

# UNIT

# 4

## NEWS

### STRUCTURE

- News definition concept, meaning and elements
- News Values
- News Structure (chronological and inverted pyramid)

### • LEARNING OBJECTIVES

*After this chapter students will be able to understand about:*

- To understand the importance of News
- To understand the global News system
- Importance of news reporting values
- To understand the News media of today's times
- To understand the various forms of News writing styles

### • NEW

News is information about current events. This may be provided through many different media: word of mouth, printing, postal systems, broadcasting, electronic communication, or through the testimony of observers and witnesses to events.

Common topics for news reports include war, government, politics, education, health, the environment, economy, business, fashion, and entertainment, as well as athletic events, quirky or unusual events. Government proclamations, concerning royal ceremonies, laws, taxes, public health, and criminals, have been dubbed news since ancient times. Technological and social developments, often driven by government communication and espionage networks, have increased the speed with which news can spread, as well as influenced its content. The genre of news as we know it today is closely associated with the newspaper.

### • MEANING

#### Etymology

The English word "news" developed in the 14th century as a special use of the plural form of "new". In Middle English, the equivalent word was newes, like the

French nouvelles and the German Neues. Similar developments are found in the Slavic languages – namely the Czech and Slovak noviny (from nový, "new"), the cognate Polish nowiny, the Bulgarian novini, and Russian novosti – and in the Celtic languages: the Welsh newyddion (from newydd) and the Cornish nowodhow (from nowydh).

Jessica Garretson Finch is credited with coining the phrase "current events" while teaching at Barnard College in the 1890s.

## **Newness**

As its name implies, "news" typically connotes the presentation of new information. The newness of news gives it an uncertain quality which distinguishes it from the more careful investigations of history or other scholarly disciplines. Whereas historians tend to view events as causally related Manifestations of underlying processes, news stories tend to describe events in isolation, and to exclude discussion of the relationships between them. News conspicuously describes the world in the present or immediate past, even when the most important aspects of a news story have occurred long in the past—or are expected to occur in the future. To make the news, an ongoing process must have some "peg", an event in time which anchors it to the present moment. Relatedly, news often addresses aspects of reality which seem unusual, deviant, or out of the ordinary. Hence the famous dictum that "Dog Bites Man" is not news, but "Man Bites Dog" is.

Another corollary of the newness of news is that, as new technology enables new media to disseminate news more quickly, 'slower' forms of communication may move away from 'news' towards 'analysis'.

## **Commodity**

According to some theories, "news" is whatever the news industry sells. Journalism, broadly understood along the same lines, is the act or occupation of collecting and providing news. From a commercial perspective, news is simply one input, along with paper (or an electronic server) necessary to prepare a final product for distribution. A news agency supplies this resource "wholesale" and publishers enhance it for retail.

## **Tone**

Most purveyors of news value impartiality, neutrality, and objectivity, despite the inherent difficulty of reporting without political bias. Perception of these values has changed greatly over time as sensationalized 'tabloid journalism' has risen in popularity. Michael Schudson has argued that before the era of World War I and the concomitant rise of propaganda, journalists were not aware of the concept of bias in reporting, let alone actively correcting for it. News is also sometimes said to portray the truth, but this relationship is elusive and qualified.

Paradoxically, another property commonly attributed to news is sensationalism, the disproportionate focus on, and exaggeration of, emotive stories for public consumption. This news is also not unrelated to gossip, the human practice of sharing information about other humans of mutual interest. A common sensational topic is violence; hence another news dictum, "if it bleeds, it leads".

## Newsworthiness

Newsworthiness is defined as a subject having sufficient relevance to the public or a special audience to warrant press attention or coverage.

News values seem to be common across cultures. People seem to be interested in news to the extent which it has a big impact, describes conflicts, happens nearby, involves well-known people, and deviates from the norms of everyday happenings. War is a common news topic, partly because it involves unknown events that could pose personal danger.

## History

- **Folk news**

Evidence suggests that cultures around the world have found a place for people to share stories about interesting new information. Among Zulus, Mongolians, Polynesians, and American Southerners, anthropologists have documented the practice of questioning travelers for news as a matter of priority. Sufficiently important news would be repeated quickly and often, and could spread by word of mouth over a large geographic area. Even as printing presses came into use in Europe, news for the general public often travelled orally via monks, travelers, town criers, etc.

The news is also transmitted in public gathering places, such as the Greek forum and the Roman baths. Starting in England, coffeehouses served as important sites for the spread of news, even after telecommunications became widely available. The history of the coffee houses is traced from Arab countries, which was introduced in England in the 16th century. In the Muslim world, people have gathered and exchanged news at mosques and other social places. Travelers on pilgrimages to Mecca traditionally stay at caravanserais, roadside inns, along the way, and these places have naturally served as hubs for gaining news of the world. In late medieval Britain, reports ("tidings") of major events were a topic of great public interest, as chronicled in Chaucer's 1380 *The House of Fame* and other works.

- **Government proclamations**

Before the invention of newspapers in the early 17th century, official government bulletins and edicts were circulated at times in some centralized empires. The first documented use of an organized courier service for the diffusion

of written documents is in Egypt, where Pharaohs used couriers for the diffusion of their decrees in the territory of the State (2400 BC). Julius Caesar regularly publicized his heroic deeds in Gaul, and upon becoming dictator of Rome began publishing government announcements called *Acta Diurna*. These were carved in metal or stone and posted in public places. In medieval England, parliamentary declarations were delivered to sheriffs for public display and reading at the market.

Specially sanctioned messengers have been recognized in Vietnamese culture, among the Khasi people in India, and in the Fox and Winnebago cultures of the American midwest. The Zulu Kingdom used runners to quickly disseminate news. In West Africa, news can be spread by griots. In most cases, the official spreaders of news have been closely aligned with holders of political power.

Town criers were a common means of conveying information to citydwellers. In thirteenth-century Florence, criers known as *banditori* arrived in the market regularly, to announce political news, to convoke public meetings, and to call the populace to arms. In 1307 and 1322–1325, laws were established governing their appointment, conduct, and salary. These laws stipulated how many times a *banditoro* was to repeat a proclamation and where in the city they were to read them. Different declarations sometimes came with additional protocols; announcements regarding the plague were also to be read at the city gates. These proclamations all used a standard format, beginning with an exordium—"The worshipful and most esteemed gentlemen of the Eight of Ward and Security of the city of Florence make it known, notify, and expressly command, to whosoever, of whatever status, rank, quality and condition"—and continuing with a statement (*narratio*), a request made upon the listeners (*petitio*), and the penalty to be exacted from those who would not comply (*peroratio*). In addition to major declarations, *bandi* (announcements) might concern petty crimes, requests for information, and notices about missing slaves. Niccolò Machiavelli was captured by the Medicis in 1513, following a *bando* calling for his immediate surrender. Some town criers could be paid to include advertising along with news.

Under the Ottoman Empire, official messages were regularly distributed at mosques, by traveling holy men, and by secular criers. These criers were sent to read official announcements in marketplaces, highways, and other well-traveled places, sometimes issuing commands and penalties for disobedience.

- **Early news networks**

The spread of news has always been linked to the communications networks in place to disseminate it. Thus, political, religious, and commercial interests have historically controlled, expanded, and monitored communications channels by which news could spread. Postal services have long been closely entwined with the maintenance of political power in a large area.

One of the imperial communication channels, called the "Royal Road" traversed the Assyrian Empire and served as a key source of its power. The Roman Empire maintained a vast network of roads, known as *cursus publicus*, for similar purposes.

Visible chains of long distance signaling, known as optical telegraphy, have also been used throughout history to convey limited types of information. These can have ranged from smoke and fire signals to advanced systems using semaphore codes and telescopes. The latter form of optical telegraph came into use in Japan, Britain, France, and Germany from the 1790s through the 1850s.

- Rise of the newspaper



### The London Gazette, "Published By Authority" (of the Stationers' Company) on 3 December 1909

The spread of paper and the printing press from China to Europe preceded a major advance in the transmission of news. With the spread of printing presses and the creation of new markets in the 1500s, news underwent a shift from factual and precise economic reporting, to a more emotive and freewheeling format. (Private newsletters containing important intelligence therefore remained in use by people

who needed to know.) The first newspapers emerged in Germany in the early 1600s. *Relation aller Fürnemmen und gedenckwürdigen Historien*, from 1605, is recognized as the world's first formalized 'newspaper'; while not a 'newspaper' in the modern sense, the Ancient Roman *acta diurna* served a similar purpose circa 131 BC.

The new format, which mashed together numerous unrelated and perhaps dubious reports from far-flung locations, created a radically new and jarring experience for its readers. A variety of styles emerged, from single-story tales, to compilations, overviews, and personal and impersonal types of news analysis.

News for public consumption was at first tightly controlled by governments. By 1530, England had created a licensing system for the press and banned "seditious opinions". Under the Licensing Act, publication was restricted to approved presses—as exemplified by *The London Gazette*, which prominently bore the words: "Published By Authority". Parliament allowed the Licensing Act to lapse in 1695, beginning a new era marked by Whig and Tory newspapers. (During this era, the Stamp Act limited newspaper distribution simply by making them expensive to sell and buy.) In France, censorship was even more constant. Consequently, many Europeans read newspapers originating from beyond their national borders—especially from the Dutch Republic, where publishers could evade state censorship.

The new United States saw a newspaper boom beginning with the Revolutionary era, accelerated by spirited debates over the establishment of a new government, spurred on by subsidies contained in the 1792 Postal Service Act, and continuing into the 1800s. American newspapers got many of their stories by copying reports from each other. Thus by offering free postage to newspapers wishing to exchange copies, the Postal Service Act subsidized a rapidly growing news network through which different stories could percolate. Newspapers thrived during the colonization of the West, fueled by high literacy and a newspaper-loving culture. By 1880, San Francisco rivaled New York in number of different newspapers and in printed newspaper copies per capita. Boosters of new towns felt that newspapers covering local events brought legitimacy, recognition, and community. The 1830s American, wrote Alexis de Tocqueville, was "a very civilized man prepared for a time to face life in the forest, plunging into the wilderness of the New World with his Bible, ax, and newspapers." In France, the Revolution brought forth an abundance of newspapers and a new climate of press freedom, followed by a return to repression under Napoleon. In 1792 the Revolutionaries set up a news ministry called the *Bureau d'Esprit*.

Some newspapers published in the 1800s and after retained the commercial orientation characteristic of the private newsletters of the Renaissance. Economically oriented newspapers published new types of data enabled the advent of statistics, especially economic statistics which could inform sophisticated

investment decisions. These newspapers, too, became available for larger sections of society, not just elites, keen on investing some of their savings in the stock markets. Yet, as in the case other newspapers, the incorporation of advertising into the newspaper led to justified reservations about accepting newspaper information at face value. Economic newspapers also became promoters of economic ideologies, such as Keynesianism in the mid-1900s.

Newspapers came to sub-Saharan Africa via colonization. The first English-language newspaper in the area was *The Royal Gazette and Sierra Leone Advertiser*, established in 1801, and followed by *The Royal Gold Coast Gazette and Commercial Intelligencer* in 1822 and the *Liberia Herald* in 1826. A number of nineteenth-century African newspapers were established by missionaries. These newspapers by and large promoted the colonial governments and served the interests of European settlers by relaying news from Europe. The first newspaper published in a native African language was the *Muigwithania*, published in Kikuyu by the Kenyan Central Association. *Muigwithania* and other newspapers published by indigenous Africans took strong opposition stances, agitating strongly for African independence. Newspapers were censored heavily during the colonial period—as well as after formal independence. Some liberalization and diversification took place in the 1990s.

Newspapers were slow to spread to the Arab world, which had a stronger tradition of oral communication, and mistrust of the European approach to news reporting. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Ottoman Empire's leaders in Istanbul did monitor the European press, but its contents were not disseminated for mass consumption. Some of the first written news in modern North Africa arose in Egypt under Muhammad Ali, who developed the local paper industry and initiated the limited circulation of news bulletins called *jurnals*. Beginning in the 1850s and 1860s, the private press began to develop in the multi-religious country of Lebanon.

## **Newswire**

The development of the electrical telegraph, which often travelled along railroad lines, enabled news to travel faster, over longer distances. (Days before Morse's Baltimore–Washington line transmitted the famous question, "What hath God wrought?", it transmitted the news that Henry Clay and Theodore Frelinghuysen had been chosen by the Whig nominating party.) Telegraph networks enabled a new centralization of the news, in the hands of wire services concentrated in major cities. The modern form of these originated with Charles-Louis Havas, who founded Bureau Havas (later Agence France-Presse) in Paris. Havas began in 1832, using the French government's optical telegraph network. In 1840 he began using pigeons for communications to Paris, London, and Brussels. Havas began to use the electric telegraph when it became available.

One of Havas's proteges, Bernhard Wolff, founded Wolffs Telegraphisches Bureau in Berlin in 1849. Another Havas disciple, Paul Reuter, began collecting news from Germany and France in 1849, and in 1851 immigrated to London, where he established the Reuters news agency—specializing in news from the continent. In 1863, William Saunders and Edward Spender formed the Central Press agency, later called the Press Association, to handle domestic news. Just before insulated telegraph line crossed the English Channel in 1851, Reuter won the right to transmit stock exchange prices between Paris and London. He maneuvered Reuters into a dominant global position with the motto "Follow the Cable", setting up news outposts across the British Empire in Alexandria (1865), Bombay (1866), Melbourne (1874), Sydney (1874), and Cape Town (1876). In the United States, the Associated Press became a news powerhouse, gaining a lead position through an exclusive arrangement with the Western Union company.

The telegraph ushered in a new global communications regime, accompanied by a restructuring of the national postal systems, and closely followed by the advent of telephone lines. With the value of international news at a premium, governments, businesses, and news agencies moved aggressively to reduce transmission times. In 1865, Reuters had the scoop on the Lincoln assassination, reporting the news in England twelve days after the event took place. In 1866, an undersea telegraph cable successfully connected Ireland to Newfoundland (and thus the Western Union network) cutting trans-Atlantic transmission time from days to hours. The transatlantic cable allowed fast exchange of information about the London and New York stock exchanges, as well as the New York, Chicago, and Liverpool commodity exchanges—for the price of \$5–10, in gold, per word. Transmitting on 11 May 1857, a young British telegraph operator in Delhi signaled home to alert the authorities of the Indian Rebellion of 1857. The rebels proceeded to disrupt the British telegraph network, which was rebuilt with more redundancies. In 1902–1903, Britain and the U.S. completed the circumtelegraphy of the planet with transpacific cables from Canada to Fiji and New Zealand (British Empire), and from the US to Hawaii and the occupied Philippines. U.S. reassertions of the Monroe Doctrine notwithstanding, Latin America was a battleground of competing telegraphic interests until World War I, after which U.S. interests finally did consolidate their power in the hemisphere.

### **World railway and telegraph system, 1900**

By the turn of the century (i.e., circa 1900), Wolff, Havas, and Reuters formed a news cartel, dividing up the global market into three sections, in which each had more-or-less exclusive distribution rights and relationships with national agencies. Each agency's area corresponded roughly to the colonial sphere of its mother country. Reuters and the Australian national news service had an agreement to exchange news only with each other. Due to the high cost of maintaining infrastructure, political goodwill, and global reach, newcomers found it virtually



impossible to challenge the big three European agencies or the American Associated Press. In 1890 Reuters (in partnership with the Press Association, England's major news agency for domestic stories) expanded into "soft" news stories for public consumption, about topics such as sports and "human interest". In 1904, the big three wire services opened relations with Vestnik, the news agency of Czarist Russia, to their group, though they maintained their own reporters in Moscow. During and after the Russian Revolution, the outside agencies maintained a working relationship with the Petrograd Telegraph Agency, renamed the Russian Telegraph Agency (ROSTA) and eventually the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS).

The Chinese Communist Party created its news agency, the Red China News Agency, in 1931; its primary responsibilities were the Red China newspaper and the internal Reference News. In 1937, the Party renamed the agency Xinhua, New China. Xinhua became the official news agency of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

These agencies touted their ability to distill events into "minute globules of news", 20–30 word summaries which conveyed the essence of new developments. Unlike newspapers, and contrary to the sentiments of some of their reporters, the agencies sought to keep their reports simple and factual. The wire services brought forth the "inverted pyramid" model of news copy, in which key facts appear at the start of the text, and more and more details are included as it goes along. The sparse telegraphic writing style spilled over into newspapers, which often reprinted stories from the wire with little embellishment. In a 20 September 1918 Pravda editorial, Lenin instructed the Soviet press to cut back on their political rambling and produce many short anticapitalist news items in "telegraph style".

As in previous eras, the news agencies provided special services to political and business clients, and these services constituted a significant portion of their operations and income. The wire services maintained close relationships with their respective national governments, which provided both press releases and payments. The acceleration and centralization of economic news facilitated regional economic integration and economic globalization. "It was the decrease in information costs and the increasing communication speed that stood at the roots of increased market integration, rather than falling transport costs by itself. In order to send goods to another area, merchants needed to know first whether in fact to send off the goods and to what place. Information costs and speed were essential for these decisions."

## Radio and television

The British Broadcasting Company began transmitting radio news from London in 1922, dependent entirely, by law, on the British news agencies. BBC radio marketed itself as a news by and for social elites, and hired only broadcasters who spoke with upper-class accents. The BBC gained importance in the May 1926

general strike, during which newspapers were closed and the radio served as the only source of news for an uncertain public. (To the displeasure of many listeners, the BBC took an unambiguously pro-government stance against the strikers).

In the USA, RCA's Radio Group established its radio network, NBC, in 1926. The Paley family founded CBS soon after. These two networks, which supplied news broadcasts to subsidiaries and affiliates, dominated the airwaves throughout the period of radio's hegemony as a news source. Radio broadcasters in the United States negotiated a similar arrangement with the press in 1933, when they agreed to use only news from the Press–Radio Bureau and eschew advertising; this agreement soon collapsed and radio stations began reporting their own news (with advertising). As in Britain, American news radio avoided "controversial" topics as per norms established by the National Association of Broadcasters. By 1939, 58% of Americans surveyed by *Fortune* considered radio news more accurate than newspapers, and 70% chose radio as their main news source. Radio expanded rapidly across the continent, from 30 stations in 1920 to a thousand in the 1930s. This operation was financed mostly with advertising and public relations money.

The Soviet Union began a major international broadcasting operation in 1929, with stations in German, English and French. The Nazi Party made use of the radio in its rise to power in Germany, with much of its propaganda focused on attacking the Soviet Bolsheviks. The British and Italian foreign radio services competed for influence in North Africa. All four of these broadcast services grew increasingly vitriolic as the European nations prepared for war.

The war provided an opportunity to expand radio and take advantage of its new potential. The BBC reported on Allied invasion of Normandy on 8:00 a.m. of the morning it took place, and including a clip from German radio coverage of the same event. Listeners followed along with developments throughout the day. The U.S. set up its Office of War Information which by 1942 sent programming across South America, the Middle East, and East Asia. Radio Luxembourg, a centrally located high-power station on the continent, was seized by Germany, and then by the United States—which created fake news programs appearing as though they were created by Germany. Targeting American troops in the Pacific, the Japanese government broadcast the "Zero Hour" program, which included news from the U.S. to make the soldiers homesick. But by the end of the war, Britain had the largest radio network in the world, broadcasting internationally in 43 different languages. Its scope would eventually be surpassed (by 1955) by the worldwide Voice of America programs, produced by the United States Information Agency.

In Britain and the United States, television news watching rose dramatically in the 1950s and by the 1960s supplanted radio as the public's primary source of news. In the U.S., television was run by the same networks which owned radio: CBS, NBC, and an NBC spin-off called ABC. Edward R. Murrow, who first entered the public ear as a war reporter in London, made the big leap to television to become an

iconic newsman on CBS (and later the director of the United States Information Agency).

Ted Turner's creation of the Cable News Network (CNN) in 1980 inaugurated a new era of 24-hour satellite news broadcasting. In 1991, the BBC introduced a competitor, BBC World Service Television. Rupert Murdoch's Australian News Corporation entered the picture with Fox News Channel in the US, Sky News in Britain, and STAR TV in Asia. Combining this new apparatus with the use of embedded reporters, the United States waged the 1991–1992 Gulf War with the assistance of nonstop media coverage. CNN's specialty is the crisis, to which the network is prepared to shift its total attention if so chosen. CNN news was transmitted via INTELSAT communications satellites. CNN, said an executive, would bring a "town crier to the global village".

In 1996, the Qatar-owned broadcaster Al Jazeera emerged as a powerful alternative to the Western media, capitalizing in part on anger in the Arab & Muslim world regarding biased coverage of the Gulf War. Al Jazeera hired many news workers conveniently laid off by BBC Arabic Television, which closed in April 1996. It used Arabsat to broadcast.

## Internet

The early internet, known as ARPANET, was controlled by the U.S. Department of Defense and used mostly by academics. It became available to a wider public with the release of the Netscape browser in 1994. At first, news websites were mostly archives of print publications. An early online newspaper was the Electronic Telegraph, published by The Daily Telegraph. A 1994 earthquake in California was one of the first big stories to be reported online in real time. The new availability of web browsing made news sites accessible to more people. On the day of the Oklahoma City bombing in April 1995, people flocked to newsgroups and chatrooms to discuss the situation and share information. The Oklahoma City Daily posted news to its site within hours. Two of the only news sites capable of hosting images, the San Jose Mercury News and Time magazine, posted photographs of the scene.

Quantitatively, the internet has massively expanded the sheer volume of news items available to one person. The speed of news flow to individuals has also reached a new plateau. This insurmountable flow of news can daunt people and cause information overload. Zbigniew Brzezinski called this period the "technetronic era", in which "global reality increasingly absorbs the individual, involves him, and even occasionally overwhelms him."

In cases of government crackdowns or revolutions, the Internet has often become a major communication channel for news propagation; while it's a (relatively) simple act to shut down a newspaper, radio or television station, mobile

devices such as smartphones and netbooks are much harder to detect and confiscate. The propagation of internet-capable mobile devices has also given rise to the citizen journalist, who provide an additional perspective on unfolding events.

### *News media today*

News can travel through different communication media. In modern times, printed news had to be phoned into a newsroom or brought there by a reporter, where it was typed and either transmitted over wire services or edited and manually set in type along with other news stories for a specific edition. Today, the term "breaking news" has become trite as commercial broadcasting United States cable news services that are available 24 hours a day use live communications satellite technology to bring current events into consumers' homes as the event occurs. Events that used to take hours or days to become common knowledge in towns or in nations are fed instantaneously to consumers via radio, television, mobile phone, and the internet.

Speed of news transmission, of course, still varies wildly on the basis of where and how one lives.

## **Global news system**

In the 20th century, global news coverage was dominated by a combination of the "Big Four" news agencies—Reuters, Associated Press, Agence France Press, and United Press International—representing the Western bloc, and the Communist agencies: TASS from the Soviet Union, and Xinhua from China. Studies of major world events, and analyses of all international news coverage in various newspapers, consistently found that a large majority of news items originated from the four biggest wire services.

Television news agencies include Associated Press Television News, which bought and incorporated World Television News; and Reuters Television. Bloomberg News created in the 1990s, expanded rapidly to become a player in the realm of international news. The Associated Press also maintains a radio network with thousands of subscribers worldwide; it is the sole provider of international news to many small stations.

By some accounts, dating back to the 1940s, the increasing interconnectedness of the news system has accelerated the pace of world history itself.

## **New World Information and Communication Order**

The global news system is dominated by agencies from Europe and the United States, and reflects their interests and priorities in its coverage. Euro-American control of the global news system has led to criticism; that events around the world are constantly compared to events like the Holocaust and World War II, which are considered foundational in the West. Since the 1960s, a significant amount of news

reporting from the Third World has been characterized by some form "development journalism", a paradigm which focuses on long-term development projects, social change, and nation-building. When in 1987 the U.S. media reported on a riot in the Dominican Republic—the first major news item regarding that country in years—the resulting decline in tourism lasted for years and had a noticeable effect on the economy. The English language predominates in global news exchanges. Critics have accused the global news system of perpetuating cultural imperialism. Critics further charge that the Western media conglomerates maintain a bias towards the status quo economic order, especially a pro-corporate bias.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has promoted a New World Information and Communication Order, which envisions an international news exchange system involving national news agencies in every country. UNESCO encouraged the new states formed from colonial territories in the 1960s to establish news agencies, to generate domestic news stories, exchange news items with international partners, and disseminate both types of news internally. Along these lines, the 1980 MacBride report, "Many Voices, One World", called for an interdependent global news system with more participation from different governments. To this end, also, UNESCO formed the Non-Aligned News Agencies Pool.

The Inter Press Service, founded in 1964, has served as an intermediary for Third World press agencies. Inter Press Service's editorial policy favors coverage of events, institutions, and issues which relate to inequality, economic development, economic integration, natural resources, population, health, education, and sustainable development. It gives less coverage than other agencies to crime, disasters, and violence. Geographically, 70% of its news reporting concerns Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. IPS has the most subscribers in Latin America and southern Africa. IPS receives grants from organizations such as the United Nations Development Program and other United Nations agencies and private foundations to report news on chosen topics, including the environment, sustainable development, and women's issues.

Beginning in the 1960s, the United States Agency for International Development, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and UNESCO developed the use of satellite television for international broadcasting. In India, 1975–1976, these agencies implemented an experimental satellite television system, called the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment, with assistance from the Indian Space Research Organisation, and All India Radio.

### **Further transformation in global news flow**

By the 1980s, much of the Third World had succumbed to a debt crisis resulting from unrepayably large loans accumulated since the 1960s. At this point, the World Bank took an active role in the governance of many countries, and its

authority extended to communications policy. The policy of developing Third World media gave way to a global regime of free trade institutions like the World Trade Organization, which also protected the free flow of information across borders. The World Bank also promoted privatization of national telecommunications, which afforded large multinational corporations the opportunity to purchase networks and expand operations in the Third World.

In countries with less telecommunications infrastructure, people, especially youth, tend today to get their news predominantly from mobile phones and, less so, from the internet. Older folks listen more to the radio. The government of China is a major investor in Third World telecommunications, especially in Africa. Some issues relating to global information flow were revisited in light of the internet at the 2003/2005 World Summit on the Information Society, a conference which emphasized the role of civil society and the private sector in information society governance.

### **News values**

News values are the professional norms of journalism. Commonly, news content should contain all the "Five Ws" (who, what, when, where, why, and also how) of an event. Newspapers normally place hard news stories on the first pages, so the most important information is at the beginning, enabling busy readers to read as little or as much as they desire. Local stations and networks with a set format must take news stories and break them down into the most important aspects due to time constraints.

Journalists are often expected to aim for objectivity; reporters claim to try to cover all sides of an issue without bias, as compared to commentators or analysts, who provide opinion or personal points of view. The resulting articles lay out facts in a sterile, noncommittal manner, standing back to "let the reader decide" the truth of the matter. Several governments impose certain constraints against bias. In the United Kingdom, the government agency of Ofcom (Office of Communications) enforces a legal requirement of "impartiality" on news broadcasters. Both newspapers and broadcast news programs in the United States are generally expected to remain neutral and avoid bias except for clearly indicated editorial articles or segments. Many single-party governments have operated state-run news organizations, which may present the government's views.

Although newswriters have always laid claim to truth and objectivity, the modern values of professional journalism were established beginning in the late 1800s and especially after World War I, when groups like the American Society of Newspaper Editors codified rules for unbiased news reporting. These norms held the most sway in American and British journalism, and were scorned by some other countries. These ideas have become part of the practice of journalism across the world. Soviet commentators said stories in the Western press were trivial

distractions from reality, and emphasized a socialist realism model focusing on developments in everyday life.

Even in those situations where objectivity is expected, it is difficult to achieve, and individual journalists may fall foul of their own personal bias, or succumb to commercial or political pressure. Similarly, the objectivity of news organizations owned by conglomerated corporations fairly may be questioned, in light of the natural incentive for such groups to report news in a manner intended to advance the conglomerate's financial interests. Individuals and organizations who are the subject of news reports may use news management techniques to try to make a favourable impression. Because each individual has a particular point of view, it is recognized that there can be no absolute objectivity in news reporting. Journalists can collectively shift their opinion over what is a controversy up for debate and what is an established fact, as evidenced by homogenization during the 2000s of news coverage of climate change.

Feminist critiques argue that discourse defined as objective by news organizations reflects a male-centered perspective. In their selection of sources, journalists rely heavily on men as sources of authoritative- and objective-seeming statements. News reporting has also tended to discuss women differently, usually in terms of appearance and relationship to men.

## **News organizations**

Viewed from a sociological perspective, news for mass consumption is produced in hierarchical organizations. Reporters, working near the bottom of the structure, are given significant autonomy in researching and preparing reports, subject to assignments and occasional intervention from higher decision-makers. Owners at the top of the news hierarchy influence the content of news indirectly but substantially. The professional norms of journalism discourage overt censorship; however, news organizations have covert but firm norms about how to cover certain topics. These policies are conveyed to journalists through socialization on the job; without any written policy, they simply learn how things are done. Journalists comply with these rules for various reasons, including job security. Journalists are also systematically influenced by their education, including journalism school.

News production is routinized in several ways. News stories use familiar formats and subgenres which vary by topic. "Rituals of objectivity", such as pairing a quotation from one group with a quotation from a competing group, dictate the construction of most news narratives. Many news items revolve around periodic press conferences or other scheduled events. Further routine is established by assigning each journalist to a beat: a domain of human affairs, usually involving government or commerce, in which certain types of events routinely occur.

A common scholarly frame for understanding news production is to examine the role of information gatekeepers: to ask why and how certain narratives make their way from news producers to news consumers. Obvious gatekeepers include journalists, news agency staff, and wire editors of newspapers. Ideology, personal preferences, source of news, and length of a story are among the many considerations which influence gatekeepers. Although social media have changed the structure of news dissemination, gatekeeper effects may continue due to the role of a few central nodes in the social network.

New factors have emerged in internet-era newsrooms. One issue is "click-thinking", the editorial selection of news stories—and of journalists—who can generate the most website hits and thus advertising revenue. Unlike a newspaper, a news website has detailed data collection about which stories are popular and who is reading them. The drive for speedy online postings, some journalists have acknowledged, has altered norms of fact-checking so that verification takes place after publication.

Journalists' sometimes unattributed echoing of other news sources can also increase the homogeneity of news feeds. The digital age can accelerate the problem of circular reporting: propagation of the same error through increasingly reliable sources. In 2009, a number of journalists were embarrassed after all reproducing a fictional quotation, originating from Wikipedia.

News organizations have historically been male-dominated, though women have acted as journalists since at least the 1880s. The number of female journalists has increased over time, but organizational hierarchies remain controlled mostly by men. Studies of British news organizations estimate that more than 80% of decision-makers are men. Similar studies have found 'old boys' networks' in control of news organizations in the United States and the Netherlands. Further, newsrooms tend to divide journalists by gender, assigning men to "hard" topics like military, crime, and economics, and women to "soft", "humanised" topics.

## **Relationship with institutions**

For various reasons, news media usually have a close relationship with the state, and often church as well, even when they cast themselves in critical roles. This relationship seems to emerge because the press can develop symbiotic relationships with other powerful social institutions. In the United States, the Associated Press wire service developed a "bilateral monopoly" with the Western Union telegraph company.

The news agencies which rose to power in the mid-1800s all had support from their respective governments, and in turn served their political interests to some degree. News for consumption has operated under statist assumptions, even when it takes a stance adversarial to some aspect of a government. In practice, a large proportion of routine news production involves interactions between reporters and



government officials. Relatedly, journalists tend to adopt a hierarchical view of society, according to which a few people at the top of organizational pyramids are best situated to comment on the reality which serves as the basis of news. Broadly speaking, therefore, news tends to normalize and reflect the interests of the power structure dominant in its social context.

Today, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) rival and may surpass governments in their influence on the content of news.

## **State control**

Governments use international news transmissions to promote the national interest and conduct political warfare, alternatively known as public diplomacy and, in the modern era, international broadcasting. International radio broadcasting came into wide-ranging use by world powers seeking cultural integration of their empires. The British government used BBC radio as a diplomatic tool, setting up Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese services in 1937. American propaganda broadcasters include Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, set up during the Cold War and still operating today. The United States remains the world's top broadcaster, although by some accounts it was surpassed for a time circa 1980 by the Soviet Union. Other major international broadcasters include the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, North Korea, India, Cuba, and Australia. Around the world (and especially, formerly, in the Soviet bloc), international news sources such as the BBC World Service are often welcomed as alternatives to domestic state-run media.

Governments have also funneled programming through private news organizations, as when the British government arranged to insert news into the Reuters feed during and after World War Two. Past revelations have suggested that the U.S. military and intelligence agencies create news stories which they disseminate secretly into the foreign and domestic media. Investigation into the Central Intelligence Agency pursued in the 1970s found that it owned hundreds of news organizations (wire services, newspapers, magazines) outright. Soviet news warfare also involved the creation of front groups, like the International Organization of Journalists. The Russian KGB heavily pursued a strategy of disinformation, planting false stories which made their way to news outlets worldwide.

Broadcasts into Iraq before the Second Gulf War mimicked the style of local programming. The US also launched Middle East Broadcasting Networks, featuring the satellite TV station Alhurra and radio station Radio Sawa to beam 24-hour programming to Iraq and environs.

Today, Al Jazeera, a TV and internet news network owned by the government of Qatar, has become one of the foremost news sources in the world, appreciated by

millions as an alternative to the Western media. State-owned China Central Television operates 18 channels and reaches more than a billion viewers worldwide. Iran's Press TV and Russia's Russia Today, branded as RT, also have multiplatform presences and large audiences.

## Public relations

As distinct from advertising, which deals with marketing distinct from news, public relations involves the techniques of influencing news in order to give a certain impression to the public. A standard public relations tactic, the "third-party technique", is the creation of seemingly independent organizations, which can deliver objective-sounding statements to news organizations without revealing their corporate connections. Public relations agencies can create complete content packages, such as Video News Releases, which are rebroadcast as news without commentary or detail about their origin. Video news releases seem like normal news programming, but use subtle product placement and other techniques to influence viewers.

Public relations releases offer valuable newsworthy information to increasingly overworked journalists on deadline. This pre-organized news content has been called an information subsidy. The journalist relies on appearances of autonomy and even opposition to established interests—but the public relations agent seek to conceal their client's influence on the news. Thus, public relations works its magic in secret.

Public relations can dovetail with state objectives, as in the case of the 1990 news story about Iraqi soldiers taking "babies out of incubators" in Kuwaiti hospitals. During the Nigerian Civil War, both the federal government and the secessionist Republic of Biafra hired public relations firms, which competed to influence public opinion in the West, and between them established some of the key narratives employed in news reports about the war.

Overall, the position of the public relations industry has grown stronger, while the position of news producers has grown weaker. Public relations agents mediate the production of news about all sectors of society.

## News consumption

Over the centuries, commentators on newspapers and society have repeatedly observed widespread human interest in news. Elite members of a society's political and economic institutions might rely on news as one limited source of information, for the masses, news represents a relatively exclusive window onto the operations by which a society is managed.

Regular people in societies with news media often spend a lot of time reading or watching news reports. Newspapers became significant aspects of national and literary culture—as exemplified by James Joyce's *Ulysses*, which derives from the

newspapers of 16 June (and thereabouts), 1904, and represents the newspaper office itself as a vital part of life in Dublin.

A 1945 study by sociologist Bernard Berelson found that during the 1945 New York newspaper strike, New Yorkers exhibited a virtual addiction to news, describing themselves as "lost", "nervous", "isolated", and "suffering" due to the withdrawal. Television news has become still further embedded in everyday life, with specific programming anticipated at different times of day. Children tend to find the news boring, too serious, or emotionally disturbing. They come to perceive news as characteristic of adulthood, and begin watching television news in their teenage years because of the adult status it confers.

People exhibit various forms of skepticism towards the news. Studies of tabloid readers found that many of them gain pleasure from seeing through the obviously fake or poorly constructed stories—and get their "real news" from television.

## **Social and cultural cohesion**

An important feature distinguishing news from private information transfers is the impression that when one reads (or hears, or watches) it, one joins a larger public. In this regard news serves to unify its receivers under the banner of a culture, or a society, as well as into the sub-demographics of a society targeted by their favorite kind of news. News thus plays a role in nation-building, the construction of a national identity.

Images connected with news can also become iconic and gain a fixed role in the culture. Examples such as Alfred Eisenstaedt's photograph V-J Day in Times Square, Nick Ut's photograph of Phan Thi Kim Phuc and other children running from a napalm blast in Vietnam; Kevin Carter's photograph of a starving child being stalked by a vulture; etc.

With the new interconnectedness of global media, the experience of receiving news along with a world audience reinforces the social cohesion effect on a larger scale. As a corollary, global media culture may erode the uniqueness and cohesion of national cultures.

## **Public sphere**

This collective form experience can be understood to constitute a political realm or public sphere. In this view, the news media constitute a fourth estate which serves to check and balance the operations of government.

This idea, at least as a goal to be sought, has re-emerged in the era of global communications. Today, unprecedented opportunities exist for public analysis and discussion of world events. According to one interpretation of the CNN effect, instantaneous global news coverage can rally public opinion as never before to

motivate political action. In 1989, local and global communications media-enabled instant exposure to and discussion of the Chinese government's actions in Tiananmen Square. The news about Tiananmen Square travelled over a fax machine, telephone, newspaper, radio, and television, and continued to travel even after the government imposed new restrictions on local telecommunications.

### **News events**

As the technological means for disseminating news grew more powerful, news became an experience which millions of people could undergo simultaneously. Outstanding news experiences can exert a profound influence on millions of people. Through its power to affect a shared experience, news events can mold the collective memory of a society.

One type of news event, the media event, is a scripted pageant organized for a mass live broadcast. Media events include athletic contests such as the Super Bowl and the Olympics, cultural events like awards ceremonies and celebrity funerals, and also political events such as coronations, debates between electoral candidates, and diplomatic ceremonies. These events typically unfold according to a common format which simplifies the transmission of news items about them. Usually, they have the effect of increasing the perceived unity of all parties involved, which include the broadcasters and audience. Today, international events such as a national declaration of independence can be scripted in advance with the major news agencies, with staff specially deployed to key locations worldwide in advance of the live news broadcast. Public relations companies can participate in these events as well.

The perception that an ongoing crisis is taking place further increases the significance of live news. People rely on the news and constantly seek more of it, to learn new information and to seek reassurance amidst feelings of fear and uncertainty. Crises can also increase the effect of the news on social cohesion, and lead the population of a country to "rally" behind its current leadership. The rise of a global news system goes hand in hand with the advent of terrorism and other sensational acts, which have power in proportion to the audience they capture. In 1979, the capture of American hostages in Iran dominated months of news coverage in the western media, gained the status of a "crisis", and influenced a presidential election.

South Africans overwhelmingly describe the end of Apartheid as a source of the country's most important news. In the United States, news events such as the assassinations of the 1960s (of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy), the 1969 moon landing, the 1986 Challenger explosion, the 1997 death of Princess Diana, the intervention of the Supreme Court in the 2000 presidential election and the 2001 September 11 attacks. In Jordan, people cited numerous memorable news events involving death and war, including the death of

King Hussein, Princess Diana, and Yitzhak Rabin. Positive news stories found memorable by Jordanians featured political events affecting their lives and families—such as the Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon, and the Israel–Jordan peace treaty.

News coverage can also shape collective memory in retrospect. A study of Israeli news coverage leading up to the media event of the nation's 60th birthday found that news coverage of events like the Holocaust, World War Two, and subsequent Israeli wars increased the perceived importance of these events in the minds of citizens.

## News making

News making is the act of making the news or doing something that is considered to be newsworthy. When discussing the act of news making, scholars refer to specific models. Five of these models are the Professional Model, Mirror Model, Organizational Model, Political Model, and Civic Journalism Model.

The Professional Model is when skilled peoples put certain events together for a specific audience. The reaction of the audience is influential because it can determine the impact that the particular article or newspaper has on the readers. The Mirror Model states that news should reflect reality. This model aims to focus on particular events and provide accuracy in reporting. The Organizational Model is also known as the Bargaining Model. It focuses on influencing various news organizations by applying pressures to governmental processes. The Political Model outlines that news represents the ideological biases of the people as well as the various pressures of the political environment. This model mainly influences journalists and attempts to promote public opinion. The Civic Journalism Model is when the press discovers the concerns of the people and uses that to write stories. This allows the audience to play an active role in society.

Models of news making help define what the news is and how it influences readers. But it does not necessarily account for the content of print news and online media. Stories are selected if they have a strong impact, incorporate violence and scandal, are familiar and local, and if they are timely.

News Stories with a strong impact can be easily understood by a reader. Violence and scandal create an entertaining and attention-grabbing story.[303] Familiarity makes a story more relatable because the reader knows who is being talked about. Proximity can influence a reader more. A story that is timely will receive more coverage because it is a current event. The process of selecting stories coupled with the models of news making are how the media is effective and impactful in society.

## **Psychological effects**

Exposure to constant news coverage of war can lead to stress and anxiety. Television coverage of the destruction of the World Trade Center in 2001, which repeated the same footage over and over, led to symptoms of trauma experienced across the United States. Studies have indicated that children have been traumatized by exposure to television of other frightening events, including the Challenger disaster. Journalists themselves also experience trauma and guilt.

Research also suggest that constant representations of violence in the news lead people to overestimate the frequency of its occurrence in the real world, thus increasing their level of fear in everyday situations.

## **Influence**

The content and style of news delivery certainly have effects on the general public, with the magnitude and precise nature of these effects being tough to determine experimentally. In Western societies, television viewing has been so ubiquitous that its total effect on psychology and culture leave few alternatives for comparison.

News is the leading source of knowledge about global affairs for people around the world. According to agenda-setting theory, the general public will identify as its priorities those issues which are highlighted on the news. The agenda-setting model has been well-supported by research, which indicate that the public's self-reported concerns respond to changes in news coverage rather than changes in the underlying issue itself. The less an issue obviously affects people's lives, the bigger an influence media agenda-setting can have on their opinion of it. The agenda-setting power becomes even stronger in practice because of the correspondence in news topics promulgated by different media channels.

## **Influence of sponsorship**

It has been acknowledged that sponsorship has historically influenced various news stories. This history gained widespread attention following the release of the film *Anchorman 2*. One example in recent time is the fact that Facebook has invested heavily in news sources and purchasing time on local news media outlets. Tech Crunch journalist Josh Constance even stated in February 2018 that the company "stole the news business" and used sponsorship to make many news publishers its "ghostwriters." In January 2019, founder Mark Zuckerberg announced that he will spend \$300 million in local news buys over a three year period.

## **News Writing Style**

News style, journalistic style, or news-writing style is the prose style used for news reporting in media such as newspapers, radio and television.

News writing attempts to answer all the basic questions about any particular event—who, what, when, where and why (the Five Ws) and also often how—at the opening of the article. This form of structure is sometimes called the "inverted pyramid", to refer to the decreasing importance of information in subsequent paragraphs.

News stories also contain at least one of the following important characteristics relative to the intended audience: proximity, prominence, timeliness, human interest, oddity, or consequence.

The related term *journalese* is sometimes used, usually pejoratively, to refer to news-style writing.

## Overview

Newspapers generally adhere to an expository writing style. Over time and place, journalism ethics and standards have varied in the degree of objectivity or sensationalism they incorporate. It is considered unethical not to attribute a scoop to the journalist(s) who broke a story, even if they are employed by a rival organization. Definitions of professionalism differ among news agencies; their reputations, according to both professional standards and reader expectations, are often tied to the appearance of objectivity. In its most ideal form, news writing strives to be intelligible to the majority of readers, engaging, and succinct. Within these limits, news stories also aim to be comprehensive. However, other factors are involved, some stylistic and some derived from the media form.

Among the larger and more respected newspapers, fairness and balance is a major factor in presenting information. Commentary is usually confined to a separate section, though each paper may have a different overall slant. Editorial policies dictate the use of adjectives, euphemisms, and idioms. Newspapers with an international audience, for example, tend to use a more formal style of writing.

The specific choices made by a news outlet's editor or editorial board are often collected in a style guide; common style guides include the AP Stylebook and the US News Style Book. The main goals of news writing can be summarized by the ABCs of journalism: accuracy, brevity, and clarity.

## Terms and structure

Journalistic prose is explicit and precise and tries not to rely on jargon. As a rule, journalists will not use a long word when a short one will do. They use subject-verb-object construction and vivid, active prose. They offer anecdotes, examples and metaphors, and they rarely depend on generalizations or abstract ideas. News writers try to avoid using the same word more than once in a paragraph (sometimes called an "echo" or "word mirror").

## Headline

The headline (also heading, head or title, or hed in journalism jargon) of a story is typically a complete sentence (e.g., "Pilot Flies Below Bridges to Save Divers"), often with auxiliary verbs and articles removed (e.g., "Remains at Colorado camp linked to missing Chicago man"). However, headlines sometimes omit the subject (e.g., "Jumps From Boat, Catches in Wheel") or verb (e.g., "Cat woman lucky").

## Subhead

A subhead (also sub-headline, subheading, subtitle or deck) can be either a subordinate title under the main headline, or the heading of a subsection of the article. It is a heading that precedes the main text, or a group of paragraphs of the main text. It helps encapsulate the entire piece, or informs the reader of the topic of part of it. Long or complex articles often have more than one subheading. Subheads are thus one type of entry point that help readers make choices, such as where to begin (or stop) reading.

## Billboard

An article billboard is capsule summary text, often just one sentence or fragment, which is put into a sidebar or text box (reminiscent of an outdoor billboard) on the same page to grab the reader's attention as they are flipping through the pages to encourage them to stop and read that article. When it consists of a (sometimes compressed) sample of the text of the article, it is known as a call-out or callout, and when it consists of a quotation (e.g. of an article subject, informant, or interviewee), it is referred to as a pulled quotation or pull quote. Additional billboards of any of these types may appear later in the article (especially on subsequent pages) to entice further reading. Journalistic websites sometimes use animation techniques to swap one billboard for another (e.g. a slide of a call-out may be replaced by a photo with pull quote after some short time has elapsed). Such billboards are also used as pointers to the article in other sections of the publication or site, or as advertisements for the piece in other publication or sites.

## Lead

The most important structural element of a story is the lead, including the story's first, or leading, sentence or two, which almost always form its own paragraph.

The lead is usually the first sentence, or in some cases the first two sentences, and is ideally 20–25 words in length. A lead must balance the ideal of maximum information conveyed with the constraint of the unreadability of a long sentence. This makes writing a lead an optimization problem, in which the goal is to articulate the most encompassing and interesting statement that a writer can make



in one sentence, given the material with which he or she has to work. While a rule of thumb says the lead should answer most or all of the five Ws, few leads can fit all of these.

Article leads are sometimes categorized into hard leads and soft leads. A hard lead aims to provide a comprehensive thesis which tells the reader what the article will cover. A soft lead introduces the topic in a more creative, attention-seeking fashion, and is usually followed by a nutshell paragraph, a brief summary of facts.

#### *Example of a hard-lead paragraph*

NASA is proposing another space project. The agency's budget request, announced today, included a plan to send another mission to the moon. This time the agency hopes to establish a long-term facility as a jumping-off point for other space adventures. The budget requests approximately \$10 billion for the project.

#### *Example of a soft-lead sentence*

Humans will be going to the moon again. The NASA announcement came as the agency requested \$10 billion of appropriations for the project.

An "off-lead" is the second most important front page news of the day. The off-lead appears either in the top left corner, or directly below the lead on the right.

To "bury the lead" is to begin the article with background information or details of secondary importance to the readers, forcing them to read more deeply into an article than they should have to in order to discover the essential point(s). It is a common mistake in press releases, but a characteristic of an academic writing style.

### **Nutshell paragraph**

A nutshell paragraph (also simply nutshell, or nut 'graph, nut graf, nutgraf, etc., in journalism jargon) is a brief paragraph (occasionally there can be more than one) that summarizes the news value of the story, sometimes bullet-pointed and/or set off in a box. Nut-shell paragraphs are used particularly in feature stories (see "Feature style" below).

### **Paragraphs**

Paragraphs (shortened as 'graphs, graphs, grafs or pars in journalistic jargon) form the bulk of an article. Common usage is that one or two sentences each form their own paragraph.

### **Inverted pyramid structure**

With this style, the writer puts the "big twist"—meaning the info that matters most to the reader—first before anything else.

This style allows the writer to summarize the story first and allow for cuttable elements of information as the story goes on. The reader can scan the article quickly, getting the juiciest stuff from the get-go. You are satisfying the reader's thirst for news gossip this way, which is good because it will mean that the reader will likely come back to your site again.

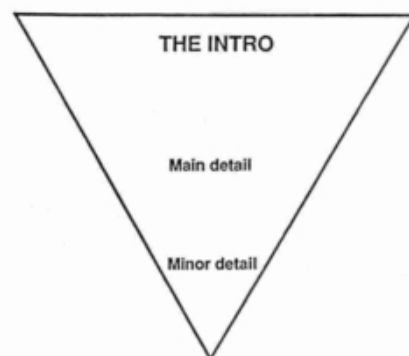
But equally as important (though not really brought up) is the way that the inverted pyramid style trains you to write the articles. You will begin to organize all your articles this way, which will tighten your writing and will keep your readers coming back for more.

The inverted pyramid is a metaphor used by journalists and other writers to illustrate how information should be prioritised and structured in prose (e.g., a news report). It is a common method for writing news stories and has wide adaptability to other kinds of texts, such as blogs, editorial columns and marketing factsheets. It is a way to communicate the basics about a topic in the initial sentences. The inverted pyramid is taught to mass communication and journalism students, and is systematically used in English-language media.

The inverted or upside-down pyramid can be thought of as a triangle pointing down. The widest part at the top represents the most substantial, interesting, and important information that the writer means to convey, illustrating that this kind of material should head the article, while the tapering lower portion illustrates that other material should follow in order of diminishing importance.

It is sometimes called a summary news lead style, or bottom line up front (BLUF). The opposite, the failure to mention the most important, interesting or attention-grabbing elements of a story in the opening paragraphs, is called burying the lede.

Journalists usually describe the organization or structure of a news story as an inverted pyramid. The essential and most interesting elements of a story are put at the beginning, with supporting information following in order of diminishing importance.



This structure enables readers to stop reading at any point and still come away with the essence of a story. It allows people to explore a topic to only the depth that their curiosity takes them, and without the imposition of details or nuances that they could consider irrelevant, but still making that information available to more interested readers.

This is a good basic pattern, and works well for simple news stories. This "shape" of the news story, with a "broad" top and a "narrow" base, is in the weight of the news itself.

The inverted pyramid structure also enables articles to be trimmed to any arbitrary length during layout, to fit in the space available.

Writers are often admonished "Don't bury the lead!" to ensure that they present the most important facts first, rather than requiring the reader to go through several paragraphs to find them.

Some writers start their stories with the "1-2-3 lead", yet there are many kinds of lead available. This format invariably starts with a "Five Ws" opening paragraph (as described above), followed by an indirect quote that serves to support a major element of the first paragraph, and then a direct quote to support the indirect quote.

The first paragraph which is called the intro, contains the most newsworthy part of the story - the newest, most unusual, most interesting and most significant - told clearly and simply. This is followed by a full explanation and all the details. The most newsworthy parts of the story will be written nearest to the top of the story.

The later part of the story - the tapering point of the inverted pyramid - contains detail which is helpful, but not essential.

However, when one has to write a more complex news story, a more complex structure is necessary.

### *Purpose*

Other styles are also used in news writing, including the "anecdotal lead," which begins the story with an eye-catching tale or anecdote rather than the central facts; and the Q&A, or question-and-answer format. The inverted pyramid may also include a "hook" as a kind of prologue, typically a provocative quote, question, or image, to entice the reader into committing to reading the full story.

This format is valued for two reasons. First, readers can leave the story at any point and understand it, even if they do not have all the details. Second, it conducts readers through the details of the story by the end.

This system also means that information less vital to the reader's understanding comes later in the story, where it is easier to edit out for space or other reasons.

This is called "cutting from the bottom." Rather than petering out, a story may end with a "kicker"—a conclusion, perhaps call to action—which comes after the pyramid. This is particularly common in feature style articles.

## History

Historians disagree about when the form was created. Many say the invention of the telegraph sparked its development by encouraging reporters to condense material, to reduce costs, or to hedge against the unreliability of the telegraph network. Studies of 19th-century news stories in American newspapers, however, suggest that the form spread several decades later than the telegraph, possibly because the reform era's social and educational forces encouraged factual reporting rather than more interpretive narrative styles.

Chip Scanlan's essay on the form includes this frequently cited example of telegraphic reporting:

This evening at about 9:30 p.m. at Ford's Theatre, the President, while sitting in his private box with Mrs. Lincoln, Mrs. Harris and Major Rathburn, was shot by an assassin, who suddenly entered the box and approached behind the President.

The assassin then leaped upon the stage, brandishing a large dagger or knife, and made his escape in the rear of the theatre.

The pistol ball entered the back of the President's head and penetrated nearly through the head. The wound is mortal.

The President has been insensible ever since it was inflicted, and is now dying.

About the same hour an assassin, whether the same or not, entered Mr. Seward's apartment and under pretense of having a prescription was shown to the Secretary's sick chamber. The assassin immediately rushed to the bed and inflicted two or three stabs on the chest and two on the face. It is hoped the wounds may not be mortal. My apprehension is that they will prove fatal.

The nurse alarmed Mr. Frederick Seward, who was in an adjoining rented room, and he hastened to the door of his father's room, when he met the assassin, who inflicted upon him one or more dangerous wounds. The recovery of Frederick Seward is doubtful.

It is not probable that the President will live through the night.

General Grant and his wife were advertised to be at the theatre...

—New York Herald, April 15, 1865

Who, when, where, why, what, and how are addressed in the first paragraph. As the article continues, the less important details are presented. An even more pyramid-conscious reporter or editor would move two additional details to the first

two sentences: That the shot was to the head, and that it was expected to prove fatal. The transitional sentence about the Grants suggests that less-important facts are being added to the rest of the story.

Other news outlets such as the Associated Press did not use this format when covering the assassination, instead adopting a chronological organization.

### *Writers against the Inverted Pyramid*

Some journalists out there...they just don't like the inverted pyramid. Who knows why? Perhaps they feel it pressures them to write a certain way. Maybe they want to write long, boring articles where the story doesn't get going until the jump page. They want control of the reader's attention. Well, what they don't understand is that the reader has true control. And if the reader is made bored because the writer has produced an uninteresting article, then it is their fault—not the readers. Journalists like these should only be allowed to write features and editorials, not breaking news stories.

Here are some things they might not appreciate about the inverted pyramid style:

- **Same old same old style**

It is the repetition that does them in. After a while, the same structure is boring to them. And I can understand that point. Doing anything the same way for a long time is boring. But again, to reiterate my point, the reader likes it this way. And that is all that counts.

- **The structure can get messy, too**

Not always, but for some writers, the inverted pyramid can amount to an article that can stretch on for too long with irrelevant facts. That is why you need good judgment and good editors to catch this problem before it happens to you. The formula can get lazy. Before you know it, every one of your stories begins with a date in the first sentence—BORING!

Some in the media critique the inverted pyramid for being artless, and certainly, it is not right for every news story, as it removes a great deal of autonomy from the reporter. Others link inverted pyramid style to the decline in newspaper readership, arguing that, by giving away the ending first, the structure goes against the very fundamentals of narrative. Some scholars have theorized that the inverted pyramid structure might actually be more difficult for readers to understand.

With the emergence of online news writing, the inverted pyramid structure is not as prominent as it once was. In the online format, where editors are no longer bound by column inches, an article's length is more flexible. Similarly, online

journalism is increasingly influenced by the presence of bloggers, who typically eschew traditional news writing structure.

---

## • CONCLUSION

---

The inverted pyramid structure simply means placing the most fundamental information in the lead paragraph of the story, and then arranging the remaining details, from most important to least important, in the following nut graphs. Although there are critics of the inverted pyramid style, it remains a widely used approach to mass media news writing.

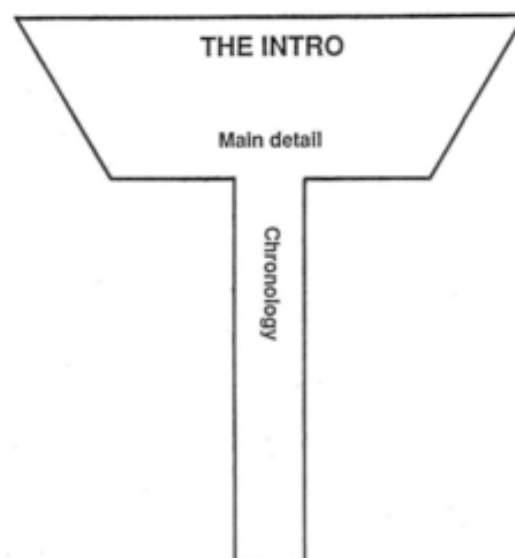
### Chronological order

The chronological report is both ‘chronological’ — in that you must present your information in the order of time — and a ‘report’ —i.e. it is a way of providing non-fictionalised, factual information to a reader.

Often, this way of writing will be used to explain a series of events. If you’re reporting on a criminal law case for a newspaper, for example, you’ll likely present your information in the order at which events occurred. You’d start with day one of the trial, and then work through the case as it proceeds, finishing with the final verdict.

The chronological report ties in closely with the inverted pyramid style of writing — it’s a style of writing used to present current news information or to depict a series of events that took place.

This is an especially useful way of telling stories about sequences of events, rather than single events. We can picture this news story structure as in the diagram below:



When the Minister of Transport opens a new bridge, there is one simple event to report. This story can be reported as a simple inverted pyramid.

However, when a group of angry landowners breaks up the ceremony, fights the police who are on duty and kidnaps the Minister, it is better to tell the news as in inverted pyramid intro, followed by a telling of the story in chronological order. We shall tell the reader or listener at the beginning what the news is going to be in the story, and then tell the story as it happens.

There is still one more story structure to discuss, however, and it is an important one. It is one which is widely used to tell complex stories. It is one which you will need to master.

#### *Why use the chronological report?*

This style of writing is surprisingly uncommon. A more common approach to writing in a style like this is to use the non-chronological report, which is the similar to a chronological report, but without needing to present the information in any order.

If you're reporting on a criminal case, for example, and you're using a non-chronological report, you might begin with a quote from the prosecutor who spoke to the jury half way through the case. You wouldn't need to first explain that the prosecutor entered the courthouse, spoke with his client and then addressed the judge.

#### *Chronological reports and digital media*

Today, chronological reports are often used during periods of breaking news. The BBC will use a chronological report to keep readers up to date with the latest information on Brexit or a general election. For example, here's the updates on the Tory leadership race, presented in a chronological report style.

If there is a major natural disaster or an irregular event in society, news sites might use this style of writing to explain how the events transpired on the day. This article on the BBC about the Iranian Embassy siege in 2002 is a great example.

#### *When should you use a chronological report?*

If you're a journalist or a reporter, you probably use this writing style to present the right information to your audience as it happens.

If you're a blogger, you probably turn to more engaging and creative writing styles, and present your content in a way that allows you to provide your own opinion on the topics you talk about.

If you're an author, chances are you won't ever use this style of writing.

But, even if you don't use this structure when you write, you might consider writing about a topic of interest as a chronological report by way of practice.

### **Pyramid of pyramids**

When a story has a number of different parts to it, it is better to tell the story one part at a time than to jump backwards and forwards between the different parts. This means that you go to the end of one part, telling the minor details about that, before moving on to the major details of the next part.

This story structure is a pyramid of pyramids, in which each part of the story is told in a mini-inverted pyramid of its own. The sequence of these mini-pyramids will depend upon the newsworthiness of each one. The most newsworthy part of the story will come first, followed by the other parts in decreasing order of importance.

Just as you have to rank key points in their order of newsworthiness in order to write the intro, so you have to rank these mini-pyramids into their order of newsworthiness in order to write a complex story.

The story will start with an intro, followed by two or three paragraphs written as though the story was going to be a simple inverted pyramid. In other words, you start by telling the most important key points in their order of importance.

After a few paragraphs, you will have introduced the most important parts of the story. You can now concentrate on the first part of the story, told in its own mini-pyramid. When you have finished that, you can move on to the next part, and so on, until you have told the whole story.

Note how each mini-pyramid is smaller than the previous one. The story is still basically structured like a pyramid, going from the most important to the least important.

How many mini-pyramids there are will depend upon the story. There may be only two - perhaps a minister's announcement of a new policy, followed by opponents' criticism of it.

There may be three or four or five mini-pyramids, if there are that many parts to the story.

The important thing is for you to understand the story clearly and then to tell it clearly.

### **TO SUMMARISE**

Use the inverted pyramid style of newswriting to give your readers or listeners the most important facts first.



If you need to tell part of the story in the order in which events happened, use chronological order after the opening paragraph - the intro - or first few paragraphs.

If a story is complex with lots of different sections, speakers or issues, use the pyramid of pyramids style.

## Kicker

A kicker can refer to multiple things:

- The last story in the news broadcast; a "happy" story to end the show
- A short, catchy word or phrase accompanying a major headline, "intended to provoke interest in, editorialize about, or provide orientation"

## Feature style

News stories are not the only type of material that appear in newspapers and magazines. Longer articles, such as magazine cover articles and the pieces that lead the inside sections of a newspaper, are known as features. Feature stories differ from straight news in several ways. Foremost is the absence of a straight-news lead, most of the time. Instead of offering the essence of a story up front, feature writers may attempt to lure readers in.

While straight news stories always stay in third person point of view, it is common for a feature article to slip into first person. The journalist often details interactions with interview subjects, making the piece more personal.

A feature's first paragraphs often relate an intriguing moment or event, as in an "anecdotal lead". From the particulars of a person or episode, its view quickly broadens to generalities about the story's subject.

The section that signals what a feature is about is called the nut graph or billboard. Billboards appear as the third or fourth paragraph from the top, and may be up to two paragraphs long. Unlike a lead, a billboard rarely gives everything away. It reflects the fact that feature writers aim to hold their readers' attention to the end, which requires engendering curiosity and offering a "payoff." Feature paragraphs tend to be longer than those of news stories, with smoother transitions between them. Feature writers use the active-verb construction and concrete explanations of straight news but often put more personality in their prose.

Feature stories often close with a "kicker" rather than simply petering out.

Who? What? Where? When?

### **The 12 steps to writing news:**

It takes practice to write an effective news story, but here are 12 simple rules you can follow to help you.

#### *1. Decide what the news is*

Focus on the part of your story that is likely to be of most interest to your readers. Stories become news because of their importance, emotion, impact, timeliness and interest to the reader.

The more people involved, the more newsworthy the story. Likewise, the more people affected, whether it's by campus car-parking charges or a pay award for staff, the more newsworthy the story is.

News is what's new. Time is of the essence. So what's news today probably won't be news in a few days, unless there are major new developments.

#### *2. Who, what, where, when, why and how?*

Include information that answers these questions within the headline and the first two paragraphs. Try to get as many of the Ws into the first (lead) paragraph as possible.

For example your first line could be: "Sanjeev Bhaskar [WHO] presented degree certificates for the first time [WHAT] at this week's [WHEN] summer graduation ceremonies in Brighton [WHERE]."

#### *3. News first, background later*

Tell the best bits – the new bits – first. The background to the story should come later.

Don't try and tease your readers into getting to the end of your article by withholding information.

Would your story still make sense if someone read only the first two lines? Or even just the headline? It should.

#### *4. Be objective and stick to facts*

The reporting 'voice' in the story should contain only facts. Any opinions or subjective descriptions should be attributed to a named source.

E.g. don't write: 'The event was a great success and led to a pleasing increase in applications'.

Who says it was a success? Who is pleased?

Instead, write: 'Dr Jones said the event went well: "It was a great success and I am pleased that, since it took place, we have had a number of new applications."'

### 5. *Keep it simple and short*

News stories should be no more than 400 words long, and preferably 250-300 words long. You need to write in a succinct and engaging way but still include all the important facts.

Don't include too many flowery words. Be punchy. If something isn't essential to the story, don't include it.

For text to be easily readable at speed, write in short sentences (think 25 words or fewer) and use simple language.

Use plain English and not academic or technical jargon.

Assume no prior knowledge - some people find it helpful to imagine that they are explaining the story to a relative who doesn't work in higher education.

### 6. *Acronyms*

Universities are full of acronyms and, especially if you have worked in the sector a long time, it can be easy to forget that not everyone will understand what they mean.

Always spell out an acronym the first time it is used, followed by the acronym itself in parentheses. From then on, in your story, you may use the acronym. E.g. 'the School of Media, Film and Music (MFM) organised the event. MFM is ...'

### 7. *House style*

The University has a 'house style' – a consistent way of writing – that is part of our brand. Having a set house style helps to convey an impression of quality and thoroughness, no matter who is writing or editing.

### 8. *Exclamation marks*

Do not use! (As the author Scott Fitzgerald said, it is like laughing at your own jokes.)

### 9. *Don't use 'I' or 'we'*

Readers won't necessarily know who wrote a news article, so don't talk about yourself or your team in the first person.

Always name individuals (even if that person is you) or units/teams mentioned in your piece. Never say 'we held a lecture'; instead say 'the History department held a lecture'.

### 10. *Write a great headline*

Many news writers argue that the headline is the single most important part of a news story.

Research shows that, on average, 80% of people read only headlines and then skip the rest of the story.

For this reason, you need to make sure that yours is clear, concise and tells your story using just a few (4-8) words. What is the minimum information that you want a skim reader to know?

Many find it easiest to write the headline last. This way you can try taking your first line and trying to distil it back to its bare bones. Cut out unnecessary words and shorten phrases (e.g. 'leads to improvements' becomes 'improves').

This is not an easy skill and takes practice, but it is worth spending time on getting it right.

PS Don't pun in a headline unless it explains your story better than plain English. Puns are fun for the writer but can muddy the water and are not always universally understood (particularly those using cultural or geographically-specific references). Choose clarity over cleverness, particularly when writing online news.

### *11. Think pictures*

A good photo or other image to accompany your story is a great way to reinforce and complement your news. When you are writing your story, always think of how you could illustrate the story with a picture.

### *12. Check your work*

Even if a deadline is really tight, still take the time to check. Chances are you will spot at least one mistake every time.

Make sure that your text has no spelling mistakes, including names, or any errors with grammar or punctuation. Then read it over again, asking yourself:

- Does it make sense?
- Are things explained in order?
- Is it as easy as possible to understand?
- Is it accurate?
- Have you repeated yourself?
- Are any ideas or phrases covered twice?
- Is it written in plain English?
- Are all dates and numbers correct?

If you wrote the article, get someone else to look over it for you. You might also want or need to run it by any individuals or units/teams mentioned in the piece.

## The Hourglass

Every trade has its secrets, every job has its tools: the carpenter's hammer and saw, the plumber's wrench, the painter's palette and brushes. In Shakespeare's time, actors used to carry bags that contained the tools of their art: makeup, costumes, props that enabled them to switch in and out of character as the drama on stage demanded.

The hourglass structure is one such device. A story shape that journalists can employ when they have news to report and a story to tell.

"It's important for a reader to be cradled in a structure." It's an apt metaphor since a cradle is a framework used to support something.

Stories need a support, shape, a structure, in the same way a building needs a frame and our bodies a skeleton. Ernest Hemingway, a one-time reporter who became one of America's most influential novelists, had this in mind when he said, "Prose is architecture, not interior decoration." Effective writers understand this and make sure their toolbox contains a variety of story shapes.

The best stories often create their own shape; writers consider their material, determine what they want the story to say, and then decide on the best way to say it.

Architects and writers follow the same rule: Form follows content. That means before you design a container you determine what you need to put inside. You wouldn't try to ship an elephant in a shoebox.

But journalists, like all writers, sometimes rely on tried-and-true forms and formulas: the inverted pyramid, the "five boxes" approach, the nut graf story. You need to be familiar with these forms whether or not you decide to write your story in a completely new way.

"Formulaic writing has gotten a bad name," says Poynter Online Editor Bill Mitchell, a veteran reporter and editor. "Done right, it diverts creatively from formula in ways that serve the needs of the story at hand. Tying the reporting, as well as the writing, to the form lends a discipline and focus that produce better stories."

The hourglass was named by Roy Peter Clark in 1983 after he had begun to notice something new in his morning paper.

It wasn't the news; it was the way the news was being told. In their stories, reporters seemed to be combining two forms: the inverted pyramid and the narrative.

Clark was a likely discoverer. A college English literature professor-turned-newspaper writing coach and reporter, he used his skills as a literary scholar and his experience in the newsroom to deconstruct the form.

In an article published in the Washington Journalism Review (since renamed American Journalism Review), he described this form and gave it a distinctive name: the hourglass. It provided an alternative, Clark said, “that respects traditional news values, considers the needs of the reader, takes advantage of narrative, and spurs the writer to new levels of reporting.”

Clark said the hourglass story can be divided into three parts:

### **THE TOP:**

Here you deliver the news in a summary lead, followed by three or four paragraphs that answer the reader’s most pressing questions. In the top you give the basic news, enough to satisfy a time-pressed reader. You report the story in its most concise form. If all that is read is the top, the reader is still informed. Because it’s limited to four to six paragraphs, the top of the story should contain only the most significant information.

### **THE TURN:**

Here you signal the reader that a narrative, usually chronological, is beginning. Usually, the turn is a transitional phrase that contains attribution for the narrative that follows: according to police, eyewitnesses described the event this way, the shooting unfolded this way, law enforcement sources and neighbors agree.

### **THE NARRATIVE:**

The story has three elements: a beginning, middle and end. The bottom allows the writer to tell a chronological narrative complete with detail, dialogue, and background information.

The hourglass form summarizes the news, then shifts to a narrative. The top delivers the news, the turn acts as a transition, the narrative tells the story.

The hourglass can be used in all kinds of stories: crime, business, government, even to report meetings. It’s best suited, however, for dramatic stories that can be told in chronological fashion. In the right hands, as the following story from The Miami Herald illustrates, the hourglass is a virtuoso form that provides the news-conscious discipline of the inverted pyramid and the storytelling qualities of the classic narrative.

---

## **• BEHIND THE HOURGLASS**

---

### **1. THE TOP**

“Shots Fired While He Stabbed Ex-Wife

By Conie Piloto and Molly Hennessy-Fiske

The Miami Herald

Aug. 9, 1998

It wasn't the first time that Dennis Leach had violently terrorized his ex-wife. But it will be the last.

Leach, 37, was shot by Davie police Saturday afternoon after he disregarded their orders to drop his knife and instead plunged it repeatedly into Joyce Leach outside her duplex at 6110 SW 41st Ct.

Dennis Leach was pronounced dead at the scene. His ex-wife, who asked police, "Why did you shoot him?" as she was loaded into the ambulance, was taken to Memorial Regional Hospital in Hollywood, where she was listed in stable condition.

The mayhem was witnessed by Dennis Leach's parents and some neighbors. The neighbors said turmoil at the Leach home was nothing new.

In May, Dennis Leach was charged with aggravated assault when, according to police, he showed up with a hammer, broke a window and chased his ex-wife around the duplex, shouting, "I'm going to kill you!"

In the first five paragraphs, the story conveys all the information the time-pressed reader needs to know: Police shoot to death a man who refuses their commands to drop his knife and stabs his ex-wife instead. The top answers several of the five W's: who, what, where, when, why, as well as how. A special feature of this lead is the first paragraph, which departs from the usual summary lead: Police shot and killed a 37-year-old Davie man after he disregarded their orders to drop his knife. Instead the writer draws in the reader with an indirect approach that sums up the situation with chilling finality.

## **2. THE TURN**

Police and neighbors gave this account of the latest domestic violence:

The transition is short, alerting the reader that the news report is shifting to storytelling form and indicating the sources for the chronicle to come.

## **3. THE NARRATIVE**

"Dennis Leach became angry with his 37-year-old ex-wife after he went to a neighborhood bar Friday night. He stormed into her duplex Saturday afternoon and threatened her with a butcher knife.

A terrified Joyce Leach dashed next door to the adjoining home of Leach's parents.

"He's got a knife, and he's gonna kill me!" Leach's mother, Reba Leach, said her daughter-in-law screamed.

At the same time, 15-year-old April Leach, one of their six children, called from a convenience store blocks away.

"Your father is going to kill me!" Joyce Leach yelled.

April Leach hung up and dialed 911.

When officers arrived at the duplex, Dennis Leach was chasing his ex-wife with a knife.

Police ordered him to drop the weapon, said Davie Capt. John George.

Instead, Leach started stabbing her.

An officer fired at Dennis Leach, striking him around a knee, but he wouldn't stop plunging the knife into his ex-wife, neighbors said.

An officer or officers fired again, this time hitting Leach in the chest. He collapsed and died on the side of the road. His parents were watching from inside their home.

Davie police would not say whether more than one officer fired at Dennis Leach, nor would they identify the officer or officers.

Neighbors say they heard at least five shots.

As police carried Joyce Leach to an ambulance, the knife still stuck in her right shoulder, she turned to police and said: "Is he dead, is he dead. ... Why did you shoot him?" said next-door neighbor Shannon Schmitzer.

As Joyce was hoisted into the ambulance and police placed a yellow tarp over Dennis Leach's body, April Leach and a brother arrived.

The two siblings cried and tried to run to their mother and father but were escorted away.

Police later drove them to Memorial Regional Hospital to be with their mother.

Dennis and Joyce Leach lived for years in the duplex owned by Leach's parents.

"They've had a lot of trouble in the past," Schmitzer said.

As the couple's problems escalated, the Department of Children and Family Services stepped in. The state took custody of the children for a while, placing them in foster homes, neighbors said.

Joyce Leach got a job at Dunkin' Donuts, just blocks away, but Dennis Leach couldn't stay out of trouble.

In May, Davie police charged him with domestic violence and aggravated assault after the incident with the hammer. He was convicted and jailed for 90 days.

He got out Tuesday night and returned to his family's house, his mother said.

"We weren't supposed to let him stay here," his mother said. "But he just showed up."

The time had come to tell the story of what transpired the night Dennis Leach died. The writer tells the story chronologically, drawing together information gleaned from interviews with the sources identified in the turn. As with all stories, the narrative section has a beginning, a middle that describes the main action, and an end, with the climactic cry of the abused ex-wife, "Why did you shoot him?" The conclusion wraps up the story with background about the couple's troubles and then, like many good stories, ends on a note that echoes back to the beginning. Note how the writer uses dramatic quotations and vivid details, such as the yellow tarp



that covers Dennis Leach's body, to show the narrative scene that the reader is merely told about in the top.

The hourglass is a form that satisfies editors who prefer a traditional approach to news writing as well as impatient readers who tire easily of leisurely approaches to stories that take forever to get to the point. Readers who want a more complete story, who like to see a story unfold as they read it, are happy as well. The hourglass serves readers' need for news and their natural desire for story.

---

## • SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

---

- News is information about current events. This may be provided through many different media: word of mouth, printing, postal systems, broadcasting, electronic communication, or through the testimony of observers and witnesses to events. A sentence is a group of words that makes complete sense.
- News can travel through different communication media.
- Speed of news transmission, of course, still varies wildly on the basis of where and how one lives.
- Journalists are often expected to aim for objectivity; reporters claim to try to cover all sides of an issue without bias, as compared to commentators or analysts, who provide opinion or personal points of view.
- News writing attempts to answer all the basic questions about any particular event—who, what, when, where and why (the Five Ws) and also often how—at the opening of the article.
- A kicker can refer to multiple things:
  - The last story in the news broadcast; a "happy" story to end the show
  - A short, catchy word or phrase accompanying a major headline, "intended to provoke interest in, editorialize about, or provide orientation"

---

## • EXERCISE

---

### Short Questions:

#### Q. 1. What is NEWS?

**Ans.** News is information about current events. This may be provided through many different media: word of mouth, printing, postal systems, broadcasting, electronic communication, or through the testimony of observers and witnesses to events.

#### Q. 2. Define Inverted Pyramid.

**Ans.** News writing attempts to answer all the basic questions about any particular event—who, what, when, where and why (the Five Ws) and also often how—at the opening of the article. This form of structure is sometimes called the "inverted pyramid", to refer to the decreasing importance of information in subsequent paragraphs.

**Q. 3. Define Pyramid of Pyramid**

**Ans.** When a story has a number of different parts to it, it is better to tell the story one part at a time than to jump backwards and forwards between the different parts. This story structure is a pyramid of pyramids, in which each part of the story is told in a mini-inverted pyramid of its own.

**Multiple Choice Questions**

1. The British Broadcasting Company began transmitting radio news from London in:

- (a) 1935
- (b) 1922
- (c) 1919
- (d) 1015

**Ans. (b)**

2. BBC World service Television was introduced in which year?

- (a) 1991
- (b) 1985
- (c) 1995
- (d) 2000

**Ans. (a)**

3. News content should contain:

- (a) 3 Ws
- (b) 4 Ws
- (c) 5 Ws
- (d) 6 Ws

**Ans. (c)**

4. The Inter Press Service was founded in:

- (a) 1934
- (b) 1944
- (c) 1954
- (d) 1064

**Ans. (d)**

---

**• ANSWER IN BRIEF**

---

1. What is the importance of NEWS?
2. Define Inverted Pyramid Structure.
3. Define Pyramid of Pyramid
4. What are the 12 steps of news writing?