

What Happens to J-School Graduates

By JOHN TEBBEL

AS THE SHORTAGE of qualified personnel increases in the news business, sharp words are flying again over what the nation's journalism schools are or are not doing about it. Some of the same publishers who were saying twenty years ago that the schools were doing too much and weren't really needed anyway are now complaining that the educators aren't doing enough.

One of the most often heard specific complaints is that journalism graduates do not become working journalists, that they are lured away by the admittedly higher salaries of public relations and advertising. Without denying that its graduates do, indeed, serve the other media, and with distinction, the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia last month issued an impressive denial of this charge.

Compiling a new alumni directory, the school discovered that of the somewhat more than 3,000 men and women who have passed through its doors since 1912, a high proportion are still engaged in active journalism, judging by the nearly 2,000 graduates who filed job information for the new directory. More than half—1,013—are working journalists. The newspapers and wire services employ 712 of them, 202 others are on magazines, and ninety-nine are in radio and television. Dean Edward W. Barrett points with justifiable pride to the fact that among these people are ten Pulitzer Prize-winners, thirty-three newspaper publishers, and twelve magazine publishers.

Columbia has also contributed substantially to education, with 152 of its graduates presently on the faculties and staffs of colleges and universities in the United States and abroad, including 144 journalism teachers and sixteen heads of journalism schools or departments. As for allied occupations, only a comparatively small number of graduates have been led into these related fields: forty-one in public relations agencies, thirty-seven in advertising agencies, and 126 in corporate public relations, advertising, and industrial communications.

While there has always been some reluctance on the part of Columbia graduates to leave New York City, the center of the communications industry, the record shows that the school has sent a substantial number of people to newspapers in other parts of the country.

There are, for example, fifteen on the Baltimore Sunpapers, eleven at the Knight Newspapers, eight at the Louisville *Courier-Journal*, fourteen on the Minneapolis *Star-Tribune*, twenty at the Providence *Journal-Bulletin*, and twenty-three at the Washington *Post*.

In New York, *The New York Times* is by far the largest employer of Columbia graduates, with eighty-seven, but the *Wall Street Journal* has nineteen, and the news magazines also list a fair number—thirty-six at Time, Inc., sixteen at *Newsweek*—and the three major networks are also well represented, with thirty-four at NBC, nineteen at CBS, and eighteen at ABC. The news services are also high on the list of employers—forty-three at the Associated Press, twenty at UPI.

Names of the famous and near-famous are sprinkled liberally through the list of Columbia graduates (its class roles have always read like a *Who's Who in Journalism*). But other schools and departments in the nation have also contributed their share of big names, and when one adds the distinguished graduates of such schools as Missouri, Northwestern, Minnesota, Michigan, Illinois, Utah, Stanford, the University of Southern California, and New York University (naming only a few) to the Columbia roster, the full impact of more than sixty years of journalism education in America becomes plain. It would, of course, be possible to compile an equally impressive list of non-J school graduates in the media, but, more and more, the schools' products have come to dominate practicing journalism and will no doubt continue to do so as long as there are professional training courses to turn them out.

The experience of other schools bears out Columbia's contention that most graduates stay with the media. For example, a recent compilation of employment records of students in Michigan's "limited graduate program for special students" between 1947 and 1966 showed that out of thirty-nine graduates, twenty-one are in news jobs in the media, six are in education, five are in public relations, and five others in advertising. One girl has retired into marriage, and one graduate has died. Somewhat the same ratio would appear in any list of degree holders from other institutions.

There is little basis, then, to fear that journalism graduates are not going to



enter the profession for which they are primarily trained. The task is still to attract enough talented recruits, and to that end the schools and the newspaper business itself are making a determined effort these days, with good if sporadic results. The demand, however, still exceeds the supply.

Newspapers feel the shortage most, magazines somewhat less. Book publishing, which has never been related to J-school training, is just beginning to feel the pinch. Like newspapers in happier days, publishing houses have always had an overabundance of candidates for jobs, but now *their* personnel directors, too, are faced with growing shortages, some more acute than others. This situation is complicated by low industry scales; the book business has never had to contend seriously with unions except in its manufacturing operations. Recently the American Book Publishers' Council organized an ad hoc committee to attack the personnel training problem, but the book industry traditionally has had difficulty in confronting its problems and particularly in acting collectively. Like the newspaper publishers before them, the book entrepreneurs will no doubt do what inevitably must be done only when a sterner necessity compels it.

THE job squeeze is not peculiarly American. In Western Europe, a shortage of trained people exists on newspapers, for reasons which are quite similar, but the plight of newspapers in Western Europe and the United Kingdom is, in some respects, worse than that of newspapers in the United States. European and United Kingdom newspapers have not enjoyed a steady build-up of supply from journalism schools, and now that competing media and competing salaries have caught up with them, they must make an extra effort

to catch up with the world. They are doing it, too.

European journalism educators also have been more severely handicapped by the academic snobbery which in this country has made unloved stepchildren of so many schools and departments, because they are dealing with a far more rigid system of education, solidly embedded in medieval traditions. In this country, the state universities have departed farthest from those traditions, which may account for the fact that they have, in general, the strongest journalism schools, while Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, founded in the Old World tradition, have none at all. Columbia's, it will be remembered, is the result of an academic accident. The impulse for its founding came from Joseph Pulitzer and not the university. President Nicholas Murray Butler's distaste for it and its potential benefactor was so strong that the actual founding had to wait from 1904, when Pulitzer first proposed it, until after the publisher died in 1911, leaving a specific bequest. The ancient established universities of Europe and England have yielded hardly at all in their belief that the second oldest profession is little better than the oldest. In England, the new red-brick technological universities have shown some interest in journalism education, but their enthusiasm is not overwhelming.

Moreover, the proponents of journalism education over there must contend with an attitude among publishers which has virtually disappeared in America, namely, that journalism can be learned only on the job. Europeans listen with polite disbelief or suppressed disapproval to an American's statement that most J-school graduates in this country don't start as copyboys or apprentices but go to work at once as reporters or copyeditors, even on the best papers. It has been a task to get the European and English publishers to accept any kind of journalism education at all, and consequently the programs which exist are almost entirely professional, unabashedly vocational. In some countries, it is not possible to take such training until a student has earned a baccalaureate degree in political science or some related field. Others prescribe a mixture of liberal arts and professional work, on the American plan, while still others take students directly from the secondary level and give them what amounts to a college course in professional journalism, with little or no liberal arts ornamentation.

The moving force behind journalism education both in England and on the Continent are the editorial trade unions, with the financial aid of government in some countries. These professionals share the publishers' belief to some extent that on-the-job training is best,

so their programs often involve apprenticeship training, of a much more extensive character than internship practice in the United States. These trade unionists aim not so much at recruiting as toward improving the standards of those already in the business. In England, for example, there is far more emphasis on seminars and short courses for young men and women in the field who want to know more and do better. By this means the union educators hope to upgrade the quality of the newspapers themselves.

While journalism education is not yet a recruiting operation, by and large, across the Atlantic, it will be in time unless the steady loss of newspapers and the growth of monopoly reduces the rapidly increasing deficit of qualified new people. As it is, the body of bright young creative intellectuals from whom the publishers have always drawn has shown an increasing tendency to look for opportunity elsewhere, especially in television.

IN England, journalism training is centered in the National Council for the Training of Journalists, directed by John Dodge, an amiable, energetic ex-newspaperman. Set up fourteen years ago, the Council represents proprietors, editors, and unions, as well as educators. Most of the money to finance it comes from the Fleet Street publishers, who insist that in return they do no training themselves but continue to recruit from the provincial papers, which get the training programs.

Two things make the British system unique. First, it is a national scheme which covers all the provincial papers and must be operated in all offices. Second, only trainees already employed as journalists can take part in it. It is a system based on the complete integra-

tion of work and training—"practical relevance," as they call it.

Nevertheless, the Council has had to work out with editors a system of recruitment, and the decision about who is to be trained closely parallels the selection process in a good American graduate journalism school. About 500 reporters, one in four of them girls, are taken on as trainees every year by British provincial papers, and it is these people who are given the training. Their apprenticeship-study program ends with a professional examination.

Aware now of a need for recruitment as well as training, the Council is just beginning what it calls pre-apprenticeship training. This is a full year's program, with each student sponsored by an individual paper which pays him half salary and takes him on as a full-time apprentice at the end of the year if he passes his examination.

The Council has other new projects in mind. One would provide "crash" courses in practical journalism for university graduates who come into the business. Another would extend the training scheme to cover magazine journalists. There is also talk of establishing a school of communications at one of the new red-bricks, but no substantial progress has been made because no one is sure who would pay for it and there is no consensus about what such a school could or should do.

In France, journalism education flourishes at five different centers, much more oriented toward established academic institutions, although professionals have a hand in them. In Belgium there are four journalism institutes, three of them university connected. In the Scandinavian countries, Finland has had journalism training since 1925; Denmark, Norway, and Sweden train in special schools independent of the universities but cooperating with them to some extent. The training is heavily professional. The Dutch started their first nationwide program last fall, when the National School of Journalism began operations at Utrecht, jointly financed by the trade unions and the government. It emphasizes the professional side, but general education is provided, too.

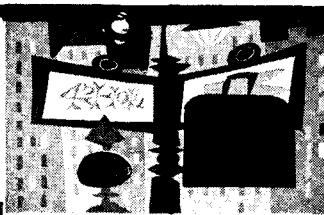
West Germany's journalism education is a combination of apprenticeships, vocational training in school, and preparatory academic work. Austria, after a good many false starts, began in the spring of 1966 its Seminar for Junior Journalists, modeled on the American idea. Like the Germans, the Austrians regard journalism education as a science.

Training in Italy has tended strongly toward communications methodology and research, but the Italian Parliament recently passed a law making it compulsory for anyone who wants to work as a

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Madison Avenue



The World of the Mini

IF ANYONE questions whether Americans are faddists, witness how many businessmen and journalists have jumped on the word *mini*. Almost daily, it seems, there is a proliferation of the word in marketing terminology in packages, products, promotional terms, names, and references by companies.

It is journalistic coverage, though, which has really made it take hold. This is not surprising to anybody in the field of communications who is paid to popularize words, products, and ideas. But the mini concept today is in the public domain. And it is the journalists who have converted it into a cliché.

The Washington Bureau of the *Chicago Daily News*, for example, reports that Congress is being asked to create four mini-vacations (three day weekends) a year by shifting the dates for observing national holidays. *Newsweek* views children's programming on TV as a mini-wasteland. *Parade*, the Sunday supplement, one week presented a batch of Mini-Quips. A few weeks later, the same publication's food recipe page featured raisin mini-muffins. The highly-respected *Home Furnishings Daily* devoted a two-page spread to mini-merchandising. And a Chicago rock'n'roll radio station, WCFL, has played "minutunes"—part of songs. And so the mini craze goes. When or where it will stop depends on its exposure.

It is no secret that the impetus behind the massive mini-movement was created by the mini-skirt's introduction to fashion circles in the United States a few years ago. What is surprising is that the influence of the word *mini* on vocabularies of so many communicators took so long in this country. The whole concept of miniaturization has been going on for some time, especially in the hearing aid industry, aerospace technology, and miniature circuitry for TV sets and transistor radios.

According to a recent article in *The New York Times*, the mini-style is showing signs of lessening in England, the mini-skirt's mother country. But the phrase is gaining momentum in this country, appealing to more and more businesses for which it was not intended.

Consider the imposing array of products—some new, many old—bearing the word *mini* or using it for description today. For example, there's a thermo jug,

marketed by Alladin Industries, that's described as almost a mini-ice box. Panasonic's new lineup of home entertainment products this year includes a Mini-Console—a radio-stereo phonograph unit which is a foot deep and less than a foot high. There are a large number of mini-branded products in the appliance and houseware industries.

Seagram Distillers Company, one of the marketing divisions of giant Joseph E. Seagram & Sons, began marketing a Mini-Pak earlier this winter. The package consists of miniature bottles of Seagram liquor brands (each containing one-tenth of a pint). These are the same bottles given to first-class passengers, or purchased, on airline flights. They are illegal for sale in thirty-nine states. Despite this somewhat limited distribution, Seagram decided to go the mini-route (my own coined phrase) because of its sampling advantages. Once a customer has been exposed to a brand through a miniature, there's always the possibility that he or she can be converted into a customer for a larger size.

BUT there are many mini-products. Mini-cameras have appeared on retail counters. The Minox Camera, an import from West Germany, has been sold for some time in this country with good success. Mini-bicycles also have been on the market. And in the world of apparel makers, the follow-the-leader philosophy of some marketers has resulted in mini-purses, mini-blouses, mini-pants, and a mini-Shet (a new type of sweater imported from France; Shet is short for Shetland). There's even a pacer, called Mini-Boy, who has been trotting around the harness race track circuit. Mini-Boy recently returned \$19.40 for every bettor who plunked down \$2 for the horse to win. Mini-Boy's record: He's finished in the money one out of three starts so far. Not bad for a trend.

Whatever the product, every marketer who has adapted the mini concept is looking for increased sales. There is a concept of borrowed interest in fads, whether it's a mini-product, hula hoop, or a Batman.

Timing, naturally, is important in borrowing a concept for a specific product. "If you get on the cycle early enough, you have a chance to capitalize," says Paul Brickman, vice president

of Fuller & Smith & Ross. "But sometimes it's hard to determine whether the fad or term you've picked up is going up or is on the downslide. This, of course, is based on how many firms have jumped on the bandwagon already. And the degree of exposure it's had."

Putting a halo like mini on a product may or may not give it an advantage, though it's worth a try in today's competitive marketplace. In many product categories, there is little if any differentiation. Consumers are increasingly becoming aware of this. According to David Hardin, president of Market Facts, one of the nation's best marketing research firms, there are no brand new products, only adaptations of existing ones. This puts even heavier emphasis on advertising and marketing hooks which attract and beguile the consumer.

Getting the shopper's attention is difficult. The average consumer is bombarded daily with 1,600 advertising messages, a figure which may rise to 2,000 at the beginning of the next decade. Recall will be more of a problem unless there is something about a product or the advertising message that clicks.

THE awesome losses on new products and ideas is another reason why a borrowed term might help a certain product. According to Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn, American companies invested \$6.1 billion on developing new products last year. Seventy per cent of this sum, or \$4.2 billion, was wasted on ideas that did not develop or on products that failed, says BBDO's marketing department.

How long the mini concept will last is hard to determine. But if it does as well as the business generated by the Batman and 007 labels on products, it will be a huge success. Almost 1,000 products with the Batman name were on the market last year, reports the Licensing Corporation of America, which holds the licensing rights to Batman as well as 007. Through the end of 1966, products identified with the Batman name accounted for an estimated \$150 million in sales. Products bearing the 007 tag have done better: \$100 million alone in 1966 sales—almost twice as much volume as in the previous year. Licensing Corporation believes that 007 endorsed products have a good chance to stay on the market for another decade.

What will be the next fad to which manufacturers will orient their selling needs? Watch media every day for the introduction of a new style, toy, or concept that looks like the brainchild of some clever word merchant. Circle it and send it to your boss and tell him to watch it closely. The absurd phrase may become part of his next marketing program.

—GEORGE LAZARUS.