

Chatterbox #98 – Media, advertising, and celebrity gossip

Informal Contractions in this Episode

Informal contractions are unofficial short forms of other words, and they're usually only used in casual conversation. For example, when a native English speaker talks casually, they might say *gonna* instead of *going to*, or *whaddya* instead of *what do you*. Even though informal contractions are usually only used in spoken English, we include them in the Culips written transcripts to help you get used to how they're used and what they sound like.

These are the informal contractions used in today's episode, along with their meanings:

- **'cause:** because
- **gonna:** going to
- **wanna:** want to

Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone. This is Harp.

Maura: And Maura.

Harp: And we're here at Culips English Learning Podcast, bringing you another great episode.

Maura: Now, do not forget to go to our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com. On our website, you can learn how to become a member. And when you're a member, you get access to transcripts, more detailed explanations, and quizzes for every single episode.

Harp: Super exciting! And also, if you're on Facebook, come on over and say hi. And if you have a question, leave it there, and Maura, myself, or our lovely editor Jessie will respond to you.

Maura: That's right. Now, today we are going to do a Chatterbox episode, and that is where we chat about all different kinds of topics. Today we are going to talk about **the media**.

Harp: Yes. We're gonna break it down. We're gonna talk about **mainstream media**.

Maura: And the different types. And then we're going to talk about **advertising**.

Harp: And then we're gonna talk about celebrity gossip.

- Maura: Yes. Because that is also something that's **covered** a lot in **media**, especially nowadays.
- Harp: Yes, it definitely is. So let's get started, Maura.
- Maura: All right. So, it seems that **the media** is everywhere. More than ever, we come into contact with **the media**. This is probably because of the Internet, but it's also because of cell phones and smart phones and iPhones and all those kinds of things.
- Harp: Yeah, definitely. You can take **the media** with you anywhere. I have an iPhone and I can read the news anywhere, I can watch things. It's everywhere.
- Maura: Right. So we're first gonna talk about some of the **mainstream media**, and **mainstream media** includes some of the really big names, and... and these types of **media** are watched by a large number of people.
- Harp: Yeah. TV—that's a big part of **mainstream media**.
- Maura: Definitely. And that one has been pretty popular and remains pretty popular today.
- Harp: Yeah. A lot of people—almost everyone I know—has a TV at home. It's changing though, now with the Internet, that more and more people are watching online, but still, a lot of people have TVs.
- Maura: Yes. Most people do have TVs and in the evenings they watch television, they might watch the news, they watch television shows. And in most living rooms, people have their couches set up around the television because it's still one of the main items that you'll see there. People love their TVs.
- Harp: I know. That's interesting because I don't have a TV, so people are often looking for it when they sit on my couch. They're looking to see, "Where is your TV?" And then I have to say, "I don't have one."
- Maura: Yeah. I technically don't have a TV either, and that is because I watch television and movies over the Internet, so I plug it up to a screen that looks like a TV, but it's actually not a television. Another type of **media** that's very popular is newspapers or magazines.
- Harp: Yup, that's true. And, again, the interesting thing is that there are newspapers that have their online version, so often you don't have the actual paper version anymore, but it's still providing news.
- Maura: Right. Sometimes you can get newspapers online that are free and other times you have to pay, just like you would normally have to do.

- Harp: You know, I love reading the news and I still prefer having a newspaper. I read the news online most of the time, but that feeling of having a newspaper and a cup of tea; it's still my favourite thing to do on a Sunday or Saturday morning.
- Maura: Oh, really? I have to say I almost never read the actual newspaper. I only get my news online now and I'm sure I'm not the only one, because so many newspapers and magazines, especially smaller companies, have closed. A lot of newspapers have stopped being able to make money because no one wants **to advertise** in them anymore, so a lot of them have closed down. It's kind of sad.
- Harp: It is sad. And because of this, a lot of them are no longer printing. They're putting it only online.
- Maura: Yeah. Which makes sense. I mean, I guess we save paper.
- Harp: That's true.
- Maura: And sometimes we have news sources on the Internet that are not available in **hard copy**, that you can't get a **hard** newspaper version of or a magazine. You can only read it on a website.
- Harp: Yeah. A popular one that I'm thinking of is *The Huffington Post*.
- Maura: Right. This one was created online, it never existed before, and you can't buy a copy of it at a convenience store. So if you wanna read from *The Huffington Post*, you have to go online.
- Harp: And it's funny though, because it has a very traditional-sounding name, *The Huffington Post*. When I think of something that has *post* in it, I think of an actual newspaper, but it's only ever been online.
- Maura: That's a really good point. So maybe it's trying **to bridge the gap** between a traditional newspaper and a new source of news online.
- Harp: Yeah. I think it is.
- Maura: Now there's one more kind of **media** that I thought to mention, and this one is really fading and not popular like it used to be.
- Harp: Yeah. And this is the radio.
- Maura: That's right. The radio, I would say, is really **dying out**. I think that some people listen to it in their car—I know I do—but other than that, it's not a super-popular **medium** at all.

- Harp: Nope, it definitely is not. There were many years where I went without listening to the radio because I didn't have a car and there weren't a lot of online radio stations at that point, so I was just not listening to a radio.
- Maura: Yeah. And if you think about it, the podcast is kind of a new type of radio. When I'm talking to someone and they don't know what a podcast is—because some people out there don't really know what a podcast is—I usually explain it like a radio show. Because it is like a radio show, except it's available in episodes and online.
- Harp: Yup. And there are a lot of popular radio shows that have podcast form.
- Maura: That's true. And I think that's how they're trying to stay alive and attract listeners.
- Harp: Yeah. Definitely.
- Maura: OK. So those are the types of **mainstream media**. Some of them are very popular and some of them are less popular. Of course, we mentioned a little bit about the Internet and all of those have a connection to the Internet, which is interesting that all of those kinds of **media** have a representation online.
- Harp: Yeah. Everything's really becoming online. It's rare that you would have a newspaper that wouldn't have an online version or a radio station that's not available online. It seems everything's online now.
- Maura: Yeah. Most television stations also have websites, so that if you don't see the television show you can watch it the next day online. It's very convenient.
- Harp: Very convenient.
- Maura: In fact, later tonight after you leave, Harp, I'm going to watch a television show online. All right, now let's talk about **advertising**, because on all of these different types of **media** there are **advertisements**.
- Harp: Yup. All of these, whether it's TV or radio or newspapers, have **ads**.
- Maura: Right. So we can make **advertisements** shorter and just say **ads**. And I think in the UK they say **adverts**. I've also heard that.
- Harp: Yeah. Here in North America we say **ads**.
- Maura: Right. So this is just talking about publicity; publicity for anything. It could be a product, or a restaurant, or a movie. These **advertisements** can be pretty much anywhere.

- Harp: Yup, exactly. It's a company who's paid **to advertise** their product, whatever it is.
- Maura: Right. So when we talk about **advertisements**, we can also talk about the specific publicity in magazines and newspapers. So if you see something that's selling a product in a magazine or a newspaper, that is called **an advertisement**. If you have **an advertisement** on television, it's called **a commercial**.
- Harp: Yes. **A commercial** is basically when you **advertise** on TV.
- Maura: Right. And they also have these on the radio. Sometimes you'll be listening to a DJ and music and then suddenly you have **a commercial**, where they're **advertising** some kind of product.
- Harp: Yeah, definitely. And they're usually local products or local services.
- Maura: You know, that's one thing that I used to really love about watching television shows online, was that there were no **commercials**. But, of course, as that's become more and more popular, now there are **commercials** online. So when you watch a television show on the website, after about 5, 10 minutes, you get a whole stream of **commercials**. They're really annoying.
- Harp: That's really funny, because I agree. When I started watching TV online, I loved that there were no **commercials**.
- Maura: That's kind of funny. Another thing I hate about online **commercials** when you're watching television shows is it's always the same ones over and over again. When you watch TV there's usually a little bit of variety, but on the Internet it's the same thing. Ugh, I don't like them. I usually turn off the sound and walk away or go to a website and look at something different.
- Harp: Yeah. I know what you mean.
- Maura: Now, another kind of **advertisement** is a jingle.
- Harp: A jingle.
- Maura: Yeah. A jingle is just a song that is created for **advertising**. So TV **commercials** can have jingles and radio can have jingles, but obviously **an advertisement** in a newspaper can't really have a jingle 'cause you can't hear anything.
- Harp: You're silly. Yes, exactly. Jingles are on TV or on radio.
- Maura: And they're so **catchy**, sometimes years later, you can still recall a jingle that you knew **way back when**.

- Harp: Yup. And they're part of popular culture, so if you start singing one, I probably know it.
- Maura: Yeah. It's interesting how they become so **catchy** and they just stick in your head.
- Harp: It's true. It's very, very true. Another type of **advertising** that's starting to become very popular because everything's online is banner **ads**.
- Maura: Mmhmm. This is when you go to a website and usually at the very top, you have **an advertisement** that goes from one side to the other side. It doesn't take up the whole screen, but it's the top image that you see in order to get your attention.
- Harp: Yeah. This is becoming more and more popular. Some of them are really fancy and they actually show up on top of the web page and you have to close it. Those are kind of annoying.
- Maura: They are, but they definitely get your attention.
- Harp: Yeah. It's true. You have no choice but to see them.
- Maura: Especially the pop-up **ads**, the **ads** that automatically open up when you've gone to a website. Sometimes you go to a website and these other little boxes open up as **advertisements**.
- Harp: Yeah. And sometimes they have music with them. I find them very annoying.
- Maura: Yeah. The music ones are definitely annoying. It's funny, because we keep complaining about them, but they must work sometimes or no one would be using them **to advertise**.
- Harp: I'm sure they work.
- Maura: Hmm. Well, I know we're not the only ones that find them annoying because on most computers you can block pop-up **ads**. So this means that if a kind of other window is going to open up, your computer will automatically block it so you won't have to deal with all these **advertisements**.
- Harp: Yeah. I have that on my computer.
- Maura: So, these are the kinds of places in **media** where **advertisements** show up, but to be honest, **advertisements** are everywhere. When I think about walking down the street, I see them on signs, I see them at the bus stop, on buses, in the washroom sometimes if I go to a public washroom.

- Harp: Yeah. Or even on the wall of a building, or on cars, on taxis. It's really everywhere.
- Maura: Yeah. One thing that I thought was interesting to mention was in Sao Paolo, Brazil, where about five years ago, they decided to have an **ad-free** city. I believe it's called the Clean City Law.
- Harp: So they have no **advertisements** there?
- Maura: Yes. In the city, they don't have any **advertisements** in public places, so on the streets, you see just the names of shops, road signs, nothing else.
- Harp: Wow! I can't even imagine. That must be really interesting.
- Maura: Yeah. And I think about 70% of the people are happy with that. They want to continue it. They don't want to bring **ads** back. You know, it can create a lot of clutter and it can be very distracting.
- Harp: For sure. I've seen those TV programs where they talk about how it's everywhere and it gets into your head, so it might be really nice to live in a place with no **advertisements**.
- Maura: Yeah. I don't know anywhere else in the world that has the same policy, but other places should definitely think about adopting it.
- Harp: All right. So let's move on to the next section, which is celebrity gossip.
- Maura: Now you might be asking, what does this have to do with **mainstream media**? But celebrity gossip is so popular these days. I'm always amazed to see the news or read the news online and see them talking about something to do with a celebrity, right after they've spoken about a war in another country. It's crazy.
- Harp: Yeah, it's true. It's really on normal news stations you hear about celebrities now. They're not considered celebrities; it's just considered news now. It's weird, I find.
- Maura: Yeah. So there are television shows about celebrities, there are magazines, and there are especially online websites and blogs that talk about celebrity gossip. There are so many of them and they're so popular.
- Harp: Yeah, definitely, they're everywhere. They know all the little details about different celebrities' lives. You know, when I think about celebrity gossip, I always think about paparazzi.

- Maura: Mmhm. *The paparazzi*, which is actually Italian, but we started using it in English too. It was over 10 years ago, probably about 15 years ago now, when Princess Diana was killed in a car crash. And that I remember being the first time I ever heard this term, *paparazzi*.
- Harp: Yeah. You're right. That's the first time that I heard of it. So paparazzi are basically photographers who hunt and exploit celebrities.
- Maura: Right. Paparazzi follow celebrities, sometimes they wait outside their homes for hours and follow them around a city in order to take pictures of them, take video, get them to give them some information about their lives by **hounding** them and asking them questions.
- Harp: I can't imagine always being followed by the paparazzi and having no sense of privacy and being able to walk down the street and just live my life. It would be really strange.
- Maura: Yes. It definitely would be strange. But paparazzi can make a lot of money. Because celebrity gossip is so popular, they can make a lot of money by getting an exclusive picture.
- Harp: Yeah, that's true. They can make a lot of money from that.
- Maura: Another interesting term related to celebrity gossip is **spin**.
- Harp: Yes. **Spin**.
- Maura: Now, *to spin* is really just to turn something around, and that's exactly what **spin** is, related to **the media**. There might be a story about a celebrity, usually a negative story, and **the media** or the person's **public relations** **spins** the story and tries to make it positive, so **to spin**, in **the media**, means to change a story, usually from bad to good.
- Harp: And **spin**, with **media**, is very popular and common with celebrity gossip, but really, it can be used for any sort of news story, often in politics.
- Maura: Right. So some bad story could come out about a politician and they **spin** it to try to make it sound positive. It could be about a person, but it really could be about any kind of news story where they try to make it sound better than it is.
- Harp: Yeah. You know what I think about when I think about celebrity gossip?
- Maura: What's that?
- Harp: ***Fifteen minutes of fame.***

- Maura: Yes. Some celebrities that we've seen, they're not celebrities for very long.
- Harp: Yeah. They have their **15 minutes of fame**, which means they're popular or famous for a really short period of time and then no one talks about them again.
- Maura: Usually these kinds of people were not famous for much. I think about a lot of reality TV stars, which is also a new kind of television show, but these kinds of celebrities, reality television celebrities, are popular for a very short amount of time, maybe only while the television show is playing, and then after, no one cares about them anymore.
- Harp: Yeah. That happens often, I find.
- Maura: What's interesting about this expression is the origin, as well. In 1968, Andy Warhol, who was a very popular and well known artist, said, "In the future, everyone will be famous for 15 minutes."
- Harp: You know, that's interesting that he said it. He's very famous for his celebrity art.
- Maura: That's right. And I think it's really interesting because we have seen so many people who are famous for a short time, for almost nothing. I think part of the reason is because of YouTube. People might be popular there, or for other small news stories, for a short time these people are popular.
- Harp: Yeah. And then their **15 minutes of fame** is over and they go back to being nobody.
- Maura: Mmhmm. Now there are some people who are famous, usually actors or musicians, and they've been famous for a long time and **the media** loves them. These people can be called **media** darlings, and this is because **the media** likes them. They won't sometimes even print a bad story about them, even if they hear a bad story, because **the media** respects this person and doesn't wanna say something bad about them.
- Harp: Yeah. If I had to be a celebrity, I would hope to be a **media** darling and not have bad news.
- Maura: Yeah. It would be very nice to always be portrayed in **the media** as a good person all the time.
- Harp: But like they say, **there's no such thing as bad publicity**, so...

- Maura: You're right. It's an interesting expression—***there's no such thing as bad publicity***, which means as long as people are talking about you and they know your name, that's a good thing, even if it's bad. I don't know what I think about that.
- Harp: Me neither. I think I'd just rather be a **media** darling and they all like me and it's all positive news.
- Maura: This makes me think of a lot of the younger celebrities who get in trouble for doing drugs, or driving their car drunk, or getting in a fight. These are bad things, but maybe they think **no publicity is bad publicity**, so they're happy about it.
- Harp: Yeah. It's a little bit ridiculous, I find.
- Maura: All right. So, let's get over what we talked about today concerning **the media**.
- Harp: Well, we started with talking about **mainstream media** and talking about the different types.
- Maura: Right. Most of them you probably already know and already enjoy.
- Harp: Yup. And then we talked about **advertising**.
- Maura: Right. So the types of **advertising** that you see in **the media** and elsewhere.
- Harp: And then we finished with talking about celebrity gossip.
- Maura: I wonder if celebrity gossip is popular where you are, because it's definitely popular over here.
- Harp: Yeah. That's true.
- Maura: Although one thing that's funny about Canada is: we like celebrity gossip, but we don't gossip about our own celebrities.
- Harp: Yeah, that's actually true.
- Maura: We don't really have very many celebrities.
- Harp: That's really horrible to think, but I'm trying to think of some Canadian celebrities and I'm **drawing a blank**.
- Maura: Right. We look at American celebrity gossip, sometimes celebrity gossip from England, but we don't gossip about Canadians very much.
- Harp: No, it's pretty rare.

- Maura: Anyway, we hope that you enjoyed this episode about **the media** and we'll see you on **a medium**, the Internet. You can come say hi to us on Facebook or Twitter.
- Harp: Yes. And make sure you check out the website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.
- Maura: And if you become a member, you help support us and help us to continue making these episodes for you.
- Harp: Thanks everyone and talk to you soon.
- Maura: Goodbye for now.

Detailed Explanation

Mainstream

In this episode, Harp and Maura talk about the **mainstream** media. They talk about the most dominant and popular kinds of media, like TV, newspapers, and magazines. When something is described as **mainstream**, this means that it is the most popular and dominant type of whatever it is. Something that is **mainstream** is normal or usual.

We can also talk about **mainstream** music. This is the kind of music that is most popular and sells the most albums. **Mainstream** music is what is played on most radio stations, as most people like it.

All kinds of things can be described as **mainstream**. Movies can be **mainstream**. Ideas and activities can be **mainstream**. If something is not **mainstream**, this means that it is not popular with most people. For example, politics that aren't **mainstream** involve political parties that not many people know about or vote for.

Here's one more example with **mainstream**:

Becky: I remember when everyone used plastic bags all the time.

Lila: I know! But bringing reusable bags to the grocery store has finally become **mainstream**.

To cover (a news story)

When any kind of news organization reports on a story, we can say that they **cover** the story. **To cover a story** means to report on it by providing information about it. A story could be **covered** in a newspaper or on the radio. This expression can be used for all types of media.

Maura says that celebrity gossip is often **covered** on the news. She means that regular news programs often report on stories about celebrities nowadays. They **cover** a wide variety of stories.

Here are a couple more examples with **to cover a story**:

Jasper: The local news is going **to cover** our fundraiser at school! We're going to be on the six o'clock news!

Kyle: I can't wait to watch.

Samantha: The news is so boring! The stories are always so uninteresting.

Oscar: So what would you **cover** if you were a reporter?

A hard copy

A hard copy is an actual physical copy of something, rather than an electronic copy that is stored on a computer or another technological device. With technology, we often don't have **hard copies** of some things, like photos or essays. If **a hard copy** is needed, this means that you have to print out the information from the computer. **A hard copy** is usually a copy on paper.

In this episode, Maura uses the expression **a hard copy** to talk about newspapers and magazines. These are mostly available online now, but you can still buy **hard copies** (the physical paper versions) of most. Some printed publications are not available in **a hard copy**.

Here's one more example with **a hard copy**:

Boss: Can you get **a hard copy** of the report on my desk by 4 o'clock today?

Nathan: No problem. I'll go print it out right now.

We also have the term *a soft copy*, although this is used much less often. A soft copy is a copy that is only available on a computer or other technological device, but it's more common to hear this called an electronic copy.

To bridge the gap

To bridge the gap means to connect two separate things. A *gap* is a space between two things. **To bridge** something means to connect them. A bridge does exactly that—it connects one piece of land to another when there is some kind of space between them.

This expression can be used to talk about physical space, but also for other kinds of distance between two different things. In this way, *a gap* means *a difference*. The expression **to bridge the gap** is often used to talk about connected two things that are different or making them appear less different. For example, in a classroom, there might be children who excel and work well, and others who have many challenges. We can say that there is a gap between these two groups of children, because they are different from each other in some ways. An activity that **bridges the gap** would engage both groups of children and get them working together.

In this episode, Maura uses the expression **to bridge the gap** when talking about traditional hard-copy newspapers and those only available online. These are two very different ways to read the news, so there is a gap between them. She says that the name *The Huffington Post*, which is the name of an online newspaper, **bridges the gap** between traditional newspapers and those available online. It does this by using a traditional-sounding name for an online news source. In this way, it makes these two different types of newspapers seem less different.

Here are a couple more examples with **to bridge the gap**:

Greg: There's a new community organization that's trying **to bridge the gap** between teenagers and seniors by pairing an elderly person with a local class.

Sabrina: That sounds like it will be great for the kids.

Jon: At work it seems like we all want to create a safer work place, but no one is willing to meet about it or make a concrete plan.

Dawn: It sounds like we've got to find a way **to bridge the gap** between what people want and what they're actually willing to do about it.

To die out

To die out means to no longer exist or to disappear. For example, you might hear this expression being used to talk about species with not many animals left alive on earth, or languages that not many people speak anymore.

This expression is also often used to talk about trends and popular things, which is how it is used in this episode. If something is said to be **dying out**, this means that it is becoming less popular. When something has **died out**, not many people are interested in it anymore, so it's like it no longer exists.

In this episode, Maura talks about the radio **dying out**. The radio has become less popular than it once was. It still exists, but some stations have shut down or changed because no one was listening.

Here are a couple more examples with **to die out**:

Trudy: Have you heard that because of global warming, polar bears might be **dying out**?

Emily: No, I hadn't heard that. That's sad.

Lena: I'm so happy that the trend of teasing your bangs **died out** a long time ago.

Fiona: Me too. That was a horrible trend.

An advertisement/a commercial

Advertisements can take many forms. Any time something is being sold to you using images and words, you are being **advertised** to. **Advertisements** are in magazines and newspapers, on television and radio, and on billboards and other public spaces.

Commercials are **advertisements** that are on television and the radio. In the United States and Canada, they're called **commercials** or **ads**, but the UK these are called **adverts** or **TV adverts**.

Catchy

Something that is **catchy** is pleasurable or attractive and easy to remember, usually a phrase or a song. A **catchy** song is the kind of song that you might only hear once but are able to remember. An advertisement can be **catchy** if you easily remember the words or song that was used in it.

In this episode, the word **catchy** is used to talk about jingles, which are songs created for advertisements.

Here's another example with **catchy**:

Marie: Turn up this song. I love it. I just heard it yesterday for the first time, but it was stuck in my head all night.

Jasmine: You're right. It's really **catchy**.

Way back when

This expression, **way back when**, is just like saying *a long time ago* or *in the distant past*. It is a casual expression and should only be used in very casual writing.

In this episode, Maura uses the expression **way back when** when she's talking about jingles. She says that sometimes you can still recall a jingle that you knew **way back when**. This means that sometimes people are able to sing jingles that were in advertisements a long time ago.

Here's another example with **way back when**:

Alison: Do you remember, **way back when**, when we coloured our hair purple?

Drew: Yes! Those were some crazy hairstyles we had.

We've also talked about a similar expression at Culips: *back in the day*.

To hound someone

To hound someone means to continually bother them, to follow them, and harass them, usually because you want something from them. A *hound* is a breed of dog that is known to help hunters chase and track the animal they are after. With the expression **to hound someone**, a person is like a hound because they continue to chase and bother someone.

In this episode, Maura says that paparazzi **hound** celebrities. Paparazzi are photographers who follow, chase, and bother famous people in order to get what they want—a photograph.

Here are a couple more examples with **to hound someone**:

Erin: My boss won't stop **hounding** me for this report. I said I would have it done on Friday, but he keeps asking me about it.

Claude: At least by Friday the **hounding** will stop.

Cynthia: I don't mean **to hound** you, but can you please bring back the dress you borrowed from me?

Shannon: Yeah, sorry. I just keep forgetting to bring it.

Spin

Spin is a term for how a news story can be changed to express a certain message. Similarly, there is also a verb, **to spin**, that means *to change a story*. The message of a news story may be shifted or interpreted differently in order to persuade the public to accept or reject a public figure, an organization, or an event.

Spin can be positive or negative. Often, when a story is controlled, a positive **spin** can be put on a negative story. In this episode, Harp and Maura talk about **spin** related to celebrity gossip, but this is not the only place where **spin** happens. Any news story can have **spin**. Politicians are also public figures who are often accused of **spinning** a story.

Here's an example of a celebrity gossip story with **spin**: A movie star goes to the hospital because he drank too much. When this comes out in the media, the story is that the movie star was working too hard on a recent film project. Exhaustion is given as the reason why this movie star went to the hospital, not alcohol.

Here are a couple more examples with **spin** and **to spin**:

Marcus: Did you read the newspaper today?

Theo: No, I don't normally read it. There's so much **spin** nowadays I don't trust it.

Arianne: I guess I understand why celebrities have **to spin** their stories in the news. I feel bad for them. Everybody wants to know the personal details of their lives.

Cassy: Yeah, but I don't think that excuses bad behaviour.

Public relations

Public relations, often abbreviated to **PR**, is the management of information between a person or group and the media. People who work in **public relations** are often responsible for spinning a story. The purpose of **public relations** is to maintain the message that you want the general public to have about a person or group. This includes news stories as well as advertising.

15 minutes of fame

This expression was born when famous American artist Andy Warhol said, "In the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes." The expression **15 minutes of fame** is used to talk about the idea that some people are famous for a very short amount of time. Of course, a person's fame actually lasts longer than 15 minutes, but some people have become famous for only a couple of days. Often, people who are famous for a very short amount of time have not accomplished much and this is why their fame is so short.

There's no such thing as bad publicity

The exact origin of this expression is not known, but it has been around since the 19th century. **There's no such thing as bad publicity** means exactly what it says. As long as you have publicity and people are talking about you, then this will help you maintain your fame. Of course, not everyone believes this and it is not always true for everyone. Some famous people have definitely had bad publicity and then were forgotten about anyways.

A medium and media

In this episode we talk about all different kinds of **media** and the different techniques that are used. **Media** was originally only a plural word, an irregular plural. The singular form of **media** is **medium**. Today, **media** is also used as a mass noun, which means that it is treated as a singular. If you look back over the transcripts of this episode, you will see that Maura and Harp mostly treat **media** as a mass noun.

To draw a blank

To draw a blank means to not be able to think of some information that is required. This expression can be used instead of *I don't know*, or *I can't remember*, or *I have no idea*.

This expression has a connection to 14th-century England. At that time, there was a draw, and if you pulled out a card with nothing on it (a blank), you did not win anything. In the same way, when you **draw a blank**, you do not succeed because you cannot share the necessary information.

At the end of this episode, Harp tries to think of a Canadian celebrity who we gossip about here in Canada, and she can't think of one. So she says that she is **drawing a blank**.

Here's one more example with **to draw a blank**:

Sasha: The other day in the cafeteria I was talking to... Oh, what's his name? The new guy. He's pretty nice. Do you remember his name?

Vic: No, I'm totally **drawing a blank** too. We'll have to ask around.

Quiz

1. If something is described as *mainstream*, what does this mean?

- a) It is not popular.
- b) Not many people know about it.
- c) It is becoming popular.
- d) It is popular and common.

2. Which of the following is an example of a hard copy?

- a) a website
- b) a printed essay
- c) an online newspaper
- d) a digital photograph

3. Julia has two friends coming to visit at the same time. One is from the city and one is from the country, so she's afraid they'll like different things.

What could she do to bridge the gap between them?

- a) She could make sure they don't have to spend much time together.
- b) She could plan an activity that they will both like.
- c) She could decide to cancel with one friend and invite him another time.
- d) She could plan to drive out to the country with both of them.

4. In Canada and the US, what is an advertisement on TV usually called?

- a) an advert
- b) a commercial
- c) a TV advert
- d) a jingle

5. Which of the following is NOT something that might be called catchy?

- a) a commercial
- b) a song
- c) a slogan for a product
- d) a T-shirt

6. Nicole: We used to go out on weekends all the time _____.

Please fill in the blank with the expression that means *a long time ago*.

- a) way back when
- b) when was that
- c) way far away
- d) yesterday

7. Paulina is hounding Monica.

What does this mean?

- a) Paulina is continually trying to get something from Monica and is bothering her.
- b) Paulina really wants to see Monica's dog.
- c) Monica is really annoying Paulina.
- d) Monica and Paulina are playing a hunting game.

8. What does the expression *15 minutes of fame* refer to?

- a) People who feel famous because of YouTube.
- b) People who want to be famous very badly.
- c) People who are famous for a very short period of time.
- d) People who don't deserve to be famous.

9. Which of the following expressions means *to not know or to not remember*?

- a) to spin
- b) to draw a blank
- c) to publicize
- d) to dare

Answers:

1.d 2.b 3.b 4.b 5.d 6.a 7.a 8.c 9.b