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AUTHOR Smith, Edward J.; Fowler, Gilbert L., Jr.
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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a preliminary analysis of survey research data concerning the characteristics of magazine editors and magazine operations. The specific areas addressed are: the professional and personal characteristics of magazine editors; the extent to which editors become involved in and control the full scope of magazine editorial functions; whether magazines have editorial formulas or policies, how they are derived, and how comprehensive they are; the socialization forces in play in magazine editorial offices and how important they are in conveying information to staff; and the size of magazine staffs and the kinds of work they do. The paper reports the responses of 124 magazine editors to a mail questionnaire (with a 24.08% response rate). Dealing with each research area consecutively, it builds a composite description of the "average" magazine editor. It reveals a heavy involvement of editors in most editorial office activities and an almost even split in the presence or absence of editorial policies, but a strong reliance on editorial formulas. It also shows that "talking with the editor" is the strongest source of information on acceptable editorial office performance, that the mean number of editorial employees per magazine is 4.79, and that the task consuming the largest amount of time is "editing, correcting, and proofreading." (Author/FL)

A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON FIVE QUESTIONS CONCERNING MAGAZINE EDITORS AND MAGAZINE OPERATIONS

by

Edward J. Smith

Assistant Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication

The University of Oklahoma

Gilbert L. Fowler Jr.

Assistant Professor of Journalism

Arkansas State University

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A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON FIVE QUESTIONS CONCERNING MAGAZINE EDITORS AND MAGAZINE OPERATIONS

The magazine industry in the United States is repeatedly characterized in scholarly and commercial media as being in a state of radical change. Since the 1950s observers have emphasized that in most aspects of the medium revolutionary changes have and are continuing to take place.

Probably the most significant change has been the shift from mass to special interest magazines as a result of the advent of television and the death of the general circulation giants.[1] The economics of the industry have changed drastically in the past 30 years with direct impacts on magazine ownership, financing, editing, advertising and circulation.[2] The theme of most writing on the industry in recent years is that very little is as it was.

The typical magazine of the past with its potpourri of fact and fiction read by a national mass audience is a rarity that is only partly emulated in today's media marketplace.[3] Instead the industry's emphasis is on the special interest, target-audience publication:

> Today, advertisers who want a mass, 'shotgun' audience turn to television. Those who want a far more selective 'rifle-shot' audience — prospects of known background, interests, and income — turn to special-audience magazines.[4]

This central shift in the focus of the industry has been accompanied by a number of associated changes that have also attracted considerable attention. One important new issue concerns possible changes in the characteristics of magazine editors and their functions and roles on modern magazines. It has been suggested that the "golden age" of the strong,

dynamic magazine editor is over and has been replaced by the era of the computerized, corporate copy-handler. However, there is disagreement.

One often cited spinoff of the current trend toward specialized magazines is the opportunity such a marketplace affords to those who come up with an idea and want to start a magazine:

> The specialization of magazines allows plenty of running room for editors with unusual ideas. A magazine... can aim at attracting a small, devoted readership of people who think like the editor. Once upon a time, a strong-willed would-be editor started a newspaper. Today, he or she is far more likely to start a magazine.[5]

These authors suggest that specialization, in part, affords editors the opportunity to exert a strong influence on every aspect of the contents of their magazines. Clay Felker has argued that magazines are "peculiarly and stubbornly personal products."[6] Similarly, Sandman, Rubin and Sachsman write:

> Time, Life, and Fortune were the vision of Henry R. Luce. Playboy is Hugh Hefner. Arnold Gingrich guided Esquire to popularity; Helen Gurley Brown made a winner of Cosmopolitan; Robert Peterson did the same with Hot Rod. It is hard to think of a successful magazine that is not the reflection of one person.[7]

Wood echoed the sentiment expressed above:

> A strong editor, even a strongly wrongheaded editor, has usually meant a strong and influential magazine; whereas intelligent editors of moderate means and no firm opinions have often produced colorless and comparatively ineffective magazines.[8]

Strong arguments are made, however, that the structure and economics of present-day magazine publishing disallows such editor involvement. It is suggested that editors today are something less than they were in the past and ought to be today. Wolseley bemoans the changes he sees in the industry

in regards to the influence of top editors. He also suggests that the top editors today are characteristically different than those of a few years ago:

> But a literary glow rarely lasts around a magazine editor these days; he is not only less literary and austere but also younger and more businesslike. The personality is less evident. ...if a magazine has a voice it is institutional rather than individual. Today's big-time editor is a combination editorial executive, businessman, and graphic artist.[9]

Peterson shared a similar view. He argued that often good editors were authoritarians who imparted some of their own personalities to their magazines. However, he says that the days of the strong editor are numbered if not already a part of the past. He quotes Ken Purdy's observations that great editors are strong-willed "instinctive" editors who fought against the adoption of "synthetic policy."[10] Modern editors, Peterson says, contribute little of their personalities to their magazines. He attributes part of the change to recent trends toward the use of statistical data to devise editorial policies to please the target audiences of the specialized magazines:

> As magazines became increasingly edited to formula, as competition made editors increasingly concerned with giving the reader what he wanted, the situation was reversed. The formula, not the editor, gave a magazine its character and continuity. The editor became an anonymous technician, skilled but highly expendable, whose task was to achieve maximum results with the formula. Editors could come and go but the essential personality of the magazine could remain virtually unchanged...[11]

Peterson equated the impact of the adoption of editorial formulas to the conversion of a "chef who created original masterpieces to a cook who simply gave his competent individual touch to standard recipes."[12] Wolseley, however, points out that formulas-- the basic editorial motifs or guiding concepts and philosophies-- are in many cases partially created by the editors themselves. He wrote: "Behind every original formula are one

or more persons with ideas of what a magazine for a particular purpose should say and stand for."[13]

From the same perspective Wood writes that magazines, even those with formulas, are merely a combination of people and ideas. He says that there are few rules or reliable gauges:

> Each issue starts from nothing or only from editorial prescience, accumulated experience, skill with words, and feel for design. There are few rules, and most of them are flexible. There are no templates or reliable gauges. The ultimate ingredients of a magazine are invisible. They come down to imagination, skill, intuition, judgment, possibly intelligence, and a few other attributes...[14]

Editorial formulas are clearly editorial restraints even if the borders of the formulas are wide apart and loosely drawn. Policy is an inherent part of the formula. Wolseley's discussion of magazine formulas indicates that the formula itself is policy and that in most contexts the two expressions are synonymous.[15] He indicates that the formula is worked out, in most cases, between the senior editor and publisher of the magazine.

Another concern that is pointed out by Felker concerns how strong editors, if they indeed continue to exist, manage to convey their ideas and views to those who work with them.

Felker writes:

> One of the strangest characteristics of a number of successful editors (but not all) is that they can be mysteriously uncommunicative. For example, their sub-editors won't always know what they are talking about or what is wanted from the staff. Yet in some (evenstranger) way, that editor strongly shapes his magazine in his own image, and creates a dynamic spirit which transmits itself to the editorial contributors, the readers, and the business audience. ...sometimes even by the editor who himself initiated the policy blindly and intuitively, acting on his own biases and prejudices, and not on a carefully thought-out plan.[16]

Felker goes on to explain that by the time a person becomes an editor he or she is acting on knowledge, emotions, education, journalistic skills and psychological traits already in place. That person is drawing "on what

is already there."[17]

Felker's observation suggests that at least to some extent, the socialization process originally described in a news context by Breed[18] and later reinforced by Donohew[19] and Kerrick[20] are indeed in play in the editorial offices of magazines. In these studies and Felker's observation it is suggested that staff members learn by some other than overt means — a kind of osmosis— what is expected of them in terms of their staff roles. It is obvious that editors, in some way, teach their staffs about the kinds of things that are acceptable and unacceptable in the work situation.

An important theme of the new era in magazine publishing (and the old era for that matter) is the profit squeeze. Behind the changes that have been described and debated here is the primary motive force of economics. Magazines must make a profit and the literature suggests that the changes implemented in recent years have been made to enable magazines to make a profit. This naturally has implications concerning staff size, working hours and the various kinds of functions performed by editorial department personnel.

John Tebbel, writing in Saturday Review about magazine trends, innovations and growth, ended his article with an appropriate summary. He wrote: "The old guard is departing, but the new generation promises a profitable— if not especially inspiring— future."[21]

These observations on the past and present status of the magazine industry suggest several significant research questions. This paper is a preliminary report of data collected that addresses five research questions that are suggested by the foregoing literature.

The five research questions are:

1. What are the personal and professional characteristics

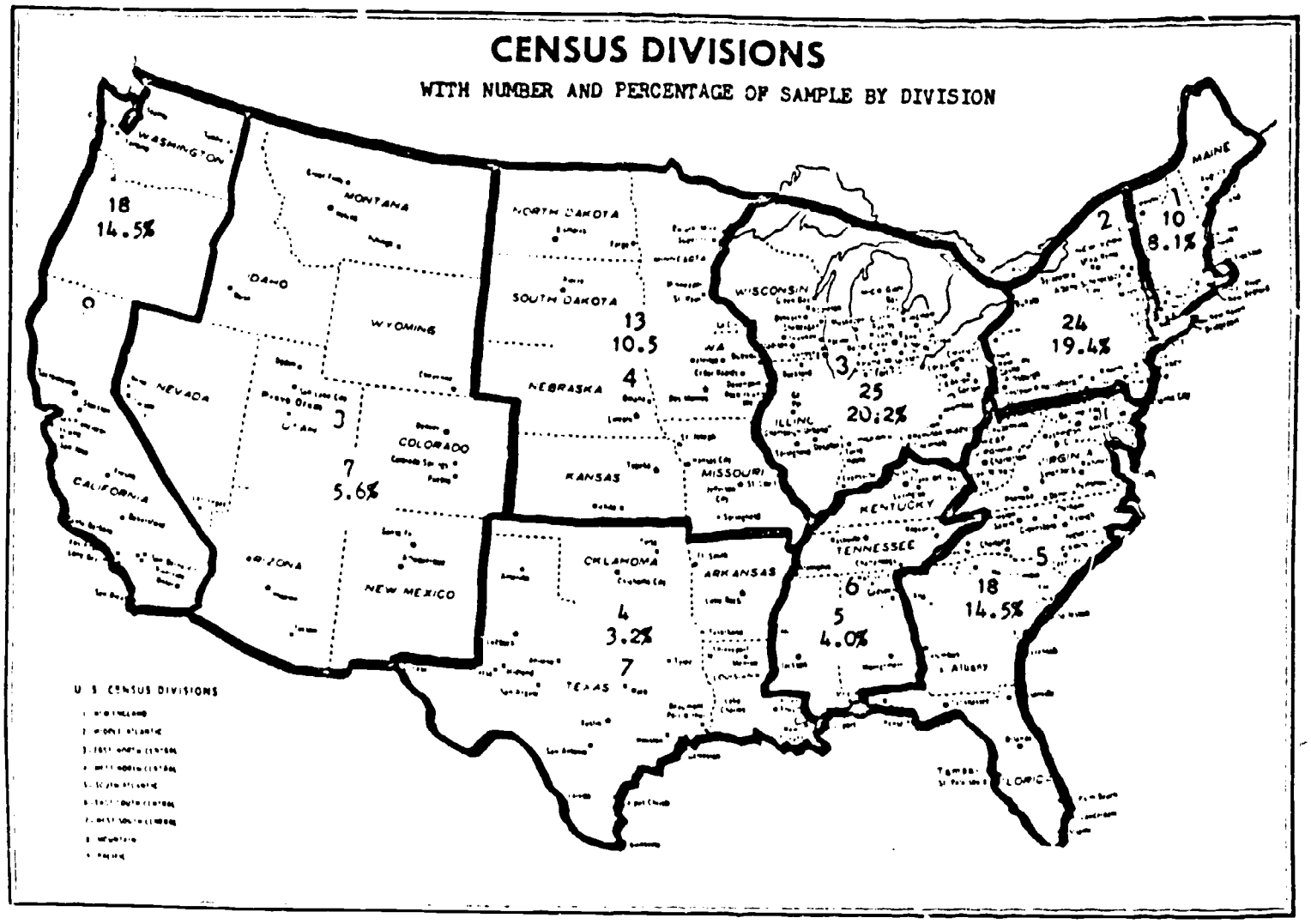
of modern magazine editors?

2. To what extent do editors become involved in and control the full scope of magazine editorial functions?
3. Do magazines have editorial formulas/policies, how are they dervied and how comprehensive are they?
4. What socialization forces are in play in magazine editorial offices and how important are they in conveying information to staffers?
5. How large are magazine staffs and what kinds of work do they do?

To gather the necessary information a three-page forced choice and fill-in-the-blank questionnaire was devised. The sample was drawn systematically from the consumer magazine listing in the 1978 Writer's Market. Five hundred questionnaires were mailed and 124 usable returns were received at the time of this writing. This produced a usable yield of 24.80%. Frequency analysis was the primary method of data analysis. This paper is, of course, descriptive in nature. The data are reported and conclusions and implications are discussed by research question consecutively.

As shown on the map on the next page all 9 U.S. Census Divisions are represented within the sample. The highest regional concentration represented in the sample is the East North Central division which includes the Chicago metro area. Second is the Middle Atlantic division which incorporates New York City. Otherwise the distribution of the sample seems to logically coincide with expected concentrations within the magazine publishing industry.

The 124 respondents edit 189 magazines with a total circulation of 33,451,728. The mean circulation was 269,771.68 with the median circulation at 80,025. The mode was 50,000 with circulations ranging from 250 to 8,000,000.



1 NEW ENGLAND
Connecticut
Maine
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
Rhode Island
Vermont

2 MIDDLE ATLANTIC
New Jersey
New York
Pennsylvania

3 EAST NORTH CENTRAL
Illinois
Indiana
Michigan
Ohio
Wisconsin

4 WEST NORTH CENTRAL
Iowa
Kansas
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
North Dakota
South Dakota

5 SOUTH ATLANTIC
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Maryland
North Carolina
South Carolina
Virginia
West Virginia

6 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL
Alabama
Kentucky
Mississippi
Tennessee

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL
Arkansas
Louisiana
Oklahoma
Texas

8 MOUNTAIN
Arizona
Colorado
Idaho
Montana
Nevada
New Mexico
Utah
Wyoming

9 PACIFIC
Alaska
California
Hawaii
Oregon
Washington

A breakdown of the distribution of magazine circulations represented within the sample revealed that 25 (20.2%) had circulations ranging from 250-10,000; 44 (35.5%) had circulation ranging from 10,001-100,000; 28 (22.6%) had circulations that ranged from 100,001-250,000 and 27 (21.8%) had circulations between 250,001 and 8,000,000.

Fifty percent, 62, of the magazines in the sample were issued monthly while 18.5%, 23, were issued on a bi-monthly basis. Twenty sample magazines were issued quarterly which accounted for 16.1%. Ten were weekly, three each

were annual and nine times a year, two were bi-weekly and one was semi-monthly.

The sample included 93 (75%) editors who edited only one magazine and 31 who edited two or more. Further breakdowns revealed that 16 sample editors edited two magazines, six edited three, four edited four magazines, two each edited five and seven magazines respectively and one edited six magazines. In all, the 124 editors in the sample edited a total of 189 magazines.

Research Question #1: What are the personal and professional characteristics of modern magazine editors?

Seventeen questions were used to gather data on various personal and professional characteristics of the editors.

The editors ranged in age from 21 to 72 with the mean at 41.22 years old. The median age was 37.83 and the mode was 37. Twenty-six (21%) were 21-30, 43 (34.7%) were in the 31-40 age group, 28 (22.6%) were 41-50 and 27 (21.8%) were 51 and above.

There were 92 (74.2%) males and 32 (25.8%) females.

Educational attainment rankings revealed that 65 (52.4%) held bachelor's degrees, 32 (25.8%) master's degrees, 11 (8.9%) Ph.D. degrees and one held a law degree. Fifteen (12.1%) had some college training but had not received a a degree. All of the respondents had attended some college or received a degree.

Thirty-eight (30.6%) of the respondents held degrees in journalism. The remaining 86 (69.4%) held degrees in 18 other fields or did not hold a degree. Thirty-one (25%) had degrees in English and 9 (7.3%) in theology. Seven (5.6%) had degrees in history. Other degree fields were finance,2; French, 1; music, 3; education, 4; speech, 2; economics, 2; botany, 1; political science, 2; law, 1; business, 4; engineering, 1; agronomy, 1;

philosophy, 3 and math, 1.

In terms of religious involvement the majority of the editors were not heavily involved. Seventy editors reported that they were either not involved or inactive in religious activities. The detailed breakdown revealed that 35 (28.2%) were not involved, 35 (28.2%) were inactive, 23 (18.5%) were moderate in their religious activity and 31 (25%) rated themselves as being active in religious affairs.

Politically, 32 editors (25.8%) considered themselves liberals, 62 (50%) considered themselves moderate, 20 (16.1%) considered themselves conservative and 10 (8.1%) did not have a political preference.

In terms of political party membership, there were 29 (23.4%) Democrats, 31 (25%) Republicans, 51 (41.1%) Independents and 13 (10.5%) reported that they were not involved in politics at all.

Relating to the editor's childhood family income status, only 3 (2.4%) reported that they came from high income families. Thirty (24.2%) said they were from upper/middle income families and 52 (41.9%) respondent that they grew up in a middle income household. Twenty six editors (21%) reported lower/middle childhood incomes and 13 (10.5%) reported lower family incomes.

Comparatively, their present personal incomes were generally higher than those of their childhood family incomes. Six (4.8%) reported upper incomes, 49 (39.5%) reported upper/middle incomes, 49 (39.5%) reported middle incomes while only 12 (9.7%) reported lower/middle and 8 (6.5%) lower incomes.

In terms of media experience the mean was 12.82 years. The range was from one to 40 years experience with the median years of media experience at 10.17 years and the mode at 10 years. Sixty-seven editors (54%) had 10 years or less experience, 33 (26.6%) had from 11 to 20 years, 18 (14.5%) had from 21 to 30 years experience and 6 (4.8%) had 31 or more years experience.

The editors reported on the number of years they had served as editor of their present employer magazine. The mean number of years was 6.15 with the median years in that editorship at 4.72 years. The mode was one year. The range extended from one to 23 years. There were 76 (61.3%) editors who had been in their present position from 1 to 5 years, 27 (21.8%) from 6 to 10 years and 21 (16.9%) in their positions from 11 to 23 years.

Seventy of the magazine editors (56.5%) had not had any previous newspaper experience while 54 (43.5%) had some newspaper experience. The overall mean for years of newspaper experience was 2.26 with the median at .386. For those (54) who had newspaper experience the mean was 4.94 years. The breakdown within this group showed that 40 (32.3% of all editors) had from 1 to 5 years newspaper experience, 8 (6.5% of all editors) had from 6 to 10 years newspaper experience and 6 (4.8% of all editors) had from 11 to 25 years newspaper experience.

The editors responded on a scale of very aggressive to very unaggressive in terms of their personal assertiveness on the job. There were 106 (85.5%) who suggested that they were somewhat to very aggressive. Only 18 editors (14.5%) reported that they were not aggressive or very unaggressive in the work context.

Correspondingly, 96 editors (78.5%) reported that they were actively seeking promotion or advancement within or outside their organizations. Only 28 editors (21.5%) were not seeking advancement.

In terms of the difficulty of their work 114 of the respondents (91.9%) said their jobs were demanding to very demanding in nature. Only 10 (8.1%) reported that their work was not very demanding or very easy.

An associated question determined how much enjoyment they derived from their jobs. Only 7 editors (5.6%) reported that their jobs were not enjoyable while 117 editors (94.8%) said they found their jobs enjoyable or very

enjoyable.

Editors also responded to a question concerning their perceptions of their personal job competence compared with the members of their staffs. Ninty-one editors (75.8% of those responding) reported that they felt they were professionally more competent or much more competent than their staffs. Twenty-nine editors (24.2% of those responding) said they were about equal in competence with members of their staffs. None said they were below the competence of their staffs.

The editors were also asked to evaluate their perceptions of their role in the operation in terms of whether they considered themselves primarily editors or managers. One hundred and one of the respondents said their primary role was that of editor while 23 (18.5%) reported that their primary role was that of a manager.

The foregoing information allows us to construct a profile of the "average" magazine editor based upon mean scores across the list of variables discussed here.

This results in a profile of the mean or majority editor that looks like this:

> The "average" editor is a 41-year-old male with a bachelor's degree in journalism or English. He is not involved in religion, is politically moderate and an indpendent. He has had a middle income upbringing but is doing a little better economically than his father did. He has about 13 years media experience and has held his present position for about 6 years. He has had about 2 years newspaper experience. He considers himself aggressive on the job, is actively seeking promotion and advancement and finds his job very demanding. He enjoys his work and feels he is more competent than his staff. He sees himself as an editor rather than a manager.

Research Question #2: To what extent do magazine editors become involved in and control the full scope of magazine editorial functions?

Twenty-four questions addressed the general question of the depth of control and involvement in editorial operations by the top magazine editors. One important goal in this context was to attempt to measure the extent to which editors share decision making with their subordinates and the extent to which they are directly involved in the day-to-day editorial work. It was also considered important to get some measure of the extent to which they keep a rein on operations or allow freedom among their staffs.

The editors reported that most of the decisions about the editorial content of their magazines were made by them alone 54.8% of the time (68 responses). Nine (7.3%) said most editorial decisions were made by their superiors and 11 (8.9%) said they were made by the staff. Twenty-three editors (18.5%) said that most decisions were made by them and their staffs.

The respondents reported that 41.1% of the time the staff had some input into the decision making process but in 58.9% of the cases the staffs were not regularly consulted for input.

The editors strongly agreed that the editorial content of their magazines must meet their personal quality standards. One hundred and eleven editors (92.8%) responded that they demand that the content meet their standards.

Editors were asked how frequently they were involved in editorial content decisions. One hundred and nineteen editors (97.6% of respondents) reported that they were either always or usually involved in editorial decisions.

One hundred percent of the responding editors (117) said that their staffs frequently make editorial decisions with which they disagree. They also reported with the same frequency (100%, 117 responses) that they frequently reverse an editorial decision made by a staff member.

The editors reported that they get good ideas about editorial contents

for their magazines from their staffs very frequently. Seventy-nine editors (68.7%) said they got good ideas from their staffs very frequently or often. Thirty-six editors (31.3%) responded that they seldom got good ideas. Similarly 67.3% of the editors responding (89) reported that they frequently use the ideas forwarded to them by their staffs. Conversely, 22.6% of the responding editors (26) said the seldom used staff ideas.

All of the responding editors (116) reported that they sometimes to very frequently made compromises of editorial decisions with their staffs.

Table 1 displays editor responses across 13 involvement variables. The 13 variables cumulatively describe the extent to which top editors are involved in routine editorial functions.

Table 1

Editor Involvement Responses Across 13 Activities

Response	Story ideas	Review stories	Accept stories	Edit stories	Write editorials	Edit editorials	Place stories	Write headlines	Photo ideas	Photo accept	Photo editing	Layout, design	Cover editing	Total Responses	Row Percent
Always	51	106	92	71	50	67	77	62	36	51	44	56	79	842	52.24%
Usually	41	13	21	21	16	16	28	20	39	28	26	26	24	319	19.79
Sometimes	19	4	9	24	19	10	12	19	38	26	29	17	10	236	14.64
Seldom	6	0	1	5	16	8	2	14	5	7	13	14	14	95	5.89
Never	5	0	0	2	11	9	3	5	3	8	9	10	6	71	4.40
Missing	2	1	1	1	12	14	2	4	3	4	3	1	1	49	3.04
	124	124	124	124	124	124	124	124	124	124	124	124	124	1,612	100.00%

As shown in the table, the top editors are indeed heavily involved in routine functions. They were asked with what frequency they were routinely involved in the 13 functional categories. The table reveals that consistently the largest numbers of responses appear in the always and usually response categories with the exception of developing photographic ideas which was strong in invclvement but not as skewed as the other responses. The table shows that 72.03% of all of the responses were in the always or usual categories. This would seem to indicate that top editors are heavily involved in all of the functions performed in their editorial offices.

A series of generalizations or conclusions can be drawn from the data. These are:

Top magazine editors make most of their decisions alone with little, if any, staff input. Editors clearly demand that editorial content meets their personal standards and they are almost always involved in editorial decision making. They frequently disagree with their staffs and frequently reverse staff decisions. They get good ideas from their staffs frequently and use them frequently. To a limited extent they are likely to compromise with their staffs where disagreement exists. Senior editors are very highly involved in all editorial functions and operations and apparently keep a close rein on the editorial content of their publications.

Research Question #3: Do magazines have editorial formulas/policies and, if so, how are they derived and how comprehensive are they?

The magazines responding were almost evenly split in terms of the existence of a written editorial policy. Among the respondents 67 (54%) of the magazines did not have formal written policies while 57 (46%) did have

policies. Among those magazines with policies, 9 (15.79%) were characterized as being very comprehensive, 20 (35.09%) were comprehensive, 18 (31.58%) were somewhat comprehensive and 10 (17.54%) were reported to be not comprehensive.

The presence of an editorial formula was a different matter. Only 12 (9.7%) of the 124 magazines responding said they did not have and use, to some extent, an editorial formula. The remaining 112 respondents leaned toward extensive reliance on the formulas. Asked how closely they adhered to their editorial formulas, 18 (16.07% of those with formulas) reported very close adherence, 52 (46.43%) reported close adherence, 31 (27.68%) reported somewhat close adherence while only 11 (9.82%) said they did not follow their formulas seriously or closely.

The editors were asked to describe the single most important source/ criteria/ingredient of the editorial decisions made on their magazines. Direct audience input was the weakest criteria with only 8 (6.5%) of the editors listing it as important. Likewise, audience research was weak with 19 (15.3%) of the responses. The main criteria are their (the editors) personal opinion with 49 (39.5%) and magazine tradition and policy with 48 (38.7%) of the responses.

Publisher involvement in the policy-making process was weak. Forty-two editors (35% of those who answered this question) said their publishers were either very involved or involved in the establishment of editorial department policies, while 78 (64.9%) said their publishers were only somewhat to not involved at all. Even lower percentages are associated with publisher involvement in day-to-day editorial content decisions. Thirty editors (25%) reported that their publishers were either involved or very involved while 90 editors (75%) reported that their publishers were somewhat to not involved.

The available data on policy considerations reveal that about half of the responding magazines have a formal, written editorial policy. Again, about half or slightly more of the editors characterize their policies as being comprehensive. Almost all of the magazines have a formula used to guide editorial operations but only about half of the editors report close adherence to the formula. The two most important decision making criteria are the editor's personal opinion and the magazine's traditions and policy. Publishers are heavily involved in setting editorial department policy in about a third of the cases and are involved in day-to-day editorial decision making in about a fourth of the cases.

In this area a distinction between policy and formula is noticeable.

Research Question #4: What socialization forces are in play in magazine editorial offices and how important are they in conveying information to staff members?

The concept of socialization suggests that employees learn what is acceptable and not acceptable in the work situation through a gradual process of learning rather than by an overt, institutionalized, purposive training process. A kind of cumulative, subtle osmosis is said to be in force. Several questions in the survey addressed the socialization question as it applies to magazine editorial offices.

One consideration concerned editor's perceptions of how aware their staff members are of the editor's editorial policies and standards. The data revealed that editors believe their staffs are highly aware of their thinking with 72 (58.1%) reporting their staffs were very aware and 39 (31.5%) reporting that their staffs were aware. Only seven responses indicated lesser awareness.

Similarly, a high percentage of the editors felt that their staff members shared and agreed with their editorial views. Sixty-seven (54%)

reported strong agreement and 38 (30.6%) reported that their staffs somewhat agree. Only 12 (9.7%) reported modest levels of agreement and none reported disagreement.

Asked if they felt their magazines would be significantly changed in editorial terms if they left their positions 96 (82.1%) of the editors reported "somewhat different" and "slightly different." Only 4 (3.4%) believed their magazines would change much in their absence. Seventeen (14.6%)said they felt their magazines would not change at all.

Another series of questions concerned the learning process.

The responding editors generally agreed that new staff members "catch on" to editorial office policies and procedures very quickly. One hundred and thirteen (91.1%) of the editors reported that new staff members catch on very quickly.

Similarly, 103 of the editors (83.1%) reported that new staff members who catch on quickly begin to be rewarded more quickly than the slower learners. Only two editors disagreed.

However, most new staff members catch on and quickly get into the swing of editorial office operations. Only 23 (18.5%) of the editors reported that they had a person on their staff who seemed unable to catch on or was catching on very slowly. Among those who had slow learners on their staffs at this time 19 (82.60%) of the editors reported that it was unlikely these staffers would be on the job this time next year.

Table 2 displays five learning variables, that is, ways that new staff members might learn what is acceptable and not acceptable on their magazines. Editors were asked to rank each on a scale from very important to very unimportant in terms of the impact of each on the learning process. It is shown in the table that editors believe the most important way new editorial

Table 2

Relative Importance of Five Learning Variables

In the Socialization Process

Response	Reading Rules	Observe others	Talk editor	Talk others	Reward/Punish	Total	Row Percent
Very Important	26	48	68	34	3	179	28.87%
Important	26	43	30	34	11	144	23.23
Somewhat Important	20	14	14	29	23	100	16.13
Not Important	16	3	2	10	31	62	10.00
Very Unimportant	26	6	0	7	46	85	13.71
Missing Value	10	10	10	10	10	50	8.06
	124	124	124	124	124	620	100.00%

staff members learn the ropes is by "talking with the editor." This is followed closely by "observing others" as an important learning method. Note that editors clearly rejected the "reward and punishment" concept espoused by some socialization researchers. Combining the very important, important and somewhat important response categories reveals that for the "reading rules and policy" variable there were 78 responses (68.4%) in the combined category, 105 (92.10%) on the "observe others" variable, 112 (98.25%) on the "talk with the editor" variable, 97 (85.09%) on the "talk with others" variable and only 37 (32.46%) on the "rewards and punishments" variable.

The variables associated with the research question on socialization suggest several summary statements or generalizations. It is clear that editors believe their staffs are highly aware of their policies, standards and editorial stance. Editors also believe that their staffs agree with them on their editorial views. To substantiate this, editors felt their magazines would experience only slight editorial content changes if they were to leave their magazines and turn operations over to their staffs.

Editors believe most new staff members catch on to editorial office tone and outlook and procedures very quickly. Those new staffers who catch on more quickly are usually rewarded more quickly. Very few editors have staffers who are slow to catch on on their staffs and the slow learners were not expected to be around long.

The editors indicated that the most important ways new staff members learn is by talking with the editor and by observing other staff members.

Research Question #5: How large are magazine staffs and what kinds of work do they do?

The purpose of this section is to describe in general terms magazine staff sizes and functions.

The editors reported that the total number of employees in all departments on their magazines was 1,981 (with 120 magazines reporting). The mean number of employees as 16.508 with the median at 12.250. The mode was 6. The range was 99 extending from 1 to 100.

With 123 magazines reporting the total number of fulltime editorial department employees was 589 with a mean of 4.79 and a median of 3.03. The range was 25 extending from 1 to 26. The mode was 2.

Fifty six of the magazines reported no parttime editorial department

employees. The mean number of parttime employees in the editorial departments was 2.156 with the median at .738. The range was 24 extending from 1 to 25.

With 87 magazines reporting the total number of editorial department manhours (personhours?) worked each week was 14,929.2. The mean number of manhours was 171.3 weekly. The median was 129.75 with a range of 785. The mode was 80 hours weekly.

Table 3 displays the weekly distribution of editorial office manhours devoted to various editorial tasks. On the instrument, editors were allowed to write in tasks not listed. Those accounting for less than one mean manhour weekly were not included in the table.

Table 3

Mean Manhours Devoted to Editorial Department Tasks
(Weekly)

Task	Mean Manhours	Percentage
Information Gathering	24*	14.03%
Story Writing	22	12.87
Consulting with Freelancers	10	5.85
Editing/Correcting/Proofreading	44	25.73
Page layout, design	18	10.53
Artistic, photographic	13	7.60
Editorial management/planning	17	9.95
Clerical	21	12.28
Public Relations/Promotional	1	.58
Production/ Production Supervision	1	.58
	171	100.00%

*Rounded to nearest whole number.

Table 3 shows that the single most time-consuming magazine editorial task is editing, correcting and proofreading. Information gathering, story writing and clerical work are grouped as second-level tasks. The table clearly reveals that magazine editorial work is diverse and demands multiple skills.

The data discussed relating to magazine staffs and tasks suggests that staffs are generally small. The average magazine has only about 16 employees and about a fourth of them work in the editorial department. The average editorial department employes two parttime workers and puts in about 170 hours work each week. The most time-consuming tasks they perform are editing and information gathering.

This paper has been a report of a preliminary analysis of data gathered in March, 1979 from magazine editors in direct operational control of the editorial departments of their publications.

Footnotes

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