The Decline and, Like, Fall of American English

BY CLARK WHETLON

I

n the mid-1980s, American English was overwhelmed by a linguistic mutation that transferred the burden of verbal communication from speaker to listener. This semblance of speech substituted sound effects and self-quotations for vocabulary, clarity and grammar. Its shapeless syntax defended those who spoke it against the risk of saying something insensitive or socially incorrect. It was a mode of non-expression that jumped from campus jargon to national discourse with astonishing speed. Without fear of contradiction, I can say, like, wow, this new way of speaking was so, like, you know, whoa! I mean, it was like, omg, totally awesome, and stuff.

This rapid descent into verbal bedlam came to my attention in the 1980s when I was interviewing intern candidates for Mayor Ed Koch’s speechwriting office in New York City. Until 1985 I had no trouble finding talented, literate students from Columbia, NYU, Pace University, and the senior colleges of New York’s City University system. But suddenly it became difficult to recruit articulate undergrads who could write. Even English majors from an Ivy League campus had withered vocabularies and a hazy grasp of grammar. Many didn’t know a noun from verbs.

Strangest of all, they struggled mightily to avoid expressing thoughts directly. In place of plain speech they employed various forms of verbal evasion, such as run-on sentences, facial tics, self-quoting and playbacks of past conversations. “He asked if I wanted to go the movies and I said yes,” became, “So he goes, like, ‘You want to like go to the movies’ and stuff, and I’m like, ‘Yeah, O.K.’” Uptalking, an interrogative rise in vocal inflection that makes statements sound like questions, added another element of imprecision to the mix. The would-be interns seemed to be defending themselves against their own words. I called this elusive dialect “Vagueness.”

At first I wondered if Vagueness had escaped from the zoo of post-hippy slang. For example, the abuse of “like” as a speech particle goes all the way back to the hipster-beatnik days of the 1950s. But slang usually has a sharp edge. Vagueness was amorphous, almost impossible to pin down. Operating as a kind of grammatical anti-matter, Vagueness camouflaged meaning with vocal intonations and ambiguity. It had to be decoded by the listener. Nonetheless, by 1987, juvenile speech patterns that had once been drummed out of kids in junior high school were not only in control in college, they were in vogue. It wasn’t as though City Hall intern candidates were capable of speaking standard American English but, for some perverse reason, had decided not to. Extended interviews revealed that most of the students had no idea how to carry on a lucid conversation.

There was another problem. Along with a lack of verbal skill, intern candidates in the late 1980s displayed serious shortcomings in composition. They simply didn’t know how to write. The basics of sentence structure and punctuation were in vogue. It wasn’t as though City Hall intern candidates were capable of writing grammatical sentences, but they did not even know how to make a sentence. "Like, get one, like, today!"

Robert Grossman

The Decline and, Like, Fall of American English

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who possess excellent verbal skills.

There it was: the Vagueness microbe in focus. Interns with “excellent verbal skills” had become harder to find in the late 1980s because there were, in fact, fewer of them. Something, it appeared, really had gone wrong in American high schools.

I decided to call Steven Cahn. Cahn, a professor of philosophy at the CUNY Graduate Center in Manhattan, has written at length about the “ellipse of excellence” in American education. Cahn recalled his 1987 exchange with Owen and Teasdale and the precipitous 20-year drop in S.A.T. scores that preceded it. Citing research by David Riesman, Cahn still wonders about one of the most peculiar elements in this decline: “Women had always done much better than men on the verbal S.A.T.s. But just as the women’s movement was finding its voice, women gave up their lead in the verbal abilities.”

“The decline must have started in high school,” I said.

“No!” Cahn replied. “The decline began in the 1970s when colleges made their curricula easier. Typically, colleges used to require 60 hours of core courses for graduation. In the 70s, all that changed. No more required courses in math, science, English composition, speech, or foreign language. Brown University became the new star of the Ivy League. Why? It wasn’t the city of Providence! It was because Brown’s open curriculum—students could take whatever courses they wanted—made it easier to get into the Ivy League. When other colleges and universities followed suit and lowered the barrier to high schools. The virus of academic slack had been incubating for years."

If Steven Cahn is right, then the undergraduates I interviewed in the late 1980s—who were born after 1964—were educated in the era of plunging S.A.T. scores, the era when colleges radically downgraded the difficulty of getting a bachelor’s degree, the era when high schools reduced their standards accordingly, the era that gave rise to Vagueness.

Forty years later, the long-term effects of an easier college curriculum are causing educators to wonder if the changes went too far. Richard Arum, co-author of the book “Academically Adrift,” criticizes colleges for treating students like pampered consumers and clients, of whom little is required. Arum points out that a typical college student studying one hour a day can easily attain a 3.2 average. How is that possible? At Harvard the most frequently awarded grade is an “A.” Professors at Harvard and at other universities worry that giving out lower grades will result in their courses being shunned by a student body unaccustomed to hard work.

Did Vagueness begin when college students taking easy courses ended up speaking easy English? Wherever it came from, the linguistic revolution is over. Vagueness won. In 2008, Caroline Kennedy-Schlossberg showed how far Vagueness has moved beyond the campus when she said “you know” 168 times in a 30-minute interview. Today, Vague- ness is even more firmly embedded in American English. Its prospects would seem to be bright. But don’t be too sure. For better or worse, language defies prediction and restraint. Its future is forever vague.
By Sandy Socolow

I t's a paradox. I am an old fogey in the business of journalism. And, when asked by younger practitioners what I think about the state of the business today, any answer I give is likely to be perceived as a criticism. There is more good quality news available today, in print and broadcast and the internet than ever before. More than even in the time of Walter Murray, Walter Cronkite, Chet Huntley and David Brinkley. The downside is that for the news consumer, it is relatively hard to find. The news consumer has to dig, search, otherwise manipulate devices to find it.

Surrounding such gems, however, is an avalanche of gems upstaged, attention aimed at entertainment first, not inform. On the serious side of the craft, there are pressures which try to manipulate the product.

I've just learned that the White House press office (why isn't it more accurately a press office?) on several occasions intercepted pool reports before distributing them and challenged the particular reporter on the substance of his/her report. This is a sea change for the arrangement wherein the White House acted as a truth teller with no interest in being otherwise manipulated to find it.

The news consumer has to dig, search, otherwise manipulate devices to find it. The news consumer is outraged and indignant, in the heyday of Edward R. Murrow, Walter Cronkite, Chet Huntley and David Brinkley.

I remember seeing him pitch a story to one of the funniest writers on the paper, Israel Shenker. "This is a made for you, Shenk," Arthur importuned. "Only you have the touch for this... Shenker shook his head. He was jammed up with other stories, but a breaking news story, he could do. Whereupon Arthur dismissed him and summoned another reporter. "This is made for you... he began.

John Darnton, another erstwhile copyboy who later succeeded Arthur as metro editor, remembers it was Frank that day. "This is Frank's story? He is shy about calling reporters and public officials what I think about the state of the business today, any answer I give is likely to be perceived as a criticism. There is more good quality news available today, in print and broadcast and the internet than ever before. More than even in the time of Walter Murray, Walter Cronkite, Chet Huntley and David Brinkley. The downside is that for the news consumer, it is relatively hard to find. The news consumer has to dig, search, otherwise manipulate devices to find it.

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When I started there was an overseas telephone call was expensive and technically difficult. Viet- nam, known popularly as "the Living Room War," was remote. Sometimes the correspondent intercepted pool reports before distributing them and challenged the particular reporter on the substance of his/her report. This is a sea change for the arrangement wherein the White House acted as a truth teller with no interest in being otherwise manipulated to find it.

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Continued from Page 3

But Arthur was not easy to turn down. He was intimidating, from his towering stature to his flashing eyes and waving arms. When I met Maureen Dowd at the memorial service compared to a blinking slot machine and whirling helicopter blades.

Back in the 60s, once I corralled me in the office waving a copy of the Daily News with front page wood screaming about a state no-show scandal in Albany. We needed to match it. Match a competitor’s investigative series? On deadline? “Get up there right away,” Arthur said. I took the bus up to Albany. When I walked into the bureau they told me, “Arthur called, looking for you.” I called him back, “You’ve got me!” he asked. I told him I had just arrived. “Ah,” he said, “forget it, you’ll never match them.” He told me to come home. Next day the News broke a second installment. Arthur called me in again. “Maybe you’d better get back to Albany,” he said. I happened to look over and saw Shelly, doubled over and clutching her sides in hysterical laughter. For Arthur, no task was too impossible to handle. Richard Witkin, then an ace political reporter proudly dyed in the office, the debonair George Barrett with someone who would be handling my story. Did I really want to start a blood feud with someone who would be handling my copy in perpetuity? On weekends, when Arthur was not in the office, the debonair George Barrett passed off the article in less than a day.

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The Arthurian Legend: Gelb of The Times

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Silurian News

Treasurist

Bernard Kirsch, Editor

Agent of a Foreign Government

BY MYRON KANDEL

D

The Arthurian Legend: Gelb of The Times

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in. Arthur was on the phone. Metro was their father.)

Tom, the Yale Bowl erupted with boos.

tification of his young sons, Gordon and

York Times, call your office.” To the mor-
speaker. “Richard Witkin of The New

his family when, to his astonishment, he

Harvard-Yale game in New Haven with

ace political reporter proudly dyed in

Harvard crimson, was at the 1967

back in the 60s, he once corralled me to

met with Gordon and Arthur at home. I

But Arthur was not in the office, the debonair George Barnett presided over the metro desk. Once known as the fastest of Times rewrite men and a boulevardier who squired the ladies in his own Rolls Royce, George had a definite cachet. But for all important de-
cisions, he called Arthur at home. I often thought, watching the pro-
cess, that George would be better off phoning Arthur when he got in, placing the re-
ciever down on the desk and just shout-
ing it to him whenever he had a question.

Long after he left the culture desk for the masthead, Arthur relished his standing as the Times’s arts czar emeritus. I once heard a rumor that architecture critic Paul Goldberger would be named the new culture editor and asked Arthur if it was true. His an-
swer was surprisingly candid. “Yes,” he said, “but it doesn’t matter.”

But for all his bluster, Arthur could also be touching vulnerable.

He came up with the laudable idea of weekly meetings of metro reporters to

chew over Big Ideas. But they usually degenerated into nit-picky sessions about editing goods and other irrelevant minu-
tine. I felt bad for Arthur.

He himself once told of coming out onto Broadway in 1971 to find the streets mobbed with religious protesters de-
nouncing the new musical “Jesus Christ Superstar” as blasphemous. He quickly called the metro desk to send a reporter and photographer. “They wouldn’t do it,” he recalled ruefully, shaking his head in bafflement. “I told them who I was.” At the time, he was metropolitan editor.

He got angry at me once for writing, “Those of us who loved Arthur will carry in our hearts forever. But it still feels as if the North Star has vanished from the sky.”

As non-threatening a country as could be). And also, what if I ever wanted to run for public office? My opponent could legitimately label me as an agent of a foreign government.

So I wrote to my friend Max Frankel, who was then the State De-

with a foreword by former major leaguer Ken Fisher. "Class of 1950: How a Bunch of Smart Kids From a Brooklyn Ghetto in the 1940s Set Out to Change the World!"

Ira Berkow, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, has written a tribute to “Wrigley Field,” which coincided with the 100th an-

as if the North Star has vanished from

covered the Justice Department and the Supreme Court. They unanimously agreed, Max said, that I should sign the form. And so I did. Maybe I imagined it, but I always felt they both had a good laugh over the “problem” I had presented them with all the way from Bonn, Germany. But recently, when I retell the record, I’m a self-admitted agent of a foreign gov-

ermen and a preface by former Su-

in a 1995 article about music, that the

niscences of the people to whom this great place has meant so much. Notable fans interviewed include Barack Obama, Scott Turow, Joe Mantry, Sara Paretsky, Jim Bouton, and George Will, among others. With a foreword by former major league pitcher Kerry Wood and a preface by former Su-

Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens.

BOOKS BY SILURIANS

Curaçao flag.
Two Different Paths to Tell a Story

BY ANNE ROIPHE

Novelists and journalists are twins in a most Siamese kind of way. Both are witnesses to the world we live in. Both are after something true, if not immediately apparent. Both are curious about the flow of time and how it event through all the turns of the earth. But when it comes to the method to achieve these goals, the two kinds of writers (sometimes it’s the same person using only one of her or his available masks) are drastically different and when they confuse identities, forget their place, the work itself turns into tangles.

But let’s start with the common motive. The journalist wants to tell a story, a real story, not necessarily the one that aphorizes at first glance. The novelist also wants to tell a story. But here the two separate. The novelist tells a story that is not real; by definition it is made-up, but it can float down, fly up, reach to a level where it speaks the truth, not the truth of facts but the more elusive truth of human experience. The journalist may be political and report on the President’s speeches or the failures of Congress to do such and such or the demonstrations in the streets or crimes of the back alleys and the crimes of the boardroom, or the corruptions of those we want to trust like men of the church or the police or lawyers or doctors.

The novelist wants to hold the reader rapt. The novel, like the Ancient Mariner, grabs the wedding guest by the sleeve and must tell the tale of how the soul was moved, crushed, redeemed perhaps, or not. The journalist will describe accurately the ship on which the Ancient Mariner sailed, how many cannons on each side, how many rations rotted in the hold, how much drinking water remained on Day 4 or 45 and what the dying men whispered to their absent mothers, their soon to betormented, their soon to be tormented.

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The novelist can stretch it a bit with some color; the sailor’s shoeslaces were untied, the top of his head where he had lost his hair was burst red, the eyes were bloodshot; those pieces of color should be accurate; if they are not there is danger that the smallest of falsehoods will all but suspsect even the facts that are accurate. There might be a contamination in the piece by the temptation to exaggerate, to enlarge, to assume what cannot be fact-checked.

We need to trust that the journalist has not invented his facts. If they are not true, he should be punished, fired, banned.

We need to trust that the journalist has not invented his facts. If they are not true, he should be punished, fired, banned. We need to know as citizens in this modern world far more than our own eyes and ears can tell us and so we rely, deeply, rely, on the journalist, his radio, TV, newspaper, blog, to tell us what we cannot know by ourselves. Who is killing whom and why. Who is taking the lion’s share of the economic spoils. Do they deserve it? Who is trying to stop them and what is happening in private homes in suburbs, in huts in foreign lands, in places where bombs and demons are dropped.

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Poets are not much use to the journalist, for poets too are a writer impoverished, soon to
turn to another profession, perhaps accounting.

A journalist, even a tired journalist, will stare out the train window at glimpses of life in the passing field, the windows of folks on the nearby cars, the figures huddled under the station’s protective hood. A weary novelist, a dreamy poet stares out the window of the moving car, for wandering living, what will happen to them tomorrow? A science journalist must love the facts, and the facts under the facts The difference between journalist and novelist or poet lies in what next. The journalist registers the scene. The writer takes his or her own pulse. What has this made me feel? What do I think about what I know if I don’t know what I feel? For many journalists, the “I” is completely submerged, invisible to the reader. In bad journalism, the “I” may signal that we are about to read a piece as interesting as that “How I spent my summer” essay of the sixth grade. Some journalists can turn the “I” into a mirror of us and when they do that, well, they push journalism right to the edge of invention. If they don’t do it well we get self-absorption, irrelevance. When it works, that journalists “I” is glorious, but when it doesn’t: we recoil. As a novelist, when I write journalism, I am tempted to color the sky a better, more dramatic color, to put a few words in someone’s mouth I didn’t hear but at a price, a slight lack of invention. I resist. The line between fact and fiction must remain a third rail, a life-saving third rail. When I write a novel I sink down into its mask, and I never worry about the factual truth. I worry about the emotional truth. That takes enough energy for any hard work ing twin, or a prayer perhaps, a moral story and a ghost story. But the protagonist, he is a novelist, turned to poetry, given no choice but to repeat his story over and over. He is a writer, like his creator. He doesn’t tweet, or text, or instant message. He grabs the wedding guest and holds him with his words. That is what all writers, journalists or novelists, poets or sportswriters, do. It’s our fate.
The Reporter and the D.A.

It was, Lucinda Franks freely admitted, an odd pairing—her affair with the austere Robert Morgenthau: “He was steeped in enforcing the law and I was breaking it,” she said at the Silurians’ October luncheon.

When they met in the 1970s, Franks was a not-quite-hippie, sometimes pot-smoking 26-year-old reporter for United Press International and Morgenthau was the District Attorney of Manhattan—a role he was to hold for 34 years. Besides, he was almost twice her age, a widower with five children.

Yet, it became a love story she has described in a highly acclaimed memoir, “Timeless: Love, Morgenthau, and Me.” They married, and had two children.

Franks, who went on to win a Pulitzer Prize and a stint at The New York Times, spoke about Morgenthau’s virility in their bedroom as well as the significant role he played in law enforcement. Indeed, she claims that he had information about terrorist plots aimed at New York City—but that the Government ignored it.

Morgenthau also was an international figure, involved in uncovering stolen Holocaust art, and led one of the most sweeping criminal prosecutions ever: the multibillion-dollar international fraud case involving the Bank of Credit and Commerce International.

But Franks’ talk was mostly on a personal level, how two people so different found and loved each other. She was a Gentile from New England; he was a scion of a German-Jewish family (and his grandfather was Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Secretary of the Treasury), “a Jewish holiday,” she said. “And how to make a seder.”

Also, at home he was not the arch figure he appeared to be in public—as a campaigner, she said, he was “very stiff.” But he enjoyed cooking for her. And unknown to the public, she said, he also suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. He served on a destroyer that was hit by a kamikaze during World War II, severely affecting his hearing in one ear.

But if those at the luncheon wanted to know more about her famous husband, Franks said, “you’ll have to buy the book.”

— Gerald Eskenazi

Lynn Sherr: Still Going Strong

Lynn Sherr may have ended a 30-year run as one of ABC News’s most significant journalists, but she’s not finished talking yet.

Alternatively tart, witty and funny, she helped open the Silurians’ fall season in September with a discussion that centered around her latest book—“Sally Ride: America’s First Woman in Space.” Sherr also used the book as a springboard to talk about her own career, and especially the hurdles and the expectations women faced back in the ancient 1970s.

“People talked about the Golden Age of journalism in the Ed Murrow era,” she said, and added, “but not when we didn’t have minorities and women in the field.”

As for herself, she said she had a simple response when someone once asked her why she became a reporter: “For a very corny reason—to tell the truth.”

Her distinguished career included those ABC years that included reporting on “20/20” and more significantly perhaps, her stint as the network’s anchor on much of the space program. It was during that time that she met Sally Ride.

Sherr described how NASA had been an all-male club (the first astronauts all were test pilots, a role closed to women). But then, Sally Ride became one of 25,000 women to apply when, in response to the burgeoning awareness of the women’s movement, NASA opened its doors, so to speak. She was one of 35 people accepted, six of them women. She went into space in 1983, at 32 the youngest American to have done so.

Sherr recalled some of the questions Sally Ride had to answer before and after: “Aren’t you afraid of being in orbit with all those men?” was one. Another reporter asked if she would cry if something went wrong. Ride kept her composure: Sherr described her as always tamp- ing down her emotions in public.

“Sally became an icon, an inspiration,” claimed Sherr, citing the fact that more than 50 other women have flown in space since.

Ride was always honest and available to Sherr, who once was able to see her during a period just before a flight when astronauts were quarantined. Sherr also spoke of being able to juggle her role as a reporter with her friendship with the astronaut. Ride died of pancreatic cancer in 2012, and her partner called Sherr and suggested she should be the one to write a book about her.

“We now have a generation of kids who can be just like her,” said Sherr in her concluding remarks. “Will we ever have a woman on the moon? Oh yeah!”

— Gerald Eskenazi

May 2014, the Silurians Awards Dinner

Left: Jim Fitzgerald, who has spent a lifetime at The Associated Press, was honored with the Peter Kihss Award. And with this award, he said, “I have made it to the big time.” The award honors a journalist who has helped mentor younger people in the business.

Right: Rosa Goldensohn, a student at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, in accepting the Dennis Duggan award, said it’s “really special and kind of strange to receive an honor at the beginning of your career before you’ve actually done very little, so I’m going to interpret this as a promise to honor the work that all of you do.”

At our June luncheon, Mr. Baker, editor in chief of the Journal, spoke about the challenge of giving his newspaper a “more modern digital sensibility” while still “embracing print journalism.”

Credit Mort Shainman

Credit Bill Diehl
Frank Litsky

A man of statistics, statistics and even more statistics.

Frank off the copy desk and made him its track writer - where he has flourished and stayed since. He also found time to cover the New York Jets’ football team for three years.

Frank also did a significant stretch as the Sunday sports editor, and brought the paper out of its predict­able past and into a brighter present by freshening the paper with outside writers and great features. In fact, he brought the Sunday sports section to the country’s first op-ed page devoted to sports.

And one of his important free-lance hires was James Michener, who agreed to write about his beloved Philadelphia Phillies. “Paid him $150, too,” crows Frank.

He also got a fellow named Arthur Ashe to write about the false lure of sports for young black men, and for $100 col­lared his friend, the artist LeRoy Neiman, to draw original pictures to go with many of the articles. Frank’s Sunday sports sec­tion received the Associated Press’s first editors’ award in 1977.

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My wife and I became friends with Frank and his wife, Arlene, and son, Charlie - wonderful people who left us too soon. Charlie died in 1993, an almost- iconic figure in bike-racing who broad­ cast and wrote about a sport he loved, including broadcasting bicycling at the Olympics. Arlene, a talented decorator who somehow figured where Frank’s voluminous file cabinets could be placed without preventing people from moving about, passed away 10 years later. They were married 48 years. It says something about Frank that Charlie’s widow, Mary, remarried, had children, and Frank con­ considers them his grandchildren.

He met the accomplished Zina Greene six years ago, and they travel the north­east corridor, either in Frank’s Toyota Land Cruiser to his home in Stockbridge, Mass., or his longtime home in Edgewater, N.J., or Zina’s other home in Washington, D.C.-not to mention trav­eling to see Zina’s kids and grandchildren. Frank also stops by to join fellow Silurians at luncheons. He has been a member more than a dozen years.

The numbers in Frank’s résumé are quite remarkable: He has covered eight Olympics, about 15 Super Bowls (includ­ing the first three). He was president of the New York Track Writers Association for more than 40 years (thanks Frank, for those $6 luncheons at the weekly meet­ings at L’ome’s).

In recent years, Frank has been a bul­wark in supporting sports at UConn, his alma mater. Although Charlie went to USC, Frank established the Charles Litsky Me­ morial Scholarship Fund at Connecticut.

Typically, Frank can tell you all the rel­evant facts about the scholarship, which has raised about a quarter-of-a-million dollars: they have come from winners of two Pulitzer Prizes, winners of three Emmys, one Super Bowl-winning coach, one Super Bowl-winning team, five Olym­pic gold medalists, five contributors in various sports halls of fame, and winners of seven Tours de France. You think Frank knows some people?

Of course I also was curious and won­dered recently about all those files he used to have. For some reason, when he was 8, he started keeping files on football play­ers (“even though I didn’t know anything about football”). I also remember Frank clipping stories all the time when I was a copy boy. Well, what about all those clips, Frank?

“I’m glad you asked,” he said. “Everything’s very neatly filed in cardboard drawers - 70 feet of them." He’s the only guy I know who measures his stuff. And how not? It’s a great collection.
BY MYRON KANDEL

My first byline was unusual in the sense that it was probably written by someone other than me - and never saw the light of print. I was working as a copyboy at The New York Times during the summer of 1951. It was in the middle of my second semester at Brooklyn College, from which I was going to graduate that following January. In the midst of running copy, sorting mail, sharpening pens, and carrying stacks of paper up from the pressroom and assorted other mundane activities, I learned that any member of the Times staff was eligible to write editorials on the editorial page of The Times. I found an unused reporter's desk in the midst of running copy, sorting mail, sharpening pens, and carrying stacks of paper up from the pressroom and assorted other mundane activities, I learned that any member of the Times staff was eligible to write editorials on the editorial page of The Times. I immediately set to work. The country was embroiled in the Korean War. It had to be ended, and I had some ideas about that. When my copyboy shift was finally over, I found an unused reporter's desk and wrote an editorial that was published in the next day's Times. "The title of each editorial was the last name of the author, followed by the title of the piece and the initials of the author. I immediately set to work. The country was embroiled in the Korean War. It had to be ended, and I had some ideas about that. When my copyboy shift was finally over, I found an unused reporter's desk and wrote an editorial that was published in the next day's Times. "Give Blood — and save a life!"

But that didn't mean it was certain to be published. Those "filler" editorials sometimes hung around for days or even weeks before being published. On the other hand, it was sometimes possible to get a single sheet of lined yellow paper each night! I learned to see the name Kandel show up. No luck.

It finally dawned on me after a few luckless nights that The Times was not in need of any copyboy Myron Kandel for the solution to the Korean War, so I decided to set my sights lower. I found an editorial on the need to give blood to support the war effort. The day after I submitted it, I rushed up to the composing room to look at that yellow sheet of paper hanging from a spike — and — joy of joys! — there it was: "Give Blood — and save a life!"

New Members

Daniel Basone is a New York-based global investment correspondent for Thomson Reuters. He covers financial markets from a trade policy, and economic and political analysis from Asia, Europe, Latin America and the United States. Prior to joining Thomson Reuters in 1997, he was a reporter at CNN Business News. He is a former president of the New York Financial Writers' Association.

Kathleen Brady was a reporter at Women's Wear Daily in the 1970s and 80s before spending a decade reporting for Time magazine and writing for Bloomberg, Reuters, and the International Herald Tribune. She has written an article on a pro bono basis for Time. She is the author of "Hisa Tarbell: Portrait of a Mudmaker" and "Lucille: The Life of Lucille Ball.

Douglas Clancy is an assistant managing editor of The Bergen Record. He joined The Record in 1976 and has held various reporting and editing posts, including special projects editor and business editor. From 2007 to 2011, he was the newspaper’s editorial page editor. The Record is a Bergen County, N.J., daily newspaper.

Donna Cernoch is a journalism professor at SUNY Purchase. Her track record as a journalist goes back to 1981, when she was an assistant producer at WCBS-TV. She later became a freelance writer whose work has appeared in The New York Times, The Daily News, Monocle, salem.com and the Washington Post.

Mary Cronin was a senior correspondent for Time magazine from 1989 to 1999. She is the author of numerous covers stories and wrote everything from celebrity profiles to pieces on modern prison design.

Frank DiGiau, a senior editor at Billboard magazine, was a columnist and editor for the New York Observer. His previous positions included contributing editor and writer at Vanity Fair magazine and assistant editor at The New York Post and The New York Daily News.

Mike Eisenrau is a broadcast news veteran who launched his journalism career in 1983 as a news writer and reporter for WJSU/ABC radio in Chicago. He was a reporter, editor and news director for WNER Radio News from 1987 to 1991 and is now in public relations.

Howard M. Epstein is the former editor and publisher of Facts on File, and had a hand in founding and editing many of its publications. Facts on File’s reference and news service databases provided an important research source for newspapers all over the country in fields ranging from history to health. He left Facts on File in 1989 and has since been a freelance writer and publishing consultant. He is the translator of Serge Krauthammer’s “French Children of the Holocaust: A Memoir.”

Jill Freedman is a freelance photographer and the author of seven photo collections. Her work is part of the permanent collections of major institutions, including the New York Museum of Modern Art and the International Center of Photography to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

John Martine was a national correspondent for ABC News from 1975 to 2002. He shared a George Polk Award for reporting on the tobacco industry’s manipulation of nicotine. He also shared an Emmy Award for reporting on public services for H. Ross Perot’s private projects; and he won an Award for Excellence from the National Association of Black Journalists for documenting the role of 18,000 black sailors in the Civil War Navy

Betsy Osho was a television producer for 30 years prior to retiring. From 1979 to 2009, she produced segments in the news departments of NBC-TV, ABC-TV and WCNB-TV, including stories for "Outlets NBC" and for ABC’s “20/20.” In addition, she produced documentaries for WCBS, and from 1972 to 1978, she was the book editor at the "Today" show.

Graciela Rogerio was a producer and writer at WABC-TV’s “ViewsWeek” News from 2011 to 2012, producing daily reports and special features on the news for the nightly newscasts for much of that time. Now retired.

Andrea Sachs retired this year as a senior reporter at Time magazine, where she had spent the last 30 years, most of them devoted to covering the book business.

Jane Sassone is the founding executive director of the McGraw Center for Business Journalism at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism. She was an editor and writer at Business Week from 1984 to 2009, was Washington bureau chief for Yahoo! News from 2010 to 2011, and has financial reporting at Tausheghi University in Bagh.

Rita Satz was an Emmy-winning writer and producer for WNBC-TV and the “Today” show for more than 20 years. She also won an investigative reporting award from the New York Society of Professional Journalists. After she retired, she taught a course called “Inside TV News” at the Center for Learning and Living.

Sheffield Shetland has a background in radio and television that began in 1973, when she was an on-air reporter for WNBC in New York. She has worked as a TV reporter and producer for such organizations as Financial News Network, WNBC-TV, WGN-TV and WXYZ-TV. Currently, she is a freelance radio anchor, producer, writer and segment editor.

Martha Weinman Lear has been a freelance writer since 1982 and the author of "Heartburns" and the just-published "Survival in the Shadows: Seven Jews in Berlin" (Peter Owen/London and Random House/ Ger-

Martha Weinman Lear has been a freelance writer since 1982 and the author of "Heartburns" and the just-published "Survival in the Shadows: Seven Jews in Berlin" (Peter Owen/London and Random House/ Germany). She is the author of three books: "How to Invest $50 to $5,000," "Financial Tips You Can’t Afford Not to Know" and "How to Invest $50 to $5,000."

Fred T. Ferguson, 82, died on Aug. 22. A second-generation Silurian and a former board member, he was a reporter and editor at UPI for 27 years, starting in 1966, before embarking on a career in public relations, primarily for PR Newswire.

John Mack Carter, 86, died on Sept. 26. He was the trailblazing editor of McCall’s, Ladies’ Home Journal and Good Housekeeping who mod-

Isabel Mount, 86, a long-time Silurian who was actively involved in helping to promote some of New York’s leading cultural institutions, died on Sept. 29, 2014. After the death of her husband, Murray Schumacher, another veteran Silurian, who was a reporter at The New York Times for 48 years. Mount worked for such organizations as the Museum of Modern Art, the Museum of Primitive Art, the American Museum of Natural History, National Geographic Society, and Teachers College at Columbia University.

In Memoriam

Nancy Dunann, a veteran business writer and the editor and publisher of TravelSmart, a news letter with a financial spin on the world of travel, died on Aug. 22. She was the author of more than 30 books, including "The Dun & Bradstreet Guide to Your Investments," "Never Call a Broker Before You Read 300 Other Financial Tips You Can’t Afford Not to Know" and “How to Invest $50 to $5,000."

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Society of the Silurians

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