JOURNALISM

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
IRVING, TEXAS

Requirements

1. Explain what freedom of the press is and how the First Amendment guarantees that you can voice your opinion. In your discussion, tell how to distinguish between fact and opinion, and explain the terms libel, slander, defamation, fair comment and criticism, public figure, privacy, and malice. Discuss how these matters relate to ethics in journalism.

2. Do either A OR B:

   a. Newspaper and magazine journalism

      (1) All on the same day, read a local newspaper, a national newspaper, a newsmagazine, and (with your parent's permission) an online news source. From each source, clip, read, and compare a story about the same event. Tell your counselor how long each story is and how fair and accurate the stories are in presenting different points of view. Tell how each source handled the story differently, depending on its purpose or audience.

      (2) Visit a newspaper or magazine office. Ask for a tour of the various divisions (editorial, business, and printing). During your tour, talk to an executive from the business side about management's relations with reporters, editors, and photographers and what makes a "good" newspaper or magazine.

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b. Radio and television journalism

(1) All on the same day, watch a local and national network newscast, listen to a radio newscast, and (with your parent's permission) view a national broadcast news source online. List the different news items and features presented, the different elements used, and the time in minutes and seconds and the online space devoted to each story. Compare the story lists and discuss whether the stories are fair and accurate. Explain why different news outlets treated the stories differently and/or presented a different point of view.

(2) Visit a radio or television station. Ask for a tour of the various departments, concentrating on those related to news broadcasts. During your tour, talk to the station manager or other station management executive about station operations, particularly how management and the news staff work together, and what makes a "good" station. If possible, go with a reporter to cover a news event.

3. Discuss the differences between a hard news story and a feature story. Explain what is the "five W's and H." Then do ONE of the following:

   a. Choose a current or an unusual event of interest to you, and write either a hard news article OR a feature article about the event. Gear the article for print OR audio OR video journalism. Share your article with your counselor.

   b. With your parent's permission and counselor's approval, interview someone in your community who is influential because of his or her leadership, talent, career, or life experiences. Then present to your counselor either a written or oral report telling what you learned about this person.

   c. With your parent's permission and counselor's approval, read an autobiography written by a journalist you want to learn more about. Write an article that tells what you learned about this person and the contributions this person has made to the field of journalism.

   d. Attend a Scouting event and write a 200-word article (feature or hard news) about the event. Use either the inverted pyramid style or the chronological style. Review the article with your counselor, then submit it to your community newspaper or BSA local council or district newsletter for consideration.

4. Attend a public event and do ONE of the following:

   a. Write two newspaper articles about the event, one using the inverted pyramid style and one using the chronological style.

   b. Using a radio or television broadcasting style, write a news story, a feature story, and a critical review of the event.

   c. Take a series of photographs to help tell the story of the event in pictures. Include news photos and feature photos in your presentation. Write a brief synopsis of the event as well as captions for your photos.

5. Find out about three career opportunities in journalism. Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. Discuss this with your counselor, and explain why this profession might interest you.

Contents

Introduction

One thing is for sure about journalism: It is never boring. For a reporter, almost every day is different from the last. One day you might interview the mayor of the city, the next day report on a car accident, and the day after that preview a new movie.

Sports writers may travel to cover the home team's games across the state or the nation. Foreign correspondents go to far-away countries to write about wars and conflicts. Technology reporters try out all the latest computers, video game machines, digital cameras, and the like to tell readers how well they work.

Journalism is for people who love excitement, who want to get involved and see how the world operates. Journalists pursue stories of interest to themselves and to the general public, and this all makes journalism lots of fun. But journalism also is hard work, and there are usually daily deadlines. Journalism can deal with matters of life and death—accidents, fires, natural disasters, and war—and often involves victims of personal tragedy.

Journalists write about crime and dishonesty. Their reports may cause people to go to jail or lose their jobs for being corrupt. Journalists help citizens form sound judgments when they vote new leaders into power. Journalists expose problems affecting the community, anything from a dangerous street intersection to pollution in the drinking water. Journalism can change public opinion and affect how governments spend money. It is not a career to be taken lightly.

Not all journalists are reporters. The field also employs photographers, editors, graphic artists, designers, producers, researchers, and others. But almost all journalists share at least one trait: They are curious and eager to share what they know with others.

How the Free Press Was Born

Journalism helps shape history.

Here in the United States, we tend to take freedom of the press for granted. We have our pick of thousands of different books, newspapers, magazines, broadcast stations, and Internet news outlets. Journalists here don't need government permission to report the news. They cover whatever stories they wish.

Many other countries do not have a free press; instead, their governments control what people are permitted to read in newspapers, see on television broadcasts, and browse on the Internet. Even in this country, the press has not always been free. The freedoms we enjoy today came about after many years of struggle.

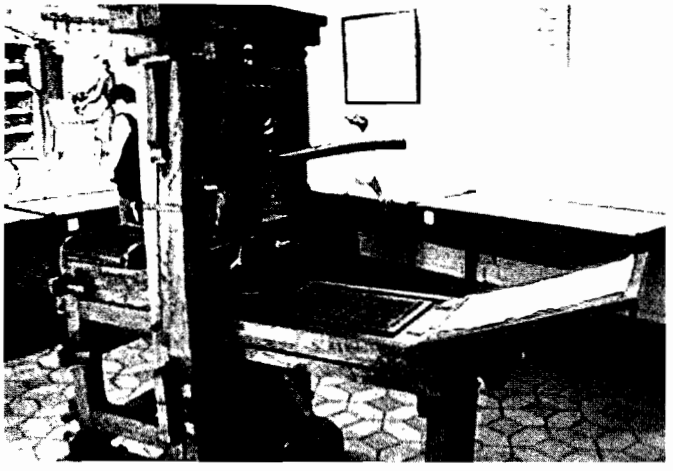
Almost from the beginning, government exerted power over the press. In England, the government forced printers to get licenses. If its license was withdrawn, a print shop could be shut down. When the first English newspapers began appearing in London in the 1620s, the editors were so worried about offending local officials that they filled their papers mostly with news from other countries.

As newspapers became more popular, the government found new ways to control them. Journalists who criticized the government were punished under laws against treason and "seditious libel." In 1644, poet John Milton wrote a famous tract, the *Areopagitica*, which appealed for freedom of the press.

One journalist repeatedly jailed or pilloried for his work in England was Benjamin Harris. Hoping to escape such tyranny, he fled to America and published, in 1690, what many regard as the first American newspaper, *Publick Occurrences, Both Foreign and Domestic*. Unfortunately, Boston authorities banned Harris' newspaper after just one issue. In 1704, a more frequent newspaper appeared, the *Boston News-Letter*. Every article was submitted to the governor of the colony for approval before publication. Because of that, the newspaper was boring. It attracted few readers.

In 1721 came the first newspaper edited to please readers instead of government officials. It was the *New-England Courant*, published by James Franklin. One writer for the paper was his younger brother, Benjamin. Later, Benjamin Franklin would publish his own newspaper and would become one of the Founding Fathers of our nation.

Our press freedom makes the United States the envy of the world, but that freedom is not inevitable. Freedom of the press must be constantly protected.



The history of modern journalism begins with the invention of the printing press in Germany in 1450. Before long, books, news sheets, and pamphlets started appearing across Europe.

During these years, American journalists could still be arrested for what they wrote. In one famous case, John Peter Zenger, publisher of the *New York Weekly Journal*, was put on trial in 1735 for publishing articles critical of government officials. In defending Zenger, his attorney argued that criticizing the government should not be a crime when the criticisms are based in truth.

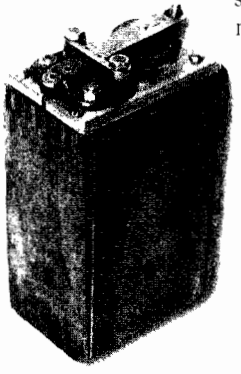
The government found another way to strangle the press—by imposing taxes. This made newspapers more expensive, reducing readership. In 1765, England imposed one such tax, called the Stamp Tax, on paper used in the American colonies. Outrage over this tax helped push the colonies into war against England.

In 1787, after America had won its independence in the Revolutionary War, the Founding Fathers drafted the U.S. Constitution. The Bill of Rights, consisting of 10 amendments to the Constitution, took effect in 1791. The first amendment established freedom of religion, freedom of speech, the right to assemble, and freedom of the press. This amendment became the foundation of a powerful American news media.

News However You Like It

The history of the press is closely linked to breakthroughs in technology. The invention of the printing press put books and news sheets into the hands of the common person, not just rich people, helping to spread literacy around the world.

The first radio broadcasts in the 1920s, and the first television stations in the 1950s, brought news to people who did not read newspapers. In the early 1990s, mass communications made a leap forward with the emergence of the World Wide Web, which now brings almost unlimited information to anyone with a home computer and network link. Today, news is being zapped wirelessly to mobile phones and handheld computers. With each advance in technology have come new opportunities—and new challenges—for journalists.



In 1837, the invention of the telegraph made it possible for information to be transmitted instantly along wires over great distances—even between nations.

What Is News?

News, simply put, is information about something new, rather than something already known. Today's weather is news; yesterday's weather is history. News is information of interest to a particular audience. Reporters and editors decide which of the many events that happen each day are newsworthy to their particular audience. Here are some factors they consider.

Timing. *When did it happen?* Most news is about something recent or upcoming—what happened yesterday, what is happening today, or what might happen tomorrow or next week. This helps people get along in their daily lives and plan for the near future. Different news media have different news cycles. Radio may update its news reports hourly; television, three times a day; print newspapers, every morning; magazines, monthly.

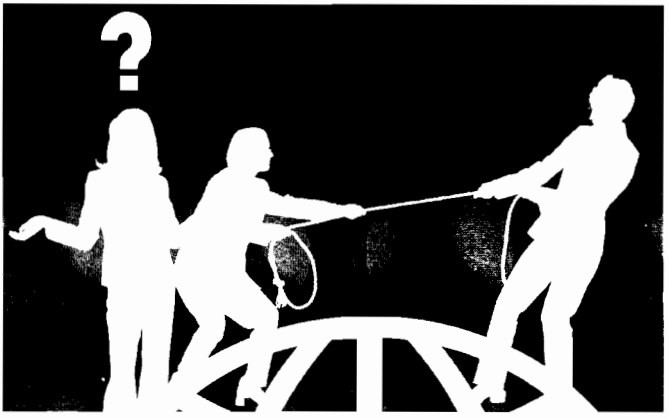
Distance. *How close was it?* The proximity of a news event affects how interesting it is to your audience. A power outage in your own town is much more newsworthy than one in the town 50 miles away.

Impact. *How strongly does it affect our audience?* The news that schools will be closed today due to snow has a big effect on the audience, so it is a leading news item on radio and TV. The fact that Mrs. Brown's lost cat finally came home has little consequence for other people, so it has little news value (though it might still get covered in a small-town newspaper).

Fame. *How famous are the people involved?* If the mayor breaks his leg, it is news to the whole city. If you do, it probably is not. If a U.S. congressman speaks at your troop meeting, the local newspaper will probably cover it. If Bobby's dad gives the speech, the newspaper probably won't (though the troop newsletter probably will).

Novelty. *How unusual was it?* An old saying in journalism goes, "When a dog bites a man, it's not news; when a man bites a dog, it is." People love to read about the odd, the extreme, and the unexpected—a 1,400-pound pumpkin, a balloonist circling the world, a dog going scuba diving. "Firsts" often make the news, such as the first man to walk on the moon (Neil Armstrong) and the first Eagle Scout to explore Antarctica (Paul Siple).

Conflict. *Who's fighting whom over what?* When people disagree, the results can often make news—whether it is a war between nations, an argument between city leaders over how much money will be spent on the new town swimming pool, or a conflict over which fund-raisers the troop should hold to raise money for summer camp. A particular challenge for journalists covering conflict is to be fair to all sides of the argument.



A newsworthy story can be one that helps spur the community to action, such as organizing a cleanup effort after a tornado.

Human Interest. Some stories are newsworthy simply because they reveal something about our humanity. These are stories that appeal to our emotions, making us laugh, cry, or feel inspired. Examples include stories about Scouts doing Good Turns for their communities, such as collecting blankets for the homeless or helping victims of a flood or tornado clean up their damaged homes. Acts of kindness and examples of people overcoming adversity or hardship are often good topics for human interest stories.

Fair and Balanced Reporting

It is a reporter's responsibility to report the facts and keep personal opinions out of the story. When the facts are unclear, or people in the story disagree, the reporter must present the conflicting information and cover all sides of the argument, even if personally the reporter favors one side or another. This is called being fair, balanced, and objective.

Objective reporting can be tricky. Suppose, for example, that the highway department wants to add lanes to the freeway going through your town. Some say the extra lanes will improve traffic flow. Opponents disagree, saying a wider highway will only encourage more people to drive instead of taking the bus, making traffic worse.

Fair and balanced reporting lets the reader make up his or her own mind based on the facts alone.

Say that you, the reporter covering the story, live next to the highway, and that your backyard will be destroyed if the highway is widened. You must be careful not to let your personal stake in the matter affect your reporting. Instead, you must present both arguments fairly and seek out more objective sources, such as studies done on the highway plan by experts. You must also avoid using "loaded" words or phrases that reveal your own opinion in a subtle way. Then your readers can decide on their own whether the highway should be widened.

Often, news events must be put into a broader perspective to be understood. For this reason, some journalists take sides on certain public issues and present their views on special pages of the newspaper labeled as the "opinion" or "editorial" section. Journalists who specialize in writing carefully thought-out opinions are called "editorialists" or "columnists." On TV or radio, they are called "commentators."

Suppose the city mayor presents the town council her annual budget spelling out how the city's tax money will be spent. The editorial writer, after weighing all the facts, may decide that the mayor's budget gives too much money to a

new baseball stadium and not enough to schools. By publishing that opinion on the editorial page, readers know it is the newspaper's opinion and not a news report. The readers, in turn, may express their own opinions in letters to the editor—or in a phone call to a radio or TV station, to be played on the air. In this way, a news outlet can inspire public debate about important community issues and ensure a wide range of views.

Let's say the Scouts of Troop 160 vote to sell holiday trees to raise money for summer camp, although almost half the troop wanted to sell lightbulbs instead. Good journalism in the troop newsletter would cover both sides of the issue in an objective report. Then, if he wishes, the newsletter editor may decide to support one side or the other, persuasively explaining his reasons in a clearly labeled editorial.

Here's how the objective news report might appear in the newsletter.

Troop Will Sell Trees to Earn Money

Troop 160 will sell pine trees again this holiday season to earn money for Scout camp next summer. The decision came Tuesday night at the weekly troop meeting at Springfield Recreation Center after a 15-13 vote. "There was a lively debate among patrols," said Scoutmaster Jim Robinson.

Members of the Eagle and Lion patrols proposed selling lightbulbs instead of trees. "Lightbulbs can be sold year-round and not just during the holidays," said Eagle Patrol leader Jason Smith. "They're a smarter choice than Christmas trees."

But holiday trees make a bigger profit, said Star Patrol's Bob Sawyer. "We can make all the money we need in a short amount of time. We should stick with trees." Agreeing with him were the Badger, Mountain, and Rocket patrols.

"Regardless of how the vote came out," Scoutmaster Robinson said after the meeting, "I was proud of the Scouts for making strong arguments on both sides of the issue."

Here is the same report written in an unprofessional way by a reporter who allowed his own feelings to color the story.

Lightbulbs Are a Dim Idea, Says Troop 160

Troop 160 wisely voted down a proposal to sell lightbulbs this year instead of holiday trees to earn money for summer camp. The 15-13 vote came Tuesday night at the weekly troop meeting at Springfield Recreation Center.

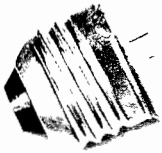
It was surprising how many Scouts were taken in by Eagle Patrol leader Jason Smith's arguments in favor of lightbulbs. They must have believed his comment that "everybody needs lightbulbs and we should make lots of money selling them." Luckily, Bob Sawyer of the Star Patrol was more persuasive than Smith. He argued that trees sell for higher prices than lightbulbs and therefore make more profit. The trees won the vote. Thank goodness.

Instead of this biased news report, a clearly labeled "editorial" would have been a more appropriate way for the troop newsletter editor to express his opinion.

Editorial: Scout Activities Are More Important Than Money Raising

This newsletter includes a report about a debate over whether Troop 160 should sell holiday trees or lightbulbs for earning money. Those in favor of selling lightbulbs made strong arguments for their cause. Patrol leader Jason Smith said that because lightbulbs are not a seasonal item, the troop could sell them whenever money was needed instead of only for a couple of weeks a year.

That is true, but raising money is not our main purpose. This troop exists so that our Scouts can enjoy everything that Scouting has to offer. We are lucky that a local tree farm lets us sell its trees during the holidays. We raise the funds we need for summer camp and other troop activities in a very short period. This quick fund-raiser lets us devote the rest of the year to Scouting program activities and community service projects, not money raising. This is how it should be.



Pitfalls to Avoid

Journalists must be careful to avoid committing *defamation*, or damaging someone's reputation with false statements. When the damage comes from written words or photographs, it is called *libel*. When the offending words are spoken, it is called *slander*. Libel or slander happens when a journalist falsely reports that someone has committed a crime. The person falsely accused can sue the journalist and news organization in civil court.

Journalists should never write something they know in advance to be false, nor should they write something carelessly, with reckless disregard for the truth. Doing so can be used in a civil court as evidence of *malice*, the intention of doing someone harm.

Journalists should respect people's privacy—their right to be left alone, out of public view. That is why, in many cases, you should seek permission before taking a person's picture or writing about the individual in a news story.

People give up some of their privacy when they are involved in an event of public interest, such as a fire, accident, or public meeting. They may temporarily become a public figure, subject to being reported on without giving their permission. Other examples of public figures are celebrities and entertainers who have thrust themselves into the limelight. Journalists have the right to make fair comment and criticism on the activities and performances of such people, as well as those of public officials, such as politicians in office.

Journalism Code of Ethics

Various journalism organizations, newspapers, and broadcasters have developed codes of ethics, or principles of good behavior, for journalists. Here are some main principles common to many of them:

1. **Be accurate.** Present facts honestly and fully. Treat all sides of a controversial issue fairly.
2. **Name your sources.** Whenever feasible, journalists should say where they got their information.
3. **Respect people's privacy.**
4. **Correct your mistakes.** If you publish something that is wrong, publish a correction promptly.
5. **Avoid conflicts of interest.** Don't report on something in order to benefit yourself.
6. **Clearly label as opinion any statements of the journalist's own views on an issue.** Keep those opinions on the editorial page of the newspaper or on a commentary segment of a newscast.

7. **Never plagiarize, or copy someone else's work without attributing the material to the original author.**
8. **Avoid stereotyping people.** That is, don't present a simplified image of a group of people—for example, people of a particular race, age, religion, region, or disability—based on the idea that all people in the group are similar. Each person is an individual.

How the News Media Work

Newspapers, magazines, television, radio, and the Internet are the main types of mass news media. But advancing technology is causing rapid change in them all. In some cases, news media are converging, or coming together—for example, newspaper reporters appearing on TV news broadcasts, or cable and network news broadcasts being posted on Web sites. This blurs the dividing lines between media types.

Still, each medium has its advantages and disadvantages and can require special reporting techniques. Well-informed citizens need to be "media savvy," that is, they need to have the skills to evaluate the accuracy and believability of information from many different sources. Then they see news events from different angles and form judgments on their own. How we get our news is rapidly changing, but the quality of the news we find still depends on the skills and integrity of the journalists who gather it.

News organizations need a variety of professionals to operate. In general terms, there is the news or *editorial* staff; the *business* staff, which includes marketing and advertising; and the *production* or *engineering* staff, which handles the technical aspects, such as getting the magazine into print or the news broadcast on the air. Each of these staffs may have a separate manager who reports to an overall manager of the whole operation. The larger the medium, the more people involved and the more specialized each person's position. This pamphlet focuses on the news side of the operation.

Newspapers, which employ more than 54,000 newsroom journalists nationwide, have the largest newsgathering staffs of any news media.

Newspapers

Newspapers provide the most thorough news reports on the widest range of topics, especially local news.

Like the other news media, newspapers are in transition. For years, newspapers have been suffering from falling circulations, due to competition from television and, more recently, the Internet. These businesses, however, still make money and aren't going away anytime soon. Newspapers are taking steps to attract more readers, such as offering their content over the Internet. Many large dailies also publish scaled-down editions for younger readers.

U.S. newspapers sold more copies each day (about 60 million) in 1965 than in 2003 (about 55 million), despite a large increase in the nation's population over that same time period. First it was afternoon newspapers that suffered, but then morning dailies also started losing readers. In 1940, there were 1,878 daily newspapers in the United States; by 2000, there were only 1,480.

ORGANIZATION

The *editor in chief* or *executive editor* oversees the entire *newsroom* operation, often concentrating on administration, budget, and editorial planning rather than hands-on editing. This editor reports directly to the *publisher*, the business-side head, who will hire or fire an editor but usually does not get involved in daily editorial decisions.

The *managing editor* manages the day-to-day flow of articles, often editing text as well as planning multipart series and coordinating special sections with the production and advertising departments. The "M.E." runs daily news meetings and serves as the newspaper's "traffic cop," making sure the whole operation runs smoothly.

Newspapers are divided into sections, each handled by a *section editor*. Typical sections include metro (city), state, national, international, lifestyle, business, sports, and entertainment (arts). Each section typically has its own reporters, who gather and write the news. *General assignment reporters* might have more than one section.

Other important positions on a newspaper include *copy editors*, who correct spelling, grammar, style, and factual errors; *photo editors*, who manage the photography staff; and *page designers*, who lay out the articles. The *editorial page* may have its own staff of editors, who write editorials expressing the newspaper's opinions on timely events, edit letters to the editor from readers, and select columns for the facing page—the "op-ed" page—often written by nationally syndicated columnists.

Finally, the *online* department or *Web page editors* work to upload content onto the newspaper's Web site. At some newspapers, the Web page editors also prepare original or supporting content—such as audio or video clips or reader forums—that augment the newspaper's print content.

Magazines

Like newspapers, the three main newsmagazines—*Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News*—have been losing readers. But unlike newspapers, consumer magazines on the whole have been gaining readership. In 1970, paid circulation of all U.S. magazines was 244 million. By 2004, that figure had grown to 363 million.

Most magazines appeal to particular groups of readers—say, sports fans, guitar players, or travel buffs—and are national in scope, rather than local. The trend in magazine publishing has been away from large-circulation, general-interest titles, such as *Life* and *Look*, toward specialized magazines with smaller readerships highly devoted to particular areas of interest. This trend of *fragmenting* the audience into special groups, and *customizing* content to appeal to those groups, is going on in most other mass news media, including radio and cable television.

The number of magazines being published in the United States increased from 13,541 in 1988 to 18,821 in 2004.

ORGANIZATION

Magazine staffs vary greatly in size depending on the nature and scope of the magazine but are usually much smaller than newspaper staffs. The main positions on many magazine staffs, however, are similar to those of newspapers: editor in chief, executive editor, managing editor, senior editor, copy editor, director of design, photography editor, and Web site editor. Magazines may also have *staff researchers*, who do in-depth fact checking, and *contributing editors*, who typically are not staff members but rather freelance writers who get regular assignments from the magazine.

To help keep their staff sizes to a minimum, magazines tend to use freelance writers and photographers—independent workers who sell their talents to a variety of publications—more than do newspapers.

Radio

Unlike TV, newspapers, or the Internet, radio can be used while the listener is also doing something else, such as jogging, washing dishes, or driving a car. That makes it the most convenient of news media. However, most radio stations today are not good sources of in-depth news, especially local news. Rather, they broadcast news headlines, often national or international in scope.

Many public radio stations have their own local news staffs and also carry "Morning Edition" and "All Things Considered," the two major news programs produced daily by National Public Radio.

This situation came about for two main reasons. In .987, the Federal Communication Commission, which grants radio and television stations licenses to broadcast, repealed the Fairness Doctrine. This rule had required stations to present news of controversial issues of public importance, with all viewpoints given fair treatment. After the repeal, many stations reduced or eliminated their news staffs.

Radio ranks second only to television in how much time people use it each day. Broadcast radio reaches some 94 percent of all Americans. In 2004 there were 13,525 licensed broadcast radio stations in the United States, a number that has been slowly increasing over the past 15 years.

The other important development was consolidation. A single company owning dozens or even hundreds of radio stations could combine staffs and broadcast national—instead of local—programming. Flourishing in this environment have been "talk radio," in which opinionated commentators interview guests about current events, and public radio, which has filled the need for in-depth news coverage in many communities.

Since 2001, two national satellite radio networks—XM and Sirius—have brought new competition to broadcast radio. The satellite networks transmit highly customized radio programming, mostly commercial-free music, to nationwide listeners who pay a subscription fee.

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Most radio stations have small staffs overseen by a *general manager,* who handles both the business and news operations. If the station produces local news, there may also be a *news director,* who makes story assignments; *staff reporters,* who work in the field and by telephone, and technicians. Larger stations that cover local news or have an all-news format may also have *news anchors,* who host drive-time news talk shows; a staff *meteorologist,* or weather reporter; a *sports reporter;* a *traffic*

reporter, who helps steer commuters around road problems; and *staff writers*, who write stories for anchors and reporters. Some of these positions—particularly traffic and weather reporters—may be shared with other radio or television stations in the same market.

Television

More than 1,700 television stations operate in this country today—an increase of almost 300 stations since 1990. Many of them are affiliated with one of the national networks—NBC, CBS, ABC, PBS, or Fox. A network *affiliate* broadcasts much of the network's programming, including such morning and evening news programs as ABC's "Good Morning America," the "NBC Nightly News," or the PBS "Newshour With Jim Lehrer."

Network affiliates also air newsmagazine shows such as "60 Minutes," "Frontline," and "20/20," as well as news commentaries such as "The O'Reilly Factor" on Fox. In addition, most TV stations originate local newscasts of their own, typically aired early in the morning, at noon, in the evening before the national newscast, and at 10 or 11 P.M., after prime-time network programming has concluded.

For an additional service fee, viewers may choose from dozens of cable TV channels. Like magazines, many cable channels are focused by topic or format, be it comedy, animals, science, or cartoons. Cable also has news-only channels, including CNN and MSNBC, as well as ESPN for sports, the Weather Channel, Court TV, and CSPAN.

Cable news has steadily stolen viewers away from network television. Studies show that since CNN was launched in 1980, the viewership of the three commercial network evening newscasts has declined by 45 percent. This is largely for cable's convenience appeal. Cable news can be watched at any time of the day. Now, in turn, cable news is facing competition from the Internet, where viewers can find what they want whenever they want it, rather than having to watch the program being aired on TV at the moment.

One side benefit of cable TV is *public access* or *community* television. This service allows community groups, ranging from Boy Scout troops to religious organizations to local universities, to use a cable station's studios and equipment to broadcast their own programs. There are hundreds of public access stations across the country.

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Besides their star *anchors*, the network TV news operations have extensive staffs of producers, assistant producers, assignment editors, reporters (and foreign correspondents), news writers, videographers, graphics designers and editors, film and tape librarians, and others. Local TV stations have many of these same positions, as well as meteorologists, sports anchors, and reporters. The local TV station's *general manager* is responsible for everything that goes out over the air; the *news director* runs the newsroom; a *programming manager* handles all non-news programming.

Online Media

The Internet, the network linking computers worldwide, is the newest and fastest growing news medium. Traditional print and broadcast news media provide much of the news content on the Internet. For instance, most newspapers, magazines, and broadcast outlets have some sort of Web site where you can read stories, listen to audio clips, or view photographs or footage of newscasts.

In the past, the huge cost of printing presses and broadcast equipment made it very expensive to become a publisher or broadcaster. Now, almost anyone with access to a computer can "spread the news." As more and more people get high-speed access to the Internet, getting news online will become even more convenient and the selection of news sources will grow.

The Internet has many technical advantages—unlimited storage capacity, the ability to search vast databases in mere seconds—that journalists are only beginning to realize. A news Web site can augment a news story with related materials such as the full text of a presidential speech, or a list of victims' names from an airplane crash. News Web sites come in many varieties. Some consist almost entirely of links to other news outlets, while others include original, in-depth reporting.

The Internet is fostering entirely new ways of distributing information. One of these is the Web log, or *blog*, in which journalists (or anyone) can publish diarylike entries for public viewing on the Web. Unlike a newspaper story, a blog can be as long as the writer wants it to be.

There are millions of blogs, collectively referred to as the *blogosphere*, some of which have broken news stories that the traditional media have missed. Blogs, however, can be highly opinionated and partisan, promoting certain political or personal views. Blogs are unlikely to stick to the standards of accuracy common among mainstream news media.

Yet another innovation in Web publishing appeared when the Google search engine began its automated news service in 2004. The Google news site updates news from 4,500 sources continuously, using a computer program rather than a human editor to select and present the stories.

An audio version of blogging is called *podcasting,* in which people record their own radio-type program and make it available on the Internet. You can listen to these audio files on a computer or download them to a portable music player. Some commercial broadcast stations now offer their own podcasts.

ORGANIZATION

Internet news sites are still in their infancy and haven't settled into a standard model yet. Most operate as a department of an established print or broadcast news outlet, *repurposing* or enhancing content from the newspaper, magazine, or broadcast station. A number of online operations are large enough to have their own editors, producers, reporters, writers, graphic designers, and programmers. Others outsource some of these functions, typically the technical side, to independent Web production companies.

The Role of Wire Services and Syndicates

Almost every local newspaper carries more than just local news. The paper will also cover major national and international news events—say, a deadly earthquake or the discovery of a new treatment for cancer. A wire service might transmit these stories by telegraph wire, though now more often by satellite feed and computer networks.

Wire services are also known as news agencies. The major wire services include Reuters in the United Kingdom; Agence France-Presse in France; and, in the United States, the Associated Press, which is a nonprofit news cooperative. Newspapers and broadcast stations receive articles, photographs, video, and audio reports from the AP and, in return, make their own local content available to other AP members.

The AP also maintains its own reporters and editors in 242 news bureaus worldwide. They cover important news events that may not have been covered by AP members. A related type of news service is the feature syndicate, which sells the right to use the work of noted writers, political cartoonists, comic strip creators, and others to local newspapers. The newspaper usually gets exclusive use of the work in its market so that no other paper with the same readers can publish the same item.

Questions to Ask When You Tour News Operations

When visiting a newspaper or magazine office, talk to section editors, photo editors, copy editors, and someone on the business side, such as an advertisement salesman or publisher.

Newspaper and Magazine Editors

- Where do you get story ideas?
- How far in advance of publication are the stories written?
- How much of your publication consists of feature news? Hard news?
- Please explain the copy flow process. Which editors work on an article after the reporter has written it?
- Ask to see a page layout in progress. Ask the designer what elements make a good layout. Ask the copy editor what makes a good headline or title.
- When are the newspaper's deadlines each day? How much time do the magazine editors have to prepare each issue?
- Ask to see a copy of the magazine's production schedule and ask for an explanation of the various steps in the schedule. Ask to see a story schedule. Ask the editor how he creates an appealing mix of articles for each issue. Ask for a copy of the publication's writer's guidelines.
- Visit the ad sales staff. Ask to see a rate card, which shows how much advertising pages in the magazine cost. Ask for an explanation of the different rates. Ask how important advertising is to the economics of the publication.

Broadcast Station Employees

- Ask for a tour of the studio and broadcast control room. Ask about the essential equipment used in preparing the broadcast. Ask for a demonstration of the tape editing equipment.
- Ask to watch a live broadcast from the control room (or to watch the control room through a window). How many minutes in a typical news broadcast are allotted for news, sports, weather, and commercials? How do the producers keep everyone on time, second by second?
- Ask about the typical shifts (hours of work) for anchors and for reporters.
- Ask for a tour of a news van or truck and an explanation of the video gear that is kept in the vehicle.
- Ask a reporter how to prepare a typical package, or news story shot in the field. Ask how to determine which of the following elements to include: natural sound, narration (voice-over), standup (reporter standing before the camera).
- Ask what must be done to prepare the package for broadcast.
- Ask how well the station is doing in local ratings. Ask what steps the station has taken in recent months to improve its ratings.

Freelance Writing

Most magazines (and some newspapers) rely on freelance writers for some of their content. Freelance assignments are a good opportunity for young journalists to get valuable experience before landing their first staff position.

Most magazines publish writer's guidelines that spell out what type of freelance work they need and how they like it presented. Look for these guidelines on the magazine's Web site. Be sure you also study copies of the publication itself carefully before trying to sell a story idea.

Most magazines want to receive a *query letter* that presents the story proposal and suggests how the article will be tailored to that magazine's audience—rather than a finished manuscript. On the other hand, newspapers often want to see the finished manuscript first. Many newspapers, especially smaller ones, use *stringers*, or freelance reporters. Stringers often cover events in a nearby community or a suburb not regularly reported on by the newspaper's own staff.

To get an assignment as a stringer, study the newspaper to find gaps in its coverage. Develop a list of story ideas to fill those gaps. Then schedule a meeting with the city editor or a section editor and present your ideas. Some newspapers will accept news about your Scout troop, such as who was awarded the Eagle rank at a recent court of honor, or a report about a camporee or troop high-adventure outing.

Freelance magazine writer Scott Wallace travels the world to write articles for various magazines. He has written about wars, the environment, native peoples, politicians, and international travel. Magazine writers like Wallace usually dig much deeper into their subject matter than newspaper reporters, because they have more time. They are not reporting on daily news events. They cover subjects in more depth. They may have to spend weeks interviewing dozens of people and doing extensive research before the article can be written.

Writers like Wallace are often freelancers. That means to earn a living they must constantly seek story ideas to suggest to magazine editors. Sometimes the editors call him with an idea they want someone to make into an article. Wallace never knows what his next assignment might be or where it will take him.

Wallace says his life is exciting but unpredictable. "I just got back from Afghanistan and Iran," he says, "and now there are assignments waiting for me in Alaska and back in the Amazon. This job allows me to travel not as a tourist but as a writer with a purpose—to tell my readers about important events, to become a witness to history."

How the Media Make Money

Most media in the United States must make a profit in order to stay in business. The print media make money by sales of the publication itself—either on the newsstand or by home subscriptions. They also sell advertising space in the publication to clients who want to reach that publication's readers with messages about products or services.

Newspapers have a general, local readership, so the advertisers are often local businesses, such as grocery stores and automobile dealerships. Magazines tend to have a specialized, national readership. Their advertisers are often equally specialized, selling guitar strings, for example, in a guitar magazine.

Online news media are still searching for ways to be profitable. Many rely on subsidies from their print or broadcast parent or sell advertising space, offering free access to the public in order to get as large a readership as possible. A few publications charge readers to access their sites—or to see archived stories from past issues. But with so much free content available on the Internet, many readers are not willing to pay for access.

Most radio stations get all of their revenue from advertising. They broadcast their programs over the airwaves for free, receiving no direct payments from listeners. (An exception are the two satellite radio broadcasters—XM and Sirius—that charge a subscription fee.) Television stations also get most revenue from advertising but may also get payments from cable TV companies that carry their programming. Public radio and TV stations operate differently. They receive some funding from taxpayers and also receive donations from listeners and viewers.

Whenever a publication or broadcast station accepts advertising, there is the danger that the advertiser will try to influence editorial coverage. Journalists with integrity who adhere to the ethical principles of their profession do not let advertisers influence their reporting or editorial positions. They know that doing so, in the long run, is not good for business. Readers or viewers may lose their trust and abandon a publication or broadcast station. Once that happens, the advertisers leave also.

Some publications make all of their revenue from ads and give the publication away for free. Others do just the opposite, charging a high price for the publication but carrying no advertisements at all.

Gathering the News

All news media have editors and managers (or directors) who plan coverage and decide how much space, time, or emphasis different stories should receive. These same editors and managers may also edit the stories before they go into print or on the air. But the most important people in the news process are the news gatherers. These *reporters* or *correspondents* seek the facts and write the news or feature articles or gather the news footage and interviews to make a good broadcast report.

The news gathering process begins with planning. Early in the day the editors look at their calendars, their lists of news tips, and the future file (a list of upcoming events kept by date) to see what events will be occurring in the city that day. They plan where to send their reporters and photographers.

Some reporters have regular *beats* to cover, such as city hall, police headquarters, or the city's professional baseball, football, or basketball team. Others are *general assignment reporters* who cover spot news such as accidents or other events that cannot be predicted, such as an elephant escaping from the zoo, or an unexpected public appearance in town by a famous movie star.

In another meeting, editors decide what subjects to write about on the editorial page that day and which opinion columns will run on the op-ed page opposite the editorials. Meanwhile, wire services send national and foreign editors their schedules of the stories that are planned to be distributed that day via satellite or Internet.

The reporter's work revolves around planning, research, covering news events, and finding and cultivating the right sources of information.

When the news reporters arrive at work, they will check their assignment sheets and might call sources to find out what is happening on their beat. Then the reporter will have a quick meeting or phone discussion with the city editor or other section editor to help decide what to cover that day. After the decision is made, the reporter might do some preliminary research online (including reading earlier articles on the same topic or issue), and then will go to a news event, conduct interviews in person, make telephone calls to other sources, and finally, write the article before deadline.

As the day progresses, news events will often occur that will persuade the editors to shift assignments. Newsrooms typically have a police scanner on at all times with someone assigned to listen to it. Reporters may be called off one story and put onto something more important—say, a broken water main that will affect thousands of residents—as the day goes on.

Finding News

Most news stories emerge from sources and events. Sources are identified, or *attributed*, so that readers know where the information in the story came from and that the facts are not just the reporter's opinions. Following are examples of common types of news sources and news events.

Witnesses and Participants. When reporters arrive at the scene of any newsworthy event, their first instinct is to listen to what is being said and to ask questions. Reporters interview people who saw the event unfold, called *witnesses*, or someone who was personally involved in the action, a *participant*.

Official and Expert Sources. Most news stories rely on official and expert sources such as city council members, police officers, economists, or forensic scientists. Reporters arriving at the scene of an accident or disaster will talk to the police officer or firefighter on hand. Beat reporters will "make the rounds" each day to visit official sources such as city hall, the county courthouse, the police department, the sheriff's office, or the school administration building. Good reporters will also keep a file of important and knowledgeable people, as well as subject experts who can be called upon for comments—perhaps a town historian or a roster of faculty members at a local university.

Press Conferences and Speeches. Reporters spend a lot of time covering speeches and press conferences. Speeches generally are given to a public audience; press conferences are held for reporters only. In both cases, someone of public interest has a message to share.

Press Releases. Every day news outlets receive dozens of press releases. Some can lead to a good news story. Others do not. All of them are sent by organizations—government agencies, private companies, universities, business or special-interest groups—trying to get favorable news coverage, or public relations firms hired to portray their clients favorably to the media. Most news outlets won't run the press release verbatim but may assign a reporter to rewrite the release in an objective way, doing additional reporting if necessary.

Accidents and Disasters. The public has a deep interest in the causes and circumstances of accidents, fires, and disasters. Thorough reporting can alert readers to dangers they may not have known about. It may point out an unsafe road condition or the need for a new traffic light. When a disaster happens, readers want to know how effectively the emergency workers responded. The readers' own sense of safety is at stake.

Reporters must be careful in writing crime stories so as not to portray a suspect as guilty of a crime before conviction.

Crime and the Courts. Criminal acts—robberies, murders, thefts, assaults—are just as interesting to the public as accidents and disasters. People want to know of dangers in their community and how effectively the police and courts are protecting them from those dangers. Because they must cover this important type of story as the need arises, reporters should be skilled at police reporting even if they aren't on the police beat.

Newspaper reporter Annie Sweeney lives a life of crime. She is not a criminal herself. She is a reporter covering the crime beat for the *Chicago Sun-Times,* a large daily newspaper in one of the nation's largest cities. She writes news articles about crimes committed in the city and the police officers who work to solve them.

Sweeney's biggest challenge, she says, is the sheer size of her coverage area. "It's a massive beat, with 24 separate police districts in the city." Another challenge is winning the trust of police officers, so they will give her information. "Some officers think reporters are out to make them look bad."

Meetings. Most matters of public importance—building new schools, voting on zoning changes, granting new-business permits, raising taxes, hiring new police officers—are discussed at meetings. Such meetings are held by various public groups and government agencies—the city council, school board, chamber of commerce, special commissions appointed by the mayor, and others.

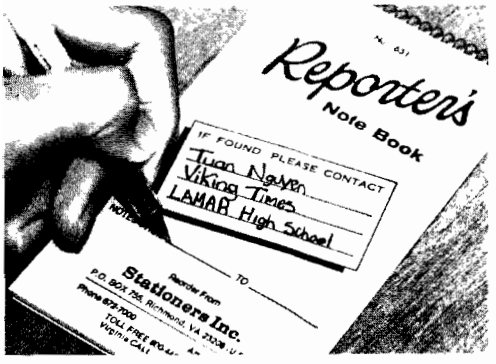
Reporters try to get a list of what will be discussed at such meetings—called an agenda—and will write a story announcing the meeting beforehand and another story after the meeting to report on what happened. Often such meetings are useful for finding related ideas for more in-depth pubic affairs reports or even feature stories, say, on the people whose homes may be affected by a new highway or factory.

Documents and Stored Sources. Besides knowing how to cover events and interview people, reporters also need good research skills. They must know their way around the public library, how to access online databases, and how to search for documents and records. The federal government, universities, and private foundations compile enormous amounts of information about the economy, occupations, population trends, the environment, and many other subjects of interest to readers. Most of these studies and reports are made available to reporters.

State and local governments also are treasure troves of information—from marriage licenses to tax records to restaurant inspection reports to building permits. Many states have *open records laws* requiring government officials to keep public records of their official activities. However, reporters must sometimes file a *freedom of information request* to force federal government agencies to make certain documents available.

Special-Interest Sources. The sources listed above are of a general nature and of particular interest to newspapers and broadcast stations that have mass audiences. Specialized media, such as magazines and Web sites catering to very narrow interests—sports cards, video games, travel, military history, cars—have their own types of specialized sources. Journalists who write for special-interest outlets often become experts themselves, as they learn more about the subject their publication covers.

State open records laws and the federal Freedom of Information Act are part of the checks-and-balances system of U.S. government. Public access to certain government records ensures that citizens can be fully informed about their government.



Basic Tools for Reporting and Writing

The main tools for reporting are a pen and small notebook. Reporters must write quickly yet legibly. They must capture the important parts of an interview and be able to read their notes later, when transcribing their notes to a computer. Many reporters develop their own form of shorthand, or abbreviated writing, for more efficient note-taking.

Many reporters use a specially shaped oblong notebook narrow enough to slip into their hip pocket.

A tape recorder, or even better, a digital voice recorder, can be useful, but should be used only to back up—not replace—note-taking. While taped interviews ensure accurate quotations, there are drawbacks. Some people feel uncomfortable about being recorded and may not speak as openly during a taped interview. Also, when writing a story, the reporter can get bogged down reviewing a lengthy recording instead of just flipping quickly through notes. Finally, there is always the danger of equipment failure (dead batteries, for example); without good written notes, the story would then be lost. It's best to take notes manually and use a recording only to verify facts or direct quotes.

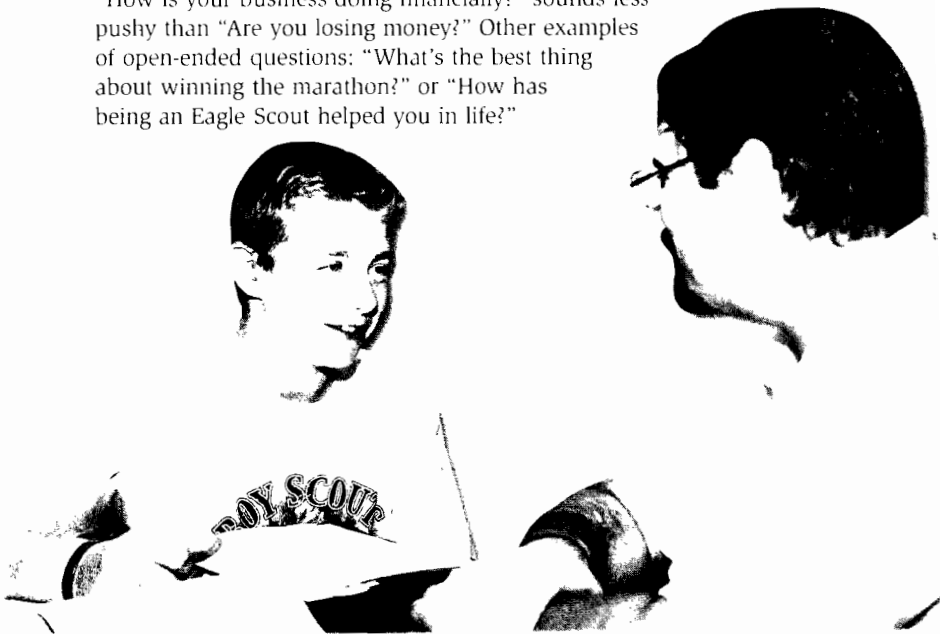
Computers have become standard equipment for reporters, not just for writing articles but also for story research and for communicating with sources via e-mail. Reporters who travel in their work often have a laptop computer in addition to a desktop computer back at the office. Many reporters type their notes directly into a computer while conducting telephone interviews. Obviously, reporters need good keyboarding skills.

Reporters need a clear speaking voice and a firm but courteous manner when asking questions. An editor doesn't always have time to fix a reporter's grammatical mistakes later on, so reporters also need solid writing skills and knowledge of grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Finally, reporters need curiosity and energy.

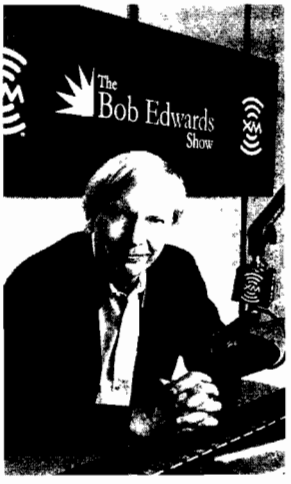
Conducting an Interview

Interviewing is a key way journalists gather information. Good interviews also make stories and broadcasts more lively and interesting. Developing good interviewing skills is essential to becoming a good journalist. Here are some pointers.

- Decide what information you need and whom to interview to get it.
- Research the interview topic so you know as much as possible beforehand.
- Use a notebook and pencil to take notes. If you want to record the conversation, ask permission first, but still take notes—recorders don't always work. Start by asking the person to spell his or her name and title. If you reach the person by phone, ask if it is a good time to talk. If it is not, ask when you should call back.
- Prepare questions in advance, and speak clearly and slowly. Use a *closed-ended* question to get a specific or concrete answer. For example, the question "How many weeks did you work on your Eagle service project?" will get a more precise answer than "How hard was your Eagle Scout service project?" Use *open-ended* questions to gently coax information from someone without appearing pushy. This gives a person flexibility when answering a question. For example, "How is your business doing financially?" sounds less pushy than "Are you losing money?" Other examples of open-ended questions: "What's the best thing about winning the marathon?" or "How has being an Eagle Scout helped you in life?"



- If you don't understand a response, ask the same question in another way, or rephrase the response in your own words and ask if you got it right. Use follow-up questions to delve deeper into a subject.
- Keep the conversation on track but be prepared to follow it where it leads, even if it departs from your script.
- Take note of the person's clothing, gestures, or other interesting attributes, such as photos and other personal effects that may add interesting details to your article.
- Save your hardest questions for last. By then, your subject should feel more comfortable and more willing to answer difficult questions.
- Ask for the person's permission to call back if necessary.
- Read your notes as soon as possible after the interview; rewrite them more legibly or type them while the conversation is still fresh in your mind.



Radio journalist Bob Edwards is one of America's most famous broadcast journalists. For 25 years, he hosted National Public Radio's "Morning Edition," a news program reaching 13 million listeners a week. During that time, he interviewed more than 20,000 people, including world leaders, actors, musicians, and average people who found themselves involved in the news of the day. Edwards gained a reputation as a master of the interview, asking brief questions in a low-key manner and letting his subjects do most of the talking. In July 2004, Edwards left NPR to join XM Satellite Radio, where he hosts "The Bob Edwards Show," another morning program that features interviews with newsmakers.

"Give people the time to expand on their thoughts," he advises young journalists. "Don't interrogate them. Make it like a conversation. Listen to what is said and follow up. Be prepared with a list of questions, but be willing to depart from the list and go where the interview leads."

Broadcast news quotes serve a similar purpose to printed quotes—adding color and clarification to a story—but are usually much shorter. They usually take the form of a *sound bite*—a short recorded segment of the person being quoted. It is less common for the reporter or anchor to say someone else's quote, because that tends to be confusing to listeners and viewers. When conducting a broadcast interview, refrain from making any sounds while the respondent is talking. The "uh-huhs" and "I sees" common during normal conversation are distracting to a broadcast audience.

Handling Quotations

Here are some practical tips for using quotations.

- When writing your story, use direct quotes—that is, the actual words spoken—when someone says something unique or important.

  "I'd rather have a tooth pulled than climb that mountain again!"

  "I have decided to resign from the presidency, effective immediately," the president said.

- Use direct quotes for *pacing*, that is, to add variety to the tone of the text or to break up long passages of explanatory text.

  During May, all Friday afternoon classes will be held outdoors, Principal Mark Brown announced today, surprising teachers and students alike. "We all need some fresh air!" he said. Classes will be conducted in the school courtyard and in the grassy area behind the gymnasium.

- Place direct quotations within quotations marks and attribute the quote. Use the person's whole name and title on first reference only. Later you can use just the last name or a pronoun (he or she).

  "Quotes add color to a story," Bob Brown, editor of the Troop 14 newsletter, says. "They make articles more readable."

- Use quotes sparingly. Quotes add emphasis and can clarify a point, but don't rely on quotes to tell the whole story. In addition, most speakers tend to ramble. So, for clarity, paraphrase what someone said by restating it in simpler, more direct language. When paraphrasing, don't use quotation marks.

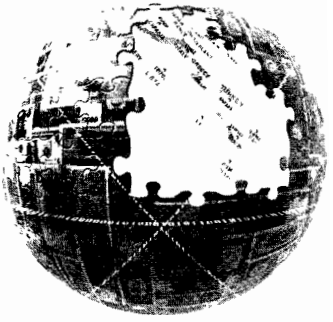
Writing for the News Media

A good news story is informative, easily understood, and interesting. It's a story that readers or viewers care about. Most readers skim through newspapers and magazines, glance at headlines, and read a few captions and maybe the first few sentences of some articles. If the story doesn't grab their attention, they move on. The same is true of broadcast stories. Here are some principles of news writing we will call the "five C's."

Good writing can make any story better.

Make Your Writing . . .

Clear. Writing should be immediately understandable. If the reader has to stop and reread a passage to get it, the writer has failed. Choose simple, familiar words and write simple sentences that aren't too long. Make the parts of a story flow in a logical, straightforward order. Be concrete ("Today's forecast is for thunderstorms and up to 2 inches of rain.") instead of vague ("Today's forecast is for bad weather."). Use transitions—connecting phrases or sentences—to introduce new subjects.



Concise. Make your writing short and to the point. Give readers a maximum amount of information in a minimum of words. There is always a shortage of time and space in the news media. Edit yourself. Remove wordiness (for example, change "at a later date" to "later" and "a small number of" to "few"). Cut out passages that are repetitious (saying the same thing twice) or redundant (saying the same thing in different words, such as "fellow classmates" or "totally destroyed").

Hometown News

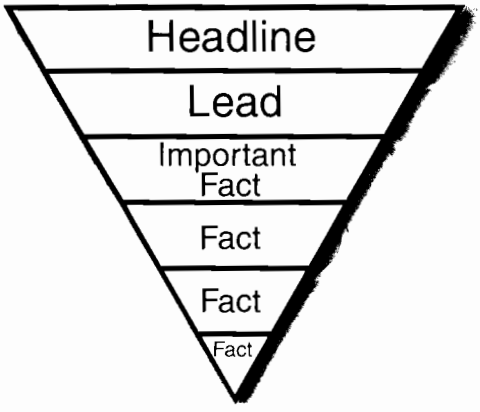
Scouts participating in national Scout jamborees have a unique opportunity to exercise their journalism skills by submitting jamboree news to their local newspapers, radio stations, and television stations. Hometown News correspondents get special training from nationally recognized journalists and teachers on how to write articles and scripts, edit copy, and select photographs and video to accompany their stories, and they have special access to interview celebrities attending the jamboree. They also will work with local media contacts to get their jamboree news to the folks back home. Ask your Scoutmaster how you can participate as a Hometown News correspondent at the next national Scout jamboree.

Complete. A good story covers the subject thoroughly. Don't leave readers with unanswered questions.

Correct. Get your facts straight. Use correct grammar and spelling. Never spell someone's name wrong.

Creative. Look for ways to make your writing vivid and lively through careful observation, good reporting, and fresh expressions. Avoid clichés—don't use overused words and terms such as "spectacular view" and "devastating flood."

Be careful not to exaggerate or overdramatize a story, and avoid writing in a fancy, overly clever way. Let the facts speak for themselves. Solid reporting is at the heart of good news writing.



If children's fairy tales were written in the inverted pyramid instead of chronological style, they would begin with "They lived happily ever after" instead of "Once upon a time."

News Story Structure

News must be written for easy reading. A news story is usually created using the inverted pyramid structure. The writer begins with the most substantial details, followed by less important details that can be trimmed, if necessary, without losing the gist of the story. In practice, this means starting with a lead paragraph that summarizes the story's most important facts, with information in descending order of importance in the middle, and ending with the least important details.

Novels and storybooks usually present events in the order in which they happen, or "chronological" order. The most important parts of the story usually come near the end, not the beginning. The chronological form keeps you reading clear through to find out what happens. But news stories are different. News writers put the essential information at the beginning, knowing that readers want the meat up front for information, not just for entertainment.

Compare these two stories written for a national readership. One is written in inverted pyramid style; the other in chronological style, as a storyteller might tell it to a group. As you read, think of reasons why the inverted pyramid style works better for newspaper readers than the storyteller style.

INVERTED PYRAMID STYLE

BOWLING GREEN, VA., JULY 24—Under humid, overcast skies, a sea of buses full of Boy Scouts from across the United States flowed into Fort A.P. Hill this morning for the National Scout Jamboree. By day's end, some 40,000 Scouts and leaders are expected to arrive at this sprawling, 76,000-acre Army base for the 10-day celebration of Scouting skills and camaraderie. The Scouts will erect 17,000 tents and 3,500 patrol kitchens in a matter of hours, making the jamboree site the fastest-growing city in America for this one day.

In a speech at a morning ceremony launching the jamboree, Secretary of the Army Thomas White said, "What a thrill it is to be here today at A.P. Hill with the BSA, with our Army, Navy, Air Force,

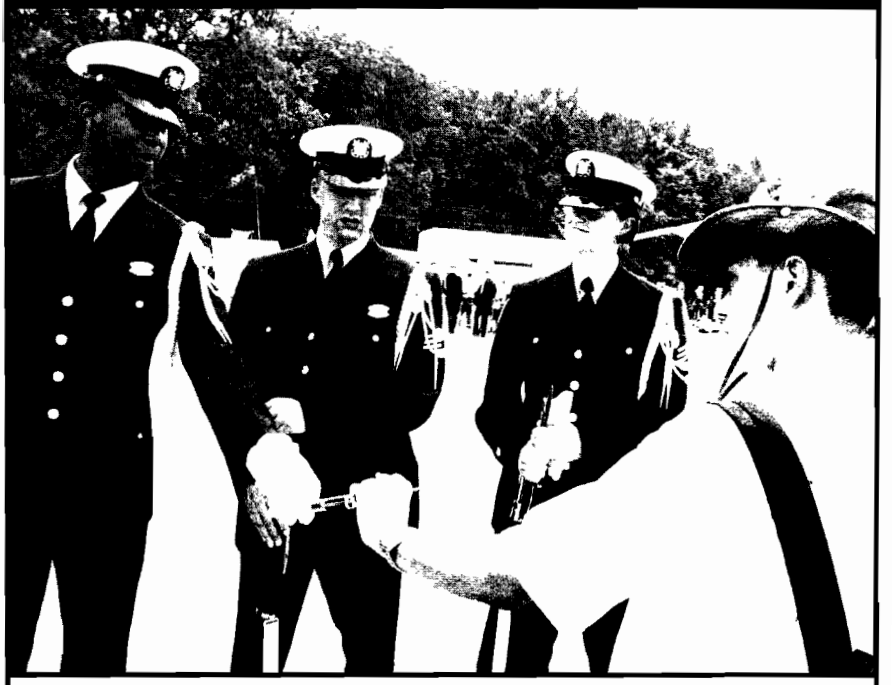
and Marines. The national Scout jamboree is the most exciting event in Scouting." An estimated 3,000 military personnel are on hand to assist the jamboree staff, composed largely of volunteers.

Also addressing the crowd was the Boy Scouts of America's Chief Scout Executive Roy L. Williams. "Today, volunteers from every walk of life have committed themselves to making this year's jamboree an experience of a lifetime for Scouts and troop leaders," he told the crowd assembled on the parade grounds near jamboree headquarters.

The first Scouts to arrive at the base were a contingent from High Point, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The Scouts scheduled a bicycle motocross race and challenging ropes course among their early activities. They chose these from a jamboree agenda that includes archery, buckskin games, conservation programs, scuba, kayak, fishing in heavily stocked lakes onsite, and dozens of other special events. They also can walk along a heritage trail where they will learn skills common to the nation's pioneers and can visit the Merit Badge Midway, which resembles a county fair, where they can work on advancement. Many Scouts also admit to wanting to participate in an unofficial jamboree activity—trading Scout patches and emblems with their counterparts from across the country.

The national Scout jamboree has been held at Fort A.P. Hill since 1981. Before then, jamborees were held at various locations across the country. The first, in 1937, was held at the base of the Washington Monument on the Mall in our nation's capital. Since then, more than 600,000 Scouts and leaders have participated in the event.

CHRONOLOGICAL STYLE



BOWLING GREEN, VA., JULY 24—A contingent of Scouts from High Point, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem, North Carolina, were the first to arrive at the National Scout Jamboree at 7 A.M. Tuesday at Fort A.P. Hill.

In a speech at 10 A.M., Secretary of the Army Thomas White launched the event with opening comments. "What a thrill it is to be here today at A.P. Hill with the BSA, with our Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines," he said. "The national Scout jamboree is the most exciting event in Scouting." An estimated 3,000 military personnel are on hand to help out

the jamboree staff, composed largely of volunteers.

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After listening to the speeches, the North Carolina Scouts looked over a jamboree agenda that includes archery, buckskin games, conservation programs, scuba, kayak, fishing in heavily stocked lakes onsite, and dozens of other special events. They can walk along a heritage trail where they will learn skills common to the nation's pioneers, or visit the Merit Badge Midway, which resembles a county fair where they can work on advancement. Many Scouts also participate in an unofficial jamboree activity—trading Scout patches and emblems with their counterparts from across the country.

When they had finished looking at everything the jamboree had to offer, the North Carolina Scouts scheduled a bicycle motocross race and challenging ropes course among their early activities.

The Scouts will camp in 17,000 tents and cook in 3,500 patrol kitchens spread around the 76,000-acre Army base.

The second version of the article has the same facts as the first, but it is not in proper news story form. The most interesting information is buried in the story. The first sentence is wasted on reporting the arrival of a particular Scout group, rather than giving an overview emphasizing the size and importance of this national event. The chronological story structure gives all the facts of the story equal weight, instead of emphasizing the important facts.

The inverted pyramid method of writing news serves two important purposes. First, it gives hurried news readers or listeners the most important information immediately. They need not read the whole article unless they have the time or interest. Second, it makes the editor's task easier. The inverted pyramid story can be cut from the bottom, for reasons of time or space, without losing essential details.

THE FIVE W'S AND H

The typical news story has two parts: the *lead* and the *body*. The lead—first sentence or two—summarizes the important facts. A good lead presents most of the six primary elements of a news event, the "five W's and H": who, what, when, where, why, and how.

If these six questions are answered in the first few sentences, the main elements of the story should be clear to the reader. The body of the story then elaborates on the important facts. The least important facts are saved for last.

The Feature Story

Most news stories are *hard* news, full of information of immediate importance to our lives. But readers also enjoy *soft* news that entertains or inspires us, examining the people, places, and things in our lives in a more relaxed way. Soft news often takes the form of a feature story, offering more human interest than the typical news article and sometimes greater depth and more colorful writing. An announcement about the troop's pancake breakfast coming up this Saturday is a hard news story. A profile of the Scoutmaster, revealing how he has led 10 of his troop members to earn the Eagle Scout Award, is a feature story.

You probably have read stories written using these common forms of feature stories.

Personality profile. People have interesting lives. This popular story form may tell how someone overcame terrible hardship to succeed in life. It might cover a narrow escape, an act of heroism, a grand adventure, a secret pursuit, or community service.

Human interest story. This story form looks beyond hard news headlines to reveal how current events are affecting real people. Examples include how tornado victims are coping with the loss of their homes; what area high school seniors are doing to prepare for college; how a local Scout troop is raising money for summer camp.

Trend stories. These stories report on what is happening in popular culture, such as the latest fads in clothing, hairstyles, music, or technology. Examples include articles on summer fashions or the popularity of portable music players.

The how-to story. People love to learn new skills. Whether it is how to cook a turkey, build a birdhouse, or plan a summer vacation, the how-to story can break a complicated task into a series of easy-to-follow steps, usually numbered.

In-depth stories. Sometimes a feature story is an extended report on a hard news topic. Say, for example, the city's subway trains are constantly breaking down. An in-depth story, through extensive research and interviews, may examine the causes of mechanical failures, what engineers are doing to correct the problems, and how repair work will affect the city budget and the likelihood of fare increases in the future.

A good exercise for any young journalist is to interview a person, probing with questions until you dig out something exciting. There is something interesting about almost everyone. Try your Scoutmaster or one of the assistants, or a friend's parent.

For more writing tips, see the *Communications* merit badge pamphlet.

Finding Features

Finding an interesting feature story is pretty easy. Everyone has at least one interesting story to tell. It is often just a matter of talking to people to find out about their interests and experiences. Or, look at the daily headlines, then find people behind the headlines to write a feature story about. This is a way of personalizing the news.

Features should be written in a crisp, colorful style, often with more descriptions of actions and of people than a hard news story. Good feature writing, like all good writing, is helped by variety in vocabulary, sentence length, and sentence structure and by the use of active rather than passive verbs.

Features about interesting people and in-depth articles about community issues are important to newspapers. They often have their own section called something like "Lifestyles," "Living," "Style," or simply "Features."

Radio and TV news programs also make much use of features-type material. A good example is "All Things Considered," a daily National Public Radio program that includes, in addition to national news, slice-of-life stories about everyday people all over the country and the world. On television, news "magazine" shows like CBS's "60 Minutes," PBS's "Frontline," and NBC's "Dateline" offer compelling investigative reports and personal profiles.

Writing for Magazines

Magazines were once filled with long, thoughtful articles that covered a subject in-depth. Readers are now busier and have far more types of mass media competing for their attention. They don't have the time to read a long article from beginning to end. Editors of many magazines have responded by breaking their pages up into shorter articles with more "points of entry." There may be information boxes, sidebars, maps, expanded captions, timelines, and various other graphical displays of information.

Magazines still offer greater depth of coverage than newspapers on specific subjects. But magazines often put less emphasis on the writing and more emphasis on creative editing or packaging of their content. For this reason, there is no one way to write for magazines any longer. There is no one "magazine style" of writing. Someone wanting to write for magazines will have to look carefully at the target magazine and see what specific style the magazine in question uses.

Opinion Journalism

Journalists are among the best informed citizens in the community. They also have good skills in communicating ideas. For those reasons, journalists are in a good position to make informed judgments about events and to persuasively articulate those opinions. People want objective and factual news, but citizens also value the journalist's informed opinions about current events and issues.

The expression of informed opinion is almost as important as the publication and broadcast of objective news. But news media must take care to keep the two types of journalism separate. That is, opinions should be segregated into clearly labeled parts of the newspaper or broadcast, apart from the news columns and reports. That way, readers and viewers will know which parts are actual news and which are opinions about the news. Then they can weigh it all and come to their own conclusions.

THE EDITORIAL

The editorial is an expression of informed opinion. Editorial writers try to persuade readers and listeners of their judgments on important issues—say, that the mayor's budget is wasteful or that the town park should be closed at midnight to cut down on crime. But editorial writers shouldn't simply express these opinions. Rather, they should carefully marshal the facts to make a strong case in favor of these judgments. Facts are just as important in editorials as they are in news writing.

Editorials seldom follow the inverted pyramid style. The introduction states the issue, and the middle factually describes important aspects of the issue. The conclusion summarizes the points and restates the writer's main opinion on the matter.

Many newspapers publish unsigned editorials, indicating that the judgment expressed is not just that of the writer but rather the opinion of the newspaper's editorial page staff or senior management of the newspaper.

THE NEWS ANALYSIS OR BACKGROUNDER

Newspapers or broadcast stations will sometimes clarify a complex news story with a *news analysis*, or *backgrounder*. In this special type of article or broadcast segment, a reporter who may have been covering the story for weeks or months steps back to explain current events by putting them into a broader context, explaining how a situation got to be where it is now. Examples might be an analysis of why test scores in local schools have plummeted in recent years or how proposed zoning changes might affect the downtown area. In this way the reporter interprets the news, sifting through months of reports to show readers which facts are most pertinent. This type of article, since it involves the reporter's opinions as well as facts, usually is clearly labeled as analysis.

Columnist George Will is a professional arguer. His job, he says, is to "make arguments." Twice a week he picks an important topic out of the news—it might involve politics, education, popular culture, you name it—and writes his opinion about it. His columns appear on the op-ed page in the *Washington Post* and are syndicated to almost 500 other newspapers around the United States and Europe.

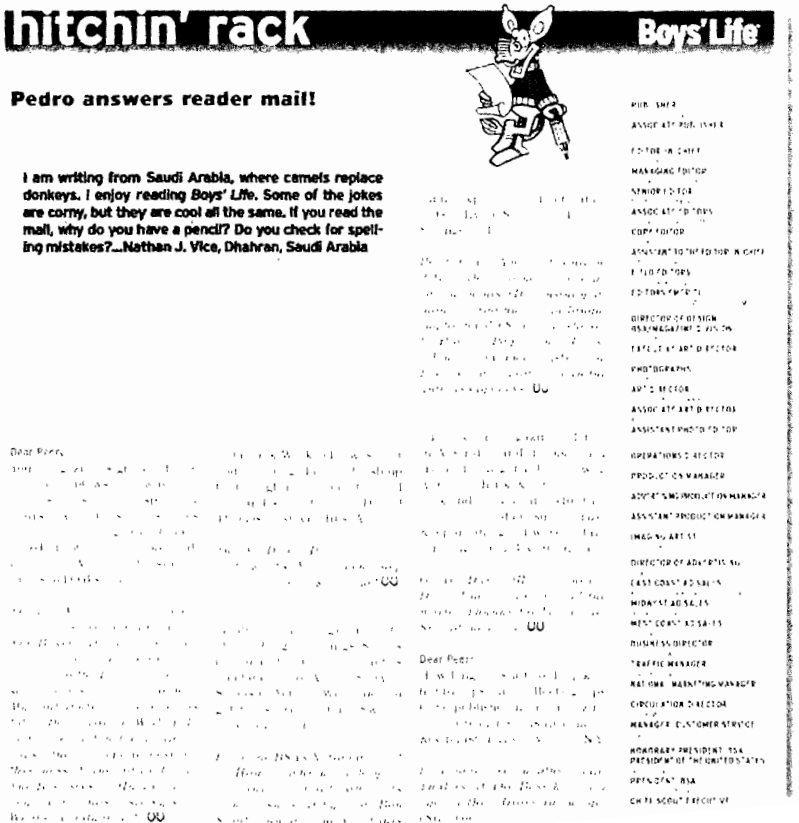
"A columnist's job is not to tell people what to think but to provoke them to think," Will says. "News articles present the facts of the story in the news pages of the paper. Columnists like me, with various points of view, hold those facts up to the bright light of opinion and cause people to decide for themselves what they think. As columnists, we're paid to make arguments."

COLUMNS PROVIDE VARIETY

Another form of editorial, or opinion, journalism is the *column*. An opinion column is a personal essay; such columns are an important part of journalism because citizens need a variety of opinions and judgments from various sources.

Columns come in many forms and address numerous topics. Columns that offer political or news commentary usually appear on the op-ed page, opposite the editorials. Other columns may appear in the lifestyle, metro, or community sections of the paper. The popular "Q & A" (question and answer) format is found in advice columns and in other columns written by experts that answer questions about topics such as health, real estate, auto care, home repair, travel, investing, or pets.

News media also often publish or broadcast personal columns written by members of the community. These might appear as guest columns on the op-ed page, or they could be regular columns focusing on local community activities.


hitchin' rack

Boys' Life

Pedro answers reader mail!

I am writing from Saudi Arabia, where camels replace donkeys. I enjoy reading *Boys' Life*. Some of the jokes are corny, but they are cool all the same. If you read the mail, why do you have a pencil? Do you check for spelling mistakes?...Nathan J. Vice, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

News media are open to the opinions of their readers and listeners. Online forums on media Web sites, guest editorial columns, and the letters to the editor section of the newspaper provide excellent opportunities to practice editorial journalism.

Try your hand at it. Write a letter to the editor of your newspaper, or a guest editorial for your radio or TV station. Express your opinion about global warming, school funding, wilderness preservation, political candidates, or other issues about which you feel strongly. You might be surprised at the reaction you get. Many editors are delighted and surprised to hear from younger readers, and might be more inclined to give more space to a letter from a citizen younger than those they usually hear from.

Here's one example.

Dear Editor:

I was saddened to read your news article about the litter problem in our community. I was especially concerned about the large number of aluminum soft drink and beer cans found in the park. There's really no excuse for that.

Boy Scout Troop 62 has been collecting aluminum containers—mostly cans—for recycling for more than a year now. We collect about 5,000 cans a month, then we take them to a recycling center. We use the money we earn to help pay for campouts and Scouting equipment. We also donate some to charity.

But our troop really is not recycling just for the money. We're doing it because it helps clean up our community, and it helps Scouts to serve where we are needed. If anyone wants us to help by recycling their aluminum, please bring it to Parkwood Elementary School on Olson and Elm streets between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on the first Saturday of each month. A Scout will be there to take your aluminum.

Mike Brown, age 14
123 Oak St.
Central City

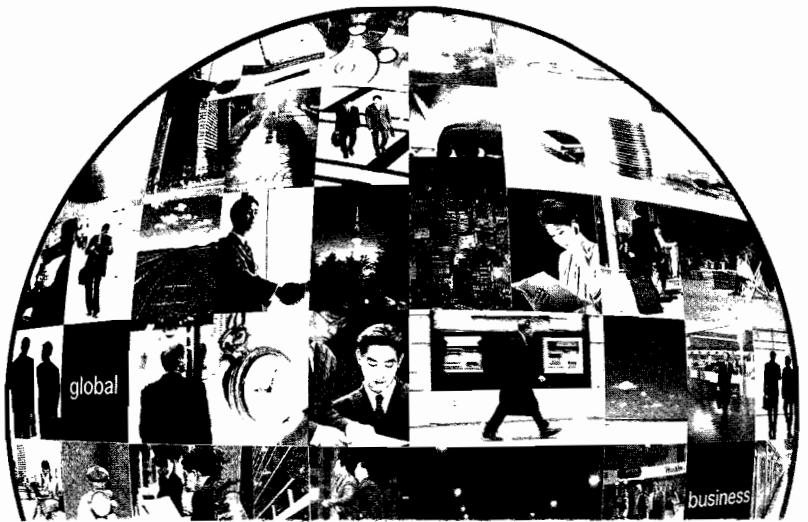
CRITICAL REVIEWS

Another form of opinion journalism is the critical review. It provides readers and viewers with judgments about products and services that are promoted and sold. These may include books, movies, television shows, concerts, sporting events, computer hardware and software, restaurant meals, hotel accommodations, and musical recordings.

A critical review should not be just praise or criticism about a performance or product. The review should present an objective report based on facts. The review should explain with illustration and example, not simply express opinions, positive or negative.

THE ROUNDUP

Magazines often use this special type of review to cover consumer products, travel destinations, or services. The roundup can be applied to any subject category in which there are many different examples to examine. Roundups usually start with an overview about some trend, say, the popularity of digital music players. Then it proceeds with individual descriptions of numerous examples of the devices, explaining the best features and shortcomings of each one. A travel roundup may briefly profile a wide range of dude ranches, say, or island resorts that specialize in scuba diving. A service roundup might describe the pluses and minuses of all the Internet service providers available in a local community or offer a reviewer's guide to area barbecue restaurants, each one rated for food quality, atmosphere, and service, with one to four stars.



Visual Journalism

Images are an essential part of journalism. Practically every newspaper and magazine uses pictures. In fact, the impact of its cover photo often determines how well a particular edition of a magazine sells on the newsstands. And of course visual images, both still and in motion, are vital to TV news and online news sites.

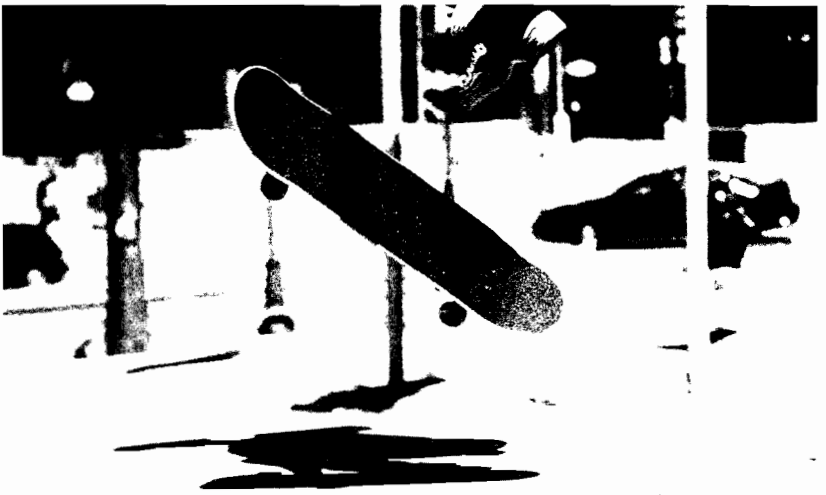
News and Feature Photography

Photography is an area of journalism where the amateur and the hobbyist can break in on a freelance basis. If you want to sharpen your photography skills, take your camera with you when you travel or go an outing. Snap away if you see something that catches your eye. It might be a bike rally, a dozen turtles sunning themselves on a log, or members of your Scout troop wakeboarding.

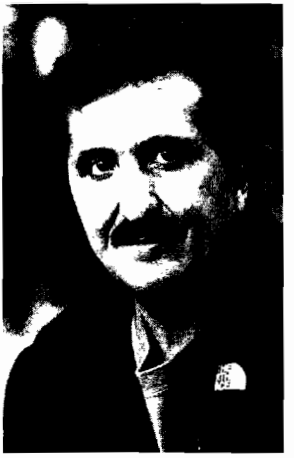
Taking a pretty picture is not what is important in journalism. A good photo should tell a story or make a statement. A photo of paramedics assisting injured passengers tells a story; a photograph of an ambulance standing alone does not. People are essential elements of almost all events. If they are not in the picture, it probably is not the kind of visual image that will make the viewer care about what is happening.

Let's return for a moment to the opening of the Maple Hills skate park. Frank Brown's editor sent a photographer to the opening ceremony with him. The photographer shot a lot of pictures there: the mayor speaking, skaters trying out the ramps for the first time, the mayor conversing with members of the civic association, an accomplished skateboarder doing a stunt.

Should you ask permission to take a stranger's picture? It is polite to do so but not always possible. If your subject is clearly involved in a newsworthy event, such as a traffic accident or fire, you can take pictures without legally invading anyone's privacy. But for a feature story that is clearly not breaking news, you should be more respectful of people's privacy and talk to them about your story before asking to shoot pictures. If you are taking photographs to be used commercially—in an advertisement, for example—the subjects must give their approval and usually must sign a model release form.



Photojournalist Pete Souza likes variety. He has worked at daily newspapers, for national magazines, and as an official government photographer for the U.S. president. Nowadays he is stationed in Washington, D.C., as a national photographer for the *Chicago Tribune*. He travels the country and the world to cover stories of interest to newspaper readers back in Chicago.



Souza, whose photo assignments have also taken him to Afghanistan, Kosovo, and Northern Ireland, says photographers will be of increasing importance to journalism. "Newspaper readers don't like to read long articles every day. Sometimes a story can best be told in pictures."

A professional photographer will take many shots, just to be sure of getting the right one. A *Boys' Life* photographer on assignment, for example, may shoot hundreds of pictures for one story. However, only a handful will appear in the magazine.

Today's cameras have advanced features that make the photojournalist's job easier. For example, many cameras have built-in motordrives or, in the case of digital cameras, memory buffers, which let you take multiple shots of fast-moving events just by holding down the shutter. This feature allows the photographer to take more photos in less time and capture several stop-action shots of one motion—that skate stunt, for example. Another useful feature is automatic bracketing, in which the camera shoots three or more pictures in rapid succession, all at a slightly different exposure (each a bit lighter or darker than the last). The idea is that one of the three will be just right.

Digital video cameras have dropped dramatically in price, making it more affordable to try videography. Footage can be loaded into a computer, edited with voice-overs and text labels, then burned to a DVD. You can create short news programs at home that might be of acceptable quality for use by a local public access cable channel. Be sure that your video tells an actual story—say, of your troop's 100-mile bike ride—and that it is presented in a news style.

Pictures Need Words

A picture may be worth a thousand words, but every picture still needs a few words of explanation. This information, printed on or near a photograph, is called a cutline in newspapers and a caption in magazines. Whatever you call them, they are very important. They are often the first (and sometimes the only) part of the article that gets read. Here are some tips for writing good captions and cutlines.

- When you take a picture, jot down the names of all who appear, so the names can be printed in the caption. Make sure you spell the names correctly. If possible, sometimes it is helpful to take an "I.D." photo. *Boys' Life* photographers out on assignment, for example, will line up all the Scouts involved in the story for a group shot, then will take down the names and birthdates of each Scout, left to right. Having a person's birth date lets the editors of *Boys' Life* get the ages right in their story, even if the photograph is published months after the picture was taken.
- Use the present tense in writing captions. "Scouts from Troop 19 reach (not *reached*) the summit of Mount Baldy." This makes the action of the photograph seem more immediate.
- Don't state the obvious in a caption. "Scout sits on fallen tree beside the trail" is obvious. "Scout Bob Smith rests after hiking 12 miles of a 20-mile hike" brings new, interesting information to the picture.
- Include details in the caption that aren't found in the accompanying article. If possible, interview the photographer—and the people pictured—to find out exactly what was going on in the picture, then use a quote. This adds color and immediacy, as in, "'I was so tired I had to sit for 20 minutes before going on,' Bob said."
- When laying out an article, use a different style of type for the captions and cutlines so they are easily distinguished from the main article.

Art, Cartoons, Typography, and Design

Journalism also needs graphic artists and designers. Many feature articles carry line drawings instead of photographs. In jurisdictions where cameras are not permitted in the courtroom, television stations and newspapers use artists to draw individuals who cannot be photographed.

Graphics artists also produce maps, charts, symbols, tables, and *logos*, which are names or labels in a particular style used repeatedly to establish identity. Some magazines and the editorial pages in newspapers use the work of editorial cartoonists. Their cartoons project a particular point of view, often pointing up something ironic, absurd, or dishonest. The Sunday paper would not be complete without the Sunday comics, too. The readers of

some magazines—like *The New Yorker* and *Boys' Life*—expect a collection of slice-of-life cartoons with every issue. These cartoons often give a periodical more appeal. What would *Boys' Life* be without "A True Story of Scouts in Action"?

Besides artists, journalism also needs graphic designers, the people who assign the artwork to be created and who lay out the articles, finding just the right arrangement of text, display type, photographs, white (or blank) space, and illustration. On magazines, the director of design is among the top positions on the editorial staff, because the visual impact of the publication is so important.

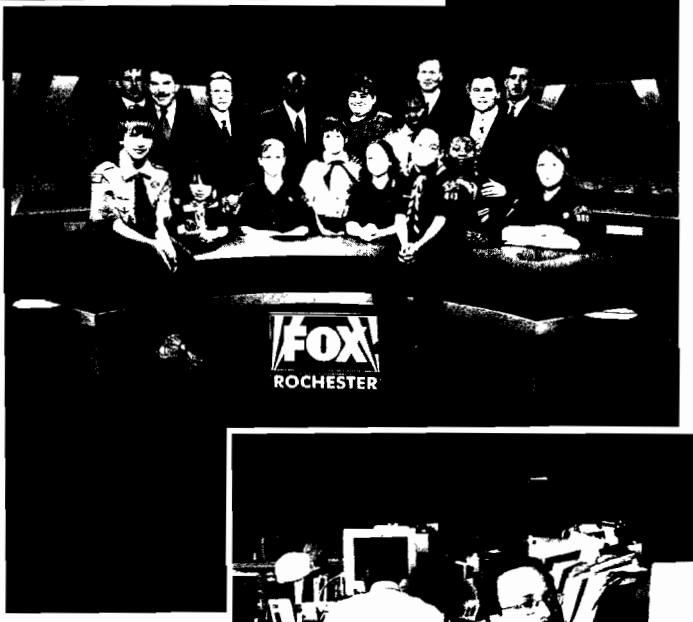
Graphic design gives a publication or Web site an identity, a personality that readers associate with that publication alone. Compare, for example, the screaming headlines and the startling photographs in the *National Enquirer* with the much more conservative look of the *New York Times*, which uses more dignified photographs and more thoughtful headlines. Even without reading the articles, you know from the look alone that the *National Enquirer* is going to be lurid and sensational, while the *New York Times* is going to be reasonable and informative.

Don't overlook the importance of *typography*, or the style of type, to a publication's design. Typography helps convey a publication's personality. Designers speak of families of typefaces, such as Times New Roman or Bookman Old Style. Within each family are sets of *fonts*, or all of the characters (letters, numbers, punctuation, symbols) in a particular size and style of type. Times New Roman, 12 point, italic, is one font within the Times New Roman type family.

Typography can help readers understand the layout and architecture of a magazine, newspaper, or Web site. For example, all the display headlines might use one style of type and all the department labels (such as "Horoscope" or "Pets") a slightly different version within the same type family. Above all, typography should be readable. Be particularly cautious about placing type on photographs, which can make the letters hard to read.

Media Web sites need designers with specialized skills and a good sense of graphic design, just like the designers of print publications. They should also be familiar with the software programs or computer programming languages that bring interactivity and enhancements to a Web page. Some media Web sites will use programmers to help designers. Others require that the designers do the technical work themselves.

For practical purposes, a site will often use a set of forms, or templates, with an established style. Updates—such as today's news headlines, pictures, and body text—can be imported into these templates without reinventing the design each time. This allows the designer to work on special sections or new features.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Careers in Journalism

The field of journalism needs people with a wide variety of talents. Journalists should be broadly educated, not just focused on one subject area. They need an informed view of the world, and being conversant in history, geography, politics, and science helps. A wide-ranging knowledge helps journalists distinguish the important from the unimportant, the right from the wrong, the true from the false in any number of subject areas they might write about.

Journalists should be intelligent, well-organized, and observant. They should be curious about everything—people, current events, public affairs, science, sports, you name it. Journalists should like people—you must deal with news sources, public officials, editors, managers, and celebrities. If you are shy, you will need to learn how to overcome this trait.

Whenever you use the Internet, be sure you have your parent's permission in advance.

Above all, journalists should be good communicators. An ability to write well is at the heart of many of the positions in journalism. Even as a print journalist you should be able to speak well, because news is often gathered orally—over the phone or in person.

Preparation for a Career

In journalism, hands-on learning such as through an internship can give you the upper hand. With recent advances in technology, never before has it been easier to try your hand at being a journalist. Anyone with a computer, some basic software, and an Internet connection can do a grassroots form of journalism.

- Write or contribute to blogs, or post messages about current events at newspapers' reader forums.
- Design and write an online magazine ("Webzine")
- Create a newsletter and e-mail it to your readers as an attachment, rather than paying the postage to send hard copies through the mail.
- Podcast your own radio-style show as an audio file on your computer and then distribute it to listeners over the Internet.

Always be on the lookout for good story ideas. Take your still or video camera with you when you travel. If you see a newsworthy event, click away and get the images to a local newspaper or TV station as quickly as possible. They may buy your pictures or footage and give you credit.

GET INVOLVED

Most high schools have a newspaper or literary magazine. Some have Web sites, radio facilities, and even TV studios. Join a club or class that produces high school media. If your school doesn't have a newspaper or Web site, help create one.

Don't overlook writing letters to the editor of your local newspaper or a magazine as a way to get your ideas published. You can also practice journalism for your Scout troop by starting—or contributing to—a troop newsletter or Web site. The same applies for almost every other group. Does your place of worship or sports league have a newsletter? If so, get involved; if not, start one.

The fastest way to improve your skills in journalism is to have your work edited by professionals, so try to write for established news outlets. Sometimes the local news media have opportunities for eager young people who want to get started. If you have proved yourself on the school newspaper, you might get an assignment as a stringer. You might be asked to cover a school function or sports event that the regular newspaper or radio-TV staff can't cover. With some luck, you might land a part-time or summer position at a local newspaper or broadcasting station. You might also try your hand at freelance writing for magazines.

One of the best ways to get into journalism is by studying it in college. In high school, take as many English, history, social science, and science classes as possible. If your school has journalism courses, take them and also get involved with your school paper.

Online reporter and editor Tim Richardson is creating the future of journalism. As the assistant director of new media for the online edition of the *Naples Daily News* in Florida, his responsibility is to reach the people who aren't reading the print edition. He does it by posting a wealth of information on the newspaper's Web site: Not only all the stories that appear in print, but also enhanced news features such as audio and video files, blogs, reader forums, opinion polls, photo galleries, scanned documents, story archives, and multimedia special sections.

Like most local news operations, *naplesnews.com* focuses on local news, not national or international coverage. "We don't try to compete with CNN, Fox News, or the *New York Times* Web sites," he says. "We're hyper-local in our focus. People won't find out what happened at the county commission meeting this morning anywhere else but on *naplesnews.com*."

The Study of Journalism

More than 100 colleges and universities have journalism departments accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. Colleges that don't have journalism courses may have campus media that you can work on to get journalism experience while earning your degree in another field.

A journalism degree calls for studying a broad range of subjects. Journalism students take courses in the arts, humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, and often foreign languages. Hands-on learning includes newswriting, editing, photography, computer-assisted reporting, design, television production, typography, communication law, and journalism history. Special fields of study include advertising and public relations. An important part of most journalism educations is working as a staff member on a campus newspaper or broadcast station.

Internships Open Doors. Many journalism programs help students find paid or unpaid positions at print or broadcast outlets. Getting good internships has become increasingly important in the field. An internship can lead to one's first post out of college, simply because employers often prefer to hire someone they have worked with as an intern rather than a stranger.

To land an internship, first check with your college adviser about media outlets that regularly take interns from your school. If assigned internships are part of the school's journalism program, you probably would earn academic credit, too. If necessary, look for opportunities on your own by contacting public relations firms and advertising agencies. Check their Web sites or call the companies to inquire. In addition, some professional organizations operate summer internship programs for students (see the resources section at the end of this pamphlet).

The Value of Networking. Practice networking, or keeping in touch with a wide range of people in the field. It may land a good internship or other opportunity for you. Start networking in high school. Contacts you make while working for the school paper may be valuable to you years later. The same is true of contacts you make in college. The other journalism students you meet, your professors, and the editors you meet during internships, all can become valuable sources.

Build your network. Everyone you work with as you progress in the field can become a good contact for the future.

Progressing in Journalism

How do you work your way up in journalism? You can travel various routes, depending upon interests and opportunities. One route is to go up the management ladder; another is to become a specialist. A third route is a combination of the two.

A typical progression if you began as a college intern at a newspaper might lead to an entry-level position as an editorial assistant and cub reporter. You might then advance to general assignment reporter. If you chose the management ladder, you could seek editing assignments and then progress to assistant city editor, city editor, national editor, sports editor, features editor, or editorial page editor, and a few years as a copy editor. You might someday become managing editor or editor in chief. The only position above that would be the publisher or owner of the newspaper.

An entry-level employee at a magazine would start as editorial assistant, then assistant editor, associate editor, senior editor, and then, perhaps, managing editor. Upper-level positions include executive editor, deputy editor, and editor in chief. Because of the trend toward special-interest magazines, the profession provides opportunities to become an established authority in a wide range of subjects.

In broadcast journalism, opportunities to specialize are more limited than in the print media. The broadcast news reporter can rise through the management ranks to become the anchor (or on-the-air announcer of news), news director, or general manager. Or, a reporter can specialize in an area of broadcast news coverage, such as government and politics, sports, weather, entertainment, or other fields.

The Rewards of Journalism

Most journalists don't get rich, but salaries in the field have improved in recent decades. The marketplace determines salary levels. If your skills, or your specialty, are in great demand, you will get paid more. As a general rule, news outlets with larger readerships or audiences will pay more than those with smaller audiences. Journalists with large national audiences, such network TV anchors or syndicated columnists, can make very high incomes indeed.

Journalists make many positive contributions. By telling the public of upcoming events, they help people get the most out of life in their communities. By reporting on good causes, they aid in the development of worthwhile institutions. These personal satisfactions help make any field in journalism meaningful and worthwhile. If you decide that this is the field for you, welcome!

TV anchor, commentator, and investigative reporter John Stossel sheds light on American life like no other newsman. His reports for ABC News have included provocative stories such as *Are We Scaring Ourselves to Death?,* which examined exaggerated fears of things like chemicals and crime; *Family Fix: Help! I've Got Kids,* which explored what to do with kids who disobey; and *Junk Science: What You Know That May Not Be So,* which exposed several popular scientific claims as bogus.

For years, Stossel worked as an investigative reporter for ABC's popular newsmagazine "20/20" and also did hour-long special reports. In 2003, he was promoted to coanchor. He now has a popular weekly segment entitled "Give Me a Break," that points out some absurdity about modern life, from popular culture to government regulations.

Stossel has received 19 Emmy Awards. The National Press Club has honored him five times for excellence in consumer reporting. He has also won the George Polk Award for Outstanding Local Reporting and the George Foster Peabody Award.

Journalism Resources

Scouting Literature

Cinematography, Communications, Computers, Graphic Arts, Law, Photography, Public Speaking, Radio, and *Theater* merit badge pamphlets

Books

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Organizations and Web Sites

American Society of Journalists and Authors

1501 Broadway, Suite 302
New York, NY 10036
Web site: *http://www.asja.org*

American Society of Magazine Editors
810 Seventh Ave., 24th Floor
New York, NY 10019
Web site: *http://www.magazine.org*

Broadcast Education Association
1771 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036-2891
Web site: *http://www.beaweb.org*

Freedom Forum First Amendment Center
1101 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22209
Web site:
http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org

Media Law Guide
The Freedom of Information Center
133 Neff Annex
University of Missouri–Columbia
Columbia, MO 65211
Web site: *http://foi.missouri.edu*

National Association of Broadcasters
1771 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
Web site: *http://www.nab.org*

National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting Inc.
138 Neff Annex
Missouri School of Journalism
Columbia, MO 65211
Web site: *http://www.nicar.org*

The Poynter Institute
801 Third St. South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Web site: *http://www.poynteronline.org*

Society of Professional Journalists
Eugene S. Pulliam National Journalism Center
3909 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
Web site: *http://www.spj.org*

Student Media Sourcebook
National Scholastic Press Association
Associated Collegiate Press
2221 University Ave. SE, Suite 121
Minneapolis, MN 55414
Web site: *http://studentpress.journ umn.edu/sourcebook*

Student Press Law Center
1101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1100
Arlington, VA 22209
Web site:
http://www.splc.org/legalresearch.asp

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