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AUTHOR Smith, Conrad; Becker, Lee B.
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ABSTRACT

According to a new myth in the television broadcasting industry, the producer has become the representative of the show business side of news production, while the reporter has remained the protector of the more noble goals of journalism in the television newsroom. To explore the dimensions of this myth, a study examined data, available from a national sample of television reporters and news producers, to determine the differences between these two groups of broadcast journalists in terms of professional training, motivations for pursuing careers in broadcast journalism, their career plans, and the manner in which they would handle a hypothetical news decision. Subjects, 512 reporters (out of a sample of 793) and 126 producers (out of a sample of 199), randomly selected, were asked about their attitudes towards television news and for demographic information. Results showed that producers were less critical than reporters of their stations' newscasts and that producers were also likely to have pursued television news careers for more pragmatic and less idealistic reasons than reporters. However, there was little evidence that reporters are fighting for the journalistic integrity of television news against producers who are interested only in the show-business aspects of television. (Thirty-eight notes and six tables of data are included.) (MS)

Television Reporters and Producers as Journalists

by

Conrad Smith

and

Lee B. Becker

School of Journalism
The Ohio State University
242 West 18th Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43210

614-292-6291 work
614-263-8063 home

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at the 1988 AEJMC Annual Conference
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Television Reporters and Producers as Journalists

As television news became profitable in the 1970s and stations adopted electronic newsgathering technology, news organizations expanded and roles became increasingly specialized. One of the outgrowths of this specialization was a strong division between reporter and producer. With later deadlines and "live" capability, reporters had less time to provide journalistic perspective and were under more pressure to think on their feet. Producers took control of the new technology and, in the process, increased their editorial control over reporters' stories.

This division of labor between the reporter and the producer seems to have produced a conflict in the electronic newsroom paralleling the mythical split between reporter and editor in the print newsroom. The producer, according to this new myth, has become the representative of the show business side of news production. The reporter has remained the protector of the more noble goals of journalism in the television newsroom.

While it is not possible to explore all dimensions of this new myth, data available from a national sample of television reporters and news producers allow for an examination of differences between these two groups of broadcast journalists in terms of professional training, motivations for pursuing careers in broadcast journalism, their career plans, the manner in which they would handle a hypothetical news decision, and their demographic characteristics.

Background

The number of full-time employees in the median television newsroom increased from 9.5 in 1972 to 18.4 in 1985, according to Stone.[1] Johnstone, Slawski and Bowman had earlier observed that organizational growth in journalism makes editorial control more hierarchical and newsworkers more

specialized.[2] That this increasing specialization changed the reporter's role and increased the power of producers in the 1970s has been described by Bantz, McCorkle and Baade[3] and by Yoakam[4]. The implications of this specialization have been dealt with by Diamond[5] and Powers,[6] among others. Diamond and MacNeil[7] seem particularly to have furthered the myth that producers represent everything that is wrong with television journalism, in implicit contrast with noble reporters.

"When young producers want to praise a piece," according to Diamond, "they say, 'It's good television!' not 'This will rattle them at city hall!'....These people are bright, fast, tough, noncerebral--don't expect to discuss Graham Greene, or even Tom Wicker, with them. But rely on them to produce fast-paced, entertaining news, so disco beat that it disorients....This doltish audience, it is said, has to be teased, tickled, jerked off and around."[8] "In television news much of the time," says MacNeil, "the production tail wags the editorial dog....Production values to most TV producers mean a lot of lively pictures whizzing by. If the average TV producer or studio director hasn't got moving pictures on the screen in front of him, something in his soul dies."[9]

Another key issue in this debate is alleged misuse by producers of "live" coverage. The president of Post-Newsweek television stations, for example, says electronic journalists often use "live" technology simply because they have it.[10] Television news directors responding to a 1982 survey were more likely to see "live" capability as a negative rather than positive influence on news content.[11] Powers[12] and Daviss[13] have faulted local television news for its needless use of "live" technology to hype news coverage.

Hidden behind much of this discussion is the issue of professionalism. This concept, deeply rooted in the sociology of work literature, was

transferred to the communications area by the early work of McLeod and Hawley, among others. The original McLeod and Hawley study of editorial and non-editorial newspaper employees in Milwaukee showed that those with high professionalism scores were more critical of their employer and less likely than non-editorial employees to evaluate their job on the basis of how exciting it was.[14]

Lattimore and Nayman found that journalists at Colorado dailies who scored high on professionalism were younger than others and more critical of their employers.[15] Ismach and Dennis found that television reporters in Minneapolis had much lower education levels than newspaper reporters and were much less likely to belong to professional organizations.[16] Becker reanalyzed Johnstone, Slawski and Bowman's sample of 736 journalists who did news reporting at least once a week and found that reporters in small broadcast operations were less professionally oriented than those at small daily newspapers. Reporters for large broadcast operations, however, were more professionally oriented than their counterparts at large daily newspapers.[17]

LeRoy found that television journalists with high professionalism scores had more autonomy than others.[18] Weinthal and O'Keefe found that broadcast reporters in Denver with high professionalism scores were more critical of their employers, had more education, belonged to more professional organizations, and were less likely to say they would leave broadcast news.[19] Idsvoog and Hoyt found that Wisconsin television journalists with high professionalism scores performed better as journalists and were less likely to leave television news.[20]

Weaver and Wilhoit found that broadcast and print journalists in their national sample who planned to leave the field in 1982 were more, rather than

less, likely to stress professional values. Newsworkers who planned to leave also perceived that they had job autonomy and were more experienced, better-educated, and older than other journalists.[21] In a separate analysis of the same data, Weaver, Drew and Wilhoit found that television and newspaper journalists were equally professional in terms of their education, their attitudes towards journalism, and their professional reading.[22]

Professionalism may not be the only, or even most important, characteristic to study when examining journalists. Becker, Fruit and Caudill have explicitly challenged the preoccupation with this concept.[23] Also of concern are such things as training differences and motivations to pursue careers in journalism. These latter have been examined by Burgoon, Buller, Coker and Coker,[24] who found that minority high school students planning media careers were similar to non-minority students. The most important motivating factor was the personal enjoyment that respondents anticipated from the work.

Becker, Fruit and Caudill surveyed students about to graduate with journalism degrees and found that 69 percent said a major reason for wanting to enter the field was that "journalism is exciting" and 58 percent said because of "opportunities to write." Writing, interest in public affairs, and autonomy were less important to students interested in broadcast journalism than to students interested in print journalism. Broadcast news students were more interested in salary, job security, and opportunity for advancement. Broadcast students showed less pride in their anticipated occupation and were more likely to say the media should run booster pieces and that it is acceptable to take junkets.[25]

News producers have received less scholarly attention than other journalists. They are editors in that they help determine which stories are

used, what kind of play they get, and whether they should be covered "live." But do producers come from the same kinds of journalistic backgrounds as print editors? Do they have comparable years of experience? Do they earn the same supervisor-level salaries?

Producers were an important part of larger network news organizations before they became important in local news. Gans observed that top network producers in the late 1960s and mid 1970s had roles similar to top editors at weekly news magazines except they had to share their power with anchorpersons.[26] Epstein found that network news producers in the late 1960s came from different backgrounds than network correspondents. Many had worked for newspapers or magazines, but none had been a television correspondent. Most producers he interviewed agreed that their "primary job" was to "enforce the standards of the organizations" for which they worked.[27] Although network correspondents saw "great social significance and responsibility" in their work, producers tended to treat their work as "nothing more than a fairly interesting and well-paying livelihood."[28]

Weaver and Wilhoit found that editors and producers in their sample of 1,001 journalists (121 of whom worked in television) had half again as much news experience as reporters--a median of 12 years experience compared to eight. Because producers were not analyzed separately, the experience figures would more accurately represent print journalists, who constituted about three-fourths of the sample. Unlike the producers described by Epstein, the majority of 86 print editors interviewed for the Weaver and Wilhoit study had prior experience in the same medium as reporters or news editors.[29]

Johnstone, Slawski and Bowman found that print journalists who did "a great deal of editing" in 1971 were six years older than those who did

"reporting regularly" (a median of 41.7 compared to 35.6), but that television journalists who did "a great deal of editing" were a year younger than those who did "reporting regularly" (a median of 29.7 compared to 31).[30] The data suggest that print editors are promoted from the ranks of reporters, but that television news editors follow a separate career path.

If news producers are supervisors in the same sense as print editors, they would presumably earn substantially more than reporters. A 1987 salary survey of 375 television stations by Stone indicated that median producers do earn six to 11 percent more than median reporters at small stations, but that median reporters in top-50 markets earn more, and that the best-paid reporters in all sizes of TV news organizations earn as much as or more than the best-paid producers.[31]

These data suggest producers are younger than print editors, that they have comparatively less experience than print editors, that they are less likely to earn supervisor-level salaries, and that they are less likely to have a background in reporting.

Research Questions

The scant literature on television news producers suggests they are different from reporters. But are producers responsible for the visual hype, the dearth of substance, and mindless "live" coverage that critics say characterize today's television news? If producers are different from reporters, are they different in ways likely to be detrimental to the journalistic integrity of television news? Are producers less professional than reporters, less interested in journalism?

If news producers are less professional than TV reporters, the findings of McLeod and Hawley, Lattimore and Nayman, Weinthal and O'Keefe, and Idsvoog and

Hoyt suggest they will be less critical of their station's newscast. If, as Epstein suggests, the producer's primary role is to enforce organizational norms, producers are likely to be less idealistic about journalism, less interested in journalism, and more interested in control over newswork. If Epstein was correct in observing that reporting is a calling but producing is a job, producers could be expected to enjoy the work less and be more influenced than reporters by practical, rather than idealistic, concerns. These are the issues explored in this study.

Method

Two hundred network-affiliated television stations were selected randomly by numbering all non-satellite affiliates listed in the 1985 Broadcasting-Cablecasting Yearbook and generating random numbers in that range. Telephone calls yielded the names of 199 early evening producers[32] and 200 dayside assignment editors.[33] During late 1985 and early 1986, up to two letters were sent to each assignment editor requesting names of all full-time reporters at each station. If no response was received, up to two more letters were sent to each news director. This effort and telephone follow-up yielded names of 1453 reporters at 174 of the 200 stations (87 percent).

Budget restraints precluded surveying every reporter, so 793 were selected randomly by assigning a number to each reporter and generating random numbers in that range. All 199 of the producers were included in the final sample. After three questionnaire mailings, usable responses were obtained from 512 reporters (65 percent) and 126 producers (63 percent). There were no significant differences between demographics of early and late respondents in either group. The combined response represents 180 television stations in 120 television markets in 48 states and the District of Columbia (90 percent

completion rate for stations). The survey was conducted between May and August, 1986.

Reporters and producers were asked about their attitudes towards television news and for demographic information. Producers were also asked whether their newsrooms required prior script and video approval "always," "most of the time," "sometimes," "occasionally" or "never." They also were asked to respond to this open-ended question: "What motivated you to become a television news reporter (producer)?" Eighty-six percent of responding reporters (N=442) and 83 percent of responding producers (N=105) provided usable answers.

Motivation statements were coded into eight categories: enjoy journalism, enjoy television, enjoy current events, practical reasons (such as "fell into it" or "had the right skills"), idealistic reasons (such as "the chance to make a difference," "help people" and "social responsibility), personal gain (such as "career advancement" or "more money than print journalism"), control over newswork and outside influence (such as "admired Walter Cronkite," "my college experience," "Vietnam," etc.). The first three categories were collapsed into an aggregate category, enjoy the work. After independently coding a random sample of motivation statements, a second coder agreed 69 percent of the time with the primary coder. The relatively low intercoder reliability should be kept in mind when interpreting the motivational analyses below.

To examine reporter and producer perspectives on the alleged misuse of "live" technology, a hypothetical situation was developed in which a producer had to decide whether to arrange "live" coverage of a routine political appearance (see Table 6). A panel of experts, consisting of news producers from a large, medium and small television market, judged the hypothetical

situation a realistic representation of the values and pressures involved in making such decisions.[34]

Results

Average age of television reporters and of producers was 30, similar to the mean of 31 obtained by Weaver and Wilhoit[35] in their 1982 survey of 239 broadcast journalists. Education levels of reporters and producers were very similar, with 90 percent of reporters and 89 percent of producers having college degrees. Reporters were more likely than producers to have majored in Journalism. Producers were more likely than reporters to be women, but female producers were significantly younger than their male counterparts (a mean of 27 compared to 33, $p < .001$) and had significantly less television news experience (a mean of five years compared to nine, $p < .001$).[36]

TABLES 1 AND 2 ABOUT HERE

The early-evening producer at an average station had about a year and a half more TV news experience than the average reporter at such a station and had worked in four-tenths more television newsrooms. Professional memberships of reporters and producers were very similar to each other and to journalists surveyed by Weaver and Wilhoit.[37]

Among 219 reporters and 58 producers who indicated interest in changing jobs during the next ten years, 15 percent of the reporters and 62 percent of the producers aspired to television management jobs. Ten percent of the reporters were interested in becoming producers, and nine percent of the producers wanted to be reporters. Forty-seven percent of job-switching

reporters compared to only 24 percent of like-minded producers wanted to leave television news, but the difference was not statistically significant.

Fifty-six percent of responding producers indicated they had experience as television reporters. Other common work backgrounds among producers included anchoring experience (24 percent), producing experience at another station (23 percent), news photography or video editing (19 percent) and various positions with the assignment desk (14 percent). Percentages add to more than 100 because of multiple responses.

Ten percent of responding producers said their newsrooms always required editorial approval of reporter scripts and story video before a story could air, a decision that would ordinarily be made by a producer. Fourteen percent said such control was exercised occasionally or never. The median respondent worked in a newsroom where script approval was required "most of the time" and video approval "sometimes." Correlation between editorial control and market size (number of TV households) was .37 for prior script approval ($p < .001$) and .25 for prior video approval ($p < .01$). This suggests that the larger news organizations in larger markets exercise considerably more editorial control.

Reporters and producers rated their autonomy about equally and were about equally likely to agree that reporters at their stations knew their beats and that "live" newsgathering technology was misused. Producers, however, were significantly less critical of the journalistic and visual quality of the newscasts produced at their stations and were significantly more likely to believe that reporters in their newsrooms usually had enough information to do a good job as journalists.

TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Although there were few demographic differences between reporters and producers, the two groups reported substantially different motivations for choosing careers in television news (Table 4). Reporters were significantly more likely than producers to say they got into news because they enjoyed their work and enjoyed journalism and because of the influence of a person, experience or event. Producers, on the other hand, were significantly more likely to say they entered the field because of the opportunity for control over newswork or for pragmatic reasons.

TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

These differences were particularly salient in computer analysis of word frequencies in statements by reporters and producers about why they got into television news. Although both groups were about equally likely to mention writing and creativity, reporters were much more likely to use the words "people," "love," "variety," "curiosity," "fun" and "current events." Producers were much more likely to mention "control," "manage," and "power."

TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

Analysis of correlations of reasons for entering the field with selected demographics further delineates the differences between reporters and producers. As their ages increased, both reporters and producers were less likely to say they were motivated by enjoyment of journalism, and producers who said they were motivated by interest in journalism were significantly younger than like-minded reporters (a mean of 26.8 compared to 30.1, $p < .001$). Older reporters were more likely to say they were motivated by practical reasons ($r =$

.15, $p < .01$) or personal gain ($r = .12$, $p < .05$), but age made no difference in these motivations for producers.

The biggest differences in reporters' and producers' motivations were as a correlate of market size (number of TV households). As market size went up, producers were less likely than reporters to say they were motivated by practical reasons (producer r = .-.28, $p < .01$; reporter r = +.04) or personal gain (producer r = .03, reporter r = .13, $p < .01$), and more likely to say they were motivated by idealistic reasons (producer r = .24, $p < .05$; reporter r = -.03).

The hypothetical situation used to evaluate newsworker perceptions about misuse of "live" ENG technology provides another approach to examining differences between reporters and producers. The situation involved a producer's choice between a story about a proposed school levy and potential "live" coverage of a routine political appearance. Reporters and producers were given three specific justifications for using the "live" shot in lieu of the tax levy story and asked which would be the appropriate choice in general. The situation is described in Table 6.

TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

Both reporters and producers said "live" coverage was significantly more likely to be used than it should be. This held true regardless of the reason given for using it. There were no significant differences between how reporters and producers said the hypothetical situation should be covered, but reporters were more likely than producers to think most producers would arrange "live" coverage at the expense of the school levy story.

Newsworker perceptions about "live" coverage were further examined by computing a composite "perceived misuse" variable, consisting of the sum of each respondent's evaluation of what should be done minus the sum of each respondent's predictions about what would actually be done. Perceived misuse of "live" technology, calculated in this manner, is not a significant correlate of any other variable, including amount of editorial control exercised at the respondent's news shop or whether the respondent majored in journalism or some other subject.

Producers who most agreed that having "live" technology makes you use it were the least likely to work in news organizations that frequently require prior script approval ($r = -.20$, $p < .05$) and least likely to work at large-market stations ($r = -.27$, $p < .01$).

The degree to which producers said their stations' newscasts reflected their personal journalistic standards was a positive correlate of the frequency with which prior script approval was required ($n=125$, $r=.018$, $p < .05$). The degree to which producers said their station's news reflected their personal standards for visual quality was likewise a positive correlate of the frequency with which prior video approval was required ($n=125$, $r=.24$, $p < .01$).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to find out whether news producers are different from television reporters in ways that might jeopardize the journalistic integrity of television news. Our data show that producers are less critical than reporters of their stations' newscasts, which previous studies suggest might mean they are less professional. Producers are also likely to have pursued television news careers for more pragmatic and less idealistic reasons than reporters. But there is little evidence that reporters

are fighting for the journalistic integrity of television news against producers who are interested only in the show-business aspects of television.

Studies by Ismach and Dennis, Weinthal and O'Keefe and Weaver and Wilhoit suggested that greater professionalism is characterized by higher education levels. Since reporters and producers have virtually identical educational backgrounds, they share much of the same media socialization. Like print editors described by Weaver and Wilhoit, producers have more professional experience than reporters and have worked in a larger number of newsrooms. This may give producers more opportunity for professional socialization.

Ismach and Dennis and Weinthal and O'Keefe used membership in professional organizations as a measure of professionalism, but this measure yields no significant differences between reporters and producers. Perceived autonomy, reported by LeRoy and by Weaver and Wilhoit in their discussions of professionalism, is likewise virtually identical for reporters and producers.

Idsvoog and Hoyt and Weinthal and O'Keefe found that journalists who scored high on a professionalism index were less likely to leave journalism, but Weaver and Wilhoit found that journalists who planned to leave the field were more likely than others to stress professional values. This distinction is moot for reporters and producers, because there is no significant difference in the proportion who plan to leave TV news.

Reporters and producers are nearly identical in their evaluation of whether a routine political appearance should be covered "live" at the expense of news about a school levy. Reporters and producers were also equally likely to agree that many non-news stories get covered "live" because the new technology makes such coverage so easy. These findings suggest that misuse of "live" coverage should not be attributed to the show-business values of

producers pitted against a more noble set of journalistic criteria used by reporters.

Producers are substantially different from reporters in terms of self-reports of why they pursued careers in television news, but there is no evidence in our data that these differences mean producers are less qualified as journalists. Producers indicate that they enjoy their work less than reporters and are more likely than reporters to have chosen that line of work for pragmatic rather than idealistic reasons. Local news producers responding to this study are much like the network producers studied by Epstein 20 years ago in that they come from a somewhat different background than reporters and in that they treat their work more as a job and less as a calling. Producers are much more interested than reporters in the editorial control they wield, lending credence to Epstein's description of producers as the enforcers of organizational norms.

Conclusion

Clearly, there are differences between reporters and producers. Producers have more experience in television news and have worked at more stations than reporters. They are less likely to be critical of the newscasts produced by their stations and to think in general that producers degrade television news by making poor judgements about coverage. Producers are more likely to report getting into television news because it allows them to control the product than are reporters. In sum, producers are more likely to take a management orientation to their work than are reporters.

It seems quite clear from these data that, as the newsrooms have become more complex, job differentiation has taken place. The result is that reporters and producers find themselves in different roles. The reporter is

the information gatherer. The producer is the manager. In this sense, the data support the myth of a split in the newsroom along the lines of the split in the print newsroom between reporters and editors.

Yet, there is little in these data to argue that, if television news has deteriorated since the mid 1970s, as many critics charge, producers stand alone as the culprits. Since television news stories receive much less editing than newspaper or magazine stories,[38] reporters must share some of the blame. If Epstein was correct in observing that the primary function of producers is to enforce organizational norms, the shortcomings of television news might be better understood by looking more closely at the organizational constraints within which all newsworkers must function rather than at any particular group of newsworkers.

Footnotes

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[5] Edwin Diamond, Sign Off: The Last Days of Television (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1982), pp. 3-25.

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23 Lee B. Becker, Jeffrey W. Fruit and Susan L. Caudill with Sharon L. Dunwoody and Leonard P. Tipton, The Training and Hiring of Journalists. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex, 1987.

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[25] Becker, Fruit and Caudill, op. cit.

[26] Herbert J. Gans, Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time. New York: Vintage Books, 1980, p. 99.

[27] Edward J. Epstein, News from Nowhere (New York: Vintage, 1974), p. 222.

[28] Ibid, p. 223.

[29] Weaver and Wilhoit, op. cit., p. 74.

[30] Johnstone, et. al., op. cit., p. 220.

[31] Vernon A. Stone, "Salaries Change Little in 1987," Radio-Television News Directors Association Communicator 42(2):13-17 (February, 1988).

[32] At stations that had no early-evening local newscast, the name of the late evening producer was used.

[33] In some small markets, the producer and assignment editor were the same person. In others, the news director performed one or both functions.

[34] The description of the situation was modified according to suggestions from the medium market (Columbus, Ohio) producer. Producers from the large and small markets (Houston and Baton Rouge) examined the hypothetical situation after the survey was completed.

[35] Op. cit., p. 20.

[36] All probabilities described in this paper are two-tailed.

[37] Weaver and Wilhoit, op. cit., p. 106.

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Table 1

Education Level and Academic Emphasis of Reporters and Producers

	Reporters %	Reporters N	Producers %	Producers N
Highest Education Level	(N=508)		(N=126)	
High School or Less	0.8	(4)	0.8	(1)
Some College	9.6	(49)	10.3	(13)
College Graduate	75.0	(381)	73.0	(92)
Graduate Degree	14.6	(74)	15.9	(20)
Undergraduate Emphasis[3]	(N=501)		(N=124)	
Journalism[1]	36.3	(182)	25.8	(32)
Communication[2]	36.3	(182)	44.4	(55)
Liberal Arts	24.6	(123)	28.2	(35)
Other	2.8	(14)	1.6	(2)
Graduate Emphasis[4]	(N=96)		(N=29)	
Journalism[1]	41.7	(40)	34.5	(10)
Communication[2]	20.8	(20)	31.0	(9)
Liberal Arts	24.0	(23)	20.7	(6)
Other	13.5	(13)	13.8	(4)

Note: Table is set up to focus attention on differences between the two groups of broadcast journalists in terms of their educational backgrounds.

1 Includes advertising and public relations.

2 Includes broadcast specialties such as radio-TV-film, broadcasting, telecommunications, etc.

3 Includes students who attended but did not obtain a degree.

4 Includes students who attended but did not obtain graduate degree.

Table 2

Demographics and Professional Experience of Reporters and Producers

	Reporters (N=512)	Producers (N=126)
Percent Who Are Female	39	48
Mean Age	30	30
Mean Years TV News Experience	5.3	6.9**
Mean Number of TV Stations Worked At	2.1	2.5**
Professional Organization Membership	42 %	37 %
Membership in The Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi	18 %	15 %
Mean Number of Professional Organizations	.58	.52

Note: ** = $p < .01$. Table is set up to focus attention on demographic and professional differences between the two groups of broadcast journalists.

Table 3

Selected Attitudes of Reporters and Producers

Attitude	Reporter Mean (N=154)[1]	Producer Mean (N=126)
I can usually do my job the way I want to do it.	6.7	6.3
Reporters in this shop usually have an adequate amount of background information for their stories.	4.6	5.5***
Reporters in this shop generally have adequate specialized knowledge for the beats they cover.	5.0	5.2
The newscast here accurately reflects my personal journalistic standards.	4.5	6.1***
The newscast here accurately reflects my personal standards for how the medium should be used visually.	4.7	5.9***
A lot of non-news stories get on local TV news simply because they're so easy to do "live."	6.5	6.1

Note: 1 = "Strongly Disagree," 9 = "Strongly Agree; *** = $p < .001$.

[1] Number of stations, using aggregate means of all reporters for each station. Otherwise larger market stations, which tend to employ more reporters, would be overrepresented compared to one early-evening producer per station.

Table 4

Reporter and Producer Motivations for Getting Into TV News

Motivation	Reporters (N=442) %	N	Producers (N=104) %	N	df	Chi Square
Enjoy the Work[1]	72	(318)	38	(40)***	1	40.3
Enjoy Journalism	52	(231)	14	(15)***	1	47.2
Enjoy Television	30	(131)	31	(32)	1	0.0
Practical Reasons	24	(108)	36	(37)*	1	4.8
Idealistic Reasons	14	(61)	8	(8)	1	2.3
Personal Gain	12	(52)	15	(16)	1	0.7
Outside Influence	10	(45)	2	(2)**	1	6.3
Enjoy Current Events	5	(24)	1	(1)	1	2.9
Control over Newswork	3	(14)	38	(40)***	1	113.8

Note: * $p \leq .05$ ** $p \leq .01$ *** $p \leq .0005$ (With Yates correction).

[1] "Enjoy journalism," "enjoy television," or "enjoy current events." Percentages add up to more than 100 because up to three motives were coded for each respondent.

Table 5

Word Frequencies in Reporter and Producer Motivations

Word or Words	Reporter Statements[1] (N=442) %	N	Producer Statements[2] (N=104) %	N
Words reporters use more often				
People (e.g., "enjoy meeting people.")	15	(66)	4	(4)
Love (e.g., "love news.")	9	(39)	3	(3)
Variety (e.g., "like the variety.")	5	(24)	0	(0)
Curious, Curiosity	5	(22)	1	(1)
Fun	3	(13)	0	(0)
Current Events	3	(13)	0	(0)
Words producers use more often				
Control	0	(2)	20	(21)
Manage, Management	0	(0)	10	(10)
Power	0	(0)	3	(3)
Words used about equally often				
Write, Writing	13	(56)	10	(10)
Create, Creative	4	(18)	5	(5)

1 "What motivated you to become a television news reporter?"

2 "What motivated you to become a television news producer?"

Table 6

Differences Between How Reporters and Producers Think live Coverage Decision Should Be Made and How They Think it Would be Made

The Hypothetical Situation:

During the second block of a newscast, a producer has a chance to get a live shot of the mayor arriving at the airport after returning from a National League of Cities meeting in Phoenix. She suspects he has deliberately timed his arrival during the newscast for the publicity. To cover the arrival, she would have to kill a story about the announcement of a proposed school levy.

The general manager has made it clear that he wants live shots to be used regularly. The mayor is expected to make a brief statement about his role as chairman of the National League of Cities, but is not expected to provide anything new.

1 = Strongly Disagree 9 = Strongly Agree

Statement	Reporter Means	Producer Means
Because there has been speculation that the mayor may run for governor, the producer should send a "live" truck to cover his airport arrival.	4.85 t = 7.28	4.92 t = 2.33
Most producers would send the "live" truck because of speculation about the mayor's political future.	5.62	5.41
The producer should send a "live" truck because the mayor is more newsworthy than the levy.	3.45 t = 8.07	3.07 t = 3.41
Most producers would send the "live" truck because the mayor is more newsworthy than the school levy.	4.28	3.71*
The producer should send a "live" truck because the GM wants to see "live" shots regularly.	3.31 t = 19.91	3.23 t = 6.77
Most producers would send the "live" truck because the GM likes to see "live" shots.	5.76	4.73***
In general, this kind of story should be covered "live" when it occurs during a newscast.	4.39 t = 13.37	4.24 t = 5.40
Most producers would agree this kind of story should be covered "live" when during a newscast.	5.83	5.29*

Note: 2-tail p=.021 when t=2.33, =.001 when t=3.41 between vertical mean pairs. Two-tail probability for horizontal pairs of means: * < .05, *** < .001. N=495 for the first set of reporter means, 497 for the other three sets. N=121 for first and third sets of producer means, 120 for the second and fourth sets.