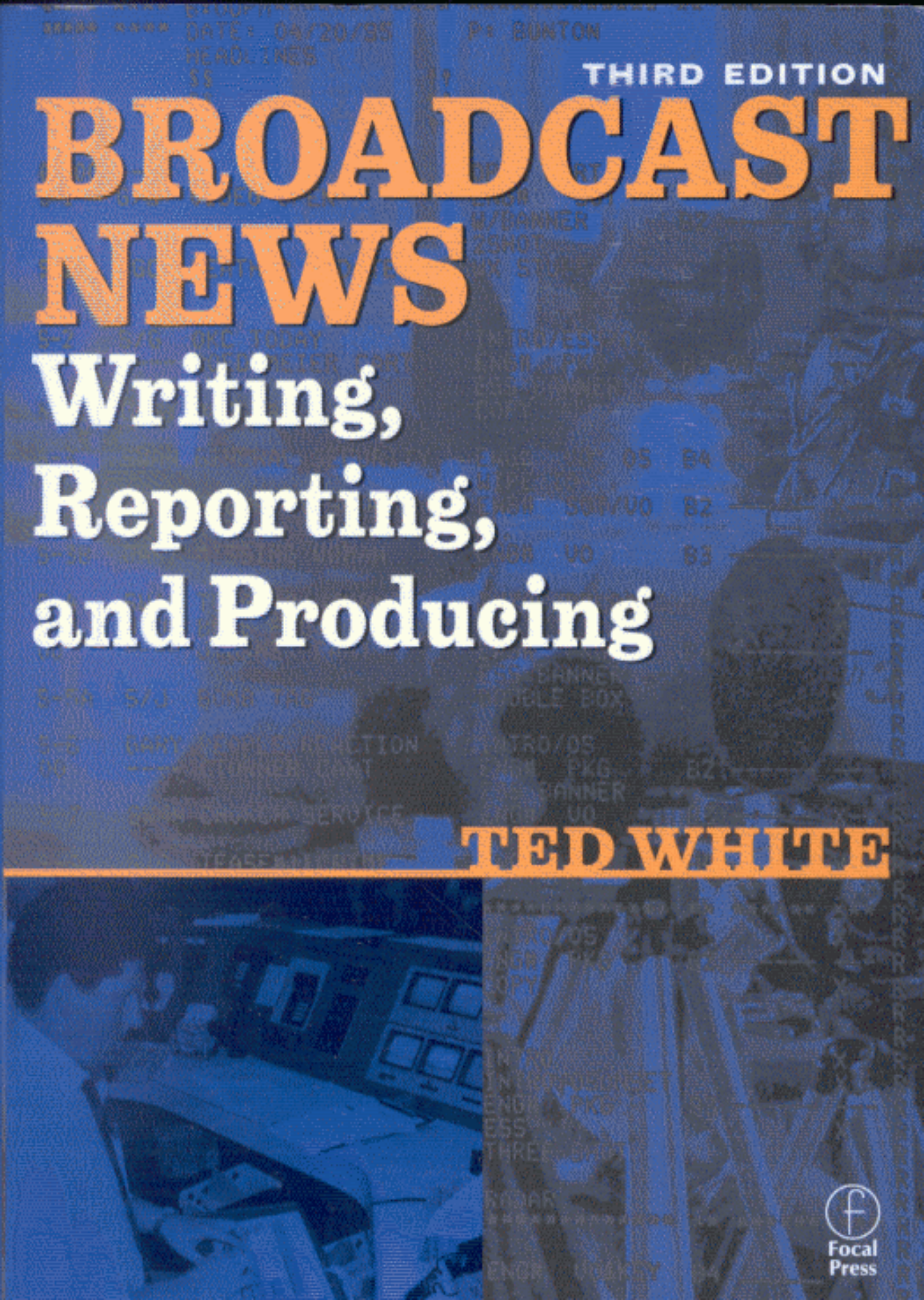




DATE: 04/20/95

BUNTON

HEADLINES

THIRD EDITION

BROADCAST NEWS

Writing,
Reporting,
and Producing

TED WHITE

Contents

Foreword	xix
Preface	xxi
Acknowledgments	xxix

Introduction	xxxi
A Changing Industry	xxxvii
Is Journalism for You?	xxxviii
What Role to Play?	xxxviii
Your College Education	xxxix
Internships	xxxix
Your First Job	xl

1 Broadcast News Writing Mechanics	1
Some Basics	1
Correcting Copy	1
Slugs	3
The Split Page	3
Avoiding Abbreviations	3
Avoiding Split Words and Sentences	4
Punctuation	4
Names and Titles	5
Middle Initials	6
Foreign Names	7
Ages	7
Marital Status	8
Race	8
Numbers	8
Timing Stories	10
Review Questions	10
Exercises	11

The Shotgun Lead	40
The Suspense Lead	40
The Delayed Lead	43
Negative Leads	43
Updating and Reworking the Lead	43
Constructing the Rest of the Story	44
Summary	45
Review Questions	46
Exercises	46
5 Color: The Key to Good Writing	48
Color Should Be Natural	48
Emulate the Best	50
Kuralt on the Road	51
"A Postcard from Nebraska"	55
Crisp and Clear	58
Use Your Senses	59
Color Comes in Many Shades	67
Colorful Obituaries	68
Frederick, Ellerbee, and Aaron	72
Murrow and His "Boys"	80
"This Is London"	80
"Permit Me to Tell You"	83
"The Fault, Dear Brutus"	85
Eric Sevareid: Writing with Class	87
Good Things from Local Stations	89
Summary	98
Review Questions	98
Exercises	99
6 Writing for the Radio Newscast	100
Your Audience	100
Organizing Material	101
Writing from the Back	102
The Lead Story	102
The Rest of the Newscast	103
Localizing the News	104
Story Length	104
Actualities	105
Wraparounds	105
Lead-Ins	106
Teases	107
Headlines	107
Pad Copy	108

Back Timing	109
Summary	109
Review Questions	110
Exercises	110
7 Writing for the Television Newscast	111
Combining Words and Pictures	111
Sound Bites	112
The Television Newswriter	112
Read Stories	112
Voiceovers	113
The Split Page	114
Video Instructions	114
Sound on Tape	117
Lead-Ins	118
Headlines and Teases	118
A Team Effort	120
Summary	120
Review Questions	121
Exercises	121
8 Delivering the News	122
Credibility	122
One-Way Communication	123
Getting Help with Your Delivery	123
Dialects	123
Listening to Yourself	125
Getting Pronunciation Help	125
Pacing	127
Marking Copy	131
Characteristics of Successful Anchors	132
Ratings Wars	133
Cosmetics	134
Summary	137
Review Questions	137
Exercises	138
9 Finding the News	139
The Wires	139
Television Satellite Feeds	140
The Internet	140
Newspapers	141
Monitoring Radios	142
Making Phone Calls	142

Stringers	143
Tipsters	143
Employee Input	144
Sounding the Alarm	145
Developing Story Ideas	147
Interaction	147
Insights	148
Assignment Boards	149
Summary	150
Review Questions	150
Exercises	150
10 Broadcast News Reporting	152
Basic Skills	152
Accuracy	153
Election 2000: It's Better to Be Right than First	153
The O. J. Simpson Trial	156
News Judgment	158
Curiosity	160
Concern and Caring	161
Persistence	162
Aggressiveness	162
Fairness	163
Diversity	163
Staying Well Informed	165
Research	166
Manners and Sensitivity	166
Working with Colleagues	168
Summary	168
Review Questions	169
Exercises	169
11 Reporting Assignments	170
Fires	170
Accidents	174
Crime	174
Police-Media Relations	175
The Courts	176
Criminal Courts	176
Reporter Access	177
Civil Courts	177
Demonstrations	178
Riots	179

Disasters	180
Oklahoma City Bombing	180
Tragedies	183
Violence	183
Schoolyard Shootings	184
Media Invade Small Community	185
Criticism of Media	187
Why Such Killings?	190
Don't Forget the Victims	191
Was the Reporting Excessive?	191
Violent Stories Also Cause Stress for Journalists	192
The Waco, Texas, Conflict	193
Was News Coverage Fair?	194
Government Control of Media	195
Could Media Involvement Have Changed the Outcome?	196
Keeping in Touch	196
War Reporting: The Rules Have Changed	197
Beats	201
Advancing the Story	202
Avoiding the Pack	202
Establishing Rapport with the Cameraperson	203
One-Person Band	204
Convergence	205
Quality Suffers	208
Summary	209
Review Questions	209
Exercises	209
12 Covering Planned Events	210
News Conferences	210
Local Government	213
Political Campaigns	217
Putting Comments into Perspective	219
Feature Stories	221
Summary	226
Review Questions	226
Exercises	227
13 Reporting Live	228
Organizing Thoughts	228
Ad-Libbing	233
The Challenges of Electronic News Gathering	233
Keeping Cool	236
Memorizing and Delivering Live Reports	238

Changing Lens Shots	238
Summary	238
Review Questions	239
Exercises	239
14 Putting the Television Story Together	240
The Package	240
At the Scene	240
Taking Notes	241
Opening the Story	241
Good Pictures	241
Good Writing	242
Organizing the Story	248
Selecting Sound	249
Working with the Video Editor	249
The Voiceover	250
The Voiceover-Sound on Tape	251
Reporter Involvement	252
Summary	253
Review Questions	253
Exercises	254
15 The Interview	255
Preparing for the Interview	255
Phrasing Questions Carefully	257
Avoiding Leading Questions	257
Listening Carefully	257
Warming Up the Head	258
The Tough Questions	259
The Surprise Questions	259
Questions to Ask Before the Interview	260
Keeping Control of the Interview	260
Asking Enough Questions	262
“Did I Forget Something?”	262
Off the Record	262
Chung’s Demise	264
Curbing Nods and Smiles	265
The Phone Interview	266
Checking Facts	266
Some Other Tips	266
Summary	267
Review Questions	267
Exercises	267

16 Collecting Information from Documents	269
Public Records and the "Sunshine Laws"	269
Filing an FOIA Request	270
Supporting Video	289
A Neglected Tool	291
The Privacy Act	291
Government Reports	291
Business Publications and Indexes	292
Trade Publications	292
Database Services	293
Great for Running Stories	293
Other Public Files	294
Police Records	294
Court Records	294
Birth and Death Records	295
Licenses	295
Land Records	296
Financial Records	296
Tax Records	297
City Directories	297
Summary	298
Review Questions	298
Exercises	299
 17 Computer-Assisted Reporting for Broadcast	300
<i>by Brant Houston</i>	
The Three Basic Tools	301
Online Resources	301
Search Engines and Guides	302
Finding People	302
Backgrounding Businesses	304
Information on Disasters	304
Covering Beats	306
Downloading Databases	307
Spreadsheets	308
Using Downloaded Data	309
Database Managers	310
Searching	311
Summarizing	311
Comparing and Matching	312
Building Your Own Database	313
Acquiring Data	314
CAR Stories	315
Resources Needed	316

Summary	317
Review Questions	317
Exercises	317
18 Developing Sources	318
Tips	318
Confidentiality	319
Accuracy of Sources	320
Gaining Confidence	320
Making Friends	321
Leaks	321
Trial Balloons	324
Authoritative or Informed Sources	324
Background Briefings	325
Summary	325
Review Questions	325
Exercises	326
19 Specialty Reporting	327
Investigative Reporting	327
The Salt Lake City Scandal	328
Environmental Reporting	333
Business Reporting	339
Health and Medical Reporting	339
Consumer Reporting	342
Sports Reporting	345
Weather Reporting	349
Summary	354
Review Questions	354
Exercises	354
20 Ethics and the Law	356
Gratuities	356
Conflict of Interest	356
Accuracy and Responsibility	357
Libel	358
Defenses	359
False Light	359
Boundaries	360
Controversial Techniques	360
Hidden Cameras and Microphones	362
Case Study 1: A Mercy Killing on TV	363
Case Study 2: Food Lion Sues ABC	364
Case Study 3: ABC Stings the Cops	366

Case Study 4: CNN Retracts Its Story	369
Too Many Investigative Reports on TV?	370
Ambush Interviews	371
Reenactments	372
Crime-Stoppers	373
Staging	374
"Unnatural" Sound	375
Video Deception	375
Improper Editing	376
Avoiding Jump Cuts	376
Inflating the News	378
Will the Real Reporter Please Stand Up?	379
Summary	380
Review Questions	380
Exercises	380
21 More Ethical Issues	382
Cameras in the Courtroom	382
Pros and Cons	383
Do Cameras Influence Witnesses?	384
The Fourth Amendment	386
Don Hewitt Has Second Thoughts	389
Cameras Raise Other Issues	389
Checkbook Journalism	390
Responsible Reporting	391
Tabloid Journalism	391
Taboo Subjects?	392
The Fairness Doctrine	393
The <i>Red Lion</i> Decision	395
Invasion of Privacy	395
Elián Gonzalez	396
Civic Journalism	399
Summary	401
Review Questions	402
Exercises	402
22 Tabloid Journalism	403
The Clinton-Lewinsky Scandal	403
Unconfirmed Reports Abound	406
Many Ways of Saying the Source Is Unreliable	406
White House Scolds <i>The Wall Street Journal</i>	407
Gary Hart Scandal Sets Stage for Clinton Coverage	407
Are News Standards Dwindling?	409
The JonBenét Ramsey Murder Case	410

23 Producing	417
The Producers	417
The Executive Producer	417
The Line Producer (Show Producer)	418
Associate Producers	418
Field Producers	419
The Staff Meetings	419
Who's the Real Boss?	420
The Golden People	421
Philosophy	421
The Rundown (Lineup)	422
Peaks and Valleys	423
Rhythm and Flow	425
A Difference of Opinion	425
Bright Future	428
Energy	430
Still Pictures	430
Live Shots	430
Back Timing	431
Summary	432
Review Questions	433
Exercises	433
 24 Using the Hardware	 434
Checking the Equipment	434
Batteries and a Power Cord	434
Tripods	435
Earphones	436
Filters	436
White Balancing	436
Mixed Light	437
Focusing	438
Time Coding	439
Shooting Techniques	439
Cover Footage	441
Establishing Shots	441
Sequential Shooting	441
Shooting Enough Footage	442
Recording Natural Sound	443
 25 The Job Search in a Changing Industry	 444
The Future of Broadcast News	445
The New Players	451
Getting Started	451

Women's Progress: Slow but Improving	453
"The Corn Fields"	457
Education Is Essential	457
The Job Search	458
The Résumé	459
References	460
Cover Letters	460
Writing Tests	462
The Job Interview	462
Minority Opportunities	464
Some Final Words	466
Glossary	469
Index	473