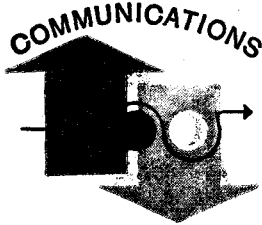


COMMUNICATIONS

Communications Editor: RICHARD L. TOBIN



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Eye People and Ear People

THE AMERICAN Newspaper Publishers Association's annual convention has come and gone, the New York merger strike appears to be near final settlement after all, new approaches to printing a newspaper are coming into being almost every day, and U.S. circulations and advertising revenues have never been higher. So perhaps this is as good a plateau as any from which to look at what is likely to happen to the American newspaper in the foreseeable future. Let's start with the meaningful statistics buried, as always, under a perfect avalanche of stuff and guff at the Waldorf.

The ANPA review of the past year shows that daily papers reached new highs in practically every measurable area of performance. Circulation went to 60,357,563 copies daily, advertising volume topped \$4.4 billion, more than four times the volume of advertising twenty years ago. Newsprint was consumed at the rate of 8.46 million tons, another record high. Employment reached 345,900 people, almost 40 per cent above newspaper payrolls in 1946, despite the desperate status of New York's strike and merger casualties. No fewer than sixteen new daily papers began publishing in the past year, though eighteen succumbed or were merged. And newspaper growth exceeded the growth of the economy, according to a study by Dr. Jon Udell of the University of Wisconsin. All in all it has seemed a good year, but there are some headaches.

One basic fact of publishing a daily paper in 1966 is that much of the printing equipment in this country is either worn out or hopelessly outdated by new publishing processes. Enormous advances in offset printing, many of which completely by-pass the actual setting of type and the casting of old-fashioned stereotype plates, are practically ignored in many metropolitan areas. One reason is, of course, the heavy investment involved, but at the Waldorf many old friends confided that they were slow to adopt new production methods because they feared union trouble. Linotypers and stereotypers have been notoriously slow to recognize that the salvation of their business lies in the new technologies. If any proof were needed, the continuing fact of "bogus" typesetting, which is tossed into the hellbox at the end of the day and is a total and irrevocable waste of money and time, condemns the unions' attitude. A parallel probably exists between the newspaper unions' recalcitrance toward technological progress and the railroad unions' attitude on obsolete firemen. Indeed, there's a deadly parallel between the two giant industries that once dominated their respective fields of communication but are now besieged on every hand by labor roadblocks to modernization.

Another of the witches stirring the cauldron of newspaper trouble is ever-keener competition from radio and television news. The unbelievable speed of electronic communication has robbed the newspaper of its original reason for being, as the auto, bus, and airplane have robbed the passenger train. News, information, communication, once the monopolized province of the newspaper and the printed page, are now permanently subdivided and shared. TV and radio alone account for what is

undoubtedly the vast majority of the modern world's news bulletins and first reports, and print media have had to be increasingly content with sober second-thought, detail, discussion, and the historical record. Just the same, there are and will ever be eye people and ear people and, though man's environment appears to be changing back to the tribal, ear-oriented world, there are those millions who simply do not wish to absorb, and probably cannot grasp, information except through the printed page. Both eye and ear media are here to stay if only for the good and sufficient reason that neither can do precisely what the other does.

What we are trying to say belatedly to our ANPA friends is that there are too many eye people on this earth ever to be satisfied with electronic news alone, for print can do things by permanent record impossible electronically. The indigenous birth, death, wedding, sports, and local items that make up most of the news content of the small city daily or weekly need more time-space than even local radio can give them. The tiny classified ad cannot easily be broadcast—it would take twenty-four hours simply to read aloud the classifieds in one issue of the Los Angeles Times, and then you wouldn't be sure what the man had said. Wall Street stock tables are literally impossible to broadcast in full on either radio or TV, as is most other tabular matter—baseball and football box scores, for instance.

So, we suggest to our departed friends that they give up their lugubrious view of the professional world they have chosen, enjoy as quickly as they can the logic of automated tape, electronic typesetting, and the latest in offset printing, and combat whatever union intransigence exists in their territories. The entire process of producing and distributing a newspaper is in violent change: the wise publisher will face up to it regardless of threat.

Above all, we should say to the editor who feels tossed into the discard by an electronic world: Nothing and no one can truly take the place of the printed page. There will always be eye people, as there will always be ear people, and the eye people will stay firmly loyal to you and your daily product. Some things newscasters can do now that newspapers cannot hope to compete with, in the instantaneous time equation of an electronic world. But, on the contrary, what you are doing each day is for the record. It can be read and re-read, clipped out and saved, perused again and again. A radio or TV broadcast cannot, under ordinary conditions, and even if it were taped it would still not be the same thing to an eye person as type on a permanent page of white newsprint.

—R.L.T.

Letters to the Communications Editor



Like Your Editorial Should

TO AN SR reader who has long been fighting a rear-guard action in defense of the old values of the English language, R.L.T.'s prose poem on the misuse of *like* [SR, May 14] was a battle cry. I'm truly grateful for the lift in morale. In hope, too. With a man of his stature and influence in the forefront of the struggle, it is inconceivable that *as*, *as if* and *as though* can be annihilated by the militant *like* hordes.

ANN F. WOLFE,
Former Head Librarian of
Manhattan College.

New York, N.Y.

I LOVE YOU for your piece on the word *like*. I refuse to smoke Winston cigarettes because their tobacco is as bad as the Carolina diction. I find the advertising a constant reproach. I despise it.

But please express yourself on the worse sin, *real good*. I refer to Billy Graham's "and may the lord bless you real good." I do not want to go to a place and spend an eternity listening to Southern illiterates abusing by mother tongue. The sulphur of Hades would be preferable.

Toynbee said we had less to fear from the Communists than from those things for which Madison Avenue stands. Sportscasters, the radio clergy, stockbrokers, and used-car salesmen point up what he probably did not have in mind. They make my listening hours miserable.

ROBERT J. HALSEY.

Avila Beach, Calif.

THE "like a cigarette should" problem has more subtle consequences than merely offending the educated eye and ear. During a short stint of teaching English composition in a junior college, I once used the sentence in a multiple-choice quiz: "Winston tastes good (like, as) a cigarette should." Of course the class was unanimously wrong. When I explained the principle involved, one boy asked, "But why do they let them write it like that if it's wrong?" I had a hard time proving to him that there is no supreme "they" to police the written word. He was shocked to discover that the Establishment had let him down on such an easy question as a rule of grammar. If he could be betrayed by writers and editors, who are supposed to know the difference between *like* and *as*, could other authorities be misleading him, too? For a not-too-bright young man, the question is unsettling at best. He may give up reading altogether.

ELIZABETH W. ZERN.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

THAT OLD KIDDER Goodman Ace must have read your copy before he wrote his own column for the same issue of May 14 and decided to pull your leg. He not only uses

like for *as if* but *as* for *like*: "any ball that looked like it might break a window;" "the diamond was not really shaped as a baseball diamond." As for the Winston copywriters, you purists are giving them far too much credit as language molders. I've been monitoring periodicals for a dictionary for about six years, and I have dozens of examples of *like* for *as* from other advertisers, and even more of *like* for *as if*, which your experts (mistakenly) regard as less acceptable, and which Winston doesn't use.

Just to consider car ads alone, from *The New Yorker* alone (and it's said to prune its advertisers' diction): "Looks like it's going to be a Chrysler year;" "The 'Jeep' V-6 zooms along the highway like it had wings;" "It just seems like \$6,000 is a lot of money for an extra 44 mph" (Volvo); "For well under \$6,000 you can buy a sports car that looks and performs like it cost twice as much" (Jaguar); "You're enveloped in luxury that looks like it came out of an Italian carrozzeria" (Pontiac).

The reason *like* for *as if* is more common now than *like* for *as* is that we have found another way of avoiding that *as*, which we seem determined to get rid of, even if we have to use two words to do it. For example: "I have never seen anyone treat it the way he does" (Henry Brandon, SR); "He looked the way his books sounded and sounded like the most colorful of his own Bostonians" (John Mason Brown, SR). (That *like* of Brown's is really a conjunction and is usually avoided by "careful writers," according to Webster II.)

ETHEL STRAINCHAMPS.

Springfield, Mo.

YOUR DELIGHTFUL EDITORIAL "Like Your Cigarette Should" in SR May 14 preceded [May 7] by Granville Hicks's provocative "The Wrong Word For It" prompts me to thank you both for speaking out on a subject too often overlooked. I only hope that yours are not voices "crying in the wilderness!"

It may amuse you to know that I refuse to smoke Winstons because I'm so infuriated by the ad, to which has now been added "... tastes good like I knew it would." However, SR accepted Goodman Ace's "... that looked like it might break a window" [SR, May 14, next to last paragraph]. But what could be more inexcusable than "Us ... would rather fight than switch?"

You are probably being inundated by readers' pet peeves in the area of bad usage; but I venture to add just a few of my own. A plural pronoun following a singular noun heads the list: "Ask anyone what they think." I recall a futile attempt some years ago to introduce "thou" to indicate "him" or "her." While it was too awkward and revolutionary to be accepted, I believe that it pointed up the fact that the masculine