

CRINGE BINGE: MORE MEDIA BLOOPERS AND EPHEMERA

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It's time once again for another roundup of typographical errors, linguistic lapses, and other amusing oddities in the news. First, some recently heard broadcast items.

On National Public Radio (January 12, 2005), a reporter opined that a government official announcing new dietary guidelines "sometimes sounded like an avuncular uncle." On WNYC, our local NPR affiliate (February 16, 2005), a matchmaker being interviewed proclaimed, "It goes without saying that my success rate speaks for itself." And on TV's Fox News (February 10, 2004), an anchorman announced, "We'll be talking to one of the producers of *Law and Order S.U.V.*—excuse me, *S.V.U.*"

Now for some choice specimens from the print media, quoted as they appeared, along with suitably snarky ripostes.

The Wall Street Journal, April 21, 2004:

Jewelers across the country say mounting prices are forcing them to raise the price of platinum wedding bands by 20% to 50% from a year ago. A plain woman's band can now cost anywhere from \$300 to \$800. . . .

For an attractive woman, prices are slightly higher.

The New York Times, December 13, 2004 (Monday):

Artwork in an exhibition that drew thousands to the Chelsea Market for its opening last week was abruptly taken down over the weekend. . . . The offices of Around the Clock Management were closed over the weekend and there was no response yesterday to repeated messages to a market representative.

As soon as we reopen, we'll change the company name.

The New York Times, Op-Ed, December 27, 2003:

Killer whales, with their awesome size and eagerness to turn a trick for a few pounds of herring, can be moneymakers for aquariums.

Please pay the madam in advance and take an extra-large condom.

The Financial Times, December 24, 2002:

The Danish government yesterday launched legal proceedings against the European Commission in an attempt to reverse a decision giving Greece the sole right to market cheese under the feta brand. . . . Only cheese produced in certain areas of Greece may bear the feta name.

Too late. It's a feta compli.

The New York Times, Sunday Styles, August 29, 2004:

But four years ago he began casually exploring the club scene and tried crystal meth. . . . "I never did it for days and days at a time, just for a couple of days every two or three weeks."

When you're high, these fine distinctions are a lot clearer.

New York magazine, article on public school reform, October 6, 2003:

"Teaching out of the *Basil Reader*," she says, "is one of the most boring things you can do."

Not if it's a cooking class.

The New York Times, Letter to the Editor, May 26, 2004:

As a former patron of the New York Philharmonic, I would urge those redesigning Avery Fisher Hall . . . to change a feature of its current design that I find more annoying than the acoustics: the placement of its seats along the side tiers at right angles to the stage. One must either stare across the hall at the audience on the other side or twist uncomfortably to see the orchestra. Perhaps, with both ears facing forward, the sound would improve as well.

Wait another few million years.

Human Events, a national conservative weekly, Letter to the Editor, March 8, 2004:

With so much of our Judo-Christian values under attack by liberal activist judges . . . passionate people of faith are needed.

Does Bruce Lee qualify?

The Wall Street Journal, front-page article, June 4, 2004:

After a fierce lobbying effort, Chicago's Wm. Wrigley Jr. Co. began selling Orbit in Singapore on May 20, 12 years after this famously fastidious nation of four million outlawed the sale of gum. . . . (It was never illegal to bring come into the country for personal use.)

Whew!