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ABSTRACT

A study examined the relationship between an individual's community ties to place and the use of media. Data were collected from residents of Austin, Texas, by means of mail and telephone surveys. Among the variables examined were community ties (home ownership and length of time in community), political variables, demographics, and use of newspapers, magazines, television, and radio. The results indicated that length of residence, likelihood of future residence, and home ownership may not be causally viable predictors of mass media use, being confounded with other possible explanations of media use, particularly age and income. (HTH)

COMMUNICATION THEORY
AND METHODOLOGY DIVISION

# EXPLORING LINKAGES BETWEEN COMMUNITY TIES TO PLACE AND MASS MEDIA USE

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## ABSTRACT

The paper explores the linkages between an individual's community ties to place and that individual's mass media use by comparing the relative contribution of community ties variables to media use with other predictors of media use, such as political and demographic variables. Results suggest that length of residence, likelihood of future residence, and home ownership may not be causally viable predictors of mass media use, being confounded with other possible explanations of media use, particularly age and income.

Stamm and his colleagues have investigated the effects of individuals' community ties on media behaviors (see, for example, Stamm, Jackson, and Brown, 1977; Denbow, 1975, Shaw and Riffe, 1979; Stamm and Fortini-Campbell, 1981; Stamm and Fortini-Campbell, 1983 ). This research is part of a long line of studies which treat media behaviors as dependent variables (such as Stephens, 1978; Stone, 1978; Westley and Severin, 1964; Chaffee and Choe, 1981; Stone and Wetherington, 1976; Schweitzer, 1976; Burgoon and Burgoon, 1980; Gollin and Salisbury, 1980; Kebbel, 1985) and which have historically tried to predict which population subgroups would be the most likely to subscribe to and read newspapers or to view television news programs.

Our purpose is to place the Stamm community ties research into the overall perspective of media use studies and to evaluate the relative contribution to mass media behaviors of community ties, political, and demographic variables. While Stamm and his colleagues have demonstrated covariation between community ties variables and media use, it is also important to rule out other possible alternative explanations for the observed relationship. This paper will study community ties to place (length of residence and home ownership) variables' relationship to media behaviors in the context of other possible predictors of media use.

The addition of media use variables in addition to newspaper use (i.e., television, magazine, and radio use) will allow us to both assess the relation of community ties to place variables with these related measures and will permit an assessment of construct validity: Community ties to place variables should relate to local media usage, whether print or broadcast, but should not relate to nonlocal media use. The result of these analyses may provide a better understanding of the role of community ties to place in affecting media use.

## INFLUENCES ON MEDIA BEHAVIORS

The audience member exists in a complex environment of forces which influence his media behaviors. Many times, as Becker (1979) has pointed out, people cannot adequately report their own motivations for media use — sometimes being unaware of the influences on their behaviors, sometimes not wishing to admit them publicly. Some mass communication scholars have circumvented this problem by ignoring motivations for viewing and instead by looking for covariance between mass media use and a wide variety of nonmedia variables, including political interest and participation (McLeod and Choe, 1978; Chaffee and Choe, 1981; Becker and Preston, 1969; Prisuta, 1973; and Kebbel, 1985), socio-economic status and other demographic variables (Schramm and White, 1949; Penrose, Weaver, Cole, and Shaw, 1974; Westley and Severin, 1964; Burgoon and Burgoon, 1980; and Gollin and Salisbury, 1980), and community ties (Janowitz, 1952; Stamm and Fortini-Campbell, 1983; Denton, 1975; Shaw and Riffe, 1979; Lynn and Bennett, 1980).

### Community ties as predictors of media use

Stamm and Fortini-Campbell (1983) differentiate among three dimensions of community ties: (1) ties of place, including behavioral measures such as length of residence and home ownership, as well as cognitive measures such as identification with a certain place; (2) ties to structure, including behavioral measures such as group membership, as well as cognitive ties such as a cognitive sense of belonging to a group; (3) ties to process, including behavioral measures such as attending community meetings, interacting with others in the community, and working for change in the community, as well as cognitive measures such as a cognitive

orientation to the community, ideas about how parts of the community are related, and agreeing with and sharing the concerns of others in the community. The relationship of community ties to newspaper reading and subscribing depended on the type of tie Stamm and Fortini-Campbell investigated. Home ownership was the strongest covariant with subscribing, while resident type (based on length of past residence in the community plus expectation of future residence) and community involvement were the best predictors of newspaper readership.

Denbow (1975) found that home ownership, household income, and length of residence in the county had the three highest correlations with newspaper readership in a bivariate correlation analysis of 14 readership variables. An index created from these three community ties variables proved to be a stronger predictor of newspaper reading than an index formed from occupation, education, and age.

Shaw and Riffe (1979) found that small-town residents who have lived in the community for 10 years or more are more likely to read the local newspaper than those who have lived there less time.

Lynn and Bennett (1980) argued that the duration of new subscriptions is more closely associated with the length of anticipated future residence than with the length of past residence

Political predictors of media use

Although most political studies concerned with the mass media examine media effects, some researchers have studied t dia as covariates and dependent variables McLeod and Choe (1978) demonstrated that readership is significantly correlated with greater political interest, knowledge, and efficacy. Chaffee and Choe (1981) identified such constraints on

newspaper readership as social change and marital instability. They found the main individual constraint was a lack of interest in politics and public affairs. Becker and Preston (1969) found that a high level of media use was associated with some types of political activity, such as concern for election outcomes, interest in the campaigns, and attempts at personal persuasion of others. Prisuta (1973) found that newspapers displayed the strongest relationship with political variables, followed by print (magazines and books) and broadcasting. Newspaper use was the only variable to correlate significantly with voter turnout; as media exposure rose, so did the level of political information.

Kebbel (1985) used logit analysis to show the importance of political activity as a predictor of news media use. He found that political activity predicts even when the effects of other variables with which it interacts are held constant. Political activity, he said, was a better predictor of media use than demographic variables.

Demographic predictors of media use

Age has been a traditionally important predictor of media use, with Schramm and White (1949) finding a positive, linear relationship between age and newspaper readership, while Penrose, Weaver, Cole, and Shaw (1974) later found a curvilinear relationship between age and newspaper readership. Readership was lowest among young adults and the elderly.

Westley and Severin (1964), in the study of the newspaper nonreader, found that readership apparently depends on a number of variables, chiefly social class, urbanism, and the extent of social contact with others. Penrose et al. (1974) partially replicated this study and found the nonreader is low in occupational status, educational attainment, and has lived only a

few years at his present address. Burgoon and Burgoon (1980) found age, income, and satisfaction with the newspaper to be predictors of readership in four American cities. Other factors which predicted readership in at least one market were: Education, political ideology, adults per household, dwelling status (own/rent), and evaluation of the editorial product.

Gollin and Salisbury (1980) employed three commonly used data analysis methods such as multiple regression, AID analysis, and cross-tabulation to determine which demographic factors account for people's daily newspaper reading. They found that income, education, region, and age are important predictors of newspaper readership in the three analysis modes.

Establishing causality

Such studies, being primarily correlation based, can establish covariation between media use and nonmedia variables, but they can not establish causality, since they often do not address the time order of the independent and dependent variables, and they do not rule out the range of other possible explanatory variables. Stamm and Fortini-Campbell (1983: 22) assume that causal direction runs from community ties to media use (treating "community ties as antecedents of newspaper subscribing and use"), although they acknowledge that standard sociological theory treats the local mass media as agents for transmitting a sense of community attachment to the young and to new residents (p. 2).

While we cannot manipulate time order in this study, we can try to rule out possible alternative explanations for the observed relationships between community ties variables of place (length of residence and home ownership) and media use, thus contributing to the study of the role of these community ties variables as predictors of media use. We will do this through

secondary analysis of three data sets, collected in by telephone interviews with residents of Austin, Texas, during the fall of 1981, 1983, and 1985. The data sets were originally collected to study general media use and political attitudes and behaviors. As is often the case in secondary analysis, the variables do not exactly fit the purpose, but there are enough comparable variables in each data set to assess the relative strength of community ties to place variables with other predictors of mass media use. Unfortunately we are unable to assess the relative contribution of community ties to structure and to process with these data sets.

We will test the following hypothesis: Community ties to place have a larger independent contribution to media use (particularly local media use) than do political and demographic variables.

We expect that age will be an important alternative predictor of mass media use, being positively correlated with community ties to place, such as length of residence and home buying. Although Stamm and Fortini-Campbell (1983) discuss the importance of age, they do not statistically control for age in their analyses.

## METHOD

Our hypothesis is tested through the secondary analysis of three data sets collected with residents of Austin, Texas, during the fall of 1981 (N = 191), 1983 (N = 225), and 1985 (N = 443) by students in a survey research graduate seminar. The 1981 survey was conducted by mail; the other two years' studies were conducted by telephone. The telephone survey samples were generated through random digit dialing. The mail survey sample was generated by

ramdomly sampling from a city directory. Each year's data are analyzed separately, yielding separate replications of our hypothesis test. Variables selected from the three studies are those which are most uniform over the three questionnaires and which best fit this paper's purpose. Following are the variables used in the study; see Appendix A for a complete list of the operational definitions used in each year.

Community ties to place variables

- Own or rent home (1981, 1983, 1985)
- How long lived in community (1981, 1983, 1985)
- Likelihood of living in community 5 years from now (1981, 1985)

Political variables

- Political ideology (1981, 1983, 1985)
- Political interest (1985)

Demographic variables

- Gender (1981, 1983, 1985)
- Age (1981, 1983, 1985)
- Education (1981, 1983, 1985)
- Income (1981, 1983, 1985)

In order to assess the relative contribution of each of these variables, we will perform separate stepwise multiple regression analyses with each of the following media behaviors as dependent variables (see Appendix A for complete operational definitions):

Newspaper use

- Time spent reading daily newspapers per day (1981, 1983)
- Number of days per week that a person reads a daily newspaper (1983, 1985)
- Number of newspapers read (1981, 1985)

Magazine use

- Number of magazines that a person reads (1981) or subscribes to (1985)
- Time spent reading magazines per day (1981)
- Number of days per week that a person reads a magazine (1983)

Television use

- Time spent watching television per day (1981, 1983, 1985)
- Number of days per week that a person watches television in general (1983)
- Number of days per week that a person watches local television news (1985)
- Number of days per week that a person watches national television news (1985)

Radio use

- Number of days per week that a person listens to radio in general (1983)
- Number of days per week that a person listens to radio news (1985)
- Time spent listening to the radio per day (1981, 1983, 1985)

## RESULTS

Tables 1 to 3 show zero-order Pearson correlation coefficients for the media variables with the non-media predictors, including community ties to place variables, in the three data sets. Each year's data set was analyzed separatedly, and the results are inconsistent: In 1981 and 1983, there is no zero-order relationship between length of residence (a key community ties to place variable) with newspaper-reading frequency (days/week read a paper), as Stamm and his colleagues have found in other studies, but there was a positive relationship between length of residence and time spent watching television per day (1981) and television viewing frequency (1983).

The 1985 data set, on the other hand, did show a positive relationship between length of residence and newspaper reading frequency, the number of magazines subscribed to, time spent watching television, local TV news viewing frequency, and national TV news viewing frequency. There was a negative relationship between length of residence and the number of newspapers subscribed to.

Similar results with the 1985 data set were seen using another ties to place variable -- likelihood of being in the community five years hence. This was positively related to newspaper reading frequency, time spent watching television, and the frequency of viewing both local TV and national TV news. Likelihood of being in the community in five years was negatively related to the number of newspapers the respondent read.

Of the remaining nonmedia variables (those not assessing community ties) shown on Tables 1 to 3, the demographic variables showed the highest zero-order relationships to media

use, with the political variables being related to only a few media measures.

Tables 1 to 3 also show first-order partial correlation coefficients for the media and predictor variables, controlling for age, which we suspect will be highly correlated with the community ties variables. The 1985 sample (Table 3) shows that controlling for age effectively accounts for the zero-order relationships between length of residence and all types of media use measured. Likelihood of living in the community five years from now might prove to be a better indicator of community ties, since controlling for age left a statistically significant partial correlation coefficient between likelihood of remaining in the community and local television news viewing.

It is interesting to note that this first-order relationship (controlling for age) between remaining in the community and local television news viewing was statistically significant, while the relationship with viewing national television news was not. This is evidence for construct validity of the community ties hypothesis, since community ties theoretically ought to predict local news use better than national news use.

There was no statistically significant first-order relationship (controlling for age) between either length of past residence or likelihood of remaining in the community and newspaper reading frequency, contrary to the community ties hypothesis.

Separate stepwise regression analyses of the three data sets were used additionally to test our hypothesis — that the community ties variables would be more important predictors of media use than would the other predictor variables. In a stepwise regression analysis, the independent variable most strongly related to the dependent variable enters the regression equation first, followed by the variable with the next strongest relationship, and so on. In the

final step of the analysis, those variables which have the largest independent relationships to the dependent variable have entered the equation. This allows us to assess the relationships of community ties variables to media use relative to other predictors of media use, such as political and demographic variables. If the community ties variables (including length of residence in the community, likelihood of still being in the community with 5 years, and whether the respondent owns or rents his home) enter the regression equation, then we conclude that the community ties variables are important predictors of media use. If they do not enter the equation, then we conclude that other variables are more important.

Table 4 shows the results of these regression analyses for newspaper and magazine use. Looking across the three data sets (for which separate regression analyses were performed), we see that the only community ties variable which enters any of the print media equations was length of residence in the community, which was negatively related to the number of newspapers the respondent read (1985). Age and the other demographic variables proved to account for more of the variance in most print media use — including newspaper reading frequency — than did community ties to place variables. Political interest was related to newspaper reading frequency, the number of newspapers read, and the number of magazines read.

Table 5 shows the regression analyses for the television and radio variables. Length of residence did not enter any of the broadcast regression equations, although likelihood of remaining in the community did prove to be an important predictor of time spent watching television per day. Owning or renting your home was related to the time spent listening to the radio. Age entered nearly every regression equation, as predicted, and political interest was related to television news viewing.

In summary, there is limited support for our hypothesis that community ties to place variables would remain important predictors of mass media use, even when political and demographic variables are included in the analysis. These political and demographic variables proved to be effective alternative explanations for variance in mass media use, thereby calling into doubt a causal relationship between community ties to place variables and local mass media usage.

## DISCUSSION

We have attempted to explore the existence of a causal relationship between an individual's community ties, as theoretically defined by Stamm and Fortini-Campbell (1983), and that individual's mass media use. Although Stamm and Fortini-Campbell were primarily interested in community ties' influence on newspaper reading, we chose to include a wide range of mass media use variables in our analysis, covering use of newspapers, magazines, television, and radio — both news and non-news. The purpose was to investigate the construct validity of the community ties concept, since we would logically expect community ties to be more strongly related to local media use than to non-local use.

We performed secondary analyses of three data sets available to us, which assess some community ties to place variables for residence in the community of Austin, Texas, and those respondents' mass media usage. Because we performed secondary analysis of existing data sets, we were unable to explore the relationships of community ties to structure and to process with mass media use.

Stamm and Fortini-Campbell ( 1983) and others have demonstrated covariance between community ties to place variables and newspaper reading habits, but more work needs to be done in exploring possible alternative explanations for the observed covariation between community ties and local media use. In this study, we allowed a variety of community ties to place, political, and demographic variables to compete in a series of stepwise regression analyses. The result was consistent across the three data sets explored: The alternative political and demographic predictors were almost always better predictors of media use than were the community ties to place variables, thus calling into doubt the causal relationship proposed between community ties to place and newspaper reading. Age was a particularly important alternative predictor of media use, as we expected, since there is an obvious positive relationship between length of residence in the community and age. Controlling for age effectively accounted for the zero-order relationship between community ties to place and mass media use in most instances.

Prior research shows that age explains a significant portion of media use. Some, like Schramm and White ( 1949), point to a linear relationship; others, like Penrose, Weaver, Cole, and Shaw ( 1974), found a curvilinear relationship: Readers in the youngest and oldest age brackets are the least likely to read newspapers. Robinson and Jeffres ( 1982) refer to the question of age as the great "age readership mystery." Although Robinson and Jeffres' longitudinal study endeavored to show that the so-called decline of newspaper reading among the young did not exist, they did not challenge the notion that older persons read more than younger persons. Stamm and Fortini-Campbell ( 1983) suggest that at least some community ties are age-related and that those ties relate to newspaper readership.

If community ties to place do help explain the problem of age, as Stamm suggests, then we might expect more significant relationships between community ties to place variables and media use variables when age is controlled for. Instead, we find that age explains away the relationship between media use and community ties to place in most instances. Stamm and Fortini-Campbell (1983) do suggest that individuals might not form close community ties until after age 30, but these are surely more likely to be cognitive or structural ties, rather than the ties to place variables used in this study.

Age remains a difficult variable from the standpoint of theoretical analysis, since it is bound to be correlated with a large number of other variables, sometimes for no apparent theoretical reason. The fact that age often accounts for media use better than some community ties to place variables doesn't necessarily mean that the observed covariation betwen community ties to place variables and newspaper reading is spurious. We could just as easily say that the relationship between age and newspaper reading is theoretically explained by age's positive correlation with community ties to place variables.

But age isn't the only variable which can apparently better predict media use. As we compared community ties to place variables' relationship with several political and demographic (in addition to age) variables, we found that community ties to place variables frequently did not enter into stepwise regression equations with newspaper reading and other mass media variables as dependent measures. We believe that this is sufficient reason to question and further explore whether community ties to place variables — length of residence in the community, likelihood of future residence, and home ownership — are valid predictors of local mass media use, being possibly confounded with other possible explanations of media use, including political interest,

education, income, and age. Other research has also questioned the community ties to place measures, including Bogart and Orenstein ( 1965), who found that the number of ties to the community may be more important than the length of residence, suggesting that mobility or community involvement may be a better predictor than simple length of residence. Community ties to process and structure — dimensions of community ties not measured in our secondary analysis of three data sets — may provide better measures of community ties or social integration than the ties to place dimension by virtue of their not being as likely to be confounded with other predictors.

**Table 1. Zero-order Pearson correlation coefficients of media use variables with non-media predictor variables (plus first-order partial coefficients, controlling for age), for the 1981 data set.**

| | MEDIA USE VARIABLES | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NON-MEDIA PREDICTOR VARIABLES | Time read newspapers/day | # newspapers read | # magazines read | Time spent reading magazines/day | Time spent watching TV/day | Time spent listening to radio/day |
| Age | .17[a] | -.04 | .15[a] | .03 | .14[a] | -.15[a] |
| **How long lived in community** | **.04 (.03)** | **.09 (.15[a])** | **.04 (-.05)** | **.01 (-.02)** | **.23[c] (.20[c])** | **.02 (.11)** |
| **Likelihood of remaining in community** | **.12 (.06)** | **.04 (.09)** | **.12[a] (.08)** | **.02 (.01)** | **.22[b] (.24[b])** | **.00 (.06)** |
| Political ideology | -.02 (-.00) | -.05 (-.06) | .10 (.11) | .01 (.06) | -.13[a] (-.11) | .09 (.10) |
| Education | .08 (.07) | .21[b] (.15[a]) | .17[b] (.14[a]) | .03 (.05) | -.19[b] (-.20[b]) | -.15[a] (-.14[a]) |
| Income | .08 (.05) | .04 (.06) | .16[b] (.16[b]) | -.02 (-.07) | -.03 (.01) | -.13[a] (-.06) |

[a] $p < .05$, [b] $p < .01$, [c] $p < .001$

**Table 2. Zero-order Pearson correlation coefficients of media use variables with non-media predictor variables (plus first-order partial coefficients, controlling for age), for the 1983 data set.**

| | MEDIA USE VARIABLES | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NON-MEDIA PREDICTOR VARIABLES | Time spent reading newspaper/day | Days/week read newspaper | Days/week read magazines | Time spent watching TV/day | Days/week watch TV | Time spent listening to radio/day | Days/week listen to radio |
| Age | .30[c] | .23[c] | .13[a] | .06 | 19[c] | -.18[c] | -.22[c] |
| **How long lived in community** | **.09 (-.02)** | **.05 (-.04)** | **-.03 (-.07)** | **.05 (.01)** | **.16[b] (-.01)** | **-.01 (.05)** | **-.00 (.07)** |
| Political ideology | .13[a] (.06) | .07 (.06) | .08 (.06) | -.02 (-.06) | .08 (-.02) | -.05 (-.04) | -.01 (.01) |
| Education | .02 (.00) | .15[b] (.16[b]) | 21[c] (.15[a]) | -.28[c] (-.32[c]) | -.12[c] (-.09) | -.12[c] (-.10) | 05 (.06) |
| Income | 01 (.02) | 20[c] (.22[c]) | 20[c] (.22[c]) | -.23[c] (-.23[c]) | -.08 (-.11[a]) | -.13[c] (-.13[c]) | .00 (.19[b]) |

[a] $p < .05$, [b] $p < .01$, [c] $p < .001$

**Table 3. Zero-order Pearson correlation coefficients of media use variables with non-media predictor variables (plus first-order partial coefficients, controlling for age), for the 1985 data set.**

| NON-MEDIA PREDICTOR VARIABLES | MEDIA USE VARIABLES: Days/week read newspaper | # newspapers read | # magazines subscribed to read | Time/day watch TV | Days/week watch local TV news | Days/week watch national TV news | Time/day listening to radio | Days/week listen to radio |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | .26[c] | -.06 | .12[b] | .19[c] | .38[c] | .44[c] | -.22[c] | -.19[c] |
| **How long lived in community** | **.13[b] (.03)** | **-.11[b] (-.08)** | **.09[a] (.09)** | **.09[a] (.03)** | **.20[c] (.02)** | **.19[c] (.03)** | **-.06 (.01)** | **-.03 (.05)** |
| **Likelihood of remaining in community** | **.12[b] (.03)** | **-.08[a] (-.07)** | **.07 (.06)** | **.10[a] (.03)** | **.20[c] (.10[a])** | **.16[c] (.01)** | **-.06 (.02)** | **-.06 (.03)** |
| Political ideology | .02 (-.01) | -.05 (-.02) | .04 (.02) | .05 (.08) | .20[c] (.15[b]) | .16[c] (.17[c]) | -.06 (-.06) | -.06 (.05) |
| Political interest | 26[c] (22[c]) | .20[c] (.20[c]) | .18[c] (17[c]) | -.05 (-06) | .08 (02) | .21[c] (14[b]) | -02 (-04) | .03 (05) |
| Education | 17[c] (.15[b]) | 15[c] (.12[a]) | .24[c] (16[b]) | -.25[c] (-28[c]) | -05 (-08) | -.01 (-.07) | -19[c] (-19[c]) | -04 (.03) |
| Income | .15[b] (.06) | 07 (.08) | 25[c] (.22[c]) | -15[b] (-15[b]) | 13[b] (.07) | 06 (-02) | -14[b] (-12[a]) | 04 (07) |

[a] p<.05, [b] p<.01, [c] p<.001

**Table 4. Separate stepwise regression analyses of newspaper and magazine use variables on community ties, political, and demographic variables, for 1981 (N=191), 1983 (N=225), and 1985 (N=443) data sets.**

| Media dependent variables — independent variables entering the equation as of the final step* | Standardized beta weights for independent variables entering the equation as of the final step* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1981 | 1983 | 1985 |
| Time spent reading daily newspapers/day | | | |
| — Age | .19[a] | 32[c] | — ** |
| Number of days/week that a person reads a daily newspaper | | | |
| — Education | — | .14[b] | .20[a] |
| — Political interest | NA | NA | 21[c] |
| — Age | — | .28[c] | .11[c] |
| — Income | — | .17[b] | — |
| — Gender | — | 13[a] | — |
| Number of newspapers read | | | |
| — Political interest | NA | NA | .18[c] |
| — **How long lived in community** | — | — | **-.14[b]** |
| Number of magazines that a person reads | | | |
| — Income | .18[a] | NA | .23[c] |
| — Political interest | NA | NA | .18[c] |
| Time spent reading magazines/day | | | |
| No variables entered this equation. | | | |
| Time spent reading magazines/week | | | |
| — Income | NA | .11[c] | NA |

* The entire list of non-media predictor variables (and the years in which each variable appeared on the questionnaire) are as follows: own or rent home (1981, 1983, 1985), how long lived in community (1981, 1983, 1985), likelihood of living in community five years from now (1981, 1985), political ideology (1981, 1983, 1985), political interest (1985), gender (1981, 1983, 1985), age (1981, 1983, 1985), education (1981, 1983, 1985), income (1981, 1983, 1985). "NA" indicates that either the media or predictor variable was not measured in that year.

** A dash indicates that the predictor variable, although measured in that data set, did not load on the final step of the regression equation.

[a] $p<.05$, [b] $p<.01$, [c] $p<.001$

**Table 5. Separate stepwise regression analyses of television and radio use variables on community ties, political, and demographic variables, for 1981 (N=191), 1983 (N=225), and 1985 (N=443) data sets.**

| Media dependent variables<br>– independent variables entering the equation as of the final step* | Standardized beta weights for independent variables entering the equation as of the final step* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1981 | 1983 | 1985 |
| Time spent watching television/day | | | |
| – Education | -.20[b] | -.27[c] | -.28[c] |
| – Income | – | -.17[a] | – |
| **– Likelihood of living in community in 5 years** | **.27[c]** | **NA** | – |
| – Age | – | – | .13[a] |
| Number of days/week that a person watches TV | | | |
| – Age | NA | .28[c] | NA |
| Number of days/week that a person watches local TV news | | | |
| – Age | NA | NA | .32[c] |
| – Political ideology | NA | NA | .14[b] |
| Number of days/week that a person watches national TV news | | | |
| – Age | NA | NA | .41[c] |
| – Political ideology | NA | NA | .18[b] |
| – Political interest | NA | NA | .15[b] |
| **–Own/rent** | **NA** | **NA** | **-.13[a]** |
| Days/week that a person listens to radio in general | | | |
| – Income | NA | .18[b] | NA |
| Days/week that a person listens to radio news | | | |
| – Age | NA | NA | -.18[c] |
| Time spent listening to the radio/day | | | |
| – Age | -.18[a] | – | -.19[c] |
| – Education | – | – | -.18[c] |
| **– Own/rent** | – | **-.18[b]** | – |

* The entire list of non-media predictor variables (and the years in which each variable appeared on the questionnaire) are as follows: own or rent home (1981, 1983, 1985), how long lived in community (1981, 1983, 1985), likelihood of living in community five years from now (1981, 1985), political ideology (1981, 1983, 1985), political interest (1985) gender (1981, 1983, 1985), age (1981, 1983, 1985), education (1981, 1983, 1985), income (1981, 1983, 1985). "NA" indicates that either the media or predictor variable was not measured in that year

** A dash indicates that the predictor variable, although measured in that data set, did not load on the final step of the regression equation.

[a] $p<.05$, [b] $p<.01$, [c] $p<.001$

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## APPENDIX A

### Operational definitions of variables in this study

Community ties to place variables

- Own or rent home ( dummy coded for use in regression analyses)

1981: "Do you (or your family) own or rent your home? 1=own, 2=rent, 9=don't know/no answer."

1983: "Do you own or rent your home? 1=own, 2=rent, 3=don't know/no answer."

1985: "Do you own or rent your home? 1=own, 2=rent, 3=other, 9=don't know/no answer."

- How long lived in community

1981: "How long have you lived in Austin? 1=less than a year, 2=one to five years, 3=six of ten years, 4=eleven to twenty years, 5=more than 20 years, 9=don't know/no answer."

1983: "About how long have you lived in Austin? 1=less than one year, 2=one to four years, 3=five to nine years, 4=ten to fourteen years, 5=fifteen years or more, 9=don't know/no answer."

1985: "About how many years have you lived in Austin? 1=less than one year, 2=one to three years, 3=four to six years, 4=seven to nine years, 5=ten to twelve years, 6=thirteen to fifteen years, 7=more than fifteen years, 9=don't know, no answer."

- Likelihood of remaining in community.

1981: "How long do you expect to remain in Austin? 1=less than one year, 2=one to four years, 3=five to nine years, 4=ten years or more, 9=don't know/no answer."

1985: "Do you think you will be living in Austin five years from now? Would you say: 4=yes, certainly; 3=yes, probably; 2=no, probably not, 1=no, certainly not, 9=don't know/no answer."

Political variables

- Political ideology.

1981: "Which of the following most closely describes your political preference? 1=liberal Democrat, 2=conservative Democrat, 3=independent, 4=liberal Republican, 5=conservative Republican, 6=other, 9=don't know/no answer."

1983: "How would you rate yourself on political issues? Are you: 1=very liberal, 2=liberal, 3=moderate, 4=conservative, 5=very conservative, 9=don't know/no answer."

1985: " When talking about politics, many people use the words liberal and conservative. Would you call yourself: 1=very liberal, 2=liberal, 3=moderate, 4=conservative, 5=very conservative, 9=don't know/no answer."

- Political interest.

1985: "How interested would you say you are in politics? Would you say: 4=very interested, 3=interested, 2=not very interested, 1=not at all interested, 9=don't know/no answer."

Demographic variables

- Gender (dummy coded for use in regression analyses).

1981: "Are you (circle one): 1=male, 2=female."

1983 and 1985: "What was the respondent's sex? 1=male, 2=female, 9=don't know."

- Age.

1981: "What is your age? CODE EXACT AGE, 99=don't know/no answer."

1983: "May I have your approximate age? Is your age in the category: 1=18 to 24, 2=25 to 34, 3=35 to 44, 4=45 to 54, 5=55 to 64, 6=65 or more, 9=don't know/no answer."

1985: "May I have your age at your last birthday? CODE EXACT AGE, 99=don't know/no answer."

- Education.

1981, 1983 and 1985: "Which is the highest level of education that you have completed? 1=some grade school, 2=completed grade school, 3=some high school, 4=completed high school, 5=some college or trade school, 6=completed college or trade school, 7=some graduate school, 8=completed graduate school, 9=don't know/no answer."

- Income.

1981: "What was your approximate household income from all sources, before taxes, in 1980? 1=less than $5,000, 2=$5,000 to $9,999, 3=$10,000 to $14,999, 4=$15,000 to $19,999, 5=$20,000 to $29,999, 6=$30,000 to $39,999, 7=$40,000 to 49,999, 8=$50,000 or more, 9=don't know/no answer."

1983 and 1985: "We need to know about what is your total family income. Is your total family income: 1=under $10,000, 2=$10,000 to $20,000, 3=$20,000 to $30,000, 4=$30,000 to $40,000, 5=$40,000 to $50,000, 6=$50,000 to $60,000, 7=more than $60,000, 9=don't know/no answer "

Newspaper use

- Time spent reading daily newspapers per day.

1981: "Yesterday, how much time did you spend personally in the following activities? Reading newspapers? 1=none, 2=less than one hour, 3=one to two hours, 4=two to four hours, 5=four hours or more, 9=don't know/no answer "

1983: "How much time do you spend in a day reading daily newspapers? Would you say: 1=less than 30 minutes, 2=30 minutes to an hour, 3=one to two hours, 4=two or three hours, 5=more than three hours, 9=don't know/no answer.

- Number of days per week that a person reads a daily newspaper.

1983: "How often do you read a daily newspaper? Would you say. 1=never, 2=seldom, 3=one or two days a week, 4=nearly every day, 5=every day, 9=don't know/no

answer."

1985: "How many days a week do you read a daily newspaper? CODE EXACT NUMBER OF DAYS PER WEEK, FROM 0 TO 7, 9=don't know/no answer."

- Number of newspapers read.

1981: "Which daily newspapers do you receive or buy regularly? 1=none, 2=American-Statesman (morning edition), 3=American-Statesman (evening edition), 4=Citizen, 5=Daily Texan, 6=other, 9=don't know/no answer.

1985: "What daily newspapers do you subscribe to or read on a regular basis?" Exact number of newspapers R gave was coded, 9=don't know/no answer.

Magazine use

- Number of magazines that a person reads (or subscribes to).

1981: "Which of the following magazines do you subscribe to or buy regularly? CODE EXACT NUMBER OF MAGAZINES LISTED, 99=don't know/no answer."

1985: "About how many magazines do you subscribe to or read regularly? 0=none, 1=one to three, 2=four to six, 3=seven to nine, 4=ten to thirteen, 5=fourteen to sixteen, 6=seventeen or more, 9=don't know/no answer."

- Time spent reading magazines per day.

1981: "Yesterday, how much time did you spend personally in the following activities? Reading magazines? 1=none, 2=less than 1 hour, 3=one to two hours, 4=two or four hours, 5=four or more hours, 9=don't know/no answer."

- Number of days per week that a person reads a magazine

1983: "How often do you read magazines? 1=never, 2=seldom, 3=one or two days a week, 4=nearly every day, 5=every day, 9=don't know/no answer."

Television use

- Time spent watching television per day.

1981: "Yesterday, how much time did you spend personally in the following activities? Watching TV? 1=none, 2=less than 1 hour, 3=one to two hours, 4=two or four hours, 5=four hours or more, 9=don't know/no answer."

1983: "How much time do you spend with TV in a day? Would you say: 1=less than one hour, 2=one to two hours, 3=three to six hours, 4=more than 6 hours, 9=don't know/no answer."

1985: "How much time do you spend watching television each day, including morning, afternoon, and evening? CODE EXACT NUMBER OF HOURS UP TO 8, WHICH INDICATES 8 OR MORE HOURS, 9=don't know/no answer."

- Number of days per week that a person watches television in general.

1983: "How often do you watch television? Would you say: 1=never, 2=seldom, 3=one or two days a week, 4=nearly every day, 5=every day, 9=don't know/no answer."

- Number of days per week that a person watches local television news.

1985: "How many days a week do you get a chance to watch the local news? CODE

NUMBER OF DAYS, 9=don't know/no answer."

- Number of days per week that a person watches national television news.

1985: "How many days a week do you watch the national network news, like Dan Rather, Peter Jennings, or Tom Brokaw? CODE NUMBER OF DAYS, 9=don't know/no answer."

Radio use

- Number of days per week that a person listens to radio in general.

1983: "How often do you listen to the radio? 1=never, 2=seldom, 3=one or two days a week, 4=nearly every day, 5=every day, 9=don't know/no answer."

- Number of days per week that a person listens to radio news.

1985: "About how many days a week do you hear newscasts on the radio? CODE NUMBER OF DAYS, 9=don't know/no answer."

- Time spent listening to the radio per day.

1981: "Yesterday, how much time did you spend personally in the following activities? Listening to the radio? 1=none, 2=less than one hour, 3=one to two hours, 4=two to four hours, 5=four hours or more, 9=don't know/no answer."

1983: "How much time do you spend a day listening to the radio? 1=less than one hour, 2=one to two hours, 3=three to six hours, 4=seven to ten hours, 5=more than ten hours, 9=don't know/no answer."

1985: "How many hours do you spend a day listening to the radio? CODE EXACT NUMBER OF HOURS, 9=don't know/no answer "