

## Professional Analysis of Published Works

Professional columnists have often enjoyed the luxury of an additional writer to verify their work. This person is usually an editor or proofreader. Each day, millions of pages of text are scrutinized for accuracy by the public. Many times, people have read through an article and found an error in syntax or spelling. It almost appears to be a rewarding experience for the reader to discover an error in professional works. I have noticed that writers sacrifice their articulation for eye-grabbing slang. Is this sacrifice worth it? Does it sell books or magazines? I will explore these and many more questions as I attempt to enter the professional writers' mindset of methods and techniques. I have compiled six articles from various professional sources. They all differ in content and writing style. However, they all fit the discipline of my major, sociological law.

The first article in the editorial queue is published in Time Magazine, "From the Fists of [redacted]." This article addresses the question of prosecuting a six-year-old child for [redacted]. I can empathize with the author receiving this assignment. In a previous criminal justice class, I wrote a term paper dealing with juvenile [redacted]ers. It was a difficult assignment because of its ethical and moral implications. Juvenile prosecution is a very sensitive topic of discussion in our society. The author had to take many cautious measures to remain neutral. He did an excellent job of stating the facts and injecting the judicial statutes dealing with juvenile delinquency. In proper keeping with the three modes of persuasion, Toufexis decided to persuade the audience through the logical approach. The reader was not influenced by passions, prejudices, or customs. Facts were written in a logical fashion and presented to the reader in a chronological order. This approach was noteworthy because of the sensitive nature of juvenile [redacted]. It also allowed the reader to decide their own opinions related to the facts presented in the story. Furthermore, the ideologies of the reader are not distorted by the convictions of the writer.

Had the author decided to use an ethical presentation of the facts of this story, the virtuous battle lines between the reader and the writer would be drawn. The author would also be forced to adopt an opinion relating to the issue of the crime surrounding it. This could possibly lead to the reader condemning it for lack of neutrality. Moreover, writers are expected to maintain a non-biased aspect when reporting a story.

Additional investigation of Toufexis' work uncovered the limited use of figures of speech. One aspect of professional writing that I have discovered in my research declares the use of figures of speech as a primary viaduct of diction is strongly discouraged by many rhetoricians (Corbett 357). Additionally, restricted use of figures of speech constitutes an effective form of message delivery. Figures of speech should be used to seize a reader's attention and focus on a particular point. They should not be overused or their effectiveness is greatly reduced. Toufexis does a satisfactory job when utilizing some available figures of speech.

According to the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, readability statistic's for this article were 11.1. This indicates that an 11th grader would have no problem reading and understanding the article. However, I found a few sentences that lacked proper style schemes. The use of a Syllepsis' is noted in the following sentence, "Police initially believed the tragedy grew out of a theft." I believe the use of the word grew projected a very weak meaning of the sentence. Perhaps a better way of writing this sentence is, "Initially police believed the tragedy stemmed from theft." Better word choice could have assisted the writer in producing a clearer and more understandable image.

Charles S. Lee and Lester Sloan incorporate unlike forms of style than the previous article [redacted] yzed, "From the Fists of [redacted] s" by Anatasia Toufexis. In their article, "It's Our Turn Now," from Newsweek Magazine, the writers are bound to deliver the extremely sensitive and [redacted] e issue of [redacted]. I decided to use

the Bormuth Grade Level to gauge the reading level for this article. The Bormuth Grade level uses word length in characters and sentence length in words to determine a grade level. The results were ninth grade reading and comprehension level. I discovered these results quite surprising. There were several sentences that were rich with subordination and apposition versus standard use of compounding. This is a significant form of sentence structure because it often dictates complexity of writing.

Many somewhat complicated and uncommon choices of words were used. This lack of understandable vocabulary had tendency to lose its reader's interest. An example of the story's unorthodox word utilization is, "The sense of aggrievement is apparent in the inflamed rhetoric on mutual substantiated sides." When I finished reading this sentence I was dumbfounded and confused. The sentence appeared to use several instances of over-impressive jargon without a clear direction. I translated the sentence into more understandable language with, "Both the Latinos and Blacks share a sense of substantial grief." Another sample of complicated word choice is, "They point out that few Hispanic's bother to vote in local elections, so they are disenfranchising themselves." I asked a couple of my neighbors and friends if they knew what disenfranchising was. One thought it had to do with buying a restaurant chain. The other thought it was a foreign currency in France. I consider these people a common sampling of readers that could quite possibly read an article similar to, "It's Our Turn Now." Perhaps, other readers would also have a difficult time understanding the story.

The authors used a couple of interesting stylistic schemes and tropes. In one instance the author said, "Have the oppressed now become the oppressors." This is a perfect example of a epistrophe. An epistrophe is a repetition of the same word or group of words at the ends of successive clauses (Corbett 438). It is interesting to point out that the use of this epistrophe assisted the author in collaborating a short but essential point that oppression was handed from the Blacks to the Latinos. The journalist also discovered and integrated a beautiful quotation into his article. This quotation was the staple of the entire article, "They hire people with our tax money. We subsidize our own discrimination." These two sentences are key because they enable the reader to understand the Latinos suffrage from taxation without representation. Although this concept prompted America to declare independence from Britain in 1776, the article demonstrated the Latinos feeling the same oppression as many Black Americans experience today.

A mainstay of American political controversy is the debate over increasing the speed limit on highways. In 1974, the authority to impose speed limits on roads was taken away from the states and placed under control of the federal government. The reason was the Arab fuel embargo. The bureaucracy believed lowering speed limits would conserve fuel. The politicians were correct in their estimates.

"Hello 75, so long 55," published by US News & World Report, appears to ridicule the cliché of nothing ever changes after all. The journalists make good use of their descriptive rhetoric. The arrangement of the article is somewhat confusing. The text could have been more free-flowing and predictable. I was confused most of the time as to which direction the article was heading. The subject matter was contrasted with the five parts of usual argumentative discourse: exordium, narratio, conformatio, probatio, refutation, and peratio (Corbett 282). I found that the introduction narrative was chosen by the writers to establish reader interest. An introduction narrative is, "To rouse interest in our subject by adopting the anecdotal lead-in" (Corbett 286). The writers used a highway patrol officer's story about speeding very effectively to capture my curiosity.

Another aspect of discourse is "Integrating Oneself with the Audience" (Corbett 287). This method establishes credit with the reader by making sure qualified experts are referenced throughout the story. The authors referenced several experts in the field of highway safety. Some of these include, highway patrol officers, United States Department of Highway Safety, and city legislatures. Their article presented indisputable facts surrounding the issue of highway safety. All of the data displayed was quite impressive and believable. Additionally, it

was presented in superior graphical quality.

The next part of discourse I wish to address is the conclusion. The authors ended their article with a somewhat weak ending. It was almost as if their editor said, make it 150 words less and we will print it. Seriously though, the article did end abruptly. Corbett points out that a conclusion should, "Round off what we have been modifying in the earlier parts of the discourse" (Corbett 307). The writers did not make good use of this concept. The conclusion of the article appeared to go off in it's own misleading direction.

The fourth of the six articles I chose is, "The Scandal of Prisoner Lawsuits" appearing in Readers Digest. This feature article addresses the issue of incarcerated prisoners spending millions of tax dollars suing the government while inside prison. I think this issue is not held in a favorable light by most Americans. Why do prisoners have the right to sue while behind bars? Should inmates have this privilege? This issue is addressed by a journalist by the name of Dale VanAtta.

He was the most colorful and enthusiastic writer I encountered in my research. He utilized emotion, the third mode of persuasion to pitch his emotional appeal. Emotional appeal was originally specified by Aristotle and recognized by later rhetoricians is the appeal to the emotions of the audience (Corbett 86-87). In this particular story, the reader is pitched into a pit of anger and resentment. These emotions are often e, unpredictable, and bond the reader to the article through sheer interest.

The first line of the story is, "Lawrence Bittaker is on row, a serial er responsible for the brutal ual assault, torture and mutilation s of five teen age [sic] girls in Los Angeles County in 1979." If we take a closer look and the sentence and dissect it, we see the crime in a much more visual way. Indeed, itself is a horrible and unforgiving crime. However, when we add brutal ual assault, torture, mutilation s, and five teenage girls, these words and phrases strike fear and anger into the heart of the reader. This is what makes the use of emotional appeal effective and unforgettable. Dale VanAtta accomplished what many writers strive to achieve, visual articulation.

"Residential Segregation and School Integration," published in the journal Sociology of Education, is a purely statistically weighted presentation of argument. There are eight separate full-page graphs and charts. These graphical depiction's of comprehensive data had an inclination to bore the reader into loosing appeal for the story. Too much data can overload the reader's attention span. Moreover, the attention span is only active when it is stimulated.

The article does present some interesting elements encompassing the realm of racial justice. The article is presented to the reader in an orderly and efficient manner. This is accomplished by utilizing a chronological method of delivery. The author begins the quest in the year 1776 with the Declaration of Independence, and completes with the Civil Rights Act of 1990. This is particularly useful in assisting the reader to absorb critical dates and events based on actual memorable historic events.

Since it was written under the pretext of a professional article, the use of personal pronouns is not used throughout the story. This gives the paper a commercial appearance versus a writers' personal opinion. This can be quite useful when trying to present factual argument from an establishment or group perspective. In most instances, the article is written in an extremely formal format. This is indicative of The American Civil Liberties Union briefing papers.

In conclusion, we have examined several professional works from professional journals to the internet. I have gained a much better understanding of 1) accessing articles and information on the internet, 2) conducting library based research and referencing, and 3) yzing professional writers' techniques for capturing the attention of the reader. In the future, I can see infinite opportunities in educational research and writing from the valuable pedagogical experience I have gained from writing this paper.

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