

Words Poorly Used #57 — Media

Before we started calling newsmongers by the convenient word, “media,” we called some of them “the press” and some “broadcasters,” implying that the method of delivery was the essence. And they used to quarrel among themselves as to whom had a legitimate claim on the profession of journalism and to whom the label of “reporter” might belong. But at some point the sources of news began to fragment, while the practices of journalism and reportage began to fade. The first TV newsreader with a pompadour marked the beginning of the end. It was in this time that even the news people stopped referring to themselves relative to the content delivered, and it became trendy to refer to whatever it was they were evolving toward as “the media.” What is media? If you are a river, the medium is a ditch. If you are a book, the medium is ink on paper. If you are a television drama, the medium is electron, wire or air. If you are music, the medium is vibrating air. The medium (media is plural) is the go-between. It is not the message. The day the media christened itself after go-betweens was the day that the media lost its content, lost its meaning. Never confuse what we do here, at EVC, with media.

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