IEEE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Editor--Emily Schlesinger
Baltimore Gas and Electric Co.
Baltimore, MD 21203

AdCom Meetings

PC's AdCom has met four times since its meeting of February 23, which was reported in the last issue of this Newsletter. The two unscheduled meetings in Los Angeles (May 17 and 18) are summarized in a separate article. Highlights of the two regular meetings (April 25 and June 29) are as follows:

1. In April, Bert Pearlman presented the "hardware" of the Alfred N. Goldsmith Memorial Award for 1978--an engraved pewter pitcher; see photo.

2. In June, Lacy R. Martin (of Pullman-Swindell, Pittsburgh) was named to fill Irv Seideman's unexpired AdCom term (1979-81); he will represent PC in a new liaison group being formed to provide Group/Society opinion and suggestions for the staff of the IEEE Proceedings.

3. Lou Cole has resigned from PC's AdCom; he is Program Chairman (1979-80) and Chairman-Elect (1980-81) of the Central New Jersey Chapter of the American Society for Information Science.

4. Della Whittaker, with suggestions made by other AdCom members separately and together, is preparing guidelines for administration of a PC Scholarship Program.

5. Rudy Joenk was congratulated on the Transactions issue (June 1979) on patents. Extra copies (500) were printed and are for sale as described in another article. McDonnell Douglas Corporation's Aircraft Division, with full permission and advice from IEEE Publishing Services, has printed 1000 copies for use in an internal education program.

6. Ron Blicq's textbook and home-study course, Technically-Write!, are being revised and repriced. Details will be announced later. The course carries 6 IEEE Continuing Education Achievement Units (CEAUs).

7. Leon Pickus conducted PC's workshop, Technical Communication and Report Writing, at the International Communications Conference in Boston, June 14-15.

8. Bob Woelfe has sent out news releases on PC's growth (23%) in 1978, the home-study course and practicum, and the Goldsmith Award. PC's new Boston Chapter will be the subject of a forthcoming notice, and PC membership ads are being mailed to the editors of IEEE newsletters.

PC's AdCom in Los Angeles

The seven PC AdCom members present at the 26th International Technical Communication Conference in Los Angeles (Blicq, Dobson, Pearlman, Rosich, Schlesinger, Wells, Whittaker) held two unscheduled AdCom meetings, on the evenings of May 17 and 18, respectively. No motions were passed but some interesting information was exchanged and discussed.

1. Dave Dobson has again reprinted Mary Fan Buehler's Report Construction, one of PC's steady sellers; 500 copies are now in stock and available for $2.50 each, with rates for bulk orders; details elsewhere in this Newsletter.

2. Bill Wells, who belongs to both PC and the Society for Technical Communication, edits STC's Newsletter, Intercom. When he was sent unexpectedly to Saudi Arabia in March on temporary duty for his employer, he assembled available copy and asked Dave Dobson to see the Spring issue of the Newsletter through printing and mailing. Dave obliged, but inserted "the first available Saudi-like photograph"--the likeness of an unidentified man in Western suit and Arab head-gear--over the caption "Editor of Intercom in Saudi Arabia."

3. Irv Seideman has resigned from the AdCom.

4. Bert Pearlman has the stock of PC's Transactions for the last three years in his office. Ask him for copies.

5. PC members have formally and informally protested the projected transfer of IEEE publications personnel from New York to Piscataway. (Note: The decision to transfer has been rescinded.)

6. At the 26th ITCC, PC members answered a number of personal inquiries about PC's work, purpose, and personnel. Five PC-ers were on the Conference Program, and all seven PC-ers who attended wore stick-on labels, "Ask About IEEE Professional Communication Society," throughout all sessions. They also kept replenishing the supply of PC membership leaflets on the Conference literature table. Other PC-ers could do the same at any IEEE Conference with a bit of pre-planning. Will you volunteer to represent PC at the next Conference you attend? Ask an AdCom member to help you get started.

When business is good, it pays to advertise; when business is bad, you've got to advertise.
--Anon.

Letter from the President

Once again, in the present gasoline crisis, the general public is confused by information issued by the government, communication media, and oil companies, and the gap of mistrust opens a little wider to make a more constrained workplace atmosphere for members of the technical community. But government and industry are not necessarily the evil-doers depicted by the media (as in motion pictures like "The China Syndrome"). The problem lies in the difficulty of communicating technical information effectively to a lay public.

Everyone involved has some sort of inability. People in industry or government transmit technical information to news reporters who often do not understand it, or who have not the time to coordinate pieces of information into a logical format. The media, therefore, transmits faulty or uncoordinated information to the general public, which again may not understand it or may receive the wrong "facts" or the wrong impression. The confusion which follows is in many cases interpreted as deliberate deception. Mistrust arises and increases. The credibility gap ever widens, with the result that future communications become even more suspect than those of the past.

Although there may be some deliberate cover-ups in some quarters, government and industry in general consist of people who are ethical, hard working, honest, and sincere. The problem lies in the fact that technical matters are not communicated in a straightforward way which makes sense to the general public.

The news media's pushing technical people for instant answers during crises does not help either. When a technical problem arises in industry, scientists and engineers approach it in a rational way: i.e., they state the problem, propose and test hypotheses, carefully collate and analyze results, run control tests, etc., before publishing their results. In the DC-10 and Three Mile Island incidents, however, the media pressed for immediate answers; so much premature and conflicting information was released that the public became suspicious and incredulous. One industry executive remarked, "Even when we say that one plus one equals two, no one believes us."

In this context, members of IEEE/PCS have at least two responsibilities. As citizens we must question the methods and motives of the news media and insist that they become responsive to the general public's well-being rather than eager to create and transmit a story just for the sake of publishing or broadcasting. Think of the reports about, "Skylab is falling." They were sensational first and factual later. Furthermore, as engineers and technical communicators, we must educate ourselves, our management, and our colleagues on the need for honest, timely, understandable communication on all subjects.

These responsibilities deserve a mass commitment and involve difficulties which may seem unsurmountable. The alternative, however, is continued confusion and mistrust and a more hostile workplace for the technical community. All of these are unacceptable.

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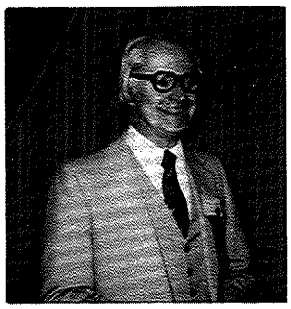
Let us, then, communicate with the news media, demanding that they become more trustworthy. Let us communicate with our government leaders, letting them know our concerns. Let us communicate with our managements, our technical societies, and our colleagues on these matters, and let us educate ourselves in the art of communication.

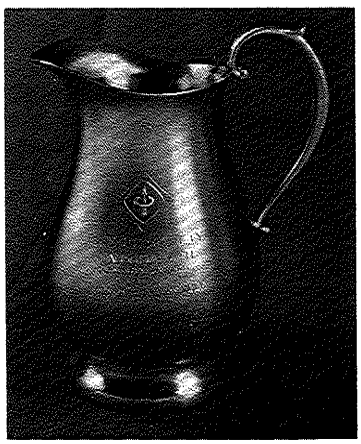
At home some evening, try to explain to the members of your family, in language they can understand, what technical tasks you performed during the day and for what purpose. Don't "talk down"; that will "turn off" your audience. Most people have more intelligence than we give them credit for. Try communicating some bit of job-related technical information to your husband or wife, your siblings, your children. You may be both surprised and pleased at the questions and discussions that will follow.

Bertrand B. Pearlman
President IEEE/PCS



Jim Lufkin speaks to the Society for Scholarly Publishing, Boston, June 4, 1979.

Jim Lufkin receives Life Membership in the Society for Scholarly Publishing. With him are A. F. Spilhaus, Jr., and E. K. Gannett, SSP Officers.



Pewter pitcher, PC's Goldsmith Award for 1978.

Bert: Please read out loud.

Emily: It has the Institute logo with two little arrows and it says "IEEE PC Society, A. N. Goldsmith Memorial Award, 1978, Emily K. Schlesinger." It's beautiful. Thank you, all PC-ers.

Elitism

What I dislike about football coaches is their elitism. If you're not a good player, they won't let you join the team. They don't care about your creativity. I think that's undemocratic. As long as your holistic intention is creative, I don't think they ought to count fumbles or missed tackles or superficial mistakes like that.

I think the snobs who coach athletic teams ought to be required to take courses in education. Then they'd learn that what matters is a holistic approach with understanding and appreciation, not subskills and winning.
--Attributed to J. Mitchell Morse in The Underground Grammarian, January 1979.

Welcome to PC!

In March through June, 251 new members joined PC. They live in 6 provinces of Canada, 30 of the United States, and 37 other countries. Welcome to all! Please, as individuals, let us know what PC can do for you and what you would like to do for PC.

Argentina
J. M. Crom

AUSTRALIA
S. Gunaridis
G. E. Smith

BELGIUM
R. C. Polfliet
J. Verbist

BRAZIL
J. E. G. Araujo
P. Bubach
G. O. Paez
N. D. Parada

CANADA

British Columbia
J. C. Knutson
R. W. Racine

Manitoba
V. Bovan
P.M. Thorp
F. Venema

Nova Scotia
J. E. Fage

Ontario
D. J. Alcorn
T. Armstrong
T. K. Chen
K. P. Drew
C. D. Holmes
J. Horban
B. L. MaCrae
S. E. March
R. C. Negus
G. E. Pajari
R. J. Patton
C. E. Spike
J. Sturdy
D. G. Ulmer

Quebec
I. M. Abu-Hakima
C. Morin
Y. Nadeau
G. Tellier

Saskatchewan
R. N. Kunkel

CHILE
F. Contreras A.

COLUMBIA
J. E. Rodriguez M.
T. G. Tellez

CYPRUS
A. M. Constantinou

ENGLAND
A. Bennouna
B. R. Gaines
B. M. Osman
R. J. Saam
Y. N. Vedd

EGYPT
M. A. Elsoury
R. M. Rifaat

FINLAND
P. T. Makinen

FRANCE
P. G. Falconnet
D. M. Hurez

GREECE
A. Katsaggelos

HONDURAS
H. L. R. Milla

HONG KONG
K. F. Chan
M. M. Ho
K. Tsui

ICELAND
E. B. Hreinsson

INDIA
T. V. Balan
K. M. Hebbar
R. E. Marathe

ISRAEL
I. L. Jacobson
M. Y. Margalit
I. Rapaport
E. Yalin-Mor
M. Yarom

ITALY
P. Antoniucci
V. Camera
E. Corti
G. Soardo

JAMAICA
M. O. Harris

JAPAN
S. Egashira
N. Furuya
N. Koishi
M. Takano
H. Yamamoto
M. Yamasaki

KOREA
H. B. Kim

LEBANON
I. M. Juma

LIBYA
O. F. Abidia

MEXICO
M. A. Arispe
J. Cervantes
F. L. Morales
F. J. Plata

PAKISTAN
A. Hussain

PANAMA
M. A. Chen

PERU
L. G. Madrid

PHILIPPINES
R. F. Gil

POLAND
J. P. Maryan

PORTUGAL
A. P. Barbosa

SAUDI ARABIA
A. Bassiouni
R. A. Runyon

SINGAPORE
K. T. Poeh

SPAIN
J. M. Jover
M. L. Lasso

SWEDEN
S. Sjogren

SWITZERLAND
B. A. Ferroni
R. P. Medioni

TAIWAN
S. Yang

WEST GERMANY
G. R. Bingham

UNITED STATES

Alabama
M. T. Kuester

Arizona
L. L. Hallman
M. R. Pomeroy
J. A. Porter
N. Simmons
D. J. Sofianos

California
K. R. Allen
W. K. Bucklen
T. A. Campbell
K. E. Feingold
L. L. French
R. Galloway
M. Gottlieb
T. J. Griffin
J. E. Haggmark
W. W. Hawkins
P. W. Kools
J. M. Lesher
N. Y. Malik
L. D. McCarthy
B. L. Myers
B. J. Oberthier
R. D. Orr
V. M. Pang
E. J. Pasahow
L. C. Post
S. M. Redmond
J. W. Rider
C. J. Robie
G. D. Rodriguez
R. Sedgwick
S. Shammas
C. E. Shaw
R. C. Stangel
R. N. Tamashiro
R. V. Tsina
E. G. Willingham, Jr.
E. D. Wilmoth

Colorado
I. L. McCoy
F. R. McElvain

Connecticut
R. E. Blechner

District of Columbia
G. L. Anderson

Florida
A. D. Alley III
S. V. Stein
W. A. Wyatt

Georgia
W. K. Beckworth
C. N. Raines

Illinois
D. L. Dvorak
A. G. Hansen
P. Laurin
C. R. Myers IV
S. E. Preece
J. C. Sood
A. R. Tebo
M. T. Weseman

Louisiana
R. E. Canright

Maryland
V. J. Calo
C. Comuntzis
J. J. Moraski
J. H. Ng
G. R. Suet
M. U. Thaden, Jr.

Massachusetts
E. M. Housman
J. J. Vernon
C. E. Wade

Michigan
J. M. Dunlap
G. Reasoner
C. L. Somach
R. Yee

Minnesota
C. R. Luartes
F. J. Vojta

Missouri
J. R. Briner
H. M Gillerman
D. J. Goldkamp
J. F. Minear

New Hampshire
J. Liu
T. F. McMullen
A. E. Southwick

New Jersey
C. W. Chuang
G. C. Hewitt
H. F. Hutto
E. Levinson
D. A. Plummer
R. H. Williamson

New Mexico
C. E. Davidson

New York
A. S. Beiler
P. E. Britton
T. H. Burke
G. Catsimbalis
A. Citron
R. J. Clark
B. C. Cohen
A. Corneretto
A. E. Greenberg
R. L. Hardacker
F. M. Kruger
R. W. Luoma
R. F. Markham
W. H. McDonald
R. Mihajlovic
R. J. Pizzutiello
J. Sverak
J. E. Thomas
J. Vaisman
L. Van der Bokke
G. E. Vaupel
P. L. N. Vrouvas
R. G. Wiley

N. Carolina
R. L. Peebles
C. P. Morse

Ohio
S. J. Covelli
R. J. De Hilster
D. A. Ksienski
S. S. Law
S. D. Miller
R. H. Parrish
P. D. Riley
H. S. Robbins
C. Rush

Oklahoma
R. E. Hoard

Oregon
D. A. Zocchi

Pennsylvania
R. P. Connors
P. J. Handwich
K. M. Prockup
E. L. Shlatz
J. C. Sopata

S. Carolina
D. E. Jones
O. D. Tatum, Jr.

S. Dakota
C. A. Meile

Texas
C. R. Cirulli
J. L. Decker
P. R. Kirschten
J. W. Lynch
W. A. Manly
W. B. McCracken
N. P. Watts, Jr.
J. L. Wisch

Virginia
K. R. Thompson

Washington
C. P. Kalpaxis
R. J. Kuklinski
R. N. Shah

Wisconsin
T. F. Karlmann
C. M. Stremke
J. C. Wilson
M. G. Zyvoloski

Blicq Honored

Ron Blicq, Chairman of PC's Education Committee, was named one of four "Outstanding Speakers" at the 26th International Technical Communication Conference in Los Angeles last May.

Conference registrants made the selections through official ballots, choosing on the basis of message, voice, delivery, appearance, and use of visual/audiovisual aids.

Ron Blicq teaches at Red River Community College, Wimpeg, Manitoba. Author of Technically--Write!, which is both a textbook and an IEEE Home-study Course, he has also designed a two-day workshop, Technical Communication and Report Writing, which he conducts at engineering conferences and business facilities in the U.S. and Canada. He spoke in Los Angeles on "Strategies for Presenting an In-house Technical Communication and Report Writing Course."

The ITCC balloting, according to the chairman of the activity, was the result of a continuing effort. Long before the conference, all speakers received guides for preparing and delivering talks. They were invited to rehearse at the Conference before award-winning Toastmistresses. And they were told that ballots would be used to identify skillful communicators.

Comments returned with the ballots seemed to show that this "Better Speech Effort" improved the general quality of Conference presentations. In many respects, as compared with former ITCCs, speaker deficiencies were decreased and audience attention was increased.

New Chairman in U.K.

A recent letter from Gordon Hanley, Secretary of PC's Chapter in Great Britain (United Kingdom/Republic of Ireland), reads in part as follows:

"Because of a major operation, Professor E. O. Taylor has resigned as Chairman of PC's UK/RI Chapter, but at his request I am sending a short report of the March meeting and news of the transfer of office. I shall continue as Secretary--a little more actively, I suspect, as Professor Taylor was happy to do most of the secretarial work as well as being Chairman!

"The new Chairman will be Mr. Basil Osborne of Rediffusion Limited. We aim to continue with a program of two meetings a year."

Secretary Hanley's account of the meeting appears elsewhere in this Newsletter, as does personal and professional "news" about PC-ers Hanley, Osborne, and Taylor.

English PC-ers

Basil W. Osborne

Basil Osborne, Chairman of PC's UK/RI Chapter, is a Fellow of the Institute of Physics and a Fellow of the Institution of Electronic and Radio Engineers. Since 1970 he has been Head of the Operational Services Department for the home operating companies of Rediffusion Engineering Ltd., with responsibility for engineering audits and standards.

Mr. Osborne's B.Sc. and M.Sc. are in physics. His early work at the National Physical Laboratory involved investigation of the electron content of the ionosphere. From 1952 to 1954 he lectured in physics at the University of Malaya, and later worked in England, Bermuda, and the United States on color television circuits, wave propagation and measurement, demodulator design, cable and ultra high frequency television reception, and other aspects of communication equipment. In the U.S., in 1969, he became Director of Engineering at the Telemet Company.

Mr. Osborne has published more than 20 papers in physics and engineering and a book on color television reception. He served on the IERE Technical Committee from 1955 to 1968 and on organizing committees for conferences on Television (1959), Television Measurements (1979), and Video and Data Recording (1976, 1979). He is now a member of the Executive Committeee of the UK/RI Section of IEEE as well as Chairman of the PC Chapter.

Gordon A. Hanley

G. A. Hanley, Secretary of PC's UK/RI Chapter, is Senior Lecturer in Electrical Engineering at Plymouth Polytechnic, the school from which he was graduated with honors in 1962. Since his college days, he has trained with England's Southern Electricity Board and served as System Design Engineer with the Central Electricity Generating Board; he is now

Chairman of the Southern Polytecnnics Power Group. He also earned the M.Sc. and Ph.D degrees and worked in planning and design for Preece, Cardew and Rider, consulting engineers.

In addition to being Senior Lecturer at Plymouth Polytechnic, Dr. Hanley has responsibilities as Industrial Training Coordinator, as Course Leader for the Higher National Diploma in Electrical and Electronic Engineering, and as a member of the Course Committee for the B.Sc. in Electrical and Electronic Engineering.

A Chartered Engineer, he is a member of both the Institution of Electrical Engineers and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

Eric Openshaw Taylor

Professor E. O. Taylor, retired Chartered Engineer, was Chairman of PC's UK/RI Chapter from 1975 through 1978. He is a graduate of London University's Imperial College of Science and Technology, a Fellow of the Institution of Electrical Engineers, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. From 1942 through 1969 he was Professor of Electrical Engineering at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh.

Professor Taylor has a number of articles and editorships to his credit; he has written two books on electric distribution and one on commutator motors. His co-authored D.C. Machines, will be published this year.

A Senior Member of IEEE, Professor Taylor is active in the UK/RI Section. For four years (1975-8), he was Chairman of IEE's Scottish Centre, and he has for some time served IEE and the Council of Engineering Institutions as External Examiner for various Universities and Polytechnics.

His non-engineering activities have included playing tennis, climbing hills, being a Toastmaster, editing for the Sussex Industrial Archeological Society, and serving as President of the Royal Scottish Society of Arts (1956-8).

Report Construction, by Mary Fran Buehler, has been reprinted with slightly larger type. Order from IEEE/PC, 6411 Chillum Place, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20012. Prices: 1 to 10 copies, $2.50 each; 11 to 25 copies, $2.40 each; 26 or more, $2.25 each. Send check with order; get helpful guidelines for "building" reports.

Meeting of UKRI Chapter

IEEE's PC Chapter in the U.K. met in March, 1979 with the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators. Mr. Hugh Marlow, a management and organization development consultant, spoke on "Computer Systems--Their Use and Abuse; or, Great Expectations Unfulfilled."

Mr. Marlow postulated that none or few of the original prognostications about the potential application of computers have been realized. The only achievement, he thinks, has been the creation of a professionally self-centered elite which has contributed little or nothing to industrial regeneration in the U.K., but which has in fact caused massive damage to management credibility. In practice, managers continue to be harassed and complain about shortage of time, computer programs and ancilliary work have made many jobs less interesting, and many formerly satisfactory services based on manual systems have been replaced by less convenient computer systems. The one major exception to the "unfulfilled great expectations" consists of the advances that have been made in scientific and professional engineering fields.

Mr. Marlow suggested a reason for this exception: the scientific and engineering disciplines are strong enough to determine and dictate the ways in which computer systems should be used. In less well established fields, the new computer personnel have formed a professionally privileged group which has dominated other less organized groups. The result has been that, in many cases, user needs have become secondary to the inflexible self-interest of systems designers. The possibility of reversing this situation depends on whether users can assume responsibility for directing the activities of the computer professionals, or at least on whether they can work together to meet acceptable, clearly defined objectives.

Finally, Mr. Marlow made three predictions about future computer applications, suggesting that events described in Orwell's 1984 and Huxley's Brave New World may yet take place:

(i) Every potential airline passenger will be required to have a computer-based identity card which can be electronically scanned at the airport through an internationally linked computer system.

(ii) To avoid paralysing strikes by computer personnel in the public sector, the government of the day will introduce legislation making a public service strike a criminal, not a civil, offence.

(iii) A gradual discrediting of the jury system, chiefly because of racial issues, will lead to the setting up of a computer-based system of profiles; the present judicial system will be replaced by a Council which will supervise input data and compare profiles.

The meeting concluded with a lively discussion on computers in management.

Gordon A. Hanley, Secretary
UK/RI Chapter, IEEE/PCS

All the forces in the world are not so powerful as an idea whose time has come.

Victor Hugo

Boston PC Chapter

A second chapter of PC has been organized! We now have one in the United States, as well as one in the United Kingdom.

Ten PC-ers met on May 10 in Boston, elected three officers, and planned to hold monthly meetings beginning in September. They hope to have speakers on various aspects of written, spoken, graphic, and automated communication, and on the development and use of communication equipment.

Ron Eames (retired) and John Phillips (RCA) are advisor/members of the new Chapter. Its officers are Morton Cohen (Raytheon), Chairman; Alain Hanover (ITEK), Vice-Chairman; and David Crocker (Crockergraphics), Secretary--Treasurer.

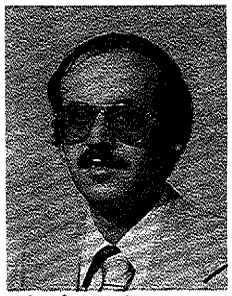
Three cheers for Boston!

Boston PC-ers

Morton Cohen

Morton Cohen, Chairman of PC's Boston Chapter, is Manager, Graphic Display Systems at the Equipment Division of Raytheon Company, responsible for engineering of the Company's RAYCOMP display and composition systems for the publishing industry. He was previously Manager, Electronic Engineering at Dymo Graphic Systems, primarily involved with the development of phototypesetting and text editing systems.

Mort holds a B.E.E. from The City College of New York and an M.S. from Stevens Institute of Technology.



Alain Hanover

Alain J. Hanover, Vice-Chairman of PC's Boston Chapter, is Phototypesetter Program Manager at the Wilmington, Massachusetts plant of Itek Composition Systems. Now responsible for engineering phototypesetters, he formerly worked with text editing and composition systems at Xylogic Systems, Inc.

Alain received BS degrees in Electrical Engineering and Mathematics from MIT and an MS degree in Computer Science from Harvard University.

David C. Crocker

David C. Crocker, Secretary/Treasurer of PC's Boston Chapter is responsible for information management systems at the Draper Laboratory. He and his wife operate a small typesetting company in their home.

Dave has a BS degree in Electrical Engineering from MIT. He could not send a photograph at this time.

The first requirement of good conversation is that nobody should know what is coming next.
--Havilah Babcock

PC Needs You

For those readers who would like to be more active in PC affairs but "don't know what to do," the Society's AdCom suggests the following:

1. Read in the list below the names of PC standing committees, their chairmen, and suggested nominal activities.

2. Find an activity that you'd like to take part in.

3. Write or call a PC officer or editor and offer to help.

By working at a PC project of your own choosing, you can not only help to promote the quality of technical communication in general but also refine your own communication skills and add luster to your professional image.

Awards and Fellows Committee

a. Once yearly, as requested, review the submitted qualifications of IEEE members who have been nominated to receive an Institute honor and whose sponsors have asked for PC support and recommendations; rarely more than one candidate is referred each year for PC opinion.

b. Choose a PC member to receive the Alfred N. Goldsmith Award for working within the Society's organization to improve technical communication; assemble professional data to justify the choice; obtain AdCom's approval of the individual and a suitable testimonial; arrange presentation ceremony and ensure that it is publicized in PC's Transactions and Newsletter, and in an appropriate news release.

c. Collect and submit suitable data, as specified, to support the nomination for IEEE Fellow or other Award of PC members considered by AdCom to merit such honor.

Education Committee

a. Present PC-sponsored lecture, workshop, or course in some aspect of communication as part of IEEE's continuing education program; support such an activity by making arrangements, publicizing, reviewing proposed presentations, or suggesting and developing presentations.

b. Enroll in PC's home-study course ("Technically--Write!"), or urge others to enroll; offer to be an instructor.

c. Suggest that PC's 2-day workshop on writing technical reports be given in your company or IEEE Section.

Meetings Committee

a. Take part in planning or presenting a national or local PC-sponsored conference or professional meeting on such a subject as "The Psychology of Professional Communication" or "The Engineer as a Professional Communicator."

b. Organize or take part in a PC-sponsored session (i.e., have three speakers or panelists discuss three aspects of a communication problem) at an IEEE convention or at the convention of a national communication society.

Membership and Publicity Committees

a. "Spread the word" about PC publications and courses; urge your colleagues to join PC and work with you to attain PC objectives and professional benefits.

b. Organize a PC group or chapter in your company or local IEEE Section.

Ways and Means Committee

a. Come to an AdCom meeting.

b. Suggest a goal or project and volunteer your services.

Out, ~~Derned~~ ~~Darnd~~ Spot

In his letter published in the April issue of the IEEE Professional Communication Society Newsletter, Mr. Greg Ruffner objects to the content of an item in the January issue titled "Reading Problems," which criticized the methods and the results of the reading professionals in today's public schools.

Mr. Ruffner also questions why such an item should run in the PCS Newsletter at all, and he asks "What is this traditional teaching that causes reading problems to mysteriously disappear after a year of implementation?"

Perhaps I can answer one of Mr. Ruffner's questions. This "traditional teaching" method is known as "phonics," defined in Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary as "a method of teaching beginners to read and pronounce words by learning the phonic value of letters, letter groups, and especially syllables."

Since phonics was replaced by the "word recognition" teaching method, the teaching profession has produced a steady stream of high school graduates who can barely read at what was once considered to be the fifth-grade level. True, today's children can recognize "dog" and "cat" after only one week in the first grade. By the time they have graduated from high school, some will have added "See Spot run" to their repertoire of "words I've seen before."

Meanwhile, the teaching profession continues to call strikes and extort higher and higher pay from the suffering taxpayer, and to lobby for its own federal Department of Education, proudly proclaiming that today's children are the best-educated generation in history. It cites as proof today's low failure rates and high incidence of A-B students---while using the world as a dumping ground for valedictorians who can barely read and write.

I hope that the preceding will answer Mr. Ruffner's question regarding the traditional teaching method. I'm sorry, though, that I can only answer his questions regarding the propriety of this subject as a topic for presentation in the PCS Newsletter with another question: What better place to present an item dealing with reading skills than in a publication expressly devoted to the professional interests of professional communicators?

Please...let's ALL do everything we can to restore the traditional phonic method of reading instruction to our public schools, while we still have someone to write for and to. Let's bring back the McGuffey Reader and give Dick and Jane the bounce. And may my Doberman pinscher, my Labrador retriever, and my mutt forgive me for saying it...let's give Spot the boot, too.

Ed Palko

Senior Editor, PLANT ENGINEERING
Senior Member, IEEE
Member, IEEE/PCS

Comment on T-W!

The following "testimonial" came to Ron Blicq from an engineer who had recently finished PC's Home-Study Course, Technically--Write!

"You may be interested to know that one of my department's goals at work is to have all fourteen of our engineers and technical assistants complete the T-W! course. Three of us have finished it and four others are now taking it. The writing of several of the engineers has improved markedly."

Health Care

An IEEE Committee is being created to formulate policy statements on the application of technology to health care. Issues to be considered are

cost of obtaining and delivering health care

use of information systems

application of technology

prevention of disease through regulation of the environment

technology-related education

physician/engineer relationships

and regulation of technology

Bert Pearlman has been asked to name a PC-er to serve on this Health Care Technology Policy Committee, which will work under the United States Activities Board. Write or call Bert if you would like to be a member.

PC's Transactions

Rudy Joenk, Editor of PC's Transactions, has begun a feature called "Forum" as a vehicle for informal reader involvement.

He hopes to publish in each issue a letter or short essay-like communication, with two or more solicited responses and perhaps a reply from the original author.

Contributions should be suggestions or ideas for "brain-storming" rather than comments on published articles. Suitable subject matter is anything that may be of interest or value to communicators of technical information.

PC-ers, write a paragraph or two on your pet peeve, a proposed "step forward," thoughts about a controversial subject, or your need for help with a problem.

* * * * *

Some people would rather disappear forever than speak before an audience. Although a psychological cure for phonophobia may be possible, planning, preparation, and practice can go a long way toward easing the pain of standing up and talking to a group.

Papers on these subjects are invited for consideration for a special issue of PC's Transactions to be published in March 1980--Public Speaking for Engineers and Scientists.

The emphasis should be on effective oral communication of technical information to either a technically trained or a lay audience; the size of the audience may range from one person to thousands.

Papers will be due by September 14, 1979. Expressions of intent to submit and long abstracts are requested by July 6. If you want to contribute but are reading this notice after July 6, write promptly.

* * * * *

Copies of the June 1979 issue of PC's Special Transactions on Patents are available from the Editor for $4 each in any quantity. Make check payable to the IEEE Professional Communication Society.

* * * * *

Communicate about any or all of the above by writing or calling Dr. R. J. Joenk, IBM Corporation Dept. 588, P.O. Box 1900, Boulder, CO 80302; (303) 447-5764.

We trained hard--but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up into teams, we would be reorganized. I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet any new situation by reorganization, and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency, and demoralization.

Petronius Arbiter

PC-ers at 26th ITCC

Six members of PC's AdCom and one former member took part in three of the four disciplinary stems of the 26th International Technical Communication Conference held in Los Angeles, May 16-19, 1979, by the Society for Technical Communication.

Craig Harkins and Dan Rosich gave papers; Ron Blicq, Dan Rosich, and Della Whittaker conducted workshops; Dave Dobson and Herb Michaelson moderated sessions; Emily Schlesinger chaired the Writing and Editing Stem.

In each of the four Conference Stems, from 10 to 14 sessions were organized and 50 to 60 persons spoke or presided. Education and Research speakers discussed chiefly teaching methods. Management and Development speakers talked about proposals, personal relations, information flow, planning, decision making, and women in publication management. Visual and Audiovisual experts suggested and explained techniques for making oral, slide-illustrated, and multi-image presentations. In the Writing and Editing Stem, sessions concerned style guides and the recognition of bias in language; quality, varieties, problems, and interfaces of technical writing; translation, ethics, and indexing.

More than 800 technical communicators attended the Conference. The 27th ITCC will be held next May in Minneapolis.

PC-ers for Engineering Management

Two PC-ers are on the program of the Engineering Management Conference to be held at Stouffer's National Center Hotel in Arlington, Virginia, November 5-7, 1979: Dan Rosich of the University of Connecticut and Howard Clark of the National Bureau of Standards.

In his workshop on problem-solving (Nov. 7), Dan Rosich will discuss models, systems, and patterns for decision-making, and participants in small teams will apply these tools and techniques to problems from their own work environments. Organizational, technical, and personal aspects of solutions will be considered, including such things as values and human behavior, trans-departmental difficulties, communication skills, and creativity.

Howard Clark will give both a two-hour lecture during the Conference and a two-day tutorial on "How to Make Effective Presentations" on November 8 and 9, immediately after the Conference.

The tutorial is being sponsored jointly by PC, IEEE's Engineering Management Society, and the U.S. Patent Office. Its first half, an expanded version of the two-hour lecture, will consist of teacher-student dialogue and a workshop on the preparation of visual aids. On the second day, each member of the class will make a ten-minute presentation, which will be recorded on videotape and reviewed by all class members in both written and oral critiques.

The tutorial will be given in offices of the Patent Offices, about two blocks away from Stouffer's Hotel. The registration fee of $75 per student will cover a set of prepared notes, material for visuals,

and light refreshments (mid-morning and mid-afternoon), but no lunch. To allow time for individual participation and to cover administrative costs, there must be no more than nine and no fewer than six registrants.

Another two-day tutorial to be held after the Conference is "Enhancing Managerial Opportunities for Engineers." A team of six speakers will make presentations.

During the Conference itself, about 30 concurrent sessions will be held on such subjects as problem-solving, documentation, innovation, motivation, planning, training, project management, and technology transfer.

Get more information from Dr. Edward A. Wolff, 1021 Cresthaven Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20903; 301-344-7496 (office), 301-439-1152 (home).

SSP

A new society has been formed whose roots were nurtured by the IEEE Professional Communication Society: the First Annual Meeting of the Scholarly Publishing was held in Boston June 4-6, 1979. This conference was an outgrowth of the biannual PC-sponsored IEEE Conference on Scientific Journals which began in 1973. PC's Past President, Jim Lufkin, was the progenitor of these early conferences and SSP's predecessor, the Association for Scientific Journals.

The objectives of SSP, the new society, are

*To facilitate interchange of learning among workers in all fields of scholarly endeavor, including the sciences, the humanities and related disciplines.

*To improve communication among practitioners engaged in all aspects of the transfer of scholarly information.

*To foster the advancement of user-responsive systems for the transfer of scholarly information, and to encourage the development and use of appropriate technology.

SSP's three-day meeting began with a plenary session, "Today's Environment," moderated by E. K. Gannett, Director of IEEE Publishing Services and Program Chairman. Other sessions included

*Scholarly Communication: Major Components of Cost
*Composition Alternatives
*The Changing Library Marketplace for Scholarly Works
*The Review Process
*Publication Design Workshop
*Quo Vadis Scholarly Publishing

Speakers and attendees spanned the gamut of commercial and nonprofit publishers, librarians, printers, compositors, editors, educators, and those involved in abstracting and indexing. The diversity of the more than 300 participants stimulated interchange and communication among these professionals in the field of scholarly publishing.

Plans are underway for the SSP Conference to be held in Chicago in 1980.

--Ann H. Burgmeyer, Supervisor
IEEE Publication Production

CCS

The Council of Communication Societies will hold its 1979 Conference December 7-8 at the Executive House Hotel in Washington, D.C.

More detailed information will appear in the next issue of this Newsletter, but PC-ers are urged to put this meeting on their personal agenda now and try to attend.

Past CCS Conferences have been more than ordinarily stimulating and informative, to say nothing of their attractive registration fees--the $50 covers one working breakfast, two lunches, and five lecture or panel sessions presented by "people in the know."

This year's Conference will concern communication in the 1980's--first, influences from government, business/industry, science/technology, and the public; and second, censorship vs. the right to know.

ASIS

ASIS--the American Society for Information Science--will hold its 42nd Annual Meeting October 14-18, 1979, at the Downtown Radisson Hotel in Minneapolis. Discussions and papers will relate to the subject, "Information Choices and Policies."

The program is being advertised as "dynamic." It includes pre-conference meetings concerned with documents, information services, and data bases; seven special sessions on various aspects of national and international management and use of information; sessions on digital image enhancement, hobby computers and personal computing, and The White House Conference on Library and Information Services, among others; and 38 sessions organized by ASIS Special Interest Groups.

There will be many exhibits, a Buffet Supper and Mixer on October 14, the Information Science Theater, and other features. Students, instructors with classes, and single-day attendees and retirees can make special arrangements; individual registrations range from $70 to $120.

Get further information from Sam Beatty, ASIS Executive Director, 1010 16th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036.

What is INTECOM?

INTECOM is the International Council for Technical Communication, an association of the technical communication societies of eight countries--

Australia
Canada
France
Norway
* Sweden
* The Netherlands
* United Kingdom
* United States

It was organized in 1970 by societies of the countries starred in this list. The Society for Technical Communication, as one of the founding organizations, represents the United States.

The main objectives of INTECOM are

--to promote understanding of the importance of technical communication

--to improve standards for technical communication

--to foster the formation of technical communication societies

--to facilitate the exchange of information among member countries

--and to encourage member societies to work together.

The executive body of INTECOM is the Board of Officers, composed of one person from each Member Country. Board members are elected from the General Assembly, to which each Member Country sends two Delegates who may be from the same or different Member Organizations. The General Assembly meets every two years; the Board of Officers manages interim affairs, and ad hoc committees and working groups carry out special projects.

The areas of technical communication in which INTECOM is interested are communication research, advertising, industrial design, information retrieval, graphic arts, and maintenance. The organization may issue statements of opinion, serve as a point of contact for technical communication societies, coordinate the efforts of member societies, and so on.

PC, through its AdCom, has asked to become an Affiliate Member Society of INTECOM. As an Affiliate Member, PC would send Observers to the General Assembly, not Delegates. They would have no vote, but would be able to express PC's point of view, participate and involve PC in INTECOM activities, and perhaps improve some international aspects of professional communication. Under these circumstances too, AdCom could ask PC-ers of any nationality to attend the General Assembly as representatives of PC only, not as Delegates from a country.

INTECOM's General Assembly will meet next in Paris, September 20-22, 1979. Lars Forsslund of Sweden is President of the organization; Mary Schaefer of the United States, Vice President; and Asbjorn Tunheim of Norway, Secretary-Treasurer.

I wish it would dawn upon engineers that, in order to be an engineer, it is not enough to be an engineer. While they are minding their own business, history may be pulling the ground from under their feet.

Jose Ortega y Gasset

Ridiculous!

The pendulum has gone full circle. (Electronics Times)

...two cylindrical balls...(Press Release)

--From The Communicator (ISTC), March 1979.

Reflections of a Godfather

by James M. Lufkin

(This is a slightly adapted version of a luncheon speech made at the First Annual Meeting of the Society for Scholarly Publishing, successor to the Association for Scientific Journals, June 4,1979, Boston, Massachusetts.)

I stand before you today, very much relieved at the title that has been thrust upon me, and for those of you who did not attend the three meetings of this group's parent organization, I need to explain that relief. I had good reason to be afraid of what might happen this morning.

At the second meeting of the Association for Scientific Journals, which was held at Cherry Hill, N.J., in 1975, Woody Gannett named me President. Now you would think that I might be grateful for that, and indeed it was something of an honor to be the first person in the history of the earth to be named President of a mailing list. Woody conferred this honor upon me with a series of funny remarks including some puns in Greek.

But he was not satisfied. At the third meeting, in Reston, Va., in 1977, his speech included a long eulogy, in iambic pentameter, which named me King of the Association, and I had every reason to fear that if I stuck around, I would be named Emperor at this meeting.

But in the intervening two years, a great change has occurred, and ASJ has been transferred into SSP. Dave Dobson suggests that I might compare what has happened to this organization with what has happened to the Commodore Hotel in New York, where we held our first ASJ meeting. The insides of it have been competely taken out, and within the old shell there is being built a magnificent new hotel.

But what I really want to talk about this noon has to do with something that Earl Coleman said at our meeting in Reston two years ago. Earl Coleman, then Chief Executive Officer of the Plenum Press, listened patiently to the arguments of editors and publishers and indexers and typesetters and proofreaders and all who together put things into print, and after two hours of this rambling and breast-beating and table-thumping, he stood up and said: "Look everybody, if we could just get rid of the authors and the readers, we would not have any of these problems!" I am here today to plead for a better understanding of the relationship between authors and readers.

Now, except for the last two years, I have been an author's editor since about 1960, and I find that the most common obstacle to acceptance of manuscripts is too little understanding on the part of authors——too little understanding of who their readers are or who their readers could be. I have had at least a hundred manuscripts handed to me for advice or approval, with a note from the author saying: "Here is a complete manuscript. Where do you think I should offer it?"

I finally developed a more or less rubber-stamp answer to that: "What would you think, dear author, of a civil engineer who built a great bridge and then said: 'Isn't this great! Now where shall I put it?'"

Seriously, however, for better communication between author and reader, we need two things. We need, first of all, some idea of what the reader knows already and of what he wants to know. We need to know something of what is in his head, which is all too often ignored. That is the first thing. And the second thing we need is an ability or at least a grudging acceptance of the need for the writing or formulation of generalizations.

Too often, what we have is a private dialogue between specialists. The most striking example of this that I can think of is a sign on the wall which was quite familiar in industrial organizations until quite recently. You would go down the hall of a large building, and there would be, strapped or fastened to the wall, a fire extinguisher, and above that fire extinguisher a sign with very large, very clear type: "For use on Class A fires only."

This was a sign written by people concerned with fire extinguishers; it was intended to be read by other people concerned with fire extinguishers and by nobody else. It ignored "outsiders," without any consideration of social implications or general applications.

Now, in the matter of generalization, scientists as a group, have a reputation for being snobs, although they in no way deserve it. There are no more snobs among scientists than among any other set of professionals. What happens is this: the scientists turn away from the enormous difficulty of communicating with laymen and thereby get an undeserved reputation for snobbishness.

There was a fine cartoon on this subject in the New Yorker a few years ago. It showed two men, drink in hand, at a cocktail party. A third man, who also has a drink, approaches tentatively, but one of the first two says, "Unless you're a PhD, scram!"

This is an unfair characterization, but I have heard scientists say (though perhaps not in such plain English), "Popularization is beneath my dignity!"

Unfortunately, popularization is not beneath their dignity, it is beyond their competence--a very different matter.

Scientists recoil in horror from the very idea of generalization. They have been trained to react that way. This is unfortunate, though understandable. We all know that generalizations are inexact, but inexactness is the price you must pay to get the message across to someone other than the fellow sitting on the other side of the same bench in the same laboratory.

Once a specialist learns to generalize, however, he must immediately learn how to qualify his generalization, so that the inexactness will not upset him so much as to prevent or inhibit his communication. But he needs another warning. He must qualify the generalization so that it becomes acceptably inexact, yet accurate enough to transfer the information.

Now, in practicing this kind of adaptation and in getting authors to practice it, I have found a very simple arithmetic ratio: to make a generalization exact, you must qualify it; but as you add qualifications, the statement becomes more and more exact and less and less intelligible until it finally becomes absolutely exact and absolutely unintelligible.

The problem will yield, however, to an application of common sense, and I think that our job as editors is to talk our scientists into applying common sense. Will they not at least <u>try</u> to make their papers, to make their statements, or at least to make the abstracts of those papers or the introductions to those papers and statements -will they not <u>try</u> to make them intelligible to, for instance, the science editor of the local newspaper? I am not advocating journalism here. I find very often that when I ask a scientist to generalize about his work, he looks at me with an expression of such horror that you would think I had asked him to condense his paper into a headline for the National Enquirer.

I have noticed lately that there is a growing concern about this problem, and that we editors are not alone. The Arthur D. Little Laboratory recently published a survey in which the point is made that our means for transferring scientific information into places where it can be used to solve social problems are still rudimentary and inadequate.

But let's stop for a moment and ask: Must all science be relevant? In recent years, we have seen the notion of relevance carried to extremes. A number of people have deplored what is called the "ruinously relevant" transformation of our university research institutions into tools of social reform. Berthold Brecht, in his otherwise admirable dramatization of the life of Galileo, has his hero say at one point in the play: "The only purpose of science consists in that it can reduce or alleviate the misery of the human condition."

But we need not go that far. We need not think that only obviously useful science should be made intelligible to other than specialists. Basic research—that is, research done in the search for truth without any regard for its implications or utility—has opened up some startling Pandora boxes—two frightening ones in nuclear physics and genetics, for example. Max Planck, I think, had no idea of the practical use that quantum mechanics might someday be put to.

So let us not decide on the basis of perceived utility whether science should be made intelligible to non-specialists or kept as "private property." Wherever technologies may take us, we should have some understanding of them.

Let me quote another statement from the Arthur D. Little report: "Scientific and technical information is often viewed as two steps removed from important policy or problem-centered decision activities. It is considered more as the product of research and development, and as the lubricant of further research and development, than as the raw material for important decision and policy making."

This presents an appallingly shortsighted view of the importance of science and technical information. Whatever direction science and the technologies which follow it may take, understanding of them is an absolutely essential ingredient of informed public policy. Democracy itself depends on the general dissemination of all available knowledge.

Television—Bane or Blessing?

As we consider that human beings can now communicate through three types of media--oral/audio, literate, and electronic, we may also think that we choose, to some extent, how we shall avoid, be exposed to, or take part in the sending and receiving of messages along any available "pathway."

Nevertheless, these media, these vehicles which carry symbols, take on symbolic values of their own, and themselves are cultural forces to be reckoned with. A communication medium is not the message it carries, but it certainly gives, to the message and to those who receive the message, a massage of one sort or another.

From this point of view, E. J. Leed writes "Communication Revolutions and the Enactment of Culture" in a recent issue of Communication Research (5:3, 1978). His article discusses the symbolic values of the three communication media and the way in which the history of communication can be seen as a "mythic representation of culture."

Similarly, P. Hurst, in "Communication, Social Change, and Development," in Educational Broadcasting International (September 1978), discusses several theories about the relation of communication to social change and personal behavior. He suggests that communicators should be less concerned with disseminating new ideas and more with helping people to understand the complexities and consequences of different kinds of social living.

An earlier discussion, by D. Ozersky, describes one of the communication media as an invidious influence--"Television: the Isolating Medium" (in Et Cetera: A Journal Devoted to the Role of Symbols in Human Interaction, March 1977). The article points out that television, unlike the cinema and "live" drama, does not produce feelings of shared participation but rather dissolves social bonds, fragments its audience into a set of individuals alienated from reality and each other, erases perceived distinction between fact and fiction, reduces tolerance for ambiguity, increases desires for immediate satisfaction, and fosters non-reflective individualism.

Similar ideas are advanced by A. A. Berger--"The Hidden Compulsion in Television" (Journal of the University Film Association, 3:2, 1978). Berger discusses television as a medium for transmitting programs and considers the programs and commercials as popular art forms.

The combination of medium and messages, he thinks, creates psychological pressures and strongly affects social behavior. Viewers develop a fear of "missing something" which engenders both a desire for more and more programs and an anxiety to buy more and more products; they become alienated and encapsulated but at the same time irritable and de-individualized, unable to entertain themselves, to concentrate, or to think according to reason.

Two related articles, which discuss international aspects of television, appeared in a recent issue of Phaedrus (5:1, 1978). Ismid Halad ("Media and International Misunderstanding") laments the attitudes of "instant globalism" diffused in broadcasts which promote the interests of rich countries and transnational corporations. "Cultural invasions," he points out, present the political and economic patterns of materialistic Western life styles so attractively as to tempt, frustrate, and even mislead the people of emerging nations. At least today, apparently, electronic communication does not truly benefit countries ridden with poverty and social equality, nor does it significantly enhance international understanding.

The other article from Phaedrus, "Television, Cultural Colonialism, and Guerilla Warfare," by Jack Lyle, discusses the same situation from a slightly different point of view. Developing countries, Lyle says, receive television programs chosen by their authorities for economic reasons. Directors of television services must operate within budgets, and television audiences, composed of gluttons rather than gourmets, prefer entertainment to instruction. Because of the addictive effect of television, demands for more programs can rarely be restrained, and schedules can be expanded most cheaply and easily by importing program series. Undoubtedly the cultural imports affect life styles and perceived values, but they may also lead eventually to demands for more varied programming.

--Information condensed from summaries in Communication Abstracts for December 1978 (Nos. 822, 848, 851, and 915) and March 1979 (Nos. 109, 173).

Messages in 2001

The IEEE Communications Magazine for January 1979 contains an article called "Information and Communication in the Third Millenium" by Edward C. Posner, of the Department of Electrical Engineering and Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology.

The first part of the article presents a "somewhat idiosyncratic" and "admittedly rose-colored" picture, in some aspects "against conventional wisdom," of how people in the U.S. will send and receive messages around the year 2001. The second and third parts of the article discuss developments in information and communication theory that the author thinks will accompany the "progress" described earlier.

Only various phenomena of the prognosticated technological environment, not the whys or wherefores, are outlined in the following paragraphs:

1. Guided waves, especially fiber optics, will replace satellites for fixed services such as point-to-point trunking. They will carry wideband aggregated common-carrier communications now handled by satellite links--across oceans as well as continents.

2. Mobile communication (i.e., communication to and from moving sources) will expand, including use of satellites to ships, aircraft, and automobiles. All automobiles will have true communication devices for voice and traffic control, but commuter traffic will decrease because of increased communication links in homes and offices. Human-portable high-quality voice communication will be used mainly by military personnel.

3. The use of citizens'-band broadcasting will remain recreational; mobile telephony will replace it as a serious communication service.

4. The increase in radio frequency interference due to the multiplicity of fixed and mobile communication sources will require development of highly sophisticated monitoring instruments; these will operate automatically for individuals and especially for the U.S. Federal Communications Commission, which will monitor rather than regulate.

5. It will be possible to send Earth-generated video communication to astronauts on Mars, and to communicate via lasers through sea-water to submerged submariners or explorers. Information networks, including those for two-way video communication, will link all offices and most homes.

6. Networks and terminals will be so widely interconnected and easy to use that much clerical and intellectual work will be decentralized--if not into homes at least into small departments and subdepartments. Such dispersion will increase society's dependence on communication technology but will also increase the ability of individuals to have more varied life-styles without dropping out of the mainstream of social living.

7. Electronic fund transfer operations will be a matter of communication rather than of computing. The home-manager will review bills and authorize payment on a home terminal. A message management network will transfer the correct message to each of the two banks involved (payer's and payee's) and initiate computing to effect the transfer of funds. The record of the transaction will be stored in the payer's local data base and compared later with a transmitted bank statement.

8. Technical meetings and interactive multi-terminal communication will take place over information networks, through which library services will also be available. Local political issues will be discussed by network.

9. Commercial video broadcasting will be replaced by scheduled or even on-demand transmission into homes via fiber optics, with demand and billing transactions initiated from individual terminals.

10. Many uses of the telephone will be replaced by electronic in-basket services that deliver, edit, retrieve, and re-direct messages. Security of personal communication will be routinely available through the use of crypto-system technology and codes that are unbreakable. Specialized newspapers and magazines will still exist, but others will be displayed as electronic graphics; they will also be available as hard copy and in local disc storage.

The Future of Nuclear Power
by
Charles H. Holley

The recent incident at the Three Mile Island power plant has highlighted the issue of nuclear energy. It has focused attention on the question--What is the role of the nuclear option in supplying the future energy needs for the United States as well as for other countries? It is important that each member of IEEE be as well informed as possible on these issues; energy impacts each of us in a professional way as well as in our life style.

The nuclear power issue is one that demands more than a passive degree of attention. As one considers nuclear power as an element of our energy program, there is a plethora of compelling technical and non-technical considerations which need to be addressed: Has the International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation Program (INFCE) thoroughly examined the U-235 fuel cycle and the issue of waste disposal? Has the Department of Energy's Non-proliferation Alternative Systems Assessment Program (NASAP) been successful in pinpointing the bewildering complexities associated with the extensive list of fuel cycle options, including the Thorium 232 and Deuterium alternatives? How can the regulatory problems be solved, and how can the pro- and anti-nuclear groups together participate constructively in issues of concern? How can we insure the safe operation of nuclear plants, and how can we safeguard against the possible use of plutonium for unethical means?

This complicated web of considerations cannot be easily unraveled. It is essential that the discussion include world-wide opinions, since the issue of nuclear power is clearly as compelling in foreign lands as it is in the United States. For most Asian nations, as an example, a combination of limited domestic resources, the lack of available fuels and momentum of programs already underway are encouraging the development of nuclear energy. Cries of caution are being heard in West Germany and France as well, yet these countries are forging ahead with nuclear power. Indeed, multi-directional viewpoints and differing perspectives may seemingly cloud the nuclear industry picture at first glance, but these must be voiced if we are to respond to the global range of questions concerning the nuclear industry and all of its technical and non-technical challenges.

These questions were addressed at the IEEE Power Engineering Summer Meeting held in Vancouver, British Columbia, in a special plenary session on July 17. A panel of experts from Canada, France, Japan, and the United States discussed problems and perspectives pertaining to the topic "Nuclear Energy--Its International Impact and Promise."

--Adapted from Power Engineering Society Newsletter, June 1979.

Filmless Camera

Space age microelectronics have brought almost within grasp a totally new approach to the recording of images, or as we normally talk about it, "taking pictures." The new approach, still in the design stage at RCA Corporation and several other companies, involves having the "camera" electronically scan and digitally record the scene that you want to preserve. After this has been done, the camera user will be able to view the picture on a television-like screen at the back of the camera. If the picture is what the user wants, it can be preserved electronically in the camera's memory; if the user does not want to keep that picture, it can be erased from the memory. When the camera's memory has been filled up, prints or transparencies can be made by feeding an electronic signal from the camera to a copying machine which may be available either at home or at a drug store or photographic store.

The new camera is being developed in RCA's Lancaster, Pennsylvania plant under the direction of H. R. Krall. He expects to be ready to market the device within three to five years. It will take pictures of excellent quality in either color or black and white, without flash equipment, in

any kind of light, even a dark, moonless night. After miniaturizing the circuitry, RCA expects to be able to price the camera competitively with conventional photographic equipment.

--From Washington Star-News via Communication Notes (February 1979)

Try Again

An article in the last issue of this Newsletter described the Lexicon LK-3000, a pocket translator with alphabet keyboard and light-emitting-diode display that provides instant translation between English and any one of several European languages.

An article in The New York Times for March 25, 1979, reported on two pocket translators, the LK-3000 and the Craig M100, but pointed out that the nuances of language are far beyond their vocabularies. The author, Ralph Blumenthal, concluded with, "I'm willing to experiment, but in the meantime, Berlitz and the phrase-book publishers still have a customer here."

Apparently, in many cases, both devices display European verbs only as infinitives, make mistakes about idioms, and confuse such "identities" as "bank check" and "check-in time."

Assoc. Tech. Editor Needed

If you have a solid technical background, proven editorial and publishing skills, experience in interfacing effectively with management and scientific personnel, you could be the Associate Editor of RCA's technical journal, the RCA ENGINEER.

In this position, you will be responsible for editing articles submitted by specialists, planning issue themes, coordinating all scheduling and liaison to meet deadlines, and maintaining contact with outside publications to assist RCA authors. You will also write short news stories, introductions to issues, tutorial items, etc., for RCA ENGINEER.

You should have several years experience in the above areas, an engineering background, and excellent writing skills.

Salary is commensurate with experience. A liberal fringe-benefits package applies. Offices of the journal are in RCA's Cherry Hill, New Jersey facility.

Send résumé and salary requirement, in confidence, to

Thomas E. King, Editor
RCA Engineer
RCA Corporation, Bldg. 204-2
Rte. 38 & Haddonfield Road
Cherry Hill, New Jersey 08358

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Writing by Wire

Dutch engineers at Philips Industries and Delft University of Technology now have a way of sending visual images over a telephone line: an electronic "note pad" with underlying wire grid is so arranged that a stylus antenna placed on one spot on the grid transmits that spot to the corresponding location on a visual display device at the other end of the telephone line. Thus, as the pen moves over the pad, letters or pictures are transmitted and displayed on the small video screen at the receiving station. The signal containing the video can be sent on standard telephone lines simultaneously with a voice transmission.

This "Scribofoon" device has been tested in a transcontinental experiment between The Netherlands and Indonesia and will be further tested later this year. If widely accepted, it might become available for about the price of a color television set.

--Information via Communication Notes (February 1979) from Intermedia (International Institute of Communications, London).

Teleconferencing

PC-ers interested in the use of electronic media for education or personal interaction will enjoy Vol. 28, No. 3 (1978) of the Journal of Communication. It contains several articles on teleconferencing, which, as a generic term, seems to include all types of discussion via telephone, with or without video reinforcement, between physically separate groups or individuals. "Telelecture," "tele-education," and "telephone-based instruction" are particular forms of teleconferencing.

Topics discussed in this issue of the Journal of Communication include the following: a survey of experimental studies of the goals and characteristics of teleconferencing; techniques used in the Open University of Great Britain; computerized conferencing; human, social, and psychological factors in teleconferencing; programs and methods of the University of Wisconsin's Educational Telephone Network; and the experiment in which the Symphonie satellite was used to link UNESCO headquarters in Paris with the Conference Center in Nairobi during the nineteenth session of the General Conference.

A related article is "New Technology for Home-based Learning" (Journal of Educational Television and Other Media, Summer 1978). In this, author T. Bates surveys systems and equipment now available for providing continuing education for minority groups, professionals who want additional or up-dated training, the physically handicapped or home-bound, etc. There is a growing interest in education-at-home and a corresponding demand that campus colleges develop the necessary hardware, software, and methodology.

--Information from Communication Abstracts for December 1978 (Nos. 991-7) and March 1979 (No. 23).

It's easy to find reasons why other folks should be patient.

--George Eliot

Non-Human Communication II

Washoe, the chimpanzee who can communicate in American Sign Language (Ameslan), was noted in the last issue of this Newsletter, along with Lana, also a chimpanzee, who communicates through an electronic keyboard. A third anthropoid ape, a female lowland gorilla named Koko, deserves notice also for communicative talent. Her skills are described by Francine G. Patterson in "The Gestures of a Gorilla: Language Acquisition in Another Pongid" (Brain and Language 5:1, 1978; summary in Communication Abstracts, December 1978, No. 828).

Koko, at the age of one year, was introduced to Ameslan in 1972. Within 30 months she acquired a vocabulary of 100 words and had begun to combine them into meaningful statements. Her language skills are still expanding; her linguistic abilities are thought comparable to those of Washoe.

Studies of Koko's and Washoe's progress in acquiring language give bases for comparing the semantic development of a gorilla, a chimpanzee, and human children. Insights gained may be found useful in ways not immediately perceivable.

A note on the word pongid: Derived from the Kongo (Bantu) mpungu, ape, it is used in English as either noun or adjective, preferably with a soft g as in ginger, to mean anthropoid ape--i.e., gorilla, chimpanzee, orangutan, or gibbon.

Voice Recognition System

Bell Telephone Laboratories has an experimental speaker-independent voice-recognition system in use in-house to provide directory assistance for the 17,000 listings in the Bell Labs phone book.

Voice recognition systems have been around for some time, and some have been reasonably successful, but until now all have had to be tailored to the individual voice that would be using them. This meant that the voice in question would have to repeat into the computer, about ten times, each word that was to be in the voice-recognition system's vocabulary; the repetition provided a range of variation within which the system would tolerate that word.

The Bell System approach to the word recognition problem is fundamentally different: Instead of a single template serving for an entire word, several templates combine, each representing only a portion of the word. Although at first this method might seem to "waste" computer capacity, in fact it is economical, because the phonemes that form one word can be used in different ways to form other words. Bell anticipates that with appropriate microprocessors such a speaker-independent speech recognition system can be built for less than $300.

--From Type World via Communication Notes (February 1979)

Corporate Communication

In the Fall of 1974 the Industrial Communication Council made a survey of their membership to profile the characteristics of corporate communication as they then existed. In the Spring of 1978 a second survey was conducted for the same purpose. Fifty-six corporations responded to each survey (though there is no guarantee that they were the same 56). The results are in some respects startingly different. Here are the highlights of the findings, comparing 1978 results to those found in 1974:

* More than twice as many publications were reported by the 56 companies in 1978 (157) as were reported in 1974 (70).

* Among the 3 most popular types of publication (newspapers, newsletters, and magazines), newsletters captured about 30% of the field from newspapers; magazines just about held their own.

* While monthlies remained the most frequent choice for internal communication, weeklies increased 9% from 4.2% to 13.6%.

* While the bulk of the publications continued to have less than 8 pages, a surprising development was the 13.7% increase in those with 18 to 28 pages.

* Many more companies are using techniques other than publication to communicate with their staffs in 1978 than were in 1974! Only 3 non-publication techniques were used by as many as 15% of the companies answering the questionnaire in 1974, but 4 years later 11 non-publication techniques were used by at least 15% of the companies reporting.

--From Industrial Communication Council Newsletter via Communication Notes (February 1979)

Picture Language

Engineers often speak jokingly (or in exasperation) about re-inventing the wheel, but the re-invention of writing has come to be serious business. Consider for a moment the history of letters.

Early documentation, in Sumeria and Egypt about 3000 BC, consisted of crude pictures inscribed in clay or marked on dry flattened reed-stems. With increased usage, the pictures became conventionalized items in accepted sets of symbols, and gradually they evolved into stylized characters that represented the sounds used in speaking. Thus came into being the signaries or sets of syllable-signs that we call today cuneiform and hieroglyphic writing.

After several hundred years, it became apparent that syllables consisted of two kinds of sound: those made completely with the mouth open--i.e., the vowels; and those made by preceding or following one of these open sounds with some sort of closure or stricture in the mouth or throat--i.e., the consonants. It also appeared that, by slight adjustment, the elements of existing syllabaries could be used to represent the vowels and consonants separately, with resulting economy and simplicity in the sign system.

For example, instead of nine different symbols to indicate the three sets of syllable-sounds ba be bi, da de di, and ma, me, mi, only six are needed, as shown here--one for each of the three vowel sounds and one for each of the three consonant sounds. Of course, to represent other syllable-sounds, the vowel symbols can be used alone, as a or o, and any vowel or consonant can be used with others, as ai, ve, nu, ug, it, or even pol and kin.

Thus, about 1000 BC, people began to represent objects, sounds of speech, and vocalizations of thought by written words as we think of them today --that is, by meaningful sub-sets of a larger set of letters called an alphabet.

But because different groups of people used sounds differently, there were different kinds of spoken words--i.e., different languages. Through the years, various alphabets have developed for writing these languages although very often one alphabet has served for more than one language. Today, for example, English and the so-called Romance languages are written in Latin (Roman) characters or letters, and a number of Eastern languages in Arabic characters.

These individualistic media are all very well, nationally speaking, but they make for fragmented and unsatisfactory international enlightenment. Nevertheless, improved communication among those who speak different languages can be fostered in several ways.

On a personal level, individuals may stay at home and somehow learn about people of different cultures; they may travel or visit in many countries and bumble or stumble and grumble or laugh; they may attempt, with varying degrees of success, to speak and understand the languages of more than one nation.

On the other hand, all people might learn to read and write two languages--their native tongue and some "world tongue." For everybody's second language, a combination of Latin, Romance languages, and English --called Interlingua--has been proposed. Again, Esperanto, a simple, logical structure based on Latin, German, and Greek, has many advocates, though it bears little relation to Russian, Far Eastern, or African speech systems. English itself has been suggested, particularly as written in the phonetic form called Soundspel--wich maeks riten werds luuk liek theez.

Still another option would be a universal language of hand-signs, and yet another--5000 years late!? --might be some sort of world-wide picture language.

Actually, several modern picture languages have been developed and are being used, for one purpose or another, but in a sort of reverse evolution: whereas primitive pictographs evolved into words, modern words are being made into pictographs.

One of these communication systems is musical notation--staff lines, clef signs, fat little dots and ovals with or without stems and handles, and many auxiliary marks and letters of abbreviated but positive instruction. This system originated in the Renaissance.

The newer system of Labanotation is used to specify dance movements; and with Birdwhistell's kinegraphics, students of communication record in even more detail the position and motion of parts of the body.

Modern "shorthand" systems are nineteenth-century syllabaries. For example, one simple sign stands for the prefix de-, another for the syllable ten, another for the suffix -tion, and so on; the signs for all the syllables in any word can be "run together" rapidly in a flowing cursive movement.

"Therbligs" are graphic representations of action and situation developed and used by the American engineer Frank B. Gilbreth in pioneer motion studies and work analysis. (Note that therblig is Gilbreth in reverse.)

International road and highway signs give warning, instructions, and general information symbolically: + = cross road ahead, ↰ = road curves to the left, and so on.

ISOTYPE is a system of pictographs designed by Otto Neurath for use singly or in combination as word supplements with any language. The symbols are stylized representations, of nouns for the most part --the ISOTYPE vocabulary; rules for drawing and combining them constitute the ISOTYPE grammar.

In the British magazine She for November, 1976, an article by Cooke and Cooke describes a set of symbols devised to help a young man whose brain was damaged in a car accident. After the accident he was unable to speak or read, but he could communicate by using pictures. In the language made for him, nouns and objects (about 200 of them) are represented pictorially. Directional arrows convert nouns to verbs and indicate tenses; adverbs and adjectives are shown by arrows and symbols somewhat differently. A slashed noun or verb is a negative, a symbol in a square is an abstraction, = means equal, ? means a question, X means wrong, * means I want, ☺ means happy, and so on.

Another pictorial language, the system of Blissymbolics, is more purely diagrammatic, more sophisticated, and more strictly logical than the language described by the Cookes. Nevertheless, like the Cooke system, this one, devised by Charles Bliss, is based not on sound but on meaning.

Bliss' Semantography (1949) is not only a text on the use of Blissymbols but also a philosophical discussion of language, especially of the value of a language which can be understood without the speaking, reading, or writing of words. The Bliss system consists of about 100 basic symbols--pictographs, ideographs, and simple arbitrary signs--and their combination to form thousands of statements, questions, commands, ideas, and abstractions.

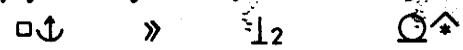
Because Blissymbols express meaning directly, they are easily learned. They can be displayed on a portable symbol board to suit particular needs, and remote-control devices can be used for pointing or selecting--that is, forcomposing a message. Each symbol is always shown in combination with a written word which has the same meaning, so that messages may be understood even by those who are unfamiliar with the system. The symbols are being used with great success by people who have been unable to communicate otherwise--by non-vocal children and adults; by those who are deaf, autistic, aphasic, or mentally handicapped; by victims of paralysis, cerebral palsy, or other physical impairment. A sample conversation in Blissymbols accompanies this article.

For a discussion of yet another set of pictograms see the review of Henry Dreyfuss' Symbol Sourcebook elsewhere in this Newsletter.

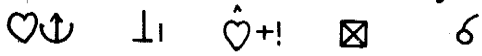
Friends in Blissymbol Language

Visitor: Hello here are fruit and picture book

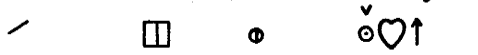
gifts for your birthday



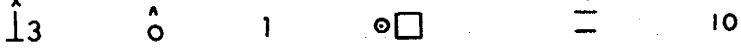
Patient: Thanks I like all fruit



the book is beautiful



Visitor: They say one picture equals ten



thousand words

Patient: Always and especially in

Blissymbol language

Visitor: I go now

Patient: Goodby many thanks I feel good

come again soon

Remove this page from the Newsletter and complete the opinion letter below. Put check-marks (✓) in the blanks or line out words to express your ideas about PC publications. Fold in thirds, tape or staple, affix stamp, mail to Newsletter Editor.

Date _____

LETTER TO PC'S ADCOM:

1. I skim through_____ read_____ PC's Transactions.

2. I skim through_____ read_____ PC's Newsletter.

3. Print more_____ fewer_____ longer_____ shorter_____ book reviews.

   Review books about _____

4. Transactions should have

   _____ only original articles

   _____ mixture of original and reprint articles

   _____ articles on communication in relation to technologies, sociology, psychology, humanities, politics, business, medicine, etc. (circle, add, or line out to show interest or lack of it)

   _____ articles about automated communication

   _____ articles on advances in various technologies

   _____ articles on history of various technologies

   _____ brief biographies of scientists, inventors, etc., and accounts of their work

5. Both Transactions and Newsletter should have

   _____ personal-experience articles

   _____ articles or letters from PC members (U.S. and abroad)

   _____ how-to articles about writing and public speaking

   _____ how-to articles about other modes of communication

6. Newsletter should print

   _____ roster of PC members by Section

   _____ more about work of other IEEE societies

   _____ more IEEE news _____ no IEEE news _____ minimum IEEE news

7. I'd like Transactions to print _____

   _____

8. I'd like the Newsletter to print _____

   _____

9. Stop publishing Transactions _____ the Newsletter_____

   Reason _____

10. I want to be _____ Area Representative _____ Member of AdCom _____ member of AdCom subcommittee on

    _____

11. I will send _____ article for Transactions _____ item for Newsletter

12. My name is _____ (optional; but if you give it, please print all information)

    My address is _____

Stamp

To: Dr. E. K. Schlesinger
Baltimore Gas and Electric Company
Room 923 G&E Building
P.O. Box 1475
Baltimore, MD 21203
U.S.A.

Communication Failure Spacecraft Failure

Last October, after 105 days in orbit, the Seasat Spacecraft failed catastrophically and became totally useless. The NASA Failure Review Board that investigated Seasat's demise has laid the blame squarely on human communication failures within the NASA Seasat organization and within the contractor, Lockheed Missiles and Space Co., that built the satellite.

The problem, according to the Failure Board, was a "massive and progressive short in one of the slip-ring assemblies used to connect the rotating solar arrays into the power subsystem." As early as 1977, the contractor knew that shorts could occur in these slip-ring assemblies, but word of such failures in a similar assembly used in other programs never reached the NASA Seasat organization, and NASA managers were never aware of the potential breakdown area.

It also developed that the slip-ring assembly was part of the Agena rocket system already used many times and known for its reliability. In adapting the Agena to Seasat, however, a substantial number of changes were made but never subjected to adequate testing and review: no one communicated the extent of those changes to the people who were planning for test operations.

So, because of two failures in human communication, a satellite costing millions operated for three months instead of for three years.

--From Avaiation Week and Space Technology via Communication Notes (February 1979)

Too Much Involved

A publishing house involved in magazines--
A program involving 12-hour days--
A method involving electrostatics is so new that hardware involving this principle is not yet available.
A method of writing involving involvement involves those involved in a state of involvement.
Do you get involved in this sort of involvement?

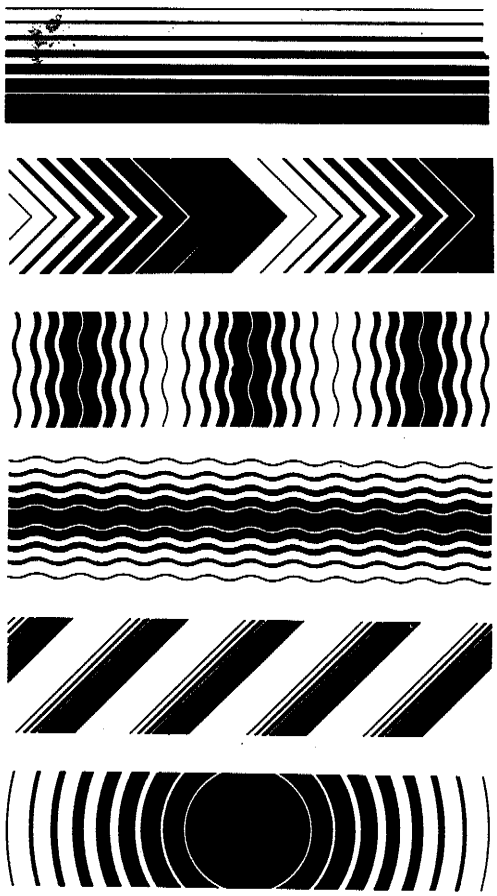
State of the Art

"Review Article: Word-processing and Text-handling Devices," by A. Phillips, explains terms and describes equipment and methods used in systems designed to simplify and speed up the drafting and final preparation of documents. Discussions cover the history and operation of "fast editing" devices, from the Morse-coded paper-tape machines of the 1800's, later "teletype" devices, and card-driven typewriters to more recent typewriter/computer systems which include such refinements as VDUs (Video Display Units), VDTs (Video Display Terminals), "daisy wheels," and "front-end processors."

This article is old but good. It appeared in the first issue of the Journal of Research Communication Studies (May 1978), published by Elsevier in Amsterdam.

EPA Logos

The United States Environmental Protection Agency codes its publications by printing a 2-inch symbolic band at the bottom of reports, brochures, etc. The graphic identifiers combine abstract and metaphorical representation of clean environment, contamination by pollutants, and the work of EPA departments. Six symbols, from top to bottom, signify air, research and development, pesticides, noise, toxic substances, and radiation:



Chermayeff and Geismar Associates designed the symbols, which are reproduced here from Graphics Today (March/April 1979).

Be Brief

Why say--	Why not say--
commentate	comment
provided	if
together with	and
in the short-term future	soon
incorrect facts	errors

Think!

MESSAGES AND MYTHS: UNDERSTANDING PERSONAL COMMUNICATION, by D. P. Millar and F. E. Millar (Port Washington, New York: Alfred Publishing Co., 1976, 209 pp. including bibliography, paperbound, $5.95).

In Messages and Myths, the brothers Millar explain and describe how to combat the fallacies behind certain statements which disrupt interpersonal communication. Some of these "myths" are listed below, with very brief suggestions for eroding belief in the misrepresentations they encourage:

1. "If I've told you once, I've told you a hundred times."
   Did you really understand what I said? There is more to communication than telling.

2. "If you don't know what the word means, look it up."
   What did the person who used the word mean? Remember that meanings emerge in conversation, are learned in social contexts, change with time.

3. "I hear you! I'm listening!"
   Do you understand what you are hearing? Communication is more than the impingement of sound on an eardrum.

4. "Every little movement has a meaning all its own."
   Does it mean the same thing in every situation and society? "Little" movements are very often cues, rather than meanings.

5. "I don't need anybody and I don't influence anybody."
   Are you sure? People are interdependent; we act to reinforce or contradict each other's and our own expectations.

1300-Word English

Enyart Associates International, Inc. (EAI), of Arlington, Virginia, has copyrighted an editing system called Enyart Technical Language Control (ETLC). The system works like this:

Writers from a client's staff are trained to use an Enyart Dictionary (EDICT) and Enyart Lexicous (ENLEX) in transposing documents from colloquial English or jargon into standardized ETLC English. A draft is then typed into the Enyart Quality Assurance Editor/Revisor (EQUATER), a computer program which edits for deviations from the ETLC format as well as for errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar, and syntax. The writer can either follow or override the program's suggestions.

EDICT contains 1300 words common to technical fields in general; each ENLEX contains 3000 to 5000 words for a particular technical field. EQUATER "flags" forbidden words and constructions, and final decisions are made by a human review board.

Because its vocabulary and stylistics are strictly defined, ETLC produces clear, impersonal copy which can be easily understood and which readily yields to computer-assisted translation. It is based on concepts and criteria of the U.S. Department of Defense Military Specification MIL-M-63037 (TM) of May 1977 and supports the objectives of Executive Order 12044 of March 1978.

John Enyart, President of EAI, calls ETLC-produced text "accurate but boring." An example, however, will suggest that run-of-the-mill maintenance manuals tend to be boring and that ETLC "translations" are quite readable. The first two sentences below are "without ETLC" versions, the second two are "with ETLC" revisions:

Preventive Maintenance

2-1. OVERVIEW. Preventive maintenance ensures that the gun mount is ready to function satisfactorily at any time without preliminary checkout. To achieve this readiness capability, a program of preventive maintenance has been developed to ensure operational readiness at all times, regardless of adverse environmental conditions of either a universal nature or unique to the user's locale. . . . Visual checks are included in tabular listings telling when and where to inspect, clean, and lubricate. Corrosion control is also included to prevent the eroding of materials. Lubrication consists of application of oil, grease, and other lubricants, along with an aggressive campaign of corrosion control.

2.1 A Description:
A good preventive maintenance program will make sure that the gun mount is ready for operation at any time. . . . . A maintenance list shows you how and when to apply lubrication, and clean and check all equipment.

--Information from The Editorial Eye (May 14 and June 12, 1979) and Capital Letter (May 1979).

"Let Me Call You Sweetheart"

How do you begin a letter to an addressee whose sex you do not know?

The following is a summary of reader responses to a similar question asked recently in The Effective Manager, monthly publication of Warren, Gorham and Lamont (Boston):

1. Use title or occupation, as "Dear Personnel Manager." Likewise, "Dear

   Sales Representative,
   Colleague,
   Associate,
   Professional, or
   Reader."

2. Don't say "Dear" anyone; replace with "Greetings" or "Good Morning."

3. Omit the salutation altogether and also the complimentary close ("Yours Truly" or "Sincerely")--no "hello" and no "good-by."

4. Greet the company--"Dear GTE."

5. Write "Sir or Madam," "Sir/Madman," or even "Ladies and Gentlemen."

6. If you know the addressee's initials, or if the first name might be used by either a man or a woman,

   a. try "Dear J. Smith," or "Jan Smith:"

   b. call the person's company and ask the telephone operator;

   c. use title and name (as in "Dear President Smith");

   d. write "Ms. or Mr. Smith,"

   e. be innovative, with "Mx. Smith."

7. Address people more distinguished or elevated than yourself as "Your Excellency" and everyone else as "Serf."

Spelling Lesson III

Word	Warning
omission	one m, as in omit
emission	one m, as in emit
independent	three e's
propagate	prop a gate
consensus	related to consent
Scandinavia	People have two i's in Scandinavia

Mutter? Stutter?

PC Area Representative G. Allen Ledbetter calls attention to a humorous essay by Russell Baker, "Simply a Matter of Human Opining," which appeared in the New Orleans States-Item on June 6, 1979. PC cannot pay the reprint fee asked for this copyright article, but we can note that its "technical" aspect consists of playing with synonyms for "communicate."

The people Mr. Baker writes about don't say or state anything, nor do they speak; and only one of them stoops so low as to declare. Others, variously,

affirm or assert	(state positively)
asseverate	(affirm positively)
aver	(prove to be true)
emphasize	(insist on the importance of)
exclaim	(speak excitedly)
expostulate	(reason earnestly)
gainsay	(deny, dispute)
opine	(express opinion)
prevaricate	(deviate from truth)
vociferate	(cry out loudly)
vouchsafe	(grant graciously or condescendingly)

One must admit that there are many other synonyms for communicate, but also agree that Mr. Baker and Allen Ledbetter have done well.

Our faults irritate us most when we see them in others.

--Pennsylvania Dutch proverb

Anti-gobbledegook

A new nonprofit public interest group to promote language reform has been established in Washington, DC. "Plain Talk, Inc.," a consumer-oriented organization, is working to stop the use of baffling, unclear, and imprecise language in public documents.

"We are particularly interested in the citizen's right to understand, and are trying to educate the public to demand plain English," states chief organizer Rick Lohmeyer.

Plain Talk is attacking the problem of confusing language by stimulating research on how to solve the problem of "gobbledegook" in writing. Its purposes, broadly speaking, are twofold: to encourage and work toward the use of plain English in all types of writing for individuals and businesses, and to educate people and organizations everywhere that the use of everyday English is good business.

The use of vague or fuzzy terms is everywhere, from the insurance contract you sign to the newspaper you read, but Plain Talk is concentrating on the law profession, hoping to rewrite existing laws and to re-educate lawyers.

"Rewriting the laws so that people will understand them will help remove some of the mystique in legalese," says Lohmeyer. The Plain Talk program will include education and media programs, seminars and research projects, and a Plain English law campaign. The staff is hard at work drafting a law that would require the use of plain talk in contracts of all kinds--in the fashion of New York's pioneer language reform law.

The group is committed to serve the public and maintain a membership widely representative of that public. There is plenty of interesting work for everyone who wants to promote clear communications. Articles concerning language reform will be welcomed for the organization's journal. For further info write: Plain Talk, Inc., 1333 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

--Adapted from article by Ray Wheeler in Capital Letter (Washington, DC, Chapter of STC)

Speaker = Actor

In "Roles Speakers Play" (The Toastmaster for March 1979), Carole Anne N. Facas views speakers as actors. They should prepare their lines and speeches carefully, she says, and deliver them at the podium like clearly identified characters with a well-defined purpose.

In other words, know what role you will play before you start to plan your next oral presentation. Are you expected to appear as an Expert? Speak with authority. An Advocate? Speak with persuasive conviction. One Who Inspires, Praises, Informs, or Mediates? Be enthusiastic, admiring, objective, or unbiassed. The role you are to play should affect the content and language of your speech and your personal manner of speaking.

Sentences to Revise

If I had money, I could greater my education.

I am so easily taken by a fool.

The effects I think would be happiness, not only with myself when I achieve my goal but also my family and friends.

This new generation would have no barriers from which to travel and to become friends with all people all over the world.

I will continue to stride for my goal.

It was so noisy in the computer center I couldn't consecrate.

My goal is to one day have a job like this, because then I will know the work I am doing now in school will be my reward later.

--Quoted examples of student errors in "Where Has All the Syntax Gone?" by J. E. Warner in the ABCA Bulletin for March 1979.

Success

In "The Seven Ingredients of Success" (The Toastmaster for April 1979), Vivian Buchan lists the qualities identified by Maxwell Maltz (Psycho-Cybernetics) as personality traits which enable people to deal effectively with their social and physical environments. Here they are:

S - sense of direction:	Know what you want to be doing ten years from now and work toward that goal.
U - understanding:	Learn how to read and respond to hints and signals of emotion.
C - courage:	Be brave enough to confront problems.
C - charity:	Be kind, forgive, forget, and look forward.
E - esteem:	Show respect for yourself and respect for other individuals.
S - self-acceptance:	Be yourself; make the most of what you are, have, and can do.
S - self-confidence:	Be proud of your successes and learn from every failure.

Suggestions

Ideas from the American Business Communication Association Bulletin for March 1979:

V. D. Arnold, in "Letters That Must Persuade," points out that, to be successful, a persuasive letter must have

1. an attention-getting opening
2. a central idea
3. convincing facts
4. a clear "call to action"
5. clarity, conciseness, coherence, completeness, and accuracy

* * * * * * * *

Donald Skarzenski, in "Motivating Business Communication Students," says

It is far more important to express than to impress.

The faster an idea is communicated, the longer it's remembered.

Write for human beings, not for impersonal titles.

Confidence in writing comes with practice.

* * * * * * * *

Jill Y. Smith, in "Speaking Out," discusses three types of non-verbal communication. Behavior called PAL (Positive Active Leadership), she points out, consists of such actions as looking directly at a speaker, paying attention to a person who is talking, nodding and smiling to show agreement, leaning forward in interest and encouragement.

The opposite of PAL is BLOCKER. Some BLOCKER behaviors are looking down or away from a speaker, looking around the room, shrugging shoulders, leaning back, and frowning or shaking the head to show disagreement.

Intermediate between PAL and BLOCKING behaviors are such HO-HUM actions as sitting passively, looking at a speaker without any noticeable expression, and manipulating a small object at random.

Do you listen as a PAL, a BLOCKER, or a HO-HUM?