(U) One Writer's 'Slant' on Punctuation (repost)

FROM: SIGINT Communications
Unknown
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(U) The following essay was submitted anonymously:

(U) The growing/increasing use/application of the slash/backslant in written/printed and spoken/oral communication/missives has become something of an epidemic/scourge.

(U) This practice/habit may have begun/started as a sort/type of shorthand/abbreviation for briefings/presentations where space/room on a briefing/presentation chart/viewgraph is limited/tight. Nevertheless it has become a standard/regular habit/custom among many authors/writers today. This is unfortunate/malefic.

(U) It does not improve/sustain understanding/discernment. It disrupts/interferes with smooth/even reading. The backslant/slash is not an acceptable/satisfactory punctuation mark/conjunction. In most cases/applications it should be replaced/substituted with a comma or the simple/modest conjunction "and". In some cases/usages the conjunction "or" would be preferred/proper. In many cases/usages one of the two words/phrases separated/delimited by the backslant/slash should simply/clearly be dropped/eliminated. The only/single proper/acceptable use/application of the backslant/slash is in the properly/appropriately applied/used phrase "and/or" meaning "either one or the other or both".

(U) Please do not use/apply the backslant/slash in written/printed materials. Although the phrasing verb/verb or noun/noun has become somewhat popular, it is incorrect/wrong. It implies the author is uncertain, confused, or cannot decide upon the appropriate term. It does nothing to improve a well written text and cannot save one that is poorly constructed.

(U) Editor's note: We rummaged through the SID *today* archives for this one. It was originally published on January 30, 2004.

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