

day of hospital care in 1960 and a day of hospital care in 1985 are appreciably different. In 1960, we didn't have renal dialysis, premature nurseries, open heart surgery, mechanical hearts. We've got to differentiate 1) whether the product has changed and 2) whether the volume we provide has increased."

SENSIBLE SPELLING CHANGES SEEN AS ONE WAY OF ENDING FUNCTIONAL ILLITERACY

With functional illiteracy growing, many organizations are promoting literacy campaigns. But Ed Rondthaler, chrm emeritus of International Typeface Corp, urges improvement of the language by correcting its "blatantly illogical spelling," reports Ass'n Trends. He spells out his proposal in a recent issue of The Typographer (Typographers International Ass'n, DC).

He proposes a phonetic spelling system to be called "American." It would be predictable, rational, easily programmed into computers. Key is pronunciation of vowel-pairs ending in "e" (see box).

Rondthaler believes spelling must change because "we're losing our manual jobs, and if the number of readers & writers keeps decreasing, there will ultimately be only an elite group of literates, say 50-million, who will then control government, business & everything else. The 200-million others will be fed by tv whatever the elite want them to be fed and there goes our democracy.

"Democracy depends on literacy. The two go hand in hand. In a society being overrun with easy electronic communications, we've got to make the English printed word more easily written, read, and understood than it is today. For most of us, it will be about as inconvenient as listening to a strong dialect, but it will spell salvation in many important areas."

TECHNIQUE FOR INTRODUCING AN UPGRADED OR CHANGED PUBLICATION

Helps ease faithful readers into new look. "Gardens for All" moves from a b&w tabloid to a full-color magazine. To reduce resistance to the change, 1st issue of the mag carries 2 covers. Outer is designed in the old format, on the old paper, using the old name, and carrying this message: "Introducing...a new way of looking at an old friend..." Bottom right corner is sliced off revealing 2nd cover, in full color, underneath. Inside is the new format, new name (Gardening) & new paper stock. Back side of old cover carries a letter from the prez thanking everyone who participated with name suggestions & format improvements.

Key to reading American spelling: pronounce the vowel-pairs ending in "e" (ae, ee, ie, oe, ue) like the first letter of each pair sounds in reciting the alphabet.

English spelling....date wate  
American spelling....daet waet (ae)

English spelling....heat feet  
American spelling....heet feet (ee)

English spelling....bite right  
American spelling....biet riet (ie)

English spelling....note boat  
American spelling....noet boet (oe)

English spelling....cute beauty  
American spelling....cuet buety (ue)

The vowel-sound in "good, should" etc. is written "uu" -- guud, shuud, but no change in "oo" for the sound in "moon, food" etc. Most other changes in spelling are phonetically self-evident.

# pr reporter

The Weekly Newsletter of Public Relations,  
Public Affairs & Communication

603 / 778 - 0514

Vol.28 No.37  
September 23, 1985

NEW TREND IN MEDIA RELATIONS IS CHECKBOOK JOURNALISM -- WHEN A MEDIUM BUYS EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS TO A STORY

This prohibits other media from having access to the individual involved during a specified period of time. Examples are Baby Fae's mother, heart patient Barney Clark. Until facing it in Humana's artificial heart program, Robert Irvine, then dpr, had never heard of checkbook journalism. But he became familiar with the concept during Bill Schroeder's artificial heart transplant.

It's common practice in Europe but just taking root here. Irvine predicts it's a dilemma that will become more & more common. And media relations professionals must understand its implications. "It throws a new dimension into an already complicated situation," he told attendees at Florida Public Relations Assn's annual conference.

Irvine, whose role was to assist Schroeder in dealing & coping with the media, was immediately affected. "When checkbook journalism comes into it, suddenly we're working for somebody else on behalf of the individual. We're assisting that medium because the individual chose to have us do it." But practitioners' basic responsibility is to client or employer, so conflict is probable.

Advantages To Buying Stories. Because of the Schroeder family's exclusive agreement with Life Magazine, Irvine had to supply its reporters & photographers with a great deal of background material, give them access to parts of the hospital normally off limits to the media. "When we took Schroeder across the street, Life people were the only ones inside the apartment at the wish of the family. We had to control that situation. All the national media were there too. It was a very intensive situation for a few days."

PR Dept's Difficulty. Humana's pr dep't could tell the media generally what was happening. But when they'd request personal interviews with Schroeder or members of his family, pr staff would say, "We're very sorry but the family has signed an exclusive agreement with Life Magazine." Tho the media is familiar with this type

Irvine is presently working on a book on the subject. Called Onslaught, it'll cover what occurs when you're suddenly faced with an onslaught of the media -- what goes on, what to expect, how to get ready for it. And it will show how the media work & think. "Many don't realize that they are just doing a job," says Irvine. A reporter he interviewed explains it this way: "One of the mistakes people make is that they take us personally, and they shouldn't. We have a job to do. Our job & responsibility is to ask questions & try to understand the entire situation. Many become insulted when we continue to probe." Irvine's book is due next year.



So human

Language

Comm  
R. H. H. H.

Media Rel

Hospital

PR: Ken

Book  
Pub

of situation, "it just complicates their jobs & ours." Media even approached Humana to sign an exclusive restricting other individuals outside the family, for example Dr. DeVries. "He wasn't interested and we weren't interested because of fairness."

Humana's approach was to try to accommodate the needs of all the media. "What you have to do is help the media so they can get their job done. We provided as much video, photography, info from good spokesmen as we could. Result was a strong working relationship where, if we had a problem, they understood."

Lengths To Which Left-Out Media Go. They learned from the Barney Clark situation. Media interest & needs were intense. "When material can't be provided, media will get it one way or another. Barney Clark's house was broken into, for example. The only things stolen were photo albums. So, based on this, we asked the Schroeders to pick out several pictures from their photo albums and allow us to reproduce them. We did that and the pressure was off."

ARE "MORPHEMES" PART OF PERSUASION? "I'm convinced that a lot of new products fail simply because they have dull, meaningless names. A good name makes a lasting impression," says Ira Bachrach of Namelab (SF). What Namelab does is "constructional linguistics" -- forming names like Nissan's Sentra, Datago for a chain of computer stores, and Compaq computers. Christian Science Monitor article lists his 3 ingredients for a memorable name:

1. Meaningful: "The more meaningful a word is, the more the mind encodes it & stores it for future retrieval."
2. Repetition Of Sound: Like Coca Cola, they're easy to remember.
3. Episodic Encoding: Certain words trigger recollections of past emotional experiences. Sentra, for example, is Nissan's central car and the manufacturer wants consumers to feel it's safe, tho small. "The word Sentra sounds like central as well as sentry, which evokes images of safety."

Names are formed from morphemes -- the smallest meaningful unit or form in a language. 6,200 are commonly used in English. For example, "van" in advantage; "ven" in adventure. 18 tests are applied to combinations of morphemes to choose the right word: Do the words have rhythm, value, alliteration, memorability, uniqueness? How many letters do they have? Does the pattern of letters look good? Is it easily read? Also considered: how does it translate to foreign languages?

Other than his own created names, Bachrach rates the following as the best brand names ever: Band-Aid, Jell-O, Kleenex, Drano, Ivory, Apple Computer; Diehard battery is "the best adapted metaphor in the history of brand names."

ANNUAL REPORTS ARE LOSING CREDIBILITY WITH INVESTORS & SECURITY ANALYSTS, FINDS HILL & KNOWLTON SURVEY Individual investors (69%) want to rely more heavily on ARs, but 67% rate them only fair or poor in giving them useful investment info. They question ARs' believability. 52% distrust what managements say in ARs. 82% believe ARs play down bad news or hide it in the back. 75% agree that ARs "are often too much like advertising; they only show the company in the best light." Both investor groups want more detailed breakouts of info. Other findings:

Give bad news with good. Both individuals (92%) & analysts (96%) want bad news too; an outside assessment of the company in the AR is desired by individuals (84%), less so by analysts (48%).

ARs still ranked 2nd as info source. Individual investors rank 1) biz pub'ns, 2) ARs, 3) stockbrokers, 4) statistical svcs, 5) radio & tv, 6) computer-accessed data bases, 7) friends & relatives. Analysts rank 1) individual interviews with company mgmts, 2) ARs & SEC-filed documents, 3) news media, 4) fin'l fact books, 5) reports from others on Wall Street, 6) computer data bases, 7) radio & tv.

Most important: shift to personal investment analysis. Of 83% who make their own investment decisions, 43% do it strictly on the basis of their own analysis. The other 40% factor in brokers' advice but still use their own judgment. 43% switched to their own analysis after having relied on others. This switch occurred during the last five years for 58%, within the last two years for 32%. Trend may be whetting interest for more & better investment info. (Annual Annual Report Report, \$35 from H&K, 420 Lexington Ave, NYC 10017)

EXPLAINING COST REQUIRES VALUE STATEMENT: QUESTION ISN'T WHAT HEALTHCARE COSTS BUT WHAT WE GET FOR THE MONEY "Healthcare has taken a black eye" unnecessarily on the cost issue, feels Debbie Novak, vp, Voluntary Hospitals of America Management Services (Tampa). She told prr one of the reasons is because people look at total-dollar increases instead of dollar increase per admission or per patient day. We don't take into consideration volumetric increases, for example greatly increased need for health services by our aging population.

To give the public the true picture, healthcare facts must be presented differently than they presently are. Novak uses this comparison to make her point:

In 1960, US spent \$105.6 billion on automobiles. In 1981, \$595.2 billion. That's an increase of \$489.6 billion.

In 1960, US spent \$26.9 billion on healthcare. In 1981, \$286.6 billion, for an increase of \$259.7 billion.

In total dollars, the rate of increase of cars is 188.5% greater than healthcare, or almost double.

"We need to go thru a social re-organization in the way we think about things. People are interested in the quality of their health. When you can put things in perspective and give them choices, it changes the way they think about it. If you get a choice between a fancy car or making your child healthy, you're going to opt to help your child. A lot has to do with the way the government presents the statistics -- and the industry itself hasn't tried to change it. For example, life expectancy between 1950-85 has increased 15 years, but we forget to say that."

Yet there's no revolt against the auto industry, because people don't look at their cost increase in total dollars -- rather in the price of a car. For healthcare, they look at total dollars -- when they should be looking at what it costs per patient, or per day, or per procedure, she believes.

"One of the things we've got to do is say a loaf of bread cost this much in 1960 and this much in 1985. That loaf of bread probably hasn't changed much. A

*Language*

*Connu*

*ARs  
in 1980s*

*Research*

*Healthcare*