DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 124 975 CS 202 805

AUTHOR Clarke, Peter; Fredin, Eric
TITLE The Media and Political Reasoning.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism (College Park, Maryland, August 1976)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Information Dissemination; Mass Media; Media Research; National Surveys; *Newspapers; *Political Attitudes; Political Influences; Political Issues; *Public Opinion; *Television

ABSTRACT

This study uses national survey data to compare newspapers and television for informativeness. Relationships are reported between media use and having reasons for liking or disliking candidates for the U.S. Senate, a variable used to measure level of information. Results demonstrate an informing role for newspapers but not for television. Analysis controls for education and interest in politics in the 67 news markets and 25 Senate races studied in 1974. Amount of competition or diversity in newspaper markets is then introduced as a correlate of information holding. A positive relationship is found. Twenty of the 28 least competitive markets have especially low levels of information; twelve of the 23 most competitive markets exhibit unusually high levels of information. Several causal explanations are cited. (Author)

THE MEDIA AND POLITICAL REASONING*

Peter Clarke and Eric Fredin

Department of Journalism and
Mass Communication Research Program,
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor

Delivered to the Theory and Methodology Division, Association for Education in Journalism, College Park, Maryland, August 2, 1976.

One of the most powerful hopes in liberal democratic theory is that news media remain free so they may educate the public in making political choices. Ignorance condemns people to sway with the most available rhetoric. The uninformed person chooses randomly or out of habit to support candidates or policies.[1] Often he avoids the political arena altogether -- perhaps from hedonism or alienation.

We should take pains, therefore, to plot the educational role of media. The character of this role, and how different media share in it, may yield hints about the future for rationality and order in American political life.[2]

Research has recently restored our confidence that this educational role exists, despite solemn sociological pronouncements a few years back about "minimal effects." Agenda-setting by media is widely recognized now.[3] Learning about public affairs from media has been documented, holding competing explanations constant.[4]

In this paper we present two amplifications. The first, and more limited, is to detail the relative contributions of newspapers and television to the public informing process. These contributions may interest students of the American political future who note the steady slippage in per capita circulation of newspapers and the equally persistent rise in minutes spent viewing television news.[5] Will this shift be accompanied by change in the level of political understanding, we might ask? Or, can we expect informing functions traditionally served by newspapers to be assumed by electronic journalism?[6]

Our second and more intriguing goal is to discern whether characteristics of media offered to citizens play a part in how informed people are.

Knowing about public affairs.

What is the proper meaning we should attach to the state of being informed? This difficult question invites a variety of answers. The most convincing of them require argument and exposition as well as empirical justification.

For purposes of our present analysis we assert the following: Possessing information about public affairs means having reasons for favoring or rejecting political alternatives.

Having reasons for perceiving or acting makes a difference. Reasons equip one to explain choices -- to self as well as others -- lending order and pattern to political action. Reasons provide a cognitive framework for acquiring and processing additional information. Helping people develop reasons (to suit their own beliefs) is a goal to which schools and news media aspire.

In our present research we have interviewed people at length about their reasons for supporting or rejecting political contenders in an important race -- the election for United States Senator in their state. Other arenas of choice would have met our needs. But this contest offers special opportunities to compare the informing functions of two competing media systems, daily newspapers and television.

We will not dwell on the specific reasons people offer. As one would expect many citizens have no choice at all for U.S. Senator, or having chosen can present no explanation for their preference.

Other people express reasons of a discouragingly conventional sort. A tiny minority fulfill the hopes of their civics teachers by enlarging on the candidates' policy positions or advantages that would accrue to certain groups if one were elected instead of the other.

We assume that expressing some reasons for senatorial choice, however primitive, is a precondition for possessing an elaborate or sophisticated point of view. Our analysis might be described as tracing the minimum conditions for an informed citizenry.

We avoid judgments about the completeness, sophistication or even "accuracy" of reasons people give for their views of senatorial candidates. Number of reasons, any reasons, count for us here -- a seemingly blind step that is vindicated by our finding that the major point of variance is between persons who lack reasons altogether, and those with only one criterion for choice.

Using media for public affairs information.

Contrary to popular opinion, a considerable body of research demonstrates that the public relies on newspapers more than television for political news.[7] Both vehicles are especially important in state and local affairs untouched by magazine journalism.

We should consider extent of exposure to newspapers and television news, as potentially informing vehicles. We should also note whether people discriminate political messages in these media.

As our findings will show, message discrimination represents the more direct and powerful contribution to learning. The concept of message discrimination has been examined elsewhere.[8] It is

meant to replace the conventional idea of gross media use as evidence that communication events have transpired. The amount of communication people have experienced is reflected by their reports of having discriminated symbols about specified topics, instead of by minutes spent exposed to media.

We have provided people the maximum opportunity to relate the political messages they find in media by asking two kinds of questions. One is whether they have read or seen anything having to do with an election campaign, recently concluded. The other is whether they have read or seen messages having to do with any national political issues that they think important.

As with our definition of information-holding, the concept of message discrimination provides latitude for people to report behavior they feel relevant to the political scene.

Links between communication and knowing.

The relationship between what media convey about politics and growth in public awareness surely depends on a variety of factors. The richness of our data base permits statistical controls for many variables -- race, income, sex of respondent, and more.

We choose a more limited path for the present in order to concentrate attention on people's skills in making effective use of media and on their likely motivations for doing so. One of our steps is to hold constant the level of formal education. This major stratification variable correlates powerfully with use of media and with knowing and participating in public affairs. Media systems differ in the educational attainment of audiences they reach.

A shorthand for education's role in the present analysis is as an ability factor.

People differ, also, in their willingness to follow public affairs. Some have been socialized more than others by circumstances as well as institutions to concern themselves with political outcomes. Our second statistical control, therefore, is people's expression of interest in following public affairs.

When we hold constant abilities conferred by education and willingness to become interested, there is some assurance that remaining variance arises from the information environment to which people are exposed. This environment can fluctuate according to the demands of political events and the way in which events, like campaigns, are reported.

RESEARCH METHODS

Our data originate from detailed personal interviews with a weighted sample of 1,883 adults, a cross-section of the American public in states with Senate elections in 1974. The sample was selected by multi-stage, probability methods. Research design, field supervision of data collection, coding and documentation were conducted according to high standards of the Center for Political Studies in the Institute for Social Research at Michigan. Details can be found elsewhere.[9]

Interviewing took place following the off-year congressional election; our analysis is confined to 25 states. Sample clusters of households represent 67 media markets, ranging from metropolitan giants like New York and San Francisco to rural hamlets in Pitt

County, North Carolina and Randolph County, Illinois. In the middle we find such varied media locales as Louisville, Tulsa, Salt Lake City, Tulare, Bridgeport, and more.

We might examine these data in two ways. One is at the level of individual behavior, correlating variables across persons. The second is by aggregating data within media markets and correlating across them. We adopt the second strategy in order to discover whether media characteristics affect levels of public information.[10]

Measures.

Our dependent variable is having reasons for liking or disliking the two major party candidates for Senate. The questions read:

> "Was there anything in particular about the Democratic (Republican) candidate for Senator that made you want to vote for (against) him (her)?"

Respondents were quizzed extensively about likes and dislikes, and as many as twelve were coded into an elaborate system of content categories.[11]

Admittedly the measure favors people who consider themselves participants in the political process. Respondents who resolved not to vote after studying the contenders and deciding neither was worth support could have received low scores on information. They would thus be misclassified in terms of the meaning we attach to this measure -- as a reflection of having reasons for political choice.[12]

Reading newspapers and viewing television news were measured with conventional items. Message discrimination required greater effort. One set of questions asked whether the respondent had read anything or seen any programs about the recent campaign. Another

battery inquired about reading and viewing things about an important national problem the respondent had identified and discussed earlier in the interview. Descriptions of these messages were also content analyzed according to a detailed coding scheme.[13]

Interest in public affairs was measured early in the interview with the following item:

> "Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all?"

RESULTS

Predicting information holding.

We start by examining correlations between having reasons for choice between senatorial candidates and use of news media. Columns of data in Table 1 should be read from left to right; they show coefficients calculated across 67 news markets.

Zero-order correlations disclose the limited effects of television -- whether indexed by news viewing or by discrimination of messages about the campaign and important national problems (at any time of day). Newspaper use shows strikingly large correlations.

Of course, both education and political interest correlate with information holding. The second column partials on education and the third on both education and interest. Newspapers remain important vehicles of information.

The final column applies even more stringent controls. Only a minority in the audience is devoted to television news or reads news-

papers heavily for their political content. If we control statistically for total exposure to these media, does the discrimination of political messages disappear as a correlate of information holding?

The data suggest that messages in newspapers confer information beyond what can be expected from general exposure levels. The value for television, on the other hand, is negative and approaches the .10 level of significance.

Let's return to the partial correlations enclosed by a box in Table 1. They seem to supply convincing evidence for a unique educational role by newspapers. Is this because people simply do not find messages about public affairs on television?

Not according to our data. Average scores are alike for measures of following the campaign and problems in newspapers and television (1.18, compared to 1.15 -- with nearly identical variances).

Are people who discriminate messages in newspapers fundamentally different from people who report this experience with television? Possibly. But that kind of explanation must confront the positive correlation between these two message behaviors -- a pearson coefficient of .53 at the market level, and a coeffecient of .33 at the level of individual analysis.

Are there substantial differences in the kinds of messages people can read and those they can view and hear? Undoubtedly. But we have yet to find differences in the topics those messages cover. We content analyzed topics reported by newspapers (front pages only) and television news broadcasts before the election.

Table 1: Zero-order and Partial Correlations with Number of Reasons for Senate Choice

	zero-ord.	part. on ed.	part. on ed./int.	part. on ed./int. and TV-NSP exposure
Exposure to TV news throughout day	.12	.12	-.06	---
Number of newspapers read	.47	.40	.32	---
Discriminating problem and campaign messages on TV	.16	.11	-.15	-.15
Discriminating problem and campaign messages in newspapers	.59	.54	.42	.30
Interest in public affairs	.49	.43	---	---
Education	.29	---	---	---
$r_{.05}$ =	(.24)	(.24)	(.24)	(.25)

N = 67 markets.. Some metropolitan areas have been divided into central city and suburban zones.

Conclusion of this part of our research awaits coding of more of the news programs we have recorded in the 67 markets. However, topic emphasis by a few stations that have been coded correlates highly with the same-city newspaper coverage, suggesting we will find more similarities than differences between media in their treatment of public affairs.[14]

Like McClure and Patterson (1976, p. 25), we are left for the moment with the familiar speculations about why newspapers convey

more information -- their greater content and detail, audience control over the pace of exposure, and so forth.

In any event, we can proceed to the second stage of analysis armed with a discovery that simplifies our work. If reasoning about political choice depends at all on the qualities of an area's media system, those qualities will be found in the newspapers that circulate there, not in television coverage.

Can we explain differences among newspaper markets?

We venture into our concluding analysis with a question. It helps dilute confidence in the conventional wisdom about great and mediocre papers. We will be unable to take refuge in compilations of the "ten best" or "ten worst".

This should not surprise us. Superior journalistic effort could not be detected the way our dependent variable is calibrated. The analysis distinguishes, essentially, between people who have absolutely no basis they can express for liking or disliking the senatorial candidates and those who have at least some reasons.

In order to detect intermarket differences we adjusted each mean level of information holding through covariance analysis. Predicted market means were calculated through multiple regression against level of education and amount of interest in political affairs. The predicted value was subtracted from the observed value to yield a residual.

Markets with positive residuals have greater levels of information than we can expect from their residents' ability and willingness. Markets with negative residuals have lower mean numbers of

reasons than expected. The analysis concluded earlier implies that each market's residual should be related somehow to characteristics of newspapers that circulate within it.

We reasoned a major factor surely would be circulation size. Danielson and Adams's study of completeness of coverage of the 1960 presidential race showed newspaper size to be important.[16] On other occasions we have examined regression analyses for cost data describing more than 400 daily newspapers. Both the size of editorial budgets and the average number of news pages produce large coefficients of determination (in the .90s) against raw circulation.

Volume of news output might make a dent in public information -- as calibrated here. Accordingly, we split circulation of dominant papers to yield three nearly equal groups of markets.

The smallest markets are those with papers having 50,000 circulation or less. For these places the pattern is clear. Seventeen out of 22 showed large negative residuals (-.26 or greater), indicating that their citizens possess even less information than levels of education and political interest would predict.[17] Three have near-zero residuals (±.25), and two show high positive residuals (+.26 or greater).

This order and neatness breaks down completely when we examine the two larger groups of markets -- those dominated by papers in the 50,001 to 175,000 class, and greater than 175,000. These markets distribute nearly equally in terms of residual information holding; some are highly negative, some near zero and some highly positive.

What is to account for this apparent confusion? One insight is provided by shifting briefly from a market-by-market analysis to

paper-by-paper comparisons. This eliminates the influence of non-readers and allows us to sense whether newspaper characteristics other than size affect the outcome.

Despite the limitation that many newspapers are represented by a handful of readers, interesting clues emerge from a look at each paper's residuals. Some multi-paper areas show marked differences in information holding between readership groups. Consider the following, expressed in standard scores:

New York Daily News	-.27
New York Post	.31
New York Times	1.42
Baltimore News American	-.34
Baltimore Sun	.39
Chicago Sun-Times	-.49
Chicago Tribune	.38
Chicago Daily News	.72
Seattle Times	-.39
Seattle P-I	.21
Oakland Tribune	-1.33
San Francisco Chronicle	-.73
San Francisco Examiner	.27

In Chicago, to take one case, there's a world of difference between readers of the Sun-Times and the Daily News. Personal opinion governs whether this or any other comparison confirms the information level one would expect, controlling for education and interest. And, of course, some markets show only narrow differences. (Both Louisville papers have high positive residuals; Atlanta papers have large negative figures; Philadelphia is uniformly high positive.)

But differences among papers warn us that public understanding in metropolitan zones depends not only on circulation penetration,

but which papers penetrate. The variability of residuals in multi-paper markets focuses attention on media competition or diversity as correlate of information.

Either of two expectations might be confirmed. The first is pessimistic. It holds that where newspapers compete on nearly equal footing for audience, they will battle for control of the "lowest common denominator." Given that politics interests only a minority, these competing papers would be expected to slight their public affairs obligations in favor of more popular fare. We would expect that through the years markets with more than one paper would come to have lower levels of information than predicted by other factors like citizens' ability and willingness.

The more optimistic observer views diversity as producer of net social gain. Rival newspapers may not compete for the same readers; they may seek joint survival through differentiation. If at least one journal chooses to cover politics thoroughly, perhaps the audience for that kind of information will benefit, will develop levels of information beyond what we would expect from predisposing factors.

From this brief and incomplete sketch we can sense that the causal imagery linking competition and knowing about politics is extremely complex. Its details can not be laid to rest here. But we can test whether the pessimists or the optimists have the greater support for their contrasting positions. Our results, it will be seen, sustain the more encouraging point of view about diversity.

For each market we averaged differences in penetration by various dailies that circulate in the appropriate census unit con-

taining the sample interview area (units might be a city, county or SMSA). Actual circulation data were used, rather than readership reported by persons interviewed, so that the origins of our competition variable would be separate from the dependent variable under analysis. Our index for competition represents environmental conditions surrounding citizens we interviewed, not their individual use of that information environment. Our variable signals, in part, the balance of newspapers' journalistic resources -- even if under common ownership -- and the availability of more than one report of political events -- even if reports might differ only in the time of day they are delivered.

Some markets have zero or almost no diversity, such as Toledo, where the Blade is the only Ohio paper circulating. Some markets have more competition, where papers differ from 70 to 30 percentage points in audience reach. The next category includes markets with 30 to 15 point gaps. The fourth group has gaps between 15 and 10 points. The most competitive markets have 10 to 0 point gaps in circulation reach by dailies.

This category scheme divides markets into as nearly-normal a distribution as can be accomplished -- 10 in the near-monopoly group, 17, 16, 12, and 11 in the most competitive environment.

Table 2 shows the results. The Gamma correlation between diversity and residual information holding is .50 ($p < .01$). Whatever the words competition and diversity mean, and whatever philosophical passions they excite, closeness of market penetration is linked to a social condition of some value -- having reasons for political choice.[18]

Table 2: Markets by Newspaper Competition and Residual on Information Holding

Size of Residuals	Monopoly				High Competition
.26 or More	Sioux Falls, S.D.	Bridgeport, Conn. Eugene, Ore. Knox, O. Oneida, N.Y.	New York Suburbs Philadelphia Suburbs Pittsburg Suburbs	Bronx, N.Y. Louisville, Ky. Philadelphia, Pa. St. Louis, Mo. St. Louis Suburbs Salt Lake City, Utah Tulare, Cal.	Cleveland, O. Cleveland Suburbs Indianapolis, Ind. San Francisco, Cal. Tulsa, Okla.
.25		Logan, Colo. Manhattan, N.Y. Mississippi, Ark.	Chicago Suburbs Los Angeles, Cal. Los Angeles Suburbs Phoenix, Ariz. Plumas, Cal. Seattle, Wash.	Brooklyn, N.Y. Dayton, O. Hamilton, O. San Francisco Suburbs	Baltimore, Md. Chicago, Ill.
.26 or Less	Adair, Mo. Columbia, S.C. Currituck, N.C. E. Carroll, La. Lowndes, Ga. Miami, Fla. Orlando, Fla. Snyder, Pa. Toledo, O.	Acadia, La. Escondido, Cal. Hancock, O. Logan, Ill. Pitt, N.C. Sarasota, Fla. Sheboygan, Wisc. Stoddard, Mo. Waterloo, Ia. Whatcomb, Wash. Wilkes-Barre, Pa.	Clark, Ark. Crawford, Ia. Little Rock, Ark. Munlenberg, Ky. New London, Conn. Ulster, N.Y. Vallejo, Cal.	Montgomery, Ala.	Atlanta, Ga. Baltimore Suburbs Randolph, Ill. Watauga, N.C.

DISCUSSION

Results are drawn from a nationwide sample including many media outlets and the universe of 25 Senate races in 1974. Findings underscore the superiority of newspapers as agents of information to help people identify assets and liabilities of import t political contenders.

This conclusion agrees with findings by McClure and Patterson in their study of presidential campaiging. They measured the relationship between issue salience and gross media exposure. We charted the correlation between holding information and amount of message discrimination. Despite major differences in concepts and measurement, results coincide.

Having voiced these encomiums to the newspaper industry, we must turn to their implications. Newspapers' command on citizen attention is apparently waning in favor of television. This can only heighten our anxiety about stability of political perception and action, insofar as those qualities depend on an informed citizenry.

Ability to reason about events requires having reasons. The aggregate amount of having reasons would appear threatened, if our data can be joined with evidence about trends in comparative use of media.

We must recognize that a correlation between diversity and public information does not locate the cause of that relationship. Is information greater because of greater aggregate amount of newspaper reading in competitive markets? Or because newspaper fans can read the same political stories twice, rather than once? Or because

competitive newspapers are differentiated in quality, or supply readers with greater per capita investment in staff and news hole?

We can not say. Each explanation presents separate implications for communication theory and for public policy.

Unmeasured factors may be at work, too. Perhaps markets with diversity also tend to have more integrated social structures that act to reinforce communication about public issues, strengthening the impact of newspaper coverage.

Another limitation in our results deserves mention. We have introduced independent variables (education, interest and diversity) in a sequence that implies specific causal linkages. The causal chain is certainly more complex, may be differently ordered, and may be reciprocal.

For example, newspaper competition may energize interest in public affairs which, in turn, leads to greater information holding. Or high levels of information could be an important market factor that sustains competition, which leads to even greater information holding.

We chose our method of analysis to illuminate the issues of media functions and competition in public affairs, not to resolve questions of causality. Whatever mechanisms are at work, results emphasize the importance of keeping track of newspaper competition and audience reach as social indicators of political health.

When these communication assets decline and no effective substitutes are in sight, political reasoning is in jeopardy.

FOOTNOTES

Data for this analysis were collected by the Center for Political Studies of the Institute for Social Research. Support was provided by grants from the National Science Foundation, the John and Mary R. Markel Foundation, and the Carnegie Corporation.

Survey documentation and data are available from the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, University of Michigan. Neither the original collectors of the data, nor the Consortium, bear any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

1 An analogy to this point, drawn from laws of inertia, can be found in Philip E. Converse, "Information Flow and the Stability of Partisan Attitudes," Public Opinion Quarterly, 26:578-599 (1962).

2 Comparisons between print and broadcast media in political effects have been reported recently. See Robert D. McClure and Thomas E. Patterson, "Print vs. Network News," Journal of Communication, 26:23-28 (1976); and their earlier paper, "Television News and Political Advertising: The Impact of Exposure on Voter Beliefs," Communication Research, 1:3-31 (1974).

3 Pertinent findings are reviewed in Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald L. Shaw, "Structuring the 'Unseen Environment,'" Journal of Communication, 26:18-22 (1976).

4 For a study comparing national and local public affairs issues, see Philip C. Palmgreen, Mass Communication and Political Knowledge: The Effects of Political Level and Mass Media Coverage on Political Learning (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1975).

5 These trends in audience reach are amply portrayed in minutes of meetings by the American Newspaper Publishers Association and in the pages of Broadcasting.

6 We omit radio and word-of-mouth communication from this discussion because research has failed to show correlations with learning about public affairs.

7 One set of research results can be found in Peter Clarke and Lee Ruggels, "Preferences Among News Media for Coverage of Public Affairs," Journalism Quarterly, 47:464-471 (1970). Also see Alex S. Edelstein, The Uses of Communication in Decision-Making (New York: Praeger, 1974).

8 Peter Clarke and F. Gerald Kline, "Media Effects Reconsidered: Some New Strategies for Communication Research," Communication Research, 1:224-240 (1974); Philip Palmgreen, F. Gerald Kline and Peter Clarke, "Message Discrimination and Information-Holding About Political Affairs," presented to the International Communication Association, New Orleans, April, 1974.

9 Persons interviewed here are 18 years or older in households selected by probability sampling methods. Approximately two-thirds had been interviewed in 1972. Sampling, weighting and other survey documentation can be found in Warren E. Miller, Arthur H. Miller, and F. Gerald Kline, The CPS 1974 American National Election Study (Ann Arbor: Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, 1975).

10 We have not overlooked individual analyses. Patterns of results below are duplicated when we examine relationships between individuals' information and media use.

11 When reasons people give are examined in detail, most cluster in four categories. Most frequent are references to the candidates' prior records of public service -- general mentions of how well they have filled governmental or political offices.

Mentions of being a good party man come second. References to integrity and honesty are third. The fourth most popular category is general expressions of having heard good things about the candidate.

Respondents cite favorable characteristics much more often than criticisms.

12 All respondents, voters and non-voters, were asked these questions, however.

13 See Miller, Miller and Kline, op. cit.

14 Others have found impressive similarities between television and newspapers in quantity of coverage of national issues. (See Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media," Public Opinion Quarterly, 35:176-187 (1972).) Whether or not this finding is duplicated at the statewide political level depends on a number of influences -- including, presumably, greater closeness between editors and events in their state, relative importance of state and national wire service priorities, and importance of local vs. national issues in each senatorial race.

15 Objections can be raised about permissiveness in accepting the ingredients of "reasoning" as reflecting a person's level of political information. (For an analysis using this kind of data to measure political ideology, see Philip E. Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," in David E. Apter (ed.) Ideology and Discontent (Glencoe: Free Press, 1964.) The reasons some persons express for liking or disliking candidates may be incorrect, according to a detached observer, or shallow, irrelevant, or otherwise unappealing.

Accordingly, we conducted a parallel analysis using a more conventional test for knowledge -- ability to name the senatorial candidates who competed in the election.

We introduced our four major independent variables in simultaneous multiple regressions against both indices of information with the following results. Data are standardized beta weights with their statistical significance.

	Reasons		Candidate Names	
	beta	p	beta	p
Education	.0136	ns	.0465	ns
Interest	.3744	.004	.2814	.033
Newspaper mess. discr.	.3176	.009	.3629	.004
Television mess. discr.	-.0290	ns	-.0728	ns

Parallels between these results are striking. We conclude that findings based on reasons for political preference, the less presumptuous measure of information, do not present a warped view of the weak educational role played by television.

16 Wayne A. Danielson and John B. Adams, "Completeness of Press Coverage of the 1960 Campaign," Journalism Quarterly, 38: 441-452 (1961).)

17 Residuals are expressed in standard scores.

18 The latter portion of our analysis can be misunderstood if read too literally. Individual towns and cities in Table 2 should not be labeled for all time as above or below expectations in level of information holding. Eugene, Ore., and Crawford County, Ia., are randomly-drawn data points in the same sense that we view individual persons in the typical sample survey analysis. Markets studied here represent

classes of markets; each is imperfectly described by the responses and behavior of a handful of adults in households chosen by probability methods.

We can be confident of findings in the aggregate, especially when grouped into broad categories as here. We can be less certain that in a second survey Phoenix or Seattle would appear in the same cells of analysis.