DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 193 667 CS 205 936

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TITLE Mass Media Use by Activist and Non-Activist Publics.
PUB DATE Aug 80
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism (63rd, Boston, MA, August 10-13, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Activism; *Change Agents; Comparative Analysis; *Conservation (Environment); Environment; *Information Sources; *Mass Media; *Media Research; Use Studies
IDENTIFIERS *Media Use

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to determine if environmental activists differed from nonactivists in their use of the various media; specifically in their use of the media to obtain information on environmental issues. Based on a review of environmental literature, it was hypothesized that activists (1) would spend more time using newspapers and less time with radio and television, (2) would express more interest in newspaper content about politics and public affairs, (3) would more frequently watch television news shows and special programs concerning news events, and (4) would want to find out more about important environmental issues than would nonactivists. Questionnaires were completed by a random sample of 544 adults in Wisconsin and a select sample of 169 environmental activists in Madison, Wisconsin. On the basis of their responses to questionnaire items, the random sample subjects were divided into groups of activists and nonactivists. The results from the random sample showed that activists were similar to nonactivists in their media use, except for a greater use of magazines. The activists also wanted to find out more about important environmental issues than did nonactivists. The results from the select sample supported the hypotheses. (Author/FL)

Public Relations Division

MASS MEDIA USE BY ACTIVIST AND NON-ACTIVIST PUBLICS

By

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Presented to the Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism Annual Convention, Boston, Mass., August, 1980.

MASS MEDIA USE BY ACTIVIST AND NON-ACTIVIST PUBLICS

Of concern to us as public relations researchers is the relationship between environmental activism and the mass media. The unprecedented speed and urgency with which ecological issues have burst into American consciousness has been called a "miracle of public opinion" (6).

In public relations practice, it is generally assumed mass-media use influences the development of attitudes about issues like the environment. The mass media's influence pervades our entire life, creating symbolic information environments, a common system of messages and images which shapes our consciousness of what is important, what is right and what is related to what else (8), as well as contributes to the probability of someone making an overt response (16).

In communication research, this relationship between the mass media and a form of behavior is modelled typically as the behavior (such as environmental activism) being the end result of predispositions leading to interest in an issue, which leads to issue knowledge, which leads to attitudes about the issue which leads to the behavior (20).

A growing body of research suggests public relations practitioners should not rely on this assumed contribution of the mass media until

stronger evidence is available, however. While little doubt exists that media use for public affairs information leads to greater knowledge of public affairs, candidates and issues, there is no conclusive evidence that mass-media use leads to greater political-activity levels, primarily because the mass media appear to play only a reinforcement role (20). Similarly, in two reviews of environmental-communications research, Stamm concluded environmental-information campaigns can increase public knowledge and awareness about the environment, but he found little support for the assumptions that increased knowledge changes attitudes or that attitudes predict behavior (18).

Therefore, on the basis of these conclusions and his own research, Grunig suggests that when designing an environmental public relations program, a public relations practitioner should rely more on specialized media and personal contact than the mass media when "targeting" activist audiences (9).

Our research goal was to test the general assumption that those who are most concerned and most knowledgeable about the environment, as well as most active, tend to use the mass media differently than those who are not environmentally active. We wanted to find out if the activist public differed from the non-active public in which media was considered the most important and most influential source of information on important environmental issues, as well as in habitual mass-media use.

Theoretical support for environmental activists using the mass media differently than non-active persons comes from the uses-and-gratification approach to mass-media use (1, 20), which suggests in this context that environmental information will be more useful to an environmental activist than to a non-active person. Therefore, an environmental activist would

manifest different types of mass-media use. This utility could be social, in that new environmental information would be useful in interpersonal communication such as attempts to convert others to the environmental position on an issue. Environmental information could also have self-expressive and reinforcement functions for the environmental activist.

For example, if a person had an image of him/herself as an environmental activist, he/she may think others expect him/her to be well-informed about environmental issues. Or, he/she may seek reinforcement for his/her environmental attitudes and activism by seeking evidence that the issues he/she supports deserves his/her support. He/she may also be interested in finding out if his/her environmental activism has had any consequences and therefore seek out relevant information.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since so few studies in the environmental literature relate environmental activism to mass-media use, we sought additional inferential evidence from studies of political behavior as well.

First, we looked at what mass media the average person uses for political information. The University of Michigan Center for Political Science conducted a 1976 American National Election Study with a random, national sample of approximately 2,400 respondents. Respondents were asked which news medium they relied on most for news about politics and current events: 64.2 percent said television; 19.3 percent said newspapers; and 16.5 percent said both television and newspapers equally (15).

What mass media does the average person use for environmental information? Much asked a random sample of persons in Durham, North Carolina where they got environmental information: 73 percent said television; 62 percent said newspapers; 37 percent said magazines; 21 percent referred to friends; and 12 percent said nonmedia sources (12). Similarly, television

was the source used most often to learn about the environment in a random sample of three Detroit communities (19). These two studies were completed before mass media coverage of the environment was so prevalent, however, and the latter included ghetto areas.

Studies of select samples of environmental activists show quite different uses of the mass media for environmental information. In a select sample of members of the Sierra Club, Sellers and Jones asked what source is usually consulted for ecology information (17). A majority cited conservation groups (52 percent), followed by "other media" (11 percent), daily newspapers (6 percent), radio-tv (1 percent), and "other sources" (14 percent). The sources from which the Sierra Club members had recently sought ecology information were: conservation groups (34 percent), "other sources" (32 percent), "other media" 19 percent), daily newspapers (13 percent), and radio-tv (1 percent). When asked what source they would use in seeking information on environmental issues they were most concerned about, Sierra Club members cited: conservation groups (54 percent), "other sources" (24 percent), "other media" (18 percent), daily newspapers (2 percent), and radio-tv (0 percent).

Novic and Sandman found that college students who used non-mass media more than mass media for environmental information considered themselves more informed, considered the environment a more important problem, and showed a stronger relationship between being informed about the environment and making a personal commitment to do something about it (13).

When members of the National Audubon Society were asked what was their chief source of environmental information, they rated Audubon magazine first (2).

Based on the evidence that environmental activism is positively related to education (11), which is also a significant predictor of newspaper use (4), we would also expect environmental activists to show higher levels of newspaper use than non-active persons.

A second area of our literature review dealt with evidence of politically or environmentally active persons differing from non-active persons in mass-media use (in studies using direct comparisons).

Extrapolating from Chaffee's (3) model of political-information diffusion, which suggests a person's acquisition of political information may depend on his/her orientations, and the evidence suggesting political orientations develop early in life, Tan hypothesized that a person's political orientations will determine the degree to which the mass media are used for public affairs information (20). He found supporting evidence in that politically active respondents were more likely to use newspapers and television for public-affairs information than those who were not politically active.

In most of the studies on political behavior which include measures of both television and newspaper exposure (21), voting and various other kinds of political activity tend to be more strongly associated with newspaper use than television use, however, even when only television public affairs viewing is measured.

Forrest provides the only direct comparison between environmental activists and non-active persons from a random sample in terms of media use (7). She found a strong, positive relationship between environmental activism and the use of environmental newspapers, environmental magazines and environmental radio content. The environmental activists were less

likely to use television than any other medium in terms of general media use compared to the non-active respondents.

HYPOTHESES

From this evidence, we hypothesized environmental activists would be likely to spend more time using newspapers and less time with radio and television than non-active persons. Since newspaper and television content related to politics, public affairs, news programs and programs on current news events would probably be more useful to environmental activists than to non-active persons either socially or for reinforcement or self-expressive reasons, we hypothesized environmental activists would differ from the non-active persons in interest in newspaper content about politics and public affairs and in frequency of watching tv news and special tv programs about current news events.

Since coverage of social conflicts such as environmental problems in newspapers and television generally occurs late in the sequence of social events (14), we also hypothesized environmental activists would differ from non-active persons in which sources of information they cite as the "most important source of information" and the "most influential source of information" upon their attitudes on important environmental issues.

Finally, based on the greater social utility of such behavior for environmental activists than for non-active persons, we hypothesized environmental activists would differ from non-active persons in wanting to find out more about important environmental issues, especially if they are going to be affected by them, and wanting to learn more information about environmental issues so the person can discuss them with other people.

The specific hypotheses tested were:

H. 1 Environmental activists will report significantly higher levels of newspaper use (time spent reading) and interest in newspaper content about politics and public affairs than non-active persons.

H. 2 Environmental activists will report significantly higher levels of reading magazines regularly than non-active persons.

H. 3 Environmental activists will report significantly lower levels of radio and television use (time spent listening and watching) than non-active persons.

H. 4 Environmental activists will report significantly higher frequency of watching tv news and special tv programs about current news events than non-active persons.

H. 5 Environmental activists will differ significantly from non-active persons in which sources of information they cite as the "most important source of information" on important environmental issues.

H. 6 Environmental activists will differ significantly from non-active persons in which sources of information they cite as the "most important influence" upon their attitudes on important environmental issues.

H. 7 Environmental activists will report significantly higher levels of attention given to newspaper or magazine articles and tv or radio programs about important environmental issues than non-active persons.

H. 8 Environmental activists will report significantly higher levels of wanting to find out more about important environmental issues while reading and listening to such articles and programs than non-active persons.

H. 9 Environmental activists will report significantly higher levels of wanting to find out if important environmental issues are going to affect them personally than non-active persons.

H. 10 Environmental activists will report significantly higher levels of wanting to learn information about important environmental issues so they can discuss them with other people than non-active persons.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOLODOGY

To achieve wider generalizability than that found in previous studies, we analyzed mass-media use by environmental activists and non-active persons found in a random sample of 544 Wisconsin adults. The data were collected in personal interviews by personnel from the Survey Research Laboratory at

the University of Wisconsin, Madison in October, 1974.

Respondents in this Statewide Random Sample were divided into groups of environmental activists and non-active persons in this manner: Environmental activists were assumed to have changed or directed their lifestyles to include more environmentally sound practices (such as reducing energy and resource consumption) and worked in society, either individually or with groups that shared their gools, to conserve natural resources and to slow, halt or prevent environmental and ecological problems, crises and pollution in any form.

The operationalized definition of an environmental activist was any person who reported participating in at least three of the following environmental activism questionnaire items: attended public meetings or hearings and supported the environmentalist's point of view; talked or written to local or county officials and supported the environmentalist's point of view; talked or written to state or federal officials and favored the environmentalist's point of view; signed a petition that favored the environmentalist's point of view; and, joined an organization that favors the environmentalist's point of view.

A "known-group" select sample of environmental activists was also developed for comparison purposes and to attempt to replicate the findings of studies which used select samples of environmental activists (for example, a select sample of Sierra Club members). This sample was created from 208 persons with Madison, Wisconsin addresses on the mailing lists of the following organizations: two Madison-based environmental organizations; the boards of directors of several Madison chapters of state and national environmental organizations; and the environmental subcommittee members of a Madison community-service organization. It was surveyed using a

mail questionnaire in April, 1975. Seventy percent of the respondents said they "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" with the statement that "I consider myself an 'environmental activist'" and 63 percent said they "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" with the statement that "My friends would describe me as an 'environmental activist'."

The questionnaire was mailed first class, which resulted in a 70 percent return within two weeks. A postcard reminder elicited another 11 percent for a total of 81 percent (169 returns). Five were discarded as incomplete. Since questionnaires to the general public seldom net over a 20 to 30 percent return (10), this high rate of return sets this select sample apart from the rest of the population. It is comparable to the 72 percent return achieved by Devall (5) with a national mail survey of 870 Sierra Club members.

Communication-behavior variables, in terms of habitual mass-media use, were operationalized in the following manner:

> In an average day and evening, how much time do you spend reading a newspaper (Monday through Friday)?
>
> When you read a newspaper, how much attention do you usually pay to news about politics and public affairs?
>
> Are there any magazines that you read regularly?
>
> What magazines are those?
>
> On an average day, about how many hours would you say you spend listening to the radio?
>
> On an average day, about how many hours would you say you spend watching television?
>
> In an average week, about how many times would you guess you watch television news shows and special tv programs about current news events?

The next group of communication-behavior variables followed an introductory question which asked: "Of these four different environmental issues -- new electric power plants, conversion of agricultural land to cities and

suburbs, fuel shortages, and pollution controls on industry -- which one do you personally consider the most important one?" Responses for the Statewide Random Sample were: power plants, 6.9 percent; agricultural land use, 18.4 percent; fuel shortages, 38.7 percent; pollution controls, 23.9 percent; and "All Equal," 5.1 percent. Responses for the Madison Select Sample of Environmental Activists were: power plants, 11.6 percent; agricultural land use, 32.3 percent; fuel shortages, 13.5 percent; pollution controls, 14.0 percent; and "All Equal," 22.8 percent. Response differences may be attributable to differences in the nature of the samples and in when each sample was taken.

The communication-behavior variables related to this introductory question were:

> On the topic of (most important issue selected by the respondent), what would you say is the most important source of information for you?
>
> Of the sources of information you have mentioned, which would you say is the most important influence on your opinions regarding the (most important issue)?
>
> There is quite a bit in the news media these days about (most important issue). When you come across newspaper or magazine articles, television or radio programs that deal with (most important issue), would you say you usually pay very close attention to them, fairly close attention, a little attention, or none at all?
>
> When you read and listen to such articles and programs, to what extent do you want to find out more about the problems of (most important issue)?
>
> To what extent do you want to find out if (most important issue) is going to affect you personally?
>
> To what extent do you want to learn information about (most important issue) so that you can discuss it with others?

FINDINGS

For the habitual mass-media use variables (with one exception), no statistically significant differences were found between environmental activists and non-active respondents in the Statewide Random Sample. This

included time spent reading newspapers and attention paid to news about politics and public affairs in the newspaper (Hyp. 1); listening to radio and television (Hyp. 3); and in frequency of watching television news shows and special programs (Hyp. 4) (Table 1). The environmental activists did report significantly higher levels of reading magazines regularly (78.1 percent) than the non-active respondents (58.9 percent) as hypothesized (Hyp. 2) ($p < .05$).

---insert Table 1 about here ---

We found these results surprising, since the environmental activists reported statistically signficant higher levels of education than the non-active respondents ($p < .007$), and higher education typically has predicted newspaper use, as cited earlier. These data give no insights as to the respondents' preferred content when using the mass media, however, so these findings must be viewed with some caution. These findings replicate previous research which suggests magazines are read more by activists than non-active persons.

To clarify magazine-content preference, we asked the environmental activists and the non-active respondents to identify the magazine(s) they read regularly (Table 2). Contrary to expectations, the environmental activists did not differ from the non-active respondents in the State-wide Random Sample in preferring environmental magazines. Statistically significant differences in reading preferences between environmental activists and non-active respondents were found for National Geographic, Field & Stream, Time, Newsweek, Reader's Digest, House Beautiful, and the general category of "Other Business and Technical Reports."

---insert Table 2 about here ---

The Madison Select Sample of Environmental Activists showed expected

high levels of readership of environmental magazines and replicated the high readership levels for Time and Newsweek. Levels of readership of Reader's Digest and House Beautiful dropped to nearly zero in the Madison Select Sample of Environmental Activists, in contrast to their readership by activists in the Statewide Random Sample.

Since demographic factors may account for the high levels of readership of "Other Business and Technical Reports" by the environmental activists in both samples, a brief demographic comparison between environmental activists and non-active respondents in the Statewide Random Sample follows.

Men and women were approximately equally active and non-active, but a statistically significant larger share of environmental activists than non-active respondents had "white-collar" occupations ($p < .01$), described themselves as "middle class" ($p < .05$), and were active in civic and service clubs ($p < .05$). The environmental activists were also more likely ($p < .01$) than the non-active respondents to have lived in larger cities before the age of 18. There were no differences between groups in political ideology ("left-right") or in political-party identification.

The Madison Select Sample of Environmental Activists, as expected, showed extremely high levels of education, participation in the environmental activism questionnaire items, income, "white-collar" occupations, identification with the "middle class," and identification with the "left" ideology and Democratic political party. The evidence does suggest it may be unwise to generalize from select samples of environmental activists to environmental activists found in the general population.

In terms of the "most important source of information on the (most important environmental issue)" (Table 3), the environmental activists were similar to the non-active respondents in the Statewide Random Sample, contrary to Hypothesis 5. Both groups cited newspapers and television as

"most important source" at approximately equal levels.

---insert Table 3 about here---

It may also be meaningful to note both groups of environmental activists were much more likely to cite mass media sources over interpersonal sources for information on the "most important" environmental issue, which tends to contradict the general assumption that environmental activists use specialized media rather than mass media for their environmental information.

Almost no one in the Madison Select Sample of Environmental Activists, however, cited television or radio as important sources of information on the "most important" environmental issue, which replicates the findings from studies using select samples of environmental activists (Table 3). Magazines were cited second after newspapers. These data are confounded somewhat by the large percentage of respondents in the Madison Select Sample who refused or were unable to pick only one "most important source of information" on this environmental issue (coded as "Inappropriate").

For the follow-up question as to which of the information sources listed were considered the "most important influence on their opinion regarding (the most important environmental issue)," the environmental activists and the non-active persons in the Statewide Random Sample were again similar (Table 4), contrary to Hypothesis 6. The non-active respondents chose television first and newspapers second, while the environmental activists chose newspapers first and television second.

---Insert Table 4 about here---

Environmental activists in the Madison Select Sample did select magazines as the "most important influence," followed by organizational newsletters, newspapers and science/technical reports. Television and radiowere selected by only a few. These results also replicate previous

findings from select samples of environmental activists. Again, however, these results are confounded somewhat by respondents in the Madison Select Sample refusing or being unable to pick only one source as the "most influential."

As expected (Hyp. 8), environmental activists did differ significantly ($p < .02$) from non-active respondents in the Statewide Random Sample in wanting to find out more about the "most important environmental issue" (Table 1). The two groups did not differ, however, in attention paid to media content related to the most important environmental issue (Hyp. 7); in the extent to which they wanted to find out more if the most important environmental issue would affect them personally (Hyp. 9); or in the extent they wanted to learn more about the most important environmental issue so they could discuss it with others (Hyp. 10) (Table 1).

These results give only weak support to the uses-and-gratification approach to media use, since one would assume environmental activists would report higher levels of the latter types of information-seeking behavior than non-active respondents, particularly on salient environmental issues.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the general assumptions about differences between environmental activists and non-active persons in mass-media use are not supported. The data from the Statewide Random Sample suggest the environmental activists do not differ from the non-active respondents in mass-media use, except in magazine use and in wanting to find out more about important environmental issues.

Research questions to be followed up include: what media content do

environmental activists prefer, and why (perhaps continuing the uses-and-gratification approach, though that is not well supported here); and, do the mass media play a significant role in determining what environmental issues are considered important by environmental activists and non-active persons?

As to what media would be the best to use in an environmental public relations program to reach activist and non-active publics, evidence from the statewide random sample suggests the mass media would be effective. Evidence from the select sample of environmental activists shows very low use of broadcast media and greater use of magazines and specialized media for environmental information. These results tend to replicate findings from previous studies using select samples of environmental activists, though they do differ from the results for the environmental activists in the statewide random sample.

TABLE 1. ANOVA Results for Mass Media Use Variables Comparing Environmental Activists to Non-Active Respondents From The WSRL Statewide Random Sample

Independent Variables:	WSRL STATEWIDE RANDOM SAMPLE ANOVA Results Non-Active Respondents (0/5) (n=304)		Environmental Activists (3/5) (n=32)
Average weekday time spent reading a newspaper	$\bar{x}$ = 2.04	N.S.	$\bar{x}$ = 2.49
Average time spent watching tv	$\bar{x}$ = 6.75	N.S.	$\bar{x}$ = 4.84
Average time spent listening to radio	$\bar{x}$ = 4.98	N.S.	$\bar{x}$ = 6.50
Number of times/week you watch tv news shows & special news programs	$\bar{x}$ = 6.48	N.S.	$\bar{x}$ = 8.40
Attention paid to news about politics & public affairs in the newspaper	$\bar{x}$ = 2.93	N.S.	$\bar{x}$ = 3.45
Extent you want to find out more about the problems of (the most important environmental problem)	$\bar{x}$ = 3.31	* ($p < .02$)	$\bar{x}$ = 3.71
Attention paid to media content related to (the most important environmental problem)	$\bar{x}$ = 3.09	N.S.	$\bar{x}$ = 3.34
Extent you want to find out more if (the most important environmental problem) will affect you personally	$\bar{x}$ = 3.55	N.S.	$\bar{x}$ = 3.78
Extent you want to learn information about (the most important environmental problem) so you can discuss it with others	$\bar{x}$ = 3.16	N.S.	$\bar{x}$ = 3.43

TABLE 2. Magazines Reported Read By Environmental Activists and Non-Active Respondents From The WSRL Statewide Random Sample and The Madison Select Sample of Enviromental Activists (Percentages)

	WSRL STATEWIDE RANDOM SAMPLE		MADISON SELECT SAMPLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS (n=164)
	Non-Active Respondents (0/5) (n=304) %	Environmental Activists (3/5) (n=32) %	%
MAGAZINE:			
Audubon	0.3	0.0	20.1
Sierra Club Bulletin	0.0	0.0	4.8
Nat'l Geographic	3.9**[a]	15.6**[a]	7.2
Environment	--	--	4.8
Not Man Apart	--	--	2.4
Smithsonian	--	--	3.6
Environmental Action	--	--	3.0
Ecology	--	--	1.8
Living Wilderness	--	--	1.8
National History	--	--	2.4
The Ecologist	--	--	0.6
National Wildlife	--	--	4.2
Wilderness Society	--	--	0.6
Eco-Bulletin	--	--	0.6
Ramparts	0.0	0.0	0.6
Rolling Stone	0.0	0.0	1.2
MS.	0.0	0.0	3.6
New Times	--	--	1.8
Progressive	0.0	0.0	5.4
New Republic	0.0	0.0	7.2
Nation	0.0	0.0	1.2
Atlantic/Harpers	0.0	3.1	7.2
Sat. Review/World	0.0	0.0	9.0
Washington Monthly	--	--	0.6
Time	6.9*	15.7*	28.6
Newsweek	3.0**	12.5**	24.4
U.S. News & World Report	1.6	3.1	3.0
N.Y. Times Sun. Mag.	--	--	1.8
Reader's Digest	7.9*	21.8*	1.8
People	0.7	3.1	0.0
Sat. Evening Post	0.0	0.0	0.0
New Yorker	0.0	0.0	7.2
Ebony/Jet	1.0	0.0	0.0
Challenge	--	--	0.6
Commonweal	0.0	0.0	0.0
Christian Century	0.0	0.0	0.6
Esquire	0.0	0.0	0.6
Playboy/Playgirl	3.4	6.2	0.0
Argosy/True	0.0	0.0	0.0
Penthouse	0.0	0.0	0.0

(cont.)

TABLE 2 (Cont.). Magazines Reported Read By Environmental Activists and Non-Active Respondents

	WSRL STATEWIDE RANDOM SAMPLE		MADISON SELECT SAMPLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS (n=164)
	Non-Active Respondents (0/5) (n=304) %	Environmental Activists (3/5) (n=32) %	%
MAGAZINE:			
McCalls/Cosmopolitan	4.9	6.2	1.2
Ladies Home Journal/ Family Circle	8.1	3.1	0.0
Psychology Today	1.0	3.1	3.0
Business Week	1.0	3.1	1.8
Science	--	--	5.4
American Scientist	--	--	0.6
Fortune	--	--	2.4
Scientific American	--	--	3.0
Popular Mechanics	1.3	3.1	0.6
House Beautiful	0.3	3.1	0.0
Home & Garden	0.3	0.0	2.4
Consumer Report	--	--	7.2
Popular Science	--	--	1.8
Organic Gardening	--	--	3.6
Sports Illustrated	2.3	0.0	1.8
Farm Journal	3.3	6.3	1.3
Field & Stream	2.6*	9.3*	0.0
Sports Afield	1.6	0.0	0.0
Other Business & Technical Reports	5.9**	31.3**	10.9
Other Fixit/Hobbies/ Home & Garden	20.4	31.3	1.8
Other Environmental	1.6	0.0	4.2
Too Many To List	--	--	20.7

*$p < .05$, F test

**$p < .01$, F test

[a]These were not coded in the WSRL Statewide Random Sample questionnaire.

TABLE 3. The Most Important Source of Information (First Choice) On (The Most Important Environmental Issue) For Environmental Activists and Non-Active Respondents From The WSRL Statewide Random Sample and The Madison Select Sample of Environmental Activists (Percentages)

	WSRL STATEWIDE RANDOM SAMPLE		MADISON SELECT SAMPLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS (n=164)
	Non-Active Respondents (0/5) (n=304) %	Environmental Activists (3/5) (n=32) %	%
SOURCE:			
Newspaper	39.8	43.7	22.0
Television	20.7	21.9	1.8
Radio	4.3	3.1	0.6
Magazines	3.3	9.4	10.4
Farm publications	2.3	3.1	0.0
Books	0.0	3.1	3.7
Trade magazines	0.7	3.1	0.0
Government stats	0.0	0.0	3.7
Organization newsletter	--[a]	--	7.3
Science/technical reports	--	--	3.7
Friends	1.6	6.3	0.0
Observation	3.6	0.0	3.0
Go to industry & ask	0.7	0.0	0.0
Talk to others	1.2	0.0	0.0
Meetings	0.0	0.0	1.2
Gas pump operator	1.6	0.0	0.0
Classes	0.0	3.1	1.2
Prices reflect it	0.0	3.1	0.0
Own experiences	0.3	0.0	0.0
Farm meetings	0.0	0.0	1.2
City/state government	--	--	4.9
Professional people	--	--	0.6
Don't know	6.3	0.0	3.6
Inappropriate	13.5	0.0	26.8[b]

[a] These were not coded in the WSRL Statewide Random Sample questionnaire.

[b] Many respondents in the Madison Select Sample refused to pick only one source as "most important."

TABLE 4. The Source of Information On (The Most Important Environmental Problem) Cited As The "Most Important Influence" On Respondent's Opinions For Environmental Activists and Non-Active Respondents From The WSRL Statewide Random Sample and The Madison Select Sample of Environmental Activists (Percentages)

	WSRL STATEWIDE RANDOM SAMPLE		MADISON SELECT SAMPLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS (n=164)
	Non-Active Respondents (0/5) (n=304) %	Environmental Activists (3/5) (n=32) %	%
SOURCE:			
Newspaper	25.0	31.3	4.9
Television	29.9	25.0	1.2
Radio	3.9	3.1	1.8
Magazines	3.3	6.3	7.3
Farm publications	1.3	0.0	0.0
Books	0.0	0.0	0.6
Trade magazines	1.0*	6.3*	0.0
Government stats	0.0	0.0	0.6
Organization newsletter	--[a]	--	6.7
Science/technical reports	--	--	4.3
Friends	1.3	3.1	0.6
Observation	3.9	6.3	3.7
Go to industry & ask	0.3	0.0	0.6
Talk to others	2.3	0.0	1.8
Meetings	0.0	3.1	0.6
Gas pump operator	3.0	0.0	0.0
Lectures	0.0	0.0	0.6
Classes	0.3**	6.3**	1.8
Prices reflect it	0.3	3.1	0.0
Own experiences	0.7	0.0	0.0
Farm meetings	0.0	0.0	2.4
City/state government	--	--	3.0
Professional people	--	--	2.4
Don't know	1.6	0.0	14.6[b]
Inappropriate	19.7	0.0	37.4[b]

*$p < .05$, F test

**$p < .01$, F test

[a]These were not coded in the WSRL Statewide Random Sample questionnaire

[b]Many respondents in the Madison Select Sample refused to pick only one source as the "most influential."

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