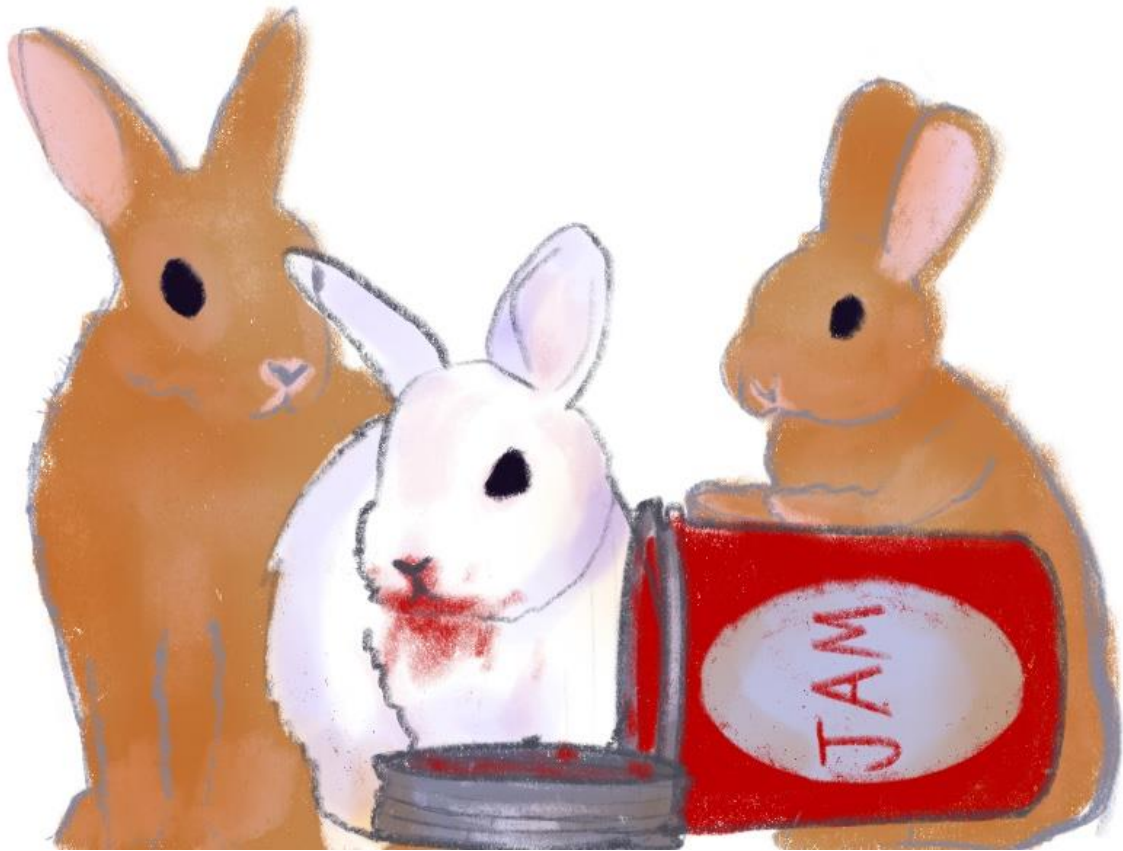


# Welcome to the second-ever Harber Writer Newsletter (9/25)!

Tuesday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023



That white rabbit will look familiar if you've ever seen Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

## Inspiring Insight

This newsletter's theme is perception vs. intention. We've all been insulted, screamed at, or cussed out by strangers. From our perspective, they're just assholes. Later on in this newsletter, I explain the etymology of the word ass.

However, we've all been on the giving end. We've all had bad days that resulted in us being rude, inconsiderate, or... well, an asshole. Generally, we all intend to be kind, friendly people. But horrible experiences often have us acting in ways we're ashamed of.

So what can we do? We all intend to be good but can't always control others' perceptions. Well, I have 3 simple suggestions. The first 2 are to apologize and be grateful.

"I'm sorry for calling you a 'stupid assface looking for a proctectomy.' But I'm grateful that you remained calm and dignified despite my insults. It will not happen again."

This isn't going to magically change their perception, but by acknowledging the problem head-on, you can mitigate the damage.

Gratitude is an attitude for life. I try to express my gratitude for everything. I'm grateful for every project I get, every client I work with, and every meal I eat. This sets a positive precedent, but it has also made me happier in my life.

But enough of that sappy life stuff! What's the third suggestion? Writing.

I'm a writer; you knew it would come back to writing. In a branding sense, we communicate primarily through writing. Our websites, brochures, online presence— even videos need a script! (All of which are services I offer. *Wink, wink, nudge, nudge.*)

Written communication is the bridge from our intentions to other's perceptions. That is why I include 2 free rounds of revisions with every project. So, you know you're being portrayed in the way you want.

## **Marketing Misadventures: What is Kentucky Fried Chicken without the chicken? In trouble.**

On February 14th, 2018, a terrible car collision outside a DHL distribution center sent waves through the KFC supply chain. That one warehouse supplied all the KFC restaurants throughout the Great Britain region. By the 18th, 604 out of 870 restaurants had closed due to a dire chicken shortage.

That car crash might have started the disruption, but a perfect storm of IT malfunctions and lack of preparation compounded this into a crisis. A crisis that attracted negative news coverage, snarky online commentary, and customer frustrations.

What did KFC do? They took out two full-page print advertisements in *The Sun* and *Metro* newspapers.

“We’re sorry,” the ad read. It featured an empty, crumb-littered bucket. Below the bucket, 77 words concisely explained the problem, apologized, and thanked everyone. KFC thanked their customers, employees, and vendors for “bearing with us.”

In less than 100 words, KFC took control of the narrative. This campaign brilliantly demonstrates the power of quality writing and good graphics. *The Sun* and *Metro* only have a readership of 6 million, but the ad took off on social media and TV. This simple ad reached an estimated one billion people globally.

KFC could have blamed their suppliers or published countless press releases. However, they understood that their brand also represents their supply chain. Instead, KFC began repairing customer perception with a well-written statement. By the end of February, everything returned to normal... except for DHL. KFC and DHL worked out a *different* arrangement. But that is a story for a different time.

## Useless Information: Origin of Ass

Ass is an interesting case of convergent etymology. Two words with different origins merged into one wonderful ass. Ass, as we know and love it today, comes from *arse*. Around 1860, the American Dialect dropped the “r.” Arse comes from the Old English (450-1150 CE) word *ærs*, meaning buttocks.

Old English also has *assa*, meaning donkey. *Assa* comes from the Latin word *asinus*, again: donkey. *Ærs* originates from the Proto-Germanic (500 BCE-500 CE) word *arsoz*. Interestingly enough, the origin of these two words coincide. The Proto-Germanic language started in the Nordic Bronze Age. Meanwhile, the early Romans spoke Latin as they entered their iron age.

**Bonus Fun Fact.** The Bible was originally written in Latin. The King James version translates *asinus* to ass, leading to 76 separate mentions of the word ass.

In short, your ass is like a donkey. It’s a hard-working, reliable beast!

**Sincerely,**  
Austin

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*"Quality Writing Makes a Difference you'll  
Notice in your Bottom Line."*

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