Davis & Davis Think Like an Editor. Strategies on taste, ethics: 11, 20, 39, 40, 47

11 **Quotes**—Let sources speak. Be fair to them.

**Paraphrase if**

* in doubt about what is said,
* whether it’s too controversial [note: publisher can get sued],
* offensive language [they rarely support using “What the f---”,
* poor grammar,
* too wordy,
* an obvious known fact anyway,
* or if the speaker is not significant,
* speaker is quoting someone else,
* if it was in an e-mail.

[They tend to be overly cautious—paraphrase a lot.]

You often want a “crystallizing quote” well up in the story. Key is good interviewing techniques and note-taking/recording so you don’t have to go back to the source.

Quotes should advance the story. Add some emotion, detail or (unusual) facts. Add tension/oppose each other.

[Some say fix basic errors, e.g. “there’s no reasons that” = “there’s no reason that” and “I’m gonna” = “I’m going to.” I support that approach.]

20. **Sensitivity**: Sexual orientation , gender, race, religion, disabilities, age (plus geography, SES, politics, ethnicity).

Sensitivity means : “Be inclusive.” across the website or publication, not is “special sections.”

Problems arise because people don’t cover their own communities.

Assignment editors need to think about being inclusive in coverage, offering solutions, being pro-active, vary the sources, and get balance. Don’t treat people as a group.

Words to watch out for [who gets these applied to them? are there assumptions made about these people (stereotypes)?]

* elderly
* disabled, handicapped
* gay, lesbian [note now preference is for LGBTQ]
* religious movements, job titles
* race, ethnicities

What if someone else says something potentially racist, sexist? If it’s news e.g. Joe Biden said it, then you would run it. [same point as St-11]

39 **Ethics** These are combined with my old notes.

Note they say “journalism is a service, not just a job” (p. 237). Agreed?

Don’t let advertisers determine coverage (SUV hypothetical).

**Sources**: Remain anonymous or protected?

Obviously) not paying sources or other “quid pro quo” **deals**, including favoritism. [Think of Austin Chronicle—still run a negative review but not near the restaurant’s ad. A compromise but maybe still unethical?]

Don’t **alter** reality [that would include going undercover, really]. They say don’t airbrush, but Obama cover of *Economist* still OK b/c it’s a cover not a photo?

Don’t **peek**, eavesdrop [but that’s a privacy matter, i.e. legal]

Don’t **plagiarize**—lots of examples [e.g. Mike Barnicle at Boston Globe stole George Carlin stuff; studio stole Art Buchwald’s Coming to America script idea (note: an idea can fall under copyright protection once it is fixed or expressed as in this case). This grades into copyright infringement/legal issue.]. Always give credit if you did not collect the information yourself. If you do not own the material or do not give credit to the owner, then it’s plagiarism.

Don’t **fabricate**—[Janet Cooke “invented” Jimmy, a 7-year-old heroin addict, got a Pulitzer and had to give it back lost her job. Also Stephen Glass at *New Republic*, (*Shattered Glass* is the movie) Jayson Blair at NYT.] Watch hoaxes, other people’s fabrications too [ABC Good Morning America “fat patrol” was a hoax. Note fake news GM VPR (video press release) was run as is by [KMSB Fox](http://www.prwatch.org/fakenews2/vnr41) Minneapolis as a news story.] Their principle is “anything that alters reality in any way.” [Note—Strategy 48—that fabrication often comes with plagiarism because reporters “failed” in getting the story.] Anonymous sources are suspicious.

Be sensitive to **minors**. Their names, how to refer to them, when to identify or interview them.

Similarly for naïve, **unaware** sources e.g. immigrants.

**Deceptive** reporting, going “undercover.” Red Lion food stores sued reporters for going undercover as workers. They demonstrated that the workers lied on their applications. Nellie Bly became famous for going undercover in an insane asylum and exposing horrible practices in Victorian era. Is this less acceptable now?

**Gifts**—don’t accept. General principle is to be independent. No gifts, junkets.

Be **fair**—cover all the sides known.

When faced with an issue, meet with a diverse group, maybe outside expert, brainstorm solutions, try consensus or appoint leader to decide.

Think about the **stakeholders** in an issue, who they are, effects on them.

40. **Taste**

Jokes, the old, the young, offensive language [obscenity vs. profanity vs. vulgarity]

Watch [often advice is not to joke around with these topics]

* language
* photos e.g. dead bodies or related crime stories; see NYTimes [Nairobi photo](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/17/reader-center/nairobi-kenya-photo.html) controversy
* sex; don’t be cute; consider audience
* children
* old people
* religion

How to decide what to run:

* is it news? E.g. Dick Cheney told Sen. Leahy to fuck yourself, *Washington Post* ran that. Others used f--- or f--k as discussed in class
* the Cheerios test—is it OK at your morning breakfast? News is already a surprise, so watch out.
* get others’ opinions [as in ethics strategy]
* how important is this component—photo, quote
* when in doubt (are you?) take it out
* think of audience

47. **Credibility**: Be above reproach. That means

* avoid conflicts of interest—don’t socialize with sources, don’t write stories your relatives are involved in; get out of active politics (some say don’t vote); don’t make deals or give or accept favors/gifts [ethics, again, really]

Watch Facebook, Twitter, e-mail. They come back to haunt journalists (case of reporter’s e-mails at *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*.)