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ABSTRACT

The Newspapers section of this collection of conference presentations contains the following 24 papers: "Dropping the Paper: The Role of Women in Local Daily Subscription Cancellations" (Melinda D. Hawley); "The Effects of the 1990-1992 Recession in the Real Estate Industry in News Coverage in Real Estate Sections at Five Major U.S. Dailies" (Wendy Swallow Williams); "Nonreaders, Single Newspaper Readers and Multiple Newspaper Readers: A Discriminant Analysis" (Wayne Wanta and others); "Sample Size in Content Analysis of Weekly Newspapers" (Stephen Lacy and others); "How Four Newspapers Covered the 1992 Los Angeles and Related 'Riots'" (Jyotika Ramaprasad and others); "The Stability of 'Bad News' in Third World Coverage: 22 Years of 'New York Times' Foreign News" (Daniel Riffe); "Press Theory for the Post-Cold War Era: Toward Recapturing the Public Sphere Dialogue" (Lisa W. Holstein); "Women Making a Difference in the Newsroom" (Marion Tuttle Marzolf); "The 'New York Times' and the 'Washington Post's Coverage of the Tiananmen Incident and the U.S. China Policy: A Comparative Study" (Hong Cheng); "Changes in Coverage Patterns of Disability Issues in Three Major American Newspapers 1976-1991" (John S. Clogston); "Motherhood and the Newspaper Industry: Family Support Benefits and Women's Status in the Business" (Rebecca Theim); "Family Feud: A Case Study of Job Stress and Coping Mechanisms among Newspaper Copy Editors" (Brad Thompson and others); and "Press Coverage of Interest Groups: News Values as Determinants" (Dong-Geun Lee); "Lead, Follow or Stop the Presses: The Future of Daily Newspapers" (Sherri Ward Massey); "International News in Six American Newspapers: Last Look at a Bipolar World?" (Catherine Cassara); "'The People's Friend': A Content Analytic Study of How a Newspaper Functions for Its Readership" (Aleen J. Ratzlaff); "The Influence of Public Ownership on Publisher Autonomy" (Martha N. Matthews); "Coverage of Africa by the African-American Press: Perceptions of African-American Newspaper Editors" (Emmanuel U. Onyedike); "Color's Influence on the Content and Origin of Newsphotos" (Cindy M. Brown); "Professional Attitudes of Alternative and Mainstream Journalists and Their Effects on Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment" (Fiona A. E. McQuarrie); "The Effect of Foreign News on Readers' Attitudes toward Foreign Countries" (Taeyong Kim); "Community Editors' Views on Extralocal Coverage" (P. J. Tichenor and others); "Design Desks: Why Are More and More Newspapers Adopting Them?" (Ann Auman); "Job Stress, Hardiness and Health Factors in Reporters and Copy Editors" (Betsy B. Cook and others); and "The Response of Newspaper Circulation in the 1980s to Economic and Other Community Demographics" (F. Dennis Hale). (RS)

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NEWSPAPERS

DROPPING THE PAPER:

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN LOCAL DAILY SUBSCRIPTIC ; CANCELLATIONS

BY

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DROPPING THE PAPER:
THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN LOCAL DAILY SUBSCRIPTION CANCELLATIONS

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Women, who are dropping out of newspaper reading in disproportionate numbers compared to men, have been the focus of research conducted in an era of unprecedented, survey-driven content adjustment to appeal to the "channel-clicking" generation.

Analysis of more than 2,000 pages of transcripts generated from depth interviews with 30 former long-term, local-daily subscribers -- 18 of whom were women -- revealed women dropped the paper because of content dissatisfaction, not lack of time to read. Four primary dissatisfaction areas emerged: "Farm-team" journalism, parochialism, superficiality, and redundancy. Women disliked the newspaper's lack of bulk.

Women, unlike men, considered cancellation when the paper failed to serve as a bridge to link family members with others within and outside the household. Several participants perceived newspapers to be barriers between household members.

Finally, women were catalysts for cancellation; they reinforced household dissatisfaction and were particularly critical when newspapers accumulated, unread.

INTRODUCTION

The steady loss of adult readers of daily newspapers has been well documented: Nearly three-quarters of all adults in the United States said they read a newspaper every day in 1961, yet by 1990 this figure had fallen to slightly more than half (Bogart, 1989; Bagby, 1991). Furthermore, household penetration -- the ratio of circulation to the number of occupied households -- dropped from 97.9 newspapers sold per 100 households in 1970 to 66.8 in 1990 (Bagby, 1991). While attrition and mergers decreased the number of dailies, and smaller household size increased the number of households, U.S. newspaper circulation failed to keep up with the rate of population growth (Bogart, 1989).

Women, who are dropping out of newspaper reading in disproportionate numbers compared to men, have been the recent focus of numerous industry readership studies. A 1991 Newspaper Advertising Bureau study revealed that between 1970-1990, readership of daily newspapers by women declined 18 percent, compared to a 12.5-percent drop by men -- statistics perceived by the industry as particularly alarming, given that "women have been abandoning newspapers just when their demographics and buying power are most commanding" (Hansen, 1992, p. 23). Simmons Market Research Bureau reported a seven-percent drop in readership by women in the past decade alone (1981-1991); in response to this loss, newspaper groups "are prodding their papers to be more appealing to women" (Pearl, 1992, p. B1).

What do women want in their newspapers? The question appears to be increasingly relevant -- and perplexing -- to newspaper management. The trade publication **News Inc.** examined the recent industry trend of "Challenging the Male

Paper" (Hansen, 1992) and suggested that women may be turning away from newspapers in part because stories that cover issues relevant to women are relegated to "soft news" pages, reporters continue to quote or cite as sources far more men than women, relatively fewer women's than men's bylines appear on front-page stories, and women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making management positions at newspapers.

In the 1990s, characterized as the "Decade of the Reader-Driven Newspaper" (Bagby, 1991, p. 18) -- a period of unprecedented readership and product examination, and subsequent market-driven adjustment -- newspapers across the nation are conducting studies of women's reactions to special sections. Several newspapers -- among them the **Chicago Tribune, The Arizona Republic** and the Cleveland **Plaindealer** -- have attempted to provide a woman's vantage point by adding a "women's section," and thus, have "reintroduced" a former staple of many newspapers dropped in the early 1970s in response to the women's movement and feminist complaints of "ghettoization" of news about women to non-news pages (Hansen, 1992).

Reactions of women focus-group participants in a 1989 American Society of Newspaper Editors study to the prototype "WOMANEWS" for the **Chicago Tribune** were mixed: "Busy working women . . . were attracted to WOMANEWS despite their strongly negative reaction to its [news segmentation] premise" (McGrath, 1990, p. 95).

Several academic researchers have suggested that time-honored news values, still in use at U.S. media organizations (Beasley, 1989; Downie, 1989), serve to ignore, or relegate to "lifestyle" or feature sections, sociological and cultural information of interest to women. Downie (1989) describes such definitions of news as "useless" and elaborates: "Patriarchal 'news' is clearly based toward violence, conflict, and the status quo as represented by corporations and government," yet, "for regular news about events and programs that make up the fine grain of the women's movement, it is still true that only our own [women's] media are paying attention" (p. 199). Beasley (1989), in turn, referring to a 1985 University of Maryland College of Journalism study of the effects of increased enrollment of women in journalism schools, observes that women have had little impact on media content, and that coverage continues to conform to the "patriarchal news" definition:

> Today there is little reason to think that the nature of news is changing dramatically . . . . It conform[s] to the conventional male model of conflict, controversy, and "spicy" headlines . . . . While a new majority may be moving into newsrooms, it appears it is continuing to encounter roughly the same old definitions of news even though there are occasional efforts to broaden coverage (Beasley, 1989, p. 192).

Cirksena (1989) faults the majority of communication studies for failing to take into account "the pervasive 'genderedness' of communication" (p.47), and concludes:

> . . . [I]f women's media use differs from that of men, and it does in particular when lifestyle differences and child care responsibilities are taken into account, then the availability of information about the climate of opinion may differ between women and men of similar circumstance; and, by the same token, one might expect that opportunities for perceiving and processing such information may also differ (p. 55).

Research about gender differences in communication and informational needs has not been limited to industry and academic circles; two recent non-fiction works drew considerable public interest to these issues (Faludi, 1991; Tannen, 1990).

Tannen (1990), devoted a chapter of her national bestseller, **You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation**, to the stereotypical phenomenon of the newspaper as a barrier between men and women, erected by the former and shutting out the latter. The author, who analyzed more than 130 communication studies in addition to her own data, contends that the exchange of information has different meanings and utilities for men and women.

Tannen (1990) reports that men are socialized from childhood to believe possessing and disseminating information gives them an advantage through one-upsmanship in a hierarchical social order; thus, they enjoy conflict-laden news about sports, politics and the world because such content in part fulfills their interest in details and their desire to discuss current events with others. Women, however, who learn as children to view life as an experience of community in which consensus and equality is highly valued, avoid conflict and instead seek details about personal lives and ramifications (the "why" in the "5 W's and an H" of news reporting) in order to fulfill their interest in people and their desire for connections with others. While seemingly reductionist, the author's perspective is qualified by the observation that gender differences in communication cannot be examined as mutually exclusive categories, but are a matter of focus, or degree.

Faludi (1991), in **Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women,** approaches the notion of media as barrier between genders from another angle; the author contends that American media, employing a patriarchal, status-quo-affirming frame in which to portray feminist issues and women's societal status, exacerbated a societal backlash against the movement for equality for women. The author observes that reporting of women's progress in the workplace and other societal arenas was framed by media from a perspective which served to undermine the feminist movement by focusing on its negative effects on women -- and men.

Rakow (1989) suggests that to remedy exploitative and meaningless media portrayals of women, women must be allowed to provide their own perspectives: ". . . [L]et us think about the world from the perspective of women (or other subjugated groups) and see what the world of communication looks like from their vantage point" (p. 304).

Given the disproportionate loss of women readers, and the industry focus on identifying how newspapers can best attract and retain them as readers and subscribers, further research is needed to learn why women are turning their backs on daily newspapers in greater numbers than men.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

During the past thirty years, adult readership differences have been at least partially linked to demographic factors in dozens of studies (e.g., Burgoon & Burgoon, 1980, 1981; Cobb, 1986; Kebbel, 1984; Kippax & Murray, 1980; Kline, 1971; Lain, 1986; McCombs & Mauro, 1977; McCombs, Mauro, & Son, 1988; Schramm, Lyle & Parker, 1960; Schwartz, 1980; Towers, 1985, 1986). However, most researchers concluded demographics alone were not as effective in predicting readership as were the combination of demographics and other factors.

Stone and Wetherington (1979), in a study which found a strong link between adoption of a newspaper-reading habit and parental reading, observed:

> Having a newspaper reading habit was demonstrated to be dependent upon the tradition of newspaper reading in the home when the individual was growing up. As such, possessing the reading habit is somewhat different from mere reading frequency: it is similar to practicing a religion or voting by party affiliation if parents exhibited such traits (p. 561).

Bogart (1989) examined gender differences reported in numerous studies and found that women who have relatively lower levels of education exhibit greater interest in newspaper content that focused on food preparation and other home-related activities than do more highly educated women. Working women, regardless of income, were slightly less likely than women who worked within the home to be frequent newspaper readers; working **mothers**, however, were more likely to be readers than were their counterparts in the home (Bogart, 1989). Furthermore, a relatively stronger need for information, interest in a wider range of subjects and a preference for "serious news items" were identified as characteristic of women who worked outside the home rather than within it (Bogart, 1989, p. 100).

Recent academic research on gender differences pertaining to newspaper content has addressed reader perception of content as it relates to gender of the source. Andsager (1990), in an examination of perceived credibility of syndicated political columnists according to gender, found that men rated political columns without bylines as more credible than those that carried a woman's byline; women, however, did not link credibility with gender. In a study of reader bias linked to gender-specific bylines to news stories, Burkhart and Sigelman (1990), found no differences between men and women participants in their evaluation of stories that carried gender-specific bylines.

While these studies are helpful in assessing the impact of gender on reader perceptions of credibility, they do not address gender differences in perception of the newspaper as a whole -- particularly its utility and value to ·omen. Furthermore, both studies employed the experimental technique, which does not take into account contextual factors. Lavrakas and Holley (1989) stressed the importance of contextual cues in their analysis of perceived images of local newspapers; they observed that "what is of particular importance to the local newspaper is what the local public is doing and thinking, not what trends hold in other markets or nationally" (pp. 52-53).

And, although a plethora of studies have addressed why readers of both genders subscribe, little is known about the reasons women are abandoning the newspaper in greater numbers than are men. In particular, there is a paucity of research on why women who once subscribed to a newspaper drop their subscriptions.

Subscribers of both genders are continually characterized as possessing relatively higher levels of income and education, and tending to be slightly older and more likely to be married homeowners, than non-subscribers (Bogart, 1989). Other studies identified demographic, transitional, and community-attachment variables as key to the discrimination between subscribers and nonsubscribers

(Denbow, 1975; Rarick, 1979; Stamm, 1988; Stamm & Weis, 1982). Recent research has revealed subscribing to a newspaper is a dynamic, not a static, process (Grotta & Babbili, 1984; Stamm & Weis, 1982; Zhu, 1988).

Why do subscribers drop the paper? Fielder and Barnum (1987), who tracked new subscribers for one year in their landmark study, "Love Us and Leave Us: New Subscribers One Year Later," found that four of 10 former subscribers -- the largest group in the study -- gave time-related reasons for stopping the subscription: lack of time to read; accumulation of unread papers; and preference for other activities to reading the paper. Content-related reasons were identified as least important to the drop decision.

The authors examined gender differences only in content-preference, not reason-for-stop, categories, and reported that: "[Women] seemed to have more of a local news orientation, to read more ads, and to be more interested in food and fashion" than did men, who were relatively more drawn to sports, business, national and international news (Fielder & Barnum, 1987, p. 17).

Zhu (1988), however, found gender to play a role in dropping a subscription in the author's secondary analysis of the Fielder and Barnum (1987) data. The author drew the following profile of households at which subscriptions were more likely to be cancelled: The main decision-maker is male, under 35, non-white and single. Rating of newspaper performance was identified as insignificant to the dropping decision.

Thus, the Fielder and Barnum (1987) study, and secondary data analysis conducted by Zhu (1988), suggest many factors may affect the decision to stop a newspaper subscription. However, responses in the original study were constricted to predetermined categories; former subscribers were unable to express reasons for stops in their own words. In addition, individual/household contextual factors that may have affected the decision were not analyzed; interaction between household members regarding the decision to drop was not measured, and gender-specific responses were restricted in the Fielder and Barnum (1987) to content-preference categories.

Given the virtually unexplored areas of cancelling a long-term newspaper subscription, and women's subscription stops, the following research was undertaken with the assumption that it was imperative to conduct an in-depth study of what former subscribers identified as relevant, rather than impose upon them a set of predetermined choices. Another, related assumption was that the survey method employed in the Fielder and Barnum (1987) study tapped top-of-mind responses that could not sufficiently capture the complexity of former subscribers' perceptions and behaviors.

THE STUDY

Research questions

The overall question of the study was: Why do long-term subscribers to the local daily newspaper "drop out," or stop subscribing?

Research questions that addressed the overall question were:

Question 1: What role (and/or function), if any, did the newspaper have in the household when the individual subscribed?

Question 2: What were the household circumstances, if any, when the decision to cancel was first considered?

Question 3: Why was the subscription stopped?

Question 4: What factors have changed in the household, if any, since the paper was dropped?

(Areas in which open-ended questions were asked of participants are listed in Appendix 1.)

Methodology

The study, funded by the James M. Cox Institute for Newspaper Management

Studies at The University of Georgia, was undertaken in six phases:

- (1) Spring, 1990 --Two in-depth exploratory interviews of former subscribers (doctoral students who volunteered to help the researcher pretest the interview schedule) were conducted prior to fieldwork, and transcribed by the researcher (72 pages were generated). In addition, the researcher read the daily newspaper to be studied during the site visit for six months prior to the research.

- (2) Aug. 16 through Sept. 10, 1990 -- Thirty in-depth (two-hour), tape-recorded interviews of former daily newspaper subscribers were conducted at a neutral location in the field (a Southern city with a 1990 population of more than 178,000, see Appendix 2 for demographic breakdown), and were transcribed by a secretary, generating 2,053 pages of transcripts.

- (3) September, 1990 -- Taped-recorded interviews were conducted at the newspaper offices with the executive editor and circulation manager, were mailed to and transcribed by a secretary and generated 29 and 61 pages, respectively.

- (4) September 1990 through July 1991 -- Ongoing data analysis was employed that (a) allowed, due to its emergent design, redefinition of the purposive sample to include subscribers identified as significant to the study (see sample, below), and (b) utilized open, axial and selective coding as proposed by Strauss (1987, see data analysis, below).

- (5) July 1991 -- A follow-up questionnaire was mailed to the 30 former subscribers, approximately one year after interviews were conducted, to determine if they had resubscribed. Included in the mailing was a one-page summary of the researcher's findings for that individual, accompanied by a cover letter that asked the participant to check for and correct inaccuracies or misinterpretations, in order to provide member checks of the analysis.

- (6) May, 1992 -- A follow-up questionnaire was mailed to the 30 former subscribers, approximately two years after the original interviews, to determine if they had resubscribed.

The sample

Former subscribers of the local, group-owned morning daily (Monday-Saturday circulation of 57,000, and Sunday circulation of nearly 70,000) were identified through stop records provided by the paper's circulation department. The interviewees must have stopped their subscriptions before January 1990 (seven months prior to the study to ensure the decision to stop would be salient), and have subscribed seven days a week. In order to move beyond the Fielder and Barnum (1987) new-subscriber study of stops, subscription duration was set at a minimum of three years; the maximum length was 10 years. However, at least five panel members said the duration of their subscriptions was longer than 10 years -- from a minimum of 13 to a maximum of 20; computerized records did not track start dates before 1980.

The emergent design of the study allowed for alteration of the purposive sample to include several key groups of participants:

• First, while the original sample was to include nonsubscribers to any newspaper, it was adjusted to include 10 former subscribers to the local paper who switched to a non-local major-metropolitan daily. Such "switching" is unusual, given the fact a non-local metro lacks local news, which prior studies identified as an important content category sought by newspaper subscribers.

• Second, the researcher discovered early in the study that stopping a subscription was continually described as a joint decision; therefore, spouses of six interview subjects were included, reducing the total number of subscribing households from 30 to 24.

• Third, when initial interviews revealed exposure to large-circulation metropolitan dailies (prior to and/or at the field site) appeared to be significant in terms of participant perceptions of the local daily, the researcher decreased minimum local-daily subscription duration to one year, instead of the original three, to include more-recent residents who were long-term newspaper readers at previous locations and the field site (ultimately, 14 months was the minimum subscription duration).

The researcher contacted long-term subscribers by phone, using two lists of more than 300 former subscribers whose identities on the print-outs appeared to be in no discernable order (alphabetical, zip code designation, phone numbers, stop/start dates, or other factors). Calls were placed to approximately 130 households; the researcher spoke to members in about 90 (due to disconnected numbers and unanswered calls). The person who answered the phone was asked to participate after the researcher, using a screening form, confirmed the household fell within the parameters of the purposive sample, did not plan to restart the subscription "in the near future" and did not work for the paper at any time, including the present. After the screening was conducted, the researcher indicated participants would be compensated $50 by the funding agency (Cox Institute).

Eighteen women and 12 men were interviewed (see Appendix 3 for demographic characteristics of participants). It is important to note that although approximately 38 percent of the Southern city's population was African American, all former subscribers interviewed in this study were white. The researcher did not ask prospective interviewees to identify their race during screening, and none of the 30 were were ultimately interviewed were African American, nor did they appear to be members of other minority groups. Lack of black readers was a concern expressed by both the executive editor and circulation director in their interviews.

TABLE 1

CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN IN THE STUDY (N = 18)

Race	
Afr. Am.	0
White	18

Age	
25-29	1
30-39	7
40-49	6
50-60	4

Marital status	
Married	15
Divorced	2
Separated	1

Number of children	
None	2
One	3
Two	7
Three	4
Pregnant	2

Employment status	
Full time	9
Part time	4
Student (PT work)	1
Homemaker	3
Retired (disabled)	1

Education	
H.S. grad	2
Some college	6
Bachelor's	4
Master's	3
LPN	2
Assoc./Tech.	1

Household income	
10,000 - 14,999	1
20,000 - 24,999	1
25,000 - 29,999	2
30,000 - 39,999	2
40,000 - 49,999	3
50,000 - 59,999	3
70,000 - 79,999	2
No report	4

Household	
Homeowner	16
Renter	2

Length of current residence	
2 to 5 years	3
5 to 10 years	4
11 to 20 years	4
21 to 30 years	2
30-49 years	5

Current subscribing status	
No home delivery	13
Non-local metro	5

(See Appendix 3 for characteristics of total sample [N = 30].)

Interviews

Interviews were scheduled seven days a week during day and evening hours at two neutral sites, depending on participant preference: an reading room at a local college or a classroom at the local library. The 30 tape-recorded interviews averaged two hours and 15 minutes in duration.

An interview guide (see Appendix 1) was used to ensure the researcher covered areas identified in prior studies and exploratory interviews as relevant, and to enable cross-comparison of responses; however, questions were as nondirective as possible so subjects could speak freely and provide their own terms, which often provide "in vivo" codes (Strauss, 1987).

Data analysis

Interviews generated 2,053 pages of transcripts (1,146 pages for women and 907 for men, with an average length of 68 pages, minimum of 50 and maximum of 112). Data were first subjected to open coding in a line-by-line and phrase-by-phrase progression proposed by Strauss (1987), which suggested "in vivo" codes and concepts relevant to the data, which were then grouped on master sheets for 12 core conceptual categories (see Appendix 4). Relationships between conceptual categories were then scrutinized in axial coding; finally, the researcher focused on core categories that appeared significant for theory building in the selective-coding step. The coding paradigm proposed by Strauss (1987) was used for analysis, in that data were coded in terms of their relevance to conditions, interactions among actors, strategies and tactics, and consequences.

Member checks

Eleven months after interviews were conducted (July, 1991), the researcher mailed to each participant a summary of the analysis conducted for that individual with an explanatory cover letter, a return form and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Participants were asked to read the summaries and indicate on the return form whether they agreed or disagreed with the analysis, and were also asked to indicate if they had resubscribed (and if so, for how many days per week). Participants were identified by alphabetical letter on tapes and transcripts (the first, A; the last, DD); on mailed analyses, the letter was accompanied by a name chosen to make reporting of results more realistic and human (e.g. "Alice" to "Dianne"). The researcher contacted all but one participant, who had moved out of the country.

(Nearly two years after interviews were conducted [May, 1992], the researcher mailed to participants a questionnaire which included questions in the following areas: current subscribing status; person[s] who made the decision to subscribe/not subscribe; main reason household subscribes/does not subscribe; other newspaper subscriptions; store/rack purchases of local daily; reading of local daily at workplace; intent to resubscribe to local daily in future; intent to reside in local city in future; and additional comments. See Appendix 9 for responses.)

FINDINGS:

WOMEN AND CONTENT DISSATISFACTION

First, depth interviews revealed that a "customer obsession" policy was in place in the circulation department of this local daily newspaper (in fact, only four former subscribers, all women, complained about delivery problems) and that the editorial department continually adopted strategies to improve the paper's reputation with the public, including a phone line for reader interaction and a series of stories addressing local problems and their solutions.

The executive editor of this group-owned, morning paper was an early and firm believer in market research; he indicated the newspaper must respond to the time-deprived, "channel-click[ing]" information-processing approach of the so-called "baby boomers," who he indicated had a low tolerance for boredom. He said this impatience could be countered by producing a paper that "provides quick entry points for all kinds of information, and connects them [readers]." He later added:

> Today's readers are impatient. They want it quick, they want it to mean something to them personally, and they want to see something happen. We'll get readers plugged into the issues of the day, vigorously encourage participation in community life, and provide a vehicle for results.

While the executive editor also said he believed the paper should run more investigative pieces -- but not necessarily stories that required six months of research, since he said readers avoid long stories full of "bureaucratic detail" -- his assessment of readers as "channel clickers" convinced him that "short stories, quick reads [and] bright enterprise" stories were essential.

Second, regardless of former subscribers' gender, age, duration of residence, degree of affinity for the city (if they thought of it as home, if they planned to stay), and other demographic factors, the majority of participants indicated that dissatisfaction with content had been discussed within the household and was a key factor in the decision to drop.

Conceptual core categories were created to account "for as much variation in a pattern of behavior with as few concepts as possible, thereby maximizing parsimony and scope" (Strauss, 1987, p. 35). Four primary, related categories of content dissatisfaction emerged from data analysis: **"farm-team" journalism** (inaccurate, poor-quality and inexpert reporting and writing, poor overall performance), **parochialism** (a narrowness of coverage and focus), **superficiality** (running trivial "fluff" and filler, insufficient and/or irrelevant coverage) and **redundancy** (running "old news," and overuse of wire-service copy seen or heard in other media, and predictable or repetitious stories). (See Appendix 5 for a detailed breakdown of categories by gender, and gender comparisons, respectively.)

While participants voiced nearly identical complaints regarding content, gender differences were apparent in several content areas:

Content dissatisfaction: Gender differences and major areas for women

• (1) Women were slightly more dissatisfied with the **redundancy** of the paper than were men; 21 percent (16) of their 78 major reasons for cancelling subscriptions were in this category, compared to 15 percent (eight) of the 55 reasons cited by men. Three women said the paper was predictable, and therefore boring, and two complained the paper repeated the same story on another day; however, none of the men mentioned either of these areas of content dissatisfaction.

In addition, eight of the 18 women (44%) said they were dissatisfied with the "old news" area of redundancy (men also complained about dated information -- five of 12, or 42%).

• (2) Women were particularly critical of inaccuracies in reporting; seven of 18 women (39%) cited this category of **"farm-team" journalism** as dissatisfying, while two of 12 men (17%) did so. Five women characterized local reporters as "lazy" or lacking enterprise, and two were "insulted" by newspaper coverage, an observation reported by none of the men.

- (3) Women were also relatively more dissatisfied with the **superficiality** of coverage; displeasure at seeing "trivial" stories in the paper was their most-common aspect of dissatisfaction category. Nine women of 18 mentioned "trivial" stories as contributing to their decision to drop the paper, while five of 12 men did so (42%). Four women said the paper was "thin" (compared to one man), and three said stories were "irrelevant," which none of the men addressed in their comments.

- (4) One of the most striking differences between men and women was an awareness of papers **"stacking up,"** unread, which five women said was directly related to their decision to drop the paper. None of the men said they were concerned about accumulated papers; two men said their wives were irritated by the mess and monetary waste. The women in the study indicated content dissatisfaction led to this accumulation.

Another category of substantial gender differences was apparent in the manner in which women and men expressed their displeasure with the newspaper. Women often framed their discussion of content dissatisfaction in terms of their **relationships with others**, while virtually none of the men spoke of a spouse or child when discussing the content of the paper.

Areas of content dissatisfaction

- **"Farm-team" journalism.** The first "in vivo" [Strauss, 1987] code represented a category of content dissatisfaction that encompassed inaccuracy (factual errors and misquoting), "lazy" and inexpert reporting, and poor overall performance. The term was coined by Sam, 41 ("it's like a farm team in baseball") to describe the poor performance of local reporters, and was alluded to by another male:

> Bill, 38: Your reporters can be immature or inexperienced and all, in knowing where to go and how to find it [news]. I see that Columbus is a training ground. They [reporters] come in here and get their start, and they go, they go off to bigger and better things. You know, bigger towns, bigger papers and all, if they're good -- and if not, they stay here [laughs].

Women were far more likely than men to directly refer to factual inaccuracies (seven of 18 women, compared to two of 12 men). Furthermore, their dissatisfaction in this core category, unlike that of men, was framed within the context of the effect of inaccuracy on family members:

> Judi, 42: I guess maybe I was sitting here trying to think, 'Well, why does [inaccuracy] bother me so much? But maybe it goes back to my parents, because my father put so much stock in the newspaper . . . what he read he always took for fact. And he would relate those facts to us, and I always thought, 'Well, if my father read it in the newspaper, then it had to be right' . . . . [W]hen I found out neither the newspaper nor my father had always been right, that was kind of a shock to me . . . . [A]nd my daughter thinks if Peter Jennings doesn't say it, then it's not true . . . . but if he says something she doesn't agree with, she's going to first look in the newspaper and see if it says the same thing.

Three women said their husbands were misquoted in the paper; one was misquoted herself. Again, dissatisfaction with inaccuracy was often framed by women in terms of family members:

> Carole, 40: [My husband] was in the paper a number of times, and they will misquote, they will put in different things, you see what I'm saying . . . . over the years, that's probably the thing that has made me decide you can't believe everything that you read in the paper.

Women were critical of poor-quality writing; five said reporters were "lazy" or lacked enterprise, three said there was little follow-up on stories, and two said the paper "insulted [their] intelligence." Dianne, 45, mentioned "inane" local columns; Harriet, 59, said the local daily "had some good writers, but . . . I just don't think the quality is as good as it used to be five years ago" and Alice, 47, whose mother learned to read by using a newspaper, observed that it could no longer be counted on for correct spelling and use of grammar.

• **Parochialism.** The second "in vivo" code [Strauss, 1987] represents participants' description of a narrowness of coverage, focus, and viewpoint. Coverage gaps identified by participants were numerous; men and women said the paper provided insufficient coverage of state, national and international news in particular. Women primarily expressed dissatisfaction with lack of state and world news, issue- and people-oriented coverage (including health issues) and news about upcoming events (eight of 18 women voiced irritation at narrow coverage and important stories that were "missed").

> Roberta, 55: A town of this size, a city of this size, should have a better paper . . . I guess really the major thing is that it does not have enough world news. I don't know why the [local paper] would think that people living here are not interested in what's going on in the rest of the world.

> Paula, 39: Now let's get out, let's take a little compass and stick it in [the center of the city]. And let's spread it out about 90 miles further.

Women, unlike men, often framed their dissatisfaction with coverage gaps in relation to others within the household, in addition to voicing their own displeasure. While none of the men indicated the local daily newspaper failed in supplying sufficiently broad coverage for their spouses or children, eight of 18 women referred to their husbands' complaints about insufficient or incomplete coverage, and two mothers indicated they felt the newspaper did not fulfill their children's needs.

> Roberta, 55: Well, my husband would be upset because occasionally he would pick up other papers and read them, and he would see something major, and he would say, 'Why, I never saw a word about that in [the local paper.'

Dianne, 45, a self-described avid read of books (virtually all of the 18 women read books and magazines regularly), was displeased with the local daily's fashion coverage, as well as insufficient depth which caused the paper to be "uninteresting." (Three women said the paper was boring and predictable; men did not.) Dianne, repeatedly using the word "we" when discussing content dissatisfaction, illustrates the manner in which many women framed their concerns in terms of the paper's impact on others:

> Dianne, 45: We did not feel there was much depth to the paper . . . we found that there was nothing, there were not many articles we really were interested to read . . . . And we decided, 'Oh well.' That is one of the reasons [the paper was stopped]. My husband feels that the business section is not great.

Carole and Bonnie were long-term residents whose son and daughter, respectively, were nearly the same age. The women indicated the local paper failed to sufficiently inform their children:

> Carole, 40: My son has come home, he's a freshman at [school name]. In their health course, they have to write . . . an article or a paper about an article about mental health. [My son's teacher] said, 'Get it from the newspaper.' And I looked at my son, and I said, 'Does she think you are going to find a mental health [story] in the [local] paper? I mean, I was just incredulous that she would even, you know, suggest the [local] paper.

> Bonnie, 40: My daughter, she voted for the first time this year. I took her down to register. But she said, 'Well, Mama, I don't know anything about these people' . . . . I think there should be more outlined [voting information] where not only somebody that is highly intelligent can read it and decipher it, but somebody that's just average intelligence, like me, can sit down and, you know, do something with it, and like my daughter, who has never voted . . . [so that] she would want to take the time to look at it, you know?

- **Superficiality**. This category of content dissatisfaction, reported by participants of both genders, included displeasure with trivial stories ("fluff" and "filler" instead of meaningful local news), and insufficient and/or irrelevant coverage. Five men and nine women complained of triviality of news stories (i.e., reports about "Aunt Bea's sewing circle" and "a little dance at the garden club") and photographs (i.e., "a picture on the front page of Mickey Mouse out in Oklahoma at some fair"). Of all areas of content dissatisfaction, trivial stories topped women's list.

Women did not express dissatisfaction in this content category in terms of their relationships with others; they appeared to be primarily frustrated that trivial coverage replaced meaningful local news.

> Dianne, 45: I feel like [the local paper's] not discussing things of importance . . . . I think it's just a real down-home paper, that's the only way I can describe it.

> Nancy, 30: It's the small-towny type news that I think there's too much of, you know? Here's the Boy Scout troop, they did something. Here's the Girl Scout troop, and so, and so. It's like constantly, all the time . . . . I know some people's view of important news is not another person's view of important news, but I think the news ought to have some substance to it.

While men and women said the local paper's reporters appeared to be "lazy" -- lack aggressiveness in their reporting -- more men than women (five of 12 compared to five of 18, respectively) were explicitly critical of the paper's failure to fulfill its "watchdog" function and were instead acting as community boosters.

> Bill, 38: The [local paper] is, you know, their people are quite active in the community, and this is one of the most community-minded places that I've ever seen . . . . And the [local paper] is one of the 'good citizens' of [the city] . . . . And so I see them as not really being aggressive in reporting news, you know . . . . My whole impression of a newspaper or the news is to report the facts, and let -- even though it may be offensive to you or may hurt someone -- [run it] if it is the facts.

> Oliver, 29: I don't feel [the local paper] lives up to its responsibilities to fully report what's going on . . . . If I started seeing that the [local paper] is living up to what I deem a journalistic responsibility -- on not only the local, but primarily the national-international scene -- then I would probably start buying [it] again . . . . I realize that not every reporter is a [Bob] Woodward and [Carl] Bernstein. But every reporter should at least be a little bit of a Woodward and Bernstein.

> Sam, 41: . . . [I]t was obvious that the paper wasn't . . .going to [conduct] any investigative reporting . . . they report a little bit, and that was the extent of it . . . . They don't make any effort to look into why things are done, where the money goes, you know . . . . [They] don't want to make waves, bottom line.

Three women's comments are representative of their peers' dissatisfaction with the paper's aggressiveness:

Dianne, 45: I feel like they [the local paper] should be a leader in the community and inform the people. And I don't know that I can say [it] does that in some of their articles . . . . Maybe they feel they should reflect the community, maybe that's what they're doing . . . . [But] I think they should be leaders in informing people, and I don't know that I think [that means running] human-interest articles about somebody's plants and rocking on the porch, things like that.

Nancy, 30: I don't think that they write what I'm already hearing everybody else talk about . . . I don't think they've got the guts to do it. I think they're afraid of what, what's going to be said to them. Now to me, [when you publish] a newspaper, you take your chances sometimes . . . to me that's what a newspaper should be doing, **not** stepping on eggshells, making sure that they print enough to make the public, make the headline look like it's interesting -- the article -- but not good enough to . . . make sure somebody else doesn't take it the wrong way (Nancy's emphasis).

Paula, 39: We [my husband and I] come from Nashville, where we had people investigating corruption in the police department, okay, or investigating corruption in the governor's office . . . . [W]e just got the feeling that there just wasn't a lot of effort. I mean, it was like [the local paper said], 'Let's fill this up with West Germany and Yugoslavia and Bulgaria and somewhere in South America, and throw in this little article about this woman who you got kicked out of this church meeting, and that's, just, you know.

Another area of content dissatisfaction associated with superficiality was partially related to physical aspects of the newspaper. Four women referred to the paper's lack of bulk, "thinness" (lack of bulk), as did one man. In addition, only women complained they could read the newspaper in a relatively short amount of time.

Kathy, 34: There was nothing, you know. You're done with the [local] paper in [snaps her fingers]. There's not much there . . . . I enjoy reading the paper, and it wasn't -- there wasn't enough there.

Gloria, 60: I stopped to pick up the paper on Thursday, and it was so skinny, and I thought, 'Well, you know, they had to, somebody's taken part out of this' . . . and I thought it was missing something.

Carole, 40: They're not very in-depth articles that they write.The front page has what the major things are, and then it just doesn't seem like there's any news in between. You know what I'm saying? In between the rest of the pages,

> there's no news. And it is small. I mean, the paper is small. The paper is very thin, there's only a few pages, and so there isn't anything in there, you know.

• **Redundancy.** Sara, 39, provided the "in vivo" (Strauss, 1987) code to describe this category of content dissatisfaction, which tied for second-place with parochialism in number of references made by women. Many of the most-common observations about content were related to repetition; dissatisfaction with "old news" was voiced by eight women and five men. Participants indicated they often saw stories repeated in the local newspaper from one day to the next, or that they read stories in the local newspaper -- a morning daily -- previously covered by evening newscasts, morning radio news or a network-television morning programming.

Gender differences appeared only in the fact that men were relatively more "sophisticated" in their use of the term "wire copy" when describing one source of the repetition (three men referred directly to the local paper's use of news services when describing redundancy). Like the content category of superficiality, the redundancy category did not generate content complaints from women in terms of relationships with family members.

> Sara, 39: It was amazing to me that I very often found articles in [the local paper] that were duplicates of something I'd heard on television -- either on 'Good Morning America' . . . or even in the evening news. It would be a lot of the same things, and I thought that was redundant.

> Roxanne, 30: I don't really trust [the local paper] to tell me what's going on in the world front. Particularly now, since we get only one [morning] paper a day. That whatever has happened is old news, I mean, you could have heard [the news] on the radio on your way to work, or whatever, before . . . . With only one paper coming out, there's a 24-hour lag there.

> Judi, 42: I don't understand why the news would have to be delayed so much . . . . You know how sometimes you will hear facts given, maybe on the evening news -- Iraq invaded Kuwait and this is what took place? And if you pick up, maybe, the [local paper], it won't be that way . . . and it's because maybe they haven't updated their facts.

Bonnie, 40, who said she once stood in an upstairs window waiting for the newspaper to arrive, indicated she became bored with its predictability:

> It just got to where the paper was the same thing . . . I don't know how to describe it, [be]cause the news is different, but it's just, almost boring. You know. I'd get to where I'd just look through it, [and] even though I'd sit down and read it . . . I found myself not reading as many articles as I did before. It **was like . . . you knew what was going to be in there** (emphasis added).

Degree of dissatisfaction: Exposure to major metropolitan daily newspapers

The most significant indicator of the degree of content dissatisfaction expressed by participants was exposure to other metropolitan daily newspapers. In general, the more exposure a former subscriber had to major daily newspapers, the more critical he or she was of local-newspaper content. This exposure occurred in other states -- when former subscribers were children or young adults, or as adults living elsewhere before moving to the local area. Several former subscribers who were long-term local residents had read the nearby metropolitan paper as children growing up in the area.

Twenty-five of the 30 subscribers (83 percent) who dropped the local daily had heavy exposure to metropolitan daily newspapers; only five had "none," "some" or "little" exposure.

Participants of both genders compared the local daily's coverage to that of a large-circulation metropolitan paper they read in a previous city, as well as to the nearby city daily published 90 miles away (then offered through home delivery and sold in local stores). The availability of this non-local, but competing newspaper allowed for daily coverage comparisons by participants. On any given day, the local daily ran approximately one-quarter the number of pages as the nearby metropolitan paper; on average, front news sections in the local paper were about half the number of the nearby metro's.

> Carole, 40, who read New York newspapers as a child and young adult:
> I guess it all just depends if, if I grew up in [the local city] . . . and the [local]

paper was all that I knew, then I would say, 'Yes, it's a good newspaper.' But when you've had other newspapers . . . .

Paula, 39, a **Nashville Tennessean** reader before moving to the area: It was a big shocker, I guess, coming from the **Tennessean** back down to the [local newspaper].

Sara, 39, who read the nearby major metropolitan newspaper as a child: I mean, the [nearby metro] has it all over [the local paper] . . . it's so much more balanced. The reporting seems to be so much more balanced and fair. Things are happening that they [local advertisers] don't want in the news, and they can keep it out locally because they have some power somehow, but they can't keep it out of the [nearby metro].

Kathy, 34: We didn't want to subscribe to two papers when one was generally inferior to the other. There [was] no need to get the [local] paper once the [nearby metropolitan newspaper] was coming to our door every day and was a better paper . . . . I would rather have a local way of getting my news through the newspaper, if I thought it was a good, reputable way of getting it.

Women participants, unlike men, stressed the importance of subscribing to a local, or "hometown" newspaper and were more likely to say they missed local news and advertising -- regardless of their age, duration of residence or affinity for the city (if they described it as "home," and/or intended to reside in the city indefinitely). Nancy, who had lived in the city for approximately two years and voiced a strong dislike for the area, expressed her preference for a local paper in terms similar to those of Gloria, 60, a local (and satisfied) resident since childhood:

Nancy, 30: There's something about having a paper where you live. You know, I mean I think most people like to get a paper where they live at. Um, my husband and I have even talked about subscribing to the **Tampa Tribune** . . . because we'll still get the national and the international news, [and] 'cause I feel the **Tampa Tribune** is a wonderful paper . . . . But we still wouldn't get that touch of home.

Gloria, 60: I would not subscribe to [the nearby metropolitan paper] on a regular basis . . . . I mean, it's not local news . . . you know, it's not who got run over on the [name of road] in [the area]. It's not the local, local news . . . . It doesn't say a thing about [the city], you know, and the [city] council meeting, you know, and it doesn't have some of local reporters . . . . It just doesn't have those things that make it a

> hometown paper. I mean, it's just -- it would be the same thing [as] picking up the **New York Times**.

FINDINGS:
THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN LOCAL DAILY NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION STOPS

Interaction between household members: Degree of dissatisfaction

In almost every instance, former subscribers of both genders indicated the decision to drop was not made hastily and was preceded by a considerable amount of discussion within the household. Negative interaction between spouses about the newspaper's content contributed significantly to the decision to drop.

All women who agreed to participate in the study and had stopped long-term subscriptions to the local daily identified themselves as regular, long-term newspaper readers, although several women indicated the degree to which their husbands read surpassed their own habits. However, regardless of their self characterizations of duration or intensity of newspaper reading, all women participants appeared to play a significant role in the household decision to cancel the subscription.

Negative interaction within the household took the following forms:

• **Women reinforced household dissatisfaction.** Eight of 18 married women who described themselves as avid, long-term newspaper consumers played a role in stopping the subscription by participating in critical discussions about the newspaper with their husbands. When both spouses characterized themselves as committed newspaper readers and both were dissatisfied with content in their local daily (for one or more of the four reasons above), the decision to stop the subscription appeared to be mutual and particularly long-lasting.

> Tom, 40: It wasn't because the [nearby metropolitan paper] was available that made us dissatisfied with the [local daily], put it that way. If the [nearby metro] was not available, then we would have done something else. Whether that be magazines or something, I don't know . . . . But you know, the irritation was always there, every day . . . . (Tom and Kathy remained nonsubscribers two years later.)

Yvonne, 33: [We dropped the subscription] for that, you know, just not every listening to us, and not getting our paper there right, and the news, too. You know, they were kind of biased. You know, they didn't give us much [local] news. (Yvonne and Darryl remained nonsubscribers two years later.)

Roberta, 55: [W]e had discussed quitting taking the paper, and taking the [nearby metropolitan paper], and then the one thing that convinced me was . . . I knew there was going to be a stock split in a certain stock, and it affected us -- we were going to buy it when it split. And there was never one word in the [local paper] about that stock split . . . . So we had to go to other sources . . . . [W]e could have bought stock, had we been informed like we thought we would be, in taking the local newspaper. (Roberta indicated two years later that the main reason the couple returned to the local newspaper was "The [nearby metro] discontinued home delivery in the [local] area.")

• **Women were catalysts for cancellation.** Women whose habit of daily newspaper reading had been significantly <u>reduced</u> because of content dissatisfaction with the local paper, like Carole and Lorraine -- or who described their husbands as "the <u>real</u> newspaper reader" of the household, like Debra and Ellen -- were particularly sensitive to wasted money when papers accumulated, unread, especially if the women handled family finances. Four women said they actively pushed their husbands to drop the paper. (In the case of Alice, 47, her non-reading sister and housemate pushed for the subscription stop.) Thus, another significant finding is that men were far more likely than women to continue a subscription, despite dissatisfaction.

Roxanne, 30: It got to be the papers were stacking up . . . . I mean, we'd have a week's worth of papers sitting there still in the wrapper. Just throwing them out, you know, at the end of the week. And I said, 'This is ridiculous.' (Roxanne and Mike remained nonsubscribers two years later.)

Carole, 40: Whenever it was [that] we dropped, I said, 'Listen, I'm tired of paying this bill every month for this paper,' and I . . . went over to where we put the newspapers . . . and I said, 'Now you look at how many of these papers were never opened. Never even looked at' . . . and I said, 'It's a waste of money.' (Two years later, Carole indicated she and her husband returned to a seven-day subscription: "My husband wants to paper to look at when he gets off work.")

Debra, 39: I just couldn't see spending one-hundred-forty-something dollars a year when a lot of times it would end up in the trash can without our even having a chance to look at it . . . . [S]ome of the things I was subscribing for -- one thing in particular that I liked -- they weren't very good about . . . the school news . . . . I guess right at the time that bill came they had just put in an article about the state math council competition . . . and did not even put in that my son had come in first place in the oral competition statewide. And I thought, 'That's kind of sloppy, that's the way they do it . . . that's just sloppiness.' (Debra and John did not return the two-year, follow-up questionnaire.)

Lorraine, 40: 'There had been a leading-up time to it, because I kept telling [my husband] that we need to cut the budget, and the newspaper is not something that we absolutely had to have. He didn't want to do away with the paper 'cause he felt like he had to have it, but after a couple of months I was able to convince him . . . . He picked up the bill one day and he looked at it and he said, 'Thirty-one-ninety-five for this piece of junk?' And I said, 'Yes.' He said. 'That's what we've been paying, for the news we don't get?' I said, 'Yeah, that's what I've been trying to tell you.' He said . . . 'You cancel it.' (Lorraine and her husband remained nonsubscribers two years later.)

Ellen, 28: I was just, like, throwing away newspaper after newspaper. So we cut back. (Ellen and her husband subscribed only on weekends two years later because, "[My] husband now delivers for the [local paper] and gets a reduced rate.")

Alice, 47: [My sister said] 'We're not interested in what is here, because we're not interested in papers laying on the desk or on the table for two or three days, and all we're doing is bringing it in the house, with it folded up and it never comes unfolded, and then we throw it in the trash can.' (Alice subscribed only on weekends two years later.)

In addition, the cancelled subscriptions resulted in permanently extinguishing the local-subscribing habit; in others, former subscribers dropped to a weekend-only subscription. Eight of 22 households that remained in the study two years after initial interviews had not resubscribed to the local daily.

<u>Interaction between household members: The newspaper as barrier</u>

- Newspapers were portrayed by men and women in several households as barriers that blocked communication between spouses. In fact, virtually all males of the six couples interviewed, without prompting, expressed sensitivity to the fact that reading the newspaper took them away from family time and/or household duties.

> Bill, 38, husband of Paula, 39: Lots of times, in the morning, I'd be reading the paper, and it's kind of one of our rituals that we all eat breakfast together, you know, before I go to work, before the kids go to school, and all this stuff. And I've got a feeling also that she [Paula] -- she felt like that was taking away from my time with her and the kids while I was reading the paper in the morning. And I should be, uh, devoting or giving more of my attention to them . . . . That was never said, but that was, that's a theory I've got.

> John, 41, husband of Debra, 39: Well, most weekends I would read the Sunday paper pretty thoroughly -- less on Saturdays, but I would read some Saturdays, too. Weekends [I] generally found the time -- I would often get chastised for reading the paper instead of doing the lawn or something. Wasting my whole day reading the paper.

> Tom, 40, husband of Kathy, 34: I try to do a good job on the job, and a good job at home, you know, with the kids and my wife. And helping out at home, to some extent . . . . and so I allocate my time, more or less, you know.

> Mike, 30, husband of Roxanne, 30: The paper is something that is really for me, not for my wife. My wife didn't read it that much. Well, the movies are for both of us. All the other things we do are for both of us.

> Quentin, 50, whose wife was not interviewed: You know, here's the husband in the morning paper and he's got it up here, you know [gestures], and he sips coffee and the wife's over there and she's done everything for him, you know, all he's done is gotten up and showered and shaved and put his clothes on -- she's made all the breakfast, she's had to shower and then she's got the house, maybe her job she's taken care of too, you know. So.

In addition, one woman expressed clear resentment toward her husband's newspaper-reading habit; another alluded to the newspaper's role as a barrier:

> Roxanne, 30: Less women have time to read the newspaper. I mean . . . I think I probably read the newspaper more than any of our friends, because all of them are working mothers, and when in the world are they going to have time to read the paper? You know, they work, and then they come home and they get dinner for the kid, and they spend time, you know, spend a little bit of time with the kid, get the kid to bed and get ready to do it all over again. But their husbands **sit down on their asses and read the paper**! We [women] took on all these new roles, but they [men] aren't helping 50 percent. This is unreal. (Participant's emphasis.)

> Lorraine, 40: [I]t wasn't kosher in his family not to have a newspaper . . . it's part of that household institute [sic] . . . you can't have a house if you don't have a newspaper, for some reason. The newspaper gets the day started, or makes a nice ending to it . . . . [Y]ou sink down in your favorite chair, and **you lose yourself in the paper**, and then you fold it up and you put it down and it's like the world is completely changed . . . .
>
> And you're either in a bad mood because something you've read irritated the stew out of you, or something made you feel good, and so, everything's just fine and **you're willing to get up and be with your spouse and your kids**, they don't get on your nerves as much. But if you've read something that you really dislike, then family, watch out, get out of the way. Stay clear, the paper had nothing but bad news today. But **for that few minutes that you're in the paper, you're just isolated**, so to speak. You've forgotten your problems, you're involved with what's going on elsewhere and you tend to relax (emphasis added).

- Newspapers were also portrayed as barriers that blocked communication between parents and children by two mothers and one father:

> Debra, 39: I could take the newspaper with me, which I have done some in the past year, but by then it's late afternoon and my daughter really doesn't want me to sit there and read the newspaper when she's just come home from school and it's better to talk to her . . . .
>
> Paula, 39: You know . . . it's just the prioritizing of life. Now, we can read the newspaper all day and all night, spend no time in conversation with the boys, doing what they want to do . . . . But you just have to say -- you have to choose -- 'What do I want to do?'
>
> Quentin, 50: I'm not against papers, but in the media itself, that can be something that takes you away from the family, too . . . . If I'm sitting there with a newspaper in front of me, and I get engrossed in that article -- whether it be sports or headline -- and [my son] has a need for something . . . . I ought to be able to have the discipline to say, 'Hey, let's take care of that' . . . .

<u>Interaction in the household: Newspaper as bridge</u>

- However, children also contributed to a household decision to <u>maintain</u> long-term subscriptions, or caused their mothers to <u>restart</u> the paper:

> Dianne, 45: We would have stopped it sooner, but our daughters were interested in it. One daughter was a cheerleader in high school, and

> you know they'll enjoy seeing pictures of their friends and things that are going on in the paper.
>
> Judi, 42: It has its drawbacks, not having the local paper. My daughter is especially upset because she wants to know everything that goes on in [the city], you know, about everybody, and so -- while she enjoys the [nearby metropolitan newspaper], she misses the [local paper]. So eventually I'm sure we will work out way back into the [local] paper.

Judi resubscribed seven days a week one year later; Dianne cancelled the paper as soon as her daughter left for college, and switched to the paper her husband preferred, the nearby major metropolitan daily. Several mothers (Dianne, 45; Paula, 39; Lorraine, 40; Roberta, 55; and Yvonne, 33) said they believed their children should grow up reading newspapers as they had, and those with young children who had not switched to the local major metropolitan daily (i.e., Paula and Yvonne) expressed concern that their children were growing up in households that did not subscribe to the local daily.

<u>Interaction in the household: Sunday paper as bridge</u>

After dropping their local daily subscriptions, all but two of the 24 households of former long-term subscribers bought a Sunday edition -- and shared it, in a weekly ritual, with other members in the household. Readers of both genders easily recounted the section-by-section process through which they, and their families, read this weekly edition. Many participants -- particularly women -- indicated they liked the Sunday paper because "there is more in it" and said they missed the paper during the week.

The Sunday paper was not described in "farm-team," parochial, trivial or redundant terms; its broad scope and bulk precluded criticism. "Sunday's the only paper worth getting, now," Harriet, 59, said. (See Appendices 6-10 for other post-dropping strategies for obtaining local and non-local news, gender-specific reasons for non/resubscribing one and two years later, and content readers seek in their local daily newspaper.)

DISCUSSION

Women and newspapers: Content dissatisfaction

Content dissatisfaction: The effect of market research

It is important to acknowledge that the 18 women interviewed for this study described themselves as long-term newspaper readers, both prior to and/or during their residence within the city. Thus, they were obviously accustomed to, and were long-term consumers of, newspapers that employed in news gathering and reporting the "patriarchal" news values (which stress conflict, controversy, and breaking news stories which provide isolated details and little emphasis on ongoing processes) suggested by researchers to alienate women readers (i.e., Beasley, 1989; Downie, 1989, Tannen, 1990). Furthermore, five of the 18 women had "switched" to a daily subscription to the nearby metropolitan daily newspaper published 90 miles from their city of residence. Therefore, it appears unlikely the women interviewed for this study stopped their subscriptions to the local, group-owned morning daily because of recent dissatisfaction with its "male tone" or coverage.

Had newspapers changed in a way that alienated long-term newspaper readers, given that 13 of 18 women (and four of 12 men), "dropped out" of daily subscribing? This study found that regardless of participants' gender, age, duration of residence, degree of affinity for the city and other demographic factors, the majority indicated dissatisfaction with content was a key factor in the decision to cancel the subscription. This finding appears especially significant in light of prior studies which indicate content factors are relatively unimportant to the decision to stop subscribing (i.e., Fielder & Barnum, 1987; Zhu, 1988)

Given the executive editor's endorsement of market research which characterized adults as impatient "channel clickers" who "want it quick," and former long-term subscribers' primary categories of content dissatisfaction (superficial content, lack of depth, and and lack of physical bulk), the results of this study suggest that the recent trend toward market-driven newspapers may, in fact, be eroding the loyal readership base of long-term subscribers. Women, in particular, appear to be responding poorly to editorial changes; more than half of the women expressed dissatisfaction with "trivial," irrelevant stories.

In addition, newspapers may err in attempting to make a "shorter read" to appeal to busy working women, who they assume have little time for newspapers; although nine of the 18 women held full-time jobs outside the home, and five worked part time (one part-time employee was a full-time student as well), only three women mentioned time constraints in relation to cancellation of newspaper subscriptions.

Furthermore, newspapers that hope to attract and retain women should consider publishing a "fat" paper, despite advertising restraints; women were particularly aware of the paper's lack of bulk and, unlike men, expressed frustration that reading the local newspaper required mere minutes to move from front to back.

Thus, the findings of this study suggest newspapers may be steered in the wrong direction by uncritically following prescriptions of national surveys, which largely tap top-of-mind responses. Newspapers should consider supplementing national data with focus-groups, and particularly depth-interview research, to get a full picture of local readers' preferences. Depth interviews allow sufficient time for readers to delve into their perceptions and attitudes, and may reveal surprising findings. While the local daily examined in this study conducts focus groups of readers, its "channel clicking" perception of readers, gleaned from national research and influencing content decisions, appeared to alienate long-term readers.

Content dissatisfaction: The effect of inaccuracy and poor-quality writing

Women were far more likely than men (39% and 17%, respectively) to mention factual and grammatical errors when describing their dissatisfaction with content. The executive editor of the newspaper indicated he was aware of the toll inaccuracy took on reader perception of the paper in an in-house report: "Few things make readers more contemptuous of us than to see the name of someone they know spelled wrong. Few aspects of newspapering draw reader outrage as quickly as an obvious grammatical or spelling [error], particularly in a head[line]." The women interviewed in this study indicated that errors not only erode their trust in newspaper content, but may lead them to consider subscription cancellation. The study therefore suggests that newspapers must aggressively strive for professional reporting and editing if they hope to keep women as regular readers. In addition, while all women in the study reported they regularly read magazines, and many were frequent book readers, more than a third said they were dissatisfied with the newspaper's unprofessional, poor-quality writing that provided little follow up on stories. This finding suggests that newspapers should make an effort to run thoroughly researched, well-written pieces that address ramifications of events.

Content dissatisfaction: The effect of redundancy

The second-largest category of content dissatisfaction among women (tied with parochialism, or coverage gaps and a narrow focus), was "old" news, which they found to be predictable and boring, and merely repeated information to which they had been exposed through prior media broadcasts. This study suggests that newspapers, unable to compete with instantaneous coverage of radio and television, may engage women by providing "fresh" angles to, and in-depth treatments of wire-service stories.

Content dissatisfaction: The effect of parochialism

Eight of 18 women (44%) said the local daily did not give them sufficient coverage, primarily in state and global news. This perception was exacerbated among many women because of exposure to a competing, large-circulation metropolitan daily; its superior resources allowed more in-depth news coverage. Although prior research (i.e., McGrath, 1990; Fielder & Barnum, 1987) identified women's news interests as primarily local and feature-oriented, this study suggests women who are newspaper loyalists have a strong appetite for state and international coverage.

Women and newspapers: Bridge or barrier?

Two conceptual areas that emerged from data analysis were newspaper as bridge, which comprised factors that contributed to subscribing to the local daily newspaper, and newspaper as barrier, which comprised factors that contributed to stopping the subscription.

Newspaper as bridge to the community, state, nation and world

The concept of newspaper as bridge, connecting subscribers to other actors within and outside the community, appears significant in light of research that suggests women may value connections and relationships with others to a relatively more significant degree than do conflict- and status-oriented men (Beasley, 1989; Cirksena, 1989; Downie, 1989; Tannen, 1990).

Former local-daily subscribers of both genders indicated a desire for their local paper to serve as a bridge, to link them with others within and outside the community. When the newspaper failed to provide sufficient coverage of local, state, national and international news (parochialism), dissatisfaction with content was strong. Almost every participant interviewed in the study criticized the paper for coverage gaps in all four areas, not only the local-news category. This study suggests that newspapers that seek increased readership by women and men would be well-served by committing a substantial portion of the news section to meaningful, thorough coverage of local, national and international news.

Newspaper as bridge to family members

Women voiced significant satisfaction with the Sunday edition of the local daily newspaper, praising its extensive coverage, longer stories, meaningful and relevant content and information about people (particularly in the national supplement, **Parade** magazine) and physical bulk. Most women framed the discussion of their enjoyment of this paper in terms of family members, in that they described the ritualistic manner in which each member of the household progressed through the paper. Even the purchase of the Sunday paper was often described as a ritualistic and shared. Newspapers should approach daily editions with a "Sunday formula;" while it is unlikely most working women have sufficient time to read a newspaper of its bulk on a daily basis, this study suggests its more-comprehensive stories would be well-received.

Newspaper as bridge for family members

Women differed from men in that they often framed their discussion of content dissatisfaction in terms of their relationships with others; a significant finding of this study is that when women perceive the newspaper to fail as a bridge for those with whom they are most closely connected, their individual dissatisfaction is exacerbated and, thus, contributes significantly to their decision to stop the subscription. While none of the men mentioned inferior content in terms of others, women said their husbands were misquoted, and one mother said her child's accomplishments in a scholastic competition went unreported ("farm-team" journalism). Women also indicated their husbands were irritated with coverage gaps, or their children were unable to find useful information in the paper (parochialism). Finally, when their husbands (or in one case, sister) complained about coverage -- and allowed papers to accumulate, unread -- women questioned the newspaper's utility and pushed to stop the subscription on grounds the newspaper was a waste of money.

Furthermore, subscriptions were continued by two mothers because their daughters wanted the newspaper to serve as their bridge to the community, a link to local residents and their activities.

Moreover, several men and women described other media use as a shared experience the family enjoyed as a unit. For example, Debra said the family had one television set to ensure that viewing would be an activity shared by all household members. (She saw newspaper reading, however, as an activity that placed a barrier between herself and her daughter.)

Therefore, this study suggests that newspapers that hope to attract and retain women readers should find ways to bring all members of the family into the paper. Children's pages, stories that include quizzes or checklists that would involve several members of the household, and other family- or couple-related coverage could bring the newspaper into a more central, bridging position in the household.

Newspaper as barrier

A finding of this study that is particularly significant, and potentially deleterious to the future of the newspaper industry, is that six of the 18 women who had stopped their local daily subscriptions -- and had not switched to the nearby major metropolitan newspaper -- had young children in the home, and an additional two of 18 were pregnant. While virtually all 30 participants interviewed in the subscription-cancellation study remembered that at least one parent (and usually both) read at least newspaper every day when they were growing up, 13 parents -- and three prospective parents -- no longer took home delivery of a daily newspaper. Thus, the likelihood that their children will subscribe to a newspaper as adults may be greatly reduced, if prior research (i.e., Stone & Wetherington, 1979) is valid in the 1990s.

Another significant finding of this study is that virtually all males, of the six couples interviewed, spontaneously expressed sensitivity to the fact that reading the newspaper took them away from time with the family and/or household duties. They either sensed the newspaper served as a barrier between themselves and their families, or that reading the paper was a somewhat-selfish activity that, when they indulged in it, caused them to shirk family-related responsibilities. One working woman who was pregnant expressed anger at men, who "sit down on their asses and read the paper!" This perceived abdication of responsibility conceivably can erect a newspaper barrier between spouses, or father and offspring.

Furthermore, two of the six men directly referred to the man-behind-the-newspaper stereotype when relating their reasons why the household subscription was dropped. A 38-year-old man "switched" to a work subscription at **USA Today** because he had "a feeling" his wife felt he should devote his time to breakfast-table conversation with her and his children rather than to reading the morning paper. Another former long-term subscriber, 50, said he was particularly sensitive to shutting out his wife and son when reading the paper; however, he revealed that newspaper reading was a ritualistic and shared activity on weekends, when he and his wife traded sections of the local paper over breakfast at a local fast-food restaurant. Thus, men in the study revealed a sensitivity to their wives' perceptions of the newspaper's role as barrier and bridge between family members.

Clearly, this study indicates that women played a key role in the cancellation of a newspaper subscription. Data analysis revealed that when women are avid newspaper readers but dissatisfied with content, they reinforce household satisfaction through conversations with spouses. When their newspaper-reading habit has decreased because of content dissatisfaction, and/or they consider another adult in the household to be "the real newspaper reader," they may serve as a catalyst for cancellation and push their spouses to drop the paper, particularly if it accumulates, unread. Furthermore, if a husband perceives his wife to resent the time he spends with the newspaper, the household subscription may be cancelled.

In light of these findings, this study suggests newspapers should consider taking the following steps, if they hope to attract -- and retain -- women readers:

- **Listen to women in the community in women-only focus groups and depth interviews.** Although most of the women in this study were newspaper "loyalists," they were more likely to abandon the paper or "push" for the stop than were their male counterparts. Women's loyalty to the newspaper appeared, in general, to be relatively less enduring as well; men were more likely than were women to continue a subscription, despite dissatisfaction with content. It appears that if the newspaper makes a conscious effort to address concerns of women, they are far more likely to be drawn into the newspaper. In addition, focus groups and depth interviews, which reach beyond "top-of-mind" responses generated by survey research, may provide valuable clues to why women are alienated from the daily newspaper.

- **Aggressively cover so-called "women's issues" -- ongoing, non-breaking and issue-oriented coverage.** Many women were interested in stories about people -- their accomplishments and activities. Nearly every woman said the Sunday **Parade** section was enjoyable; this insert often runs "inspirational" and problem-solving feature stories. They also were interested in meaningful, thorough coverage of local, state, national and international news.

- **Promote the value of the paper to women -- and to their families and friends.** When newspapers accumulate, unread, women are far more likely than men to become sensitive to monetary waste. They also appear to notice when friends do not turn to the paper for information. In addition, women are particularly critical of the paper when it fails to serve as a bridge for family members; therefore, newspapers should seek ways to bring all members of the family into the paper.

Finally, future studies also should examine the effects of group ownership on women's perceptions of the newspaper. The industry itself has undergone a recent reorganization, in that newspapers are increasingly group-owned (78 of all U.S. daily newspapers in 1988 [Bogart, 1989]). It is possible that increased group ownership may cause newspapers to ignore content that researchers associate with women's interests -- connections with others, and societal processes and their ramifications (Downie, 1989; Cirksena, 1989; Tannen, 1990) -- or may frame such news within parameters that appeal to men more than women (Beasley, 1989; Downie, 1989; Faludi, 1991; Hansen, 1992), in light of observations made by Bagdikian (1985):

> Major media owners differ among themselves, as do their corporations, in personality, style, and outlook, but these differences are minor on any realistic scale or the total values of society. They have a narrow, common outlook not out of conspiracy but because corporations of this size and power by their nature have common goals and outlooks, particularly in economics, in politics, and in sustaining the status quo . . . . **What is weak in U.S. journalism**, compared to the best journalism in other democracies, **is systematic political and social analysis that indicates the sources, relationships, and consequences of individual events** (Bagdikian, 1985, pp. 102-103, emphasis added).

Furthermore, this study of former subscribers to a group-owned daily suggests that some content decisions based on market research may alienate long-term subscribers. Bogart (1989) reported that, "The steady growth of publicly held, professionally managed newspaper groups and media conglomerates suggests that there will be mounting pressure on editors to adopt a marketing approach, to produce newspapers geared to public demand and interpreted from survey research" (p. 354).

Clearly, if research-driven changes are contributing to subscription cancellations by long-term readers and subscribers, newspapers may face far more-problematic and significant readership declines than those observed within the past decade.

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APPENDIX ONE: AREAS OF INQUIRY FOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Area One: Family background, recollections of parent's media use, if mass media was discussed within the household when the individual was growing up; current information about individual's employment, marital status, children, etc.

Area Two: Individual's recollections of first exposure to, and consumption of, mass media content from childhood through late adolescence (often, college).

Area Three: Individual's adult use of newspaper through eventual subscription(s).

Area Four: At local residence, individual's experience with local newspaper.

Area Five: Individual's perception and characterization(s) of community in which he/she resides.

Area Six: Individual's perception of others' newspaper reading (family, friends, co-workers, etc.)

Area Seven: Individual's use of other media, leisure-time activities, non-work activities, other subscriptions, etc.

Area Eight: Pre-cancellation information (circumstances leading to individual/ household dropping the paper).

Area Nine: Cancellation information (why individual said he/she dropped paper).

Area Ten: Post-drop information (consequences, if any, of canceling subscription).

Area Eleven: Individual's expectation of residency in local city (expect to stay, leave).

Area Twelve: Individual's exposure to local paper, after subscription was stopped.

Area Thirteen. Individual's normative expectations: What should the local paper do? What should newspapers in general do to best serve readers?

Area Fourteen: Individual's intent to subscribe to the local paper in the future, and if so, under what conditions.

APPENDIX TWO: DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF CITY POPULATION

CENSUS BUREAU 1990 POPULATION STATISTICS

Total population	178,681*	100.0		
Population by gender				
Male	86,869	49.0		
Female	91,812	51.0		
Population by race				
White			105,172	59.0
Black			68,157	38.0
Hispanic			5,290	3.0
Asian or Pacific Islander			2,508	1.4
Other race			2,276	1.3
Am. Indian, Eskimo, Aleut			568	0.3

Median age:	30.6
Persons per HH:	2.6
Percent renters:	46.0
Percent homeowners:	54.0
Median value/homes:	$59,000

* revised by Census Bureau to 184,000 in June 1991

APPENDIX THREE: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIVIDUALS (N = 30)

Gender	
Male	12
Female	18

Race	
Black	0
White	30

Age	
Baby Boomers 26-44	22
Post-Boomers 45-60	7
Pre-Boomers 24-25	1

Martial status	
Married	27
Divorced	2
Separated	1

Children	
None	7
1-3	21
Pregnant	2

Employment status	
Full time	21
Part time	5
Student	1
Homemaker	2
Disabled	1

Education	
Grad	3
Some college	11
Bachelor's	7
Master's	6
Professional	3

Length of current residence	
Less than 5 years	9
5 to 10 years	8
11 to 20 years	6
21 to 30 years	2
30-49 years	5

Household income	
10,000 - 14,999	1
20,000 - 24,999	3
25,000 - 29,999	2
30,000 - 39,999	6
40,000 - 49,999	5
50,000 - 59,999	5
70,000 - 79,999	2
No report	6

Household status	
Homeowner	27
Renter	3

Subscribing status (1990)	
No home delivery	21
Non-local metro	8
Work subscription	1

APPENDIX FOUR: CORE CATEGORIES FOR OPEN AND AXIAL CODING *

Category One: Recollections of Parental Use of Media

Category Two: Other Papers Read/Other Cities of Residence

Category Three: Roles Other Papers Played (utility, etc.)

Category Four: Personalities of Subjects (control, caretaking, etc.)

Category Five: Why Subscribe/Why Read Local Newspaper

Category Six: Criticisms of Local Newspaper

Category Seven: Post-Cancellation Strategies

Category Eight: Sunday Newspaper/Routine

Category Nine: Perception of Current Residence/Residents

Category Ten: Rectification -- How Could Newspaper Change So Reader Would Resubscribe

Category Eleven: Normative -- What Newspapers Should Be

Category Twelve: Coding Paradigm -- Conditions, Interaction Between Actors, Strategies and Tactics, Consequences

* Approximately 2,000 individual entries were coded on multiple core-category sheets.

APPENDIX FIVE:

PRIMARY REASON(S) 18 WOMEN AND 12 MEN REPORTED FOR CANCELING LONG-TERM SUBSCRIPTIONS TO LOCAL DAILY, BY GENDER (N = 133) *

	# Reasons by Women n=78	% W n=18	# Reasons by Men n=55	% M n=12
SUPERFICIALITY (n=37, 28% all reasons)				
Trivial stories/not newsworthy	9	50%	5	42%
Paper is "THIN"	4	22%	1	8%
Not thorough, lacks depth	4	22%	4	33%
"Not worth keeping for price"	3	17%	3	25%
Stories are irrelevant	2	11%	0	0%
"Empty"/"nothing in it"	1	6%	1	8%
TOTAL	23		14	
FARM-TEAM JOURNALISM (n=35, 26%/all)				
Inaccuracy	7	39%	2	17%
Reporters "lazy"/little enterprise	5	27%	5	42%
Little or no "follow up" on stories	3	17%	1	8%
"Amateurish," unprofessional	3	17 %	4	33%
Insults reader's intelligence	2	11%	0	0%
Inconsistent layout/visually poor	0	0%	3	25%
TOTAL	20		15	
PAROCHIALISM (n=32, 24%/all)				
Narrow/general coverage gaps	8	44%	5	42%
Biased coverage/support status quo	6	33%	9	75%
Gaps in sports coverage	0	0%	4	33%
TOTAL	14		18	
REDUNDANCY (n=24, 18%/all)				
"Old news"	8	44%	5	42%
Predictable/boring	3	17%	0	0%
Info in paper available other media	3	17%	3	25%
Stories repeated in paper itself	2	11%	0	0%
TOTAL	16		8	
STACK UP, UNREAD (n=5, 4%/all)	5	28%	0	0%
TOTAL	5		0	

* Multiple responses possible for participants; does not include additional dissatisfaction comments mentioned (only **primary** reasons for dropping listed).

APPENDIX SIX: STRATEGIES FOR OBTAINING NEWS

• LOCAL-NEWS STRATEGIES

Most participants took the following approach to local-newspaper reading:

- **Sunday rack/store buy** -- all but one of the former subscribers purchased the Sunday edition of the local paper every weekend

- **single-copy buy** -- in addition to Sundays, most bought an occasional local paper from a rack or store for a specific purpose, such as movie listings or a particular story of interest

- **break-room scan** -- those who worked outside the home commonly read the local paper at work (and said they usually spent only a few minutes with the paper).

• "SWITCHERS:" THE NON-LOCAL NEWS STRATEGY

Ten of the 30 former subscribers to the local daily (eight of the 24 households in the study), **switched** to a **non-local metro**. Six of 24 households switched to home delivery of the major daily for a metropolitan area located 90 miles away; one male panel member switched to seven-day mail delivery of the major metro daily in a neighboring state; and another subscribed at his workplace to USA Today, which he brought home to share with his spouse.

Two former subscribers, also men, regularly purchased a non-local metro from racks -- one for political coverage, the other primarily for sports.

APPENDIX SEVEN: SUBSCRIBING ACTIVITIES ONE YEAR LATER (July 1991)

Twenty-one of the participants in the 23 households represented in the study returned a mail questionnaire one year later regarding their subscribing status, and the remaining two were reached by phone. One household was dropped because the participant moved out of the country.

Of the 22 remaining households, 12 (55 percent) were not subscribing to the local daily newspaper. Ten households (45 percent) had resubscribed, and thus were "churners" -- eight took the paper seven days a week and two subscribed to the three-day, or Friday/Saturday/Sunday package.

Nine of the 10 churners had relatives living nearby (in the immediate area), usually his/her parents or his/her spouse's parents. Only four of the 12 quitters said their parents (or spouse's parents) lived in the area.

Spending one's childhood and/or adolescence in an area may have more to do with strong ties to the local paper than the degree to which a person identifies the city as "home." While six of the 10 churners spent most or all of their childhood/ adolescence in the area, only one of the 12 quitters did. However, while virtually all of the churners identified the area as "home," seven of the 12 quitters <u>also</u> did so.

<u>ONE YEAR LATER, 1991</u>

	Number of HH (n=23)	**Percent of total HH**
Quitters (had not resubscribed)	12	52
Churners (had resubscribed)	10	43
Moved	1	04
No response	N/A	N/A
Total	23	99 *

* without rounding

APPENDIX EIGHT: SUBSCRIBING ACTIVITIES TWO YEARS LATER (May 1992)

Of the 22 households that remained in the study, 18 (82 percent) responded two years later to a mailed questionnaire. Only one of the respondents who had been a "quitter" (had not resubscribed) in 1991 had returned to the paper in 1992. Eight of the respondents who were "quitters" in 1991 remained out of the subscribing loop -- remained "drop outs" two years later.

Eight of the 22 households (36 percent) were "quitters" -- they were still not subscribing to the local newspaper. Ten of 18 (45 percent) were "churners" -- nine subscribed seven days a week, and one household took the paper Saturday and Sunday. Looking only at the households that returned questionnaires, eight of 18 (44 percent) were quitters, and 10 (56 percent) were churners.

TWO YEARS LATER, 1992

	Number of HH (n=22)	Percent of total HH
Quitters (had not resubscribed)	8	36
Churners (had resubscribed)	10	45
No response	4	18
Total	22	99 *

* without rounding

APPENDIX NINE: REASONS FOR SUBSCRIBING/NONSUBSCRIBING BY GENDER

Respondents to the May, 1992 questionnaire clarified their decision to stay out (quit) or return (churn).

What is the main reason your household does NOT subscribe to the [local newspaper]? (Please write the <u>most important</u> reason.)

<u>Women's comments</u>

- "Too localized -- not interested in the world and what's happening 'out there' and how it impacts on my daily life."
- "Not enough [neighboring state] coverage. Paper is not very good."
- "News is not covered efficiently. It takes too long to get the 'news' out. Reporting is also somewhat slanted."
- "Biased reporting; reporting of old news."
- "Not enough [state] coverage. Editorials are now good."
- "Don't have time to read it."

<u>Men's comments</u>

- "Not a reliable source of information. They do not report the whole story."
- "[We get] much more information in the paper we subscribe to [the nearby major metropolitan newspaper]."
- "We sometimes went several days without reading it."
- "This paper isn't worth spending money on."
- "Just not much of a paper, for what you pay."

What would you say is the main reason your household RESUBSCRIBED to the paper? Please write what you think is the MAJOR, or most important, reason. (If a certain part of the paper was part of the reason, please tell me which part or section.)

<u>Women's comments</u>

- "Husband now delivers for the [local paper] and gets a reduced rate for daily subscription. Also, since I am not working outside the home, I have more time to devote to reading."
- "I read the paper from front to back -- especially local news. My husband prefers editorial and comics (Snuffy)."
- "My husband wants the paper to look at when he gets off work."
- "The [major nearby metro daily] discontinued home delivery in the area."
- "I committed to [serve in a visible volunteer role] and felt I needed to be as well informed of local events as possible. I also needed clippings applicable to [the post]. "
- "Unable to watch news because of work schedule; like to keep informed."
- "To keep abreast of local news and events."
- "sale papers, yard sales"
- "financial section, coupon section, recipes"

<u>Man's comment</u>

- "news, sports, weather"

APPENDIX TEN: AREAS OF CONTENT SATISFACTION

SATISFACTION: WHAT READERS SOUGHT IN THEIR LOCAL PAPER

Several hundred comments were coded into categories under three areas: Why Subscribe to the Ledger-Enquirer, Roles Other Papers Play (ed), and Normative (what newspapers should be). Six major categories emerged, with "Newspaper as Bridge" the most significant for all 30 of the former subscribers:

NEWSPAPER AS BRIDGE
Connection with family
Connection with friends, neighbors, co-workers
Connection with humankind
Connection with community
Connection with state
Connection with nation
Connection with world

NEWSPAPER AS EDUCATOR
Voting
Problem solving and improvement
Understanding and perspective
Learning and intellectual expansion

NEWSPAPER AS ENTERTAINER
Horoscopes, comics, sports and others

NEWSPAPER AS MONITOR
Local watchdog
Non-local watchdog

NEWSPAPER AS RESPITE
Time out, tune out, escape
Time for self, "sit down and read"

NEWSPAPER AS FACILITATOR
Lunch menus, movie listings, information for comparison shopping, upcoming events, food section

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THE EFFECTS OF THE 1990-1992 RECESSION IN THE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY ON NEWS COVERAGE IN REAL ESTATE SECTIONS AT FIVE MAJOR U.S. DAILIES

NEWSPAPER DIVISION
REVELING IN OUR OWN DIVERSITY:
NEWSPAPER RESEARCH IN BRIEF

BY WENDY SWALLOW WILLIAMS

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
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Real estate sections traditionally have been considered a vehicle for ad revenue more than news, a part of the paper people read only if they are in the market for a house.[1] In the 1980s, however, business coverage in general improved and real estate editors at some papers, particularly major dailies in large metropolitan centers, expanded coverage to include more hard news in their sections so that general readers would be drawn to the real estate pages on a regular basis.[2] With rapid residential growth in many metropolitan areas and explosive commercial building as well, readers in cities with booming real estate markets showed an increased interest in local zoning decisions, tax implications, changes in mortgage finance, historic preservation, and related environmental and land use issues. While these issues were not covered extensively by every newspaper, some real estate editors worked to bring such stories into the pages of their real estate sections.[3]

The 1991-92 recession, which hit the real estate industry particularly hard, triggered a drop in real estate advertising in many of the newspapers in cities that had experienced a real estate boom in the 1980s. Through a comparison of the editorial content of real estate sections of five major U.S. dailies from early 1990 and early 1992, the author finds that the recession reduced the amount of editorial space in real estate sections by nearly 25 percent, and that editors of those sections failed to change the mix of editorial copy sufficiently to continue to cover the news. As the news hole shrank, editors continued to run the same percentage mix of news,

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[1] From interview with Albert Crenshaw, former Washington Post real estate editor, Mar. 14, 1989.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

features, advice and public relations material. The net result of this policy was that significantly fewer news stories appeared in real estate sections with less breadth of coverage. In effect, the recession in the real estate industry seriously weakened news coverage in real estate sections in all five newspapers studied.

LITERATURE

The only previous study of real estate coverage and the influence of advertising on editorial decisions about coverage in real estate was done by the author a nd published in Newspaper Research Journal, winter/spring 1992, under the title "For Sale! Real Estate Advertising & Editorial Decisions about Real Estate News." Several popular articles have appeared recently looking at the influence of advertisers on real estate coverage, including "Real Estate Strongarm: Realtor and Builders Demand Happy News and Often Get It," by Elizabeth Lesley, Washington Journalism Review, Nov. 1991; "Many Journalists See A Growing Reluctance to Criticize Advertisers," by G. Pascal Zachary, The Wall Street Journal, Feb. 22, 1992.; and "Many Editors Report Advertiser Pressure," by Peg Masterson, Advertising Age, Jan. 11, 1993. Washington Journalism Review also ran an article in May 1991 "Housing: The Invisible Crisis," by Peter Dreier and Alec Dubro that looked at the dearth of adequate reporting on the state of housing in the country, an issue they say is ignored by many real estate sections.

There are some studies that look at advertiser influence in other areas of coverage, including "Cigarette Advertising and Magazine Coverage of the Hazards of Smoking--A Statistical Analysis," New England Journal of Medicine, Jan. 30 1992, which found a statistical link between cigarette ads and coverage of cigarette smoking as a health hazard. The best compilation of studies and articles on advertising pressure on editorial choices in newspapers and other media is Dictating Content: How Advertising Pressure Can Corrupt A Free Press, by Ronald K.L. Collins, published in 1992 by the Center for the Study of Commercialism in Washington, D.C. The forward, by Todd Gitlin, notes that "scholarship has had precious little to say in recent years about the pressure of advertising on journalism." The author's study of advertiser pressure on real estate editors is the only one on real estate news coverage listed in Dictating Content.

1990 STUDY OF REAL ESTATE SECTIONS

In the spring of 1990 the author examined real estate sections of eight major U.S. dailies to see how much breaking news was included in the traditional blend of soft features and press releases common to real estate sections in the past. The author looked at newspapers in cities with expansive growth in both residential and commercial real estate during the recent boom, on the premise that those cities were more likely than cities without such growth to have fostered expanded coverage in the real estate section of the local newspaper. The reasoning was that cities with active real estate markets would have experienced more breaking real estate news during that period and that general readers--people who lived and worked in those cities--would have been interested in understanding the changes facing their urban environments. The study sought evidence of expanded coverage in cities that were most likely to have supported a new approach to covering real estate news.

The study also sought to analyze how much of the news in real estate sections had a controversial element or covered issues involving the real estate industry in an objective, balanced way. While such reporting is common in hard news sections of most papers, real estate sections have traditionally been the last bastion of industry-friendly reporting.[4] If hard news stories were running in real estate sections it was also necessary to ask whether those stories met editorial standards of fairness and objectivity. The newspapers studied in the 1990 group included the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the Washington Post, the Chicago Tribune, the Atlanta Constitution, the Miami Herald, the San Francisco Examiner and the Houston Post. Other papers that could have been studied included those in Boston, Dallas, Denver and San Diego--other large cities with growth real estate markets during the boom period--but the papers included in the study offered a sufficient regional spread.

The 1990 study looked at 12 weeks of real estate sections from each paper. The sections were analyzed in terms of the percentage of editorial content in three story categories: hard (or breaking) news; news features; and features. Those three categories, however, left out a large portion of real estate coverage, namely the advice columns on real estate investment, tax and legal issues (most of which is repetitive and has no news element), and industry press releases. These two types of editorial content were designated a fourth category.

METHODOLOGY OF THE 1990 STUDY

Based on extensive interviews with several real estate editors,[5] coding categories and

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[4] Ibid.

[5] Interviews with Albert Crenshaw and Kenneth Bredemeier, the Washington Post; Bruce Koon, the San Francisco Examiner; Wayne Markham, the Miami Herald; Mike Singer, The Urban Land Institute; spring, 1990.

types of coverage were established. Hard news was defined as breaking stories covered with a balance of sources and written in an objective news style. Within this category the papers were coded for five different types of stories that covered the range of real estate stories nationwide: Local real estate controversies (stories about current fights over local real estate issues, such as historic preservation battles, zoning changes, tax disputes, environmental challenges to development and proposed changes to local laws and regulations); Local real estate trends (stories about current trends in a local real estate market, such as new areas of growth, escalating housing prices, slumps in local sales); National real estate news (stories about the national market, changing interest rates, monthly housing starts and sales figures, mortgage delinquency rates); National real estate news about federal government programs and policies (such as stories about the Federal Housing Administration, the Veteran's Administration, low-income housing and proposed changes in federal tax laws); and Miscellaneous national real estate news (stories that did not fit in the other two national news categories, such as stories about the homeless or local trends in other cities or regions).

News features were defined as stories about current issues in real estate but which lacked a breaking news element. These were softer in approach and more likely to appeal to both general readers and industry readers, but still balanced and objective by basic editorial standards. The newspapers were coded for three types of news features: Development industry trends (such as stories about how developers were adjusting to the real estate recession, or women in development and the building trades); Sales industry trends (stories about how real estate agents and brokers handled fair housing issues, or incentives offered by commercial brokers desperate to rent office space); and Consumer and investor information stories (such as articles about condominium law, how to refinance a mortgage or whether apartment buildings make good investments).

Feature stories were defined as stories about non-controversial issues in areas secondary to hard real estate news. The papers were coded for four types of features: Interior decorating and home design; Gardening; Profiles of neighborhoods or communities (a reader-service type of story found in many real estate sections, where a different neighborhood is profiled in an extended feature each week); and Miscellaneous features (such as stories about non-controversial historic preservation projects or individuals in real estate).

The fourth category included both advice columns, defined as opinion pieces by recognized experts (many of whom work in the real estate industry), and industry press releases, defined as single-source announcements of industry-related activities. Within this category the papers were coded for five different types of articles: Real estate advice about tax, investment and legal issues; Home repair and renovation advice; Book reviews of real estate books; Industry press releases and news items (such as announcements of building projects, openings of new home developments, personnel appointments and new products); and letter to the editors.

The real estate sections of the eight newspapers were analyzed according to these categories and types for three months, from February through April of 1990. In all, twelve weekly sections from each paper were coded, for a total of 96 real estate sections. For Hard News and News Features, stories were counted and also measured in column inches. For the Features and Advice/Press Release categories stories were measured only. Because some newspapers had numerous short pieces while others ran longer features, the amount of space taken up by the different types of stories was a more meaningful measure of content than the number of stories. The amount of coverage for each type of story in the four categories was then totaled over the three-month period and converted into a percentage of total editorial content in the section.

FINDINGS OF THE 1990 STUDY

The 1990 study found that of the eight papers, only four ran several hard news stories a week, with the Washington Post leading the field with 80 news stories over the three-month period. The San Francisco Examiner ran 41 news stories, the New York Times ran 31 and the Chicago Tribune ran 29. The Los Angeles Times ran only 9 (less than one a week), the Atlanta Constitution ran 7, the Miami Herald ran 4 and the Houston Post didn't run any.

The 1990 study also found that the Washington Post had the broadest kind of hard news coverage, with nearly an equal mix of stories about local controversies, national real estate news, and federal programs and policies. The San Francisco Examiner tended to shy away from local controversies, although it did include several , with a greater focus on local trends and national real estate issues. The New York Times ran a mix of stories on local controversies and local trends, but gave short shrift to national real estate news in the real estate section. The Chicago Tribune chose to avoid local controversies and focused instead on local trends and national real estate news.

The Los Angeles Times ran only one hard news story a month on a local issue, and instead focused its energies on national real estate news. The Atlanta Constitution's seven hard news stories were all national in focus, with no local hard news coverage in the three-month period.

In terms of the mix of editorial content, the New York Times and the Washington Post stood out in the field, with nearly 30 percent of their coverage hard news. While the New York Times had fewer stories than the Washington Post, they were generally longer, which made up the difference. The Chicago Tribune and the San Francisco Examiner had nearly 20 percent hard news, while the other four papers had 3 percent or less.

Overall, the Washington Post and the New York Times had the most balanced sections, with roughly a third of their space devoted to hard news, a third to half devoted to news features and soft features, and a third to a quarter given to advice columns and press releases. The San Francisco Examiner and the Chicago Tribune made solid showings, with slightly more than a third of the section devoted to hard news and news features. The Los Angeles Times offered readers a disappointing section, with less than 15 percent devoted to hard news and news features (most of that news features), and more than half of the section given to advice columns and press releases. The Miami Herald, Atlanta Constitution and Houston Post, all respected publications in general news coverage, had real estate sections in 1990 that devoted less than 10 percent of their editorial space to hard news and news features.

1992 STUDY OF REAL ESTATE SECTIONS

Shortly after the period of the 1990 study, newspapers across the country began to feel the effects of the recession, and papers in cities that had experienced a real estate boom in the

1980s specifically felt the impact of the recession in the real estate industry.[6] A content analysis of real estate sections from spring 1992, when compared to the 1990 data, could answer two questions: First, did editorial space in real estate sections shrink during the period of the recession, and second, did the mix and type of stories covered change during the recession, and if so, how.

METHODOLOGY OF THE 1992 STUDY

For the 1992 study it was important to take real estate sections from the same time of year as the 1990 study, because real estate sections tend to have wide seasonal variations in ad and editorial space. Of the original eight newspapers, five were chosen for the 1992 study: the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Chicago Tribune, the Los Angeles Times and the San Francisco Examiner. The other three were excluded because they either had so little news coverage in 1990 that it would be difficult to detect change (the Houston Post and Atlanta Constitution) or had a significant policy change within the paper about real estate coverage that would have skewed the study (the Miami Herald).[7] The remaining five papers had consistent

[6] "The Media and the Recession," by Karen Rothmyer, Columbia Journalism Review, Sept./Oct. 1991.

[7] From interview with Wayne Markham, Managing Editor for Administration, the Miami Herald, Jan. 14, 1992. The paper significantly increased its hard news coverage in the real estate section in summer 1990 in response to criticism from advertisers that the section did not draw enough readers. It also combined the real estate section wit hits home section into one large weekend section on home and real estate, a format that did not match the format for real estate sections in the other five newspapers.

editorial policies for real estate coverage during the study period.[8]

The categories and types of stories established for the 1990 study were also used in the 1992 study. Instead of looking at 12 weeks of real estate sections, nine weeks were taken over the same time period, between February and April. As in 1990, Hard News and News Features were counted as individual stories and also measured in column inches. Features and Advice/Press Release material were measured only. The amount of coverage for each type of story in the four categories was then totaled over the nine-week period and converted into a percentage of total editorial content in the section. The 1990 study was then recoded to include only nine consecutive weeks, and the story counts and measurements retotaled and converted into a percentage of total editorial content.

FINDINGS OF THE 1992 STUDY

The amount of space for editorial content measured in column inches dropped a total of 23.2 percent in the five papers, although it did not drop uniformly across the group. At the same time, the total amount of space devoted to hard news shrank 23.1 percent for the five papers together, nearly the same drop as the contraction of the overall news hole.

While this might seem a justifiable response to shrinking space, a look at what happened

[8] Based on interviews with real estate editors, specifically Kenneth Bredemeier, the Washington Post; Bruce Koon, the San Francisco Examiner; Wayne Markham, the Miami Herald; Charles Hayes, the Chicago Tribune. The editor of the New York Times was unavailable for comment, but the content analysis supported the contention that there was no significant change in editorial policy for real estate at the Times during the period of the study.

to coverage in this reduced news hole reveals that this was not just a maintenance of the status quo . The study found that--in each newspaper--the number of individual hard news stories either dropped or the types of stories covered shifted to those that were less controversial, particularly on a local level. Whether this shift was part of an effort to appease hard-hit real estate advertisers during the recession is impossible to say without further research, but the study does find that coverage of local real estate news in these real estate sections weakened substantially during the period of the recession, both in a reduction in the scope of coverage (number of different types of stories covered) and in the controversial nature of the stories. (See Chart A)

Chart A: Distribution of Editorial Content as Percentage of Space in Total News Hole in Real Estate Sections.

	New York Times		Washington Post		Chicago Tribune		S an Francisco Examiner		Los Angeles Times	
	1990	1992	1990	1992	1990	1992	1990	1992	1990	1992
Hard News	26.4	13.7	30.5	28.0	23.5	33.1	18.5	9.4	4.0	8.8
News Features	34.1	43.0	16.9	16.3	25.6	18.7	19.4	6.7	9.4	14.0
Features	18.7	18.1	18.0	20.4	8.9	18.3	11.2	35.1	26.4	23.9
Advice & PR	20.8	25.2	34.6	35.4	41.9	29.9	50.9	48.8	60.2	53.3

Looking specifically at the mix of editorial content as a percentage of the total editorial space by category, the study found that hard news coverage dropped as a percentage of the mix in three of the five papers, down from 26.4 percent to 13.7 percent in the New York Times; down from 30.5 percent to 28 percent in the Washington Post and down from 18.5 percent to 9.4 percent in the San Francisco Examiner. This finding is particularly interesting, as the earlier study found that these three papers had the strongest hard news coverage of the eight studied in 1990, and have been considered leaders in hard-hitting real estate coverage since the early 1980s.[9]

Hard News rose as a percentage of total editorial space in the Chicago Tribune, up from 23.5 percent in 1990 to 33.1 percent in 1992, and at the Los Angeles Times, from 4 percent in 1990 to 8.8 percent in 1992. (See Chart A) Looking at individual stories, however, the study found that the increase in hard news at the Chicago Tribune came through a big jump in stories about national real estate and government news rather than local controversies. In fact, coverage of local stories fell in the Tribune. The increase at the Los Angeles Times came entirely from an increase in stories about local real estate trends, while the Times did not have a single local controversy covered in the entire nine-week period of the 1992 study. (See Chart B)

In fact, coverage of local controversies fell in all five newspapers between 1990 and 1992. In 1990 the New York Times had 22 hard news stories, with 7 about local controversies. In 1992 it had only 12 hard news stories, with only 4 about local controversies. In 1990 the Washington Post had 62 hard news stories, with 14 about local controversies. In 1992 it had only 47 hard news stories, and only 6 were local controversies. In 1990 the San Francisco Examiner had 27 hard news stories and 5 were about local controversies. In 1992 it had only 11

[9] From interview with Mike Singer, Press Director, the Urban Land Institute, Nov. 14 1989.

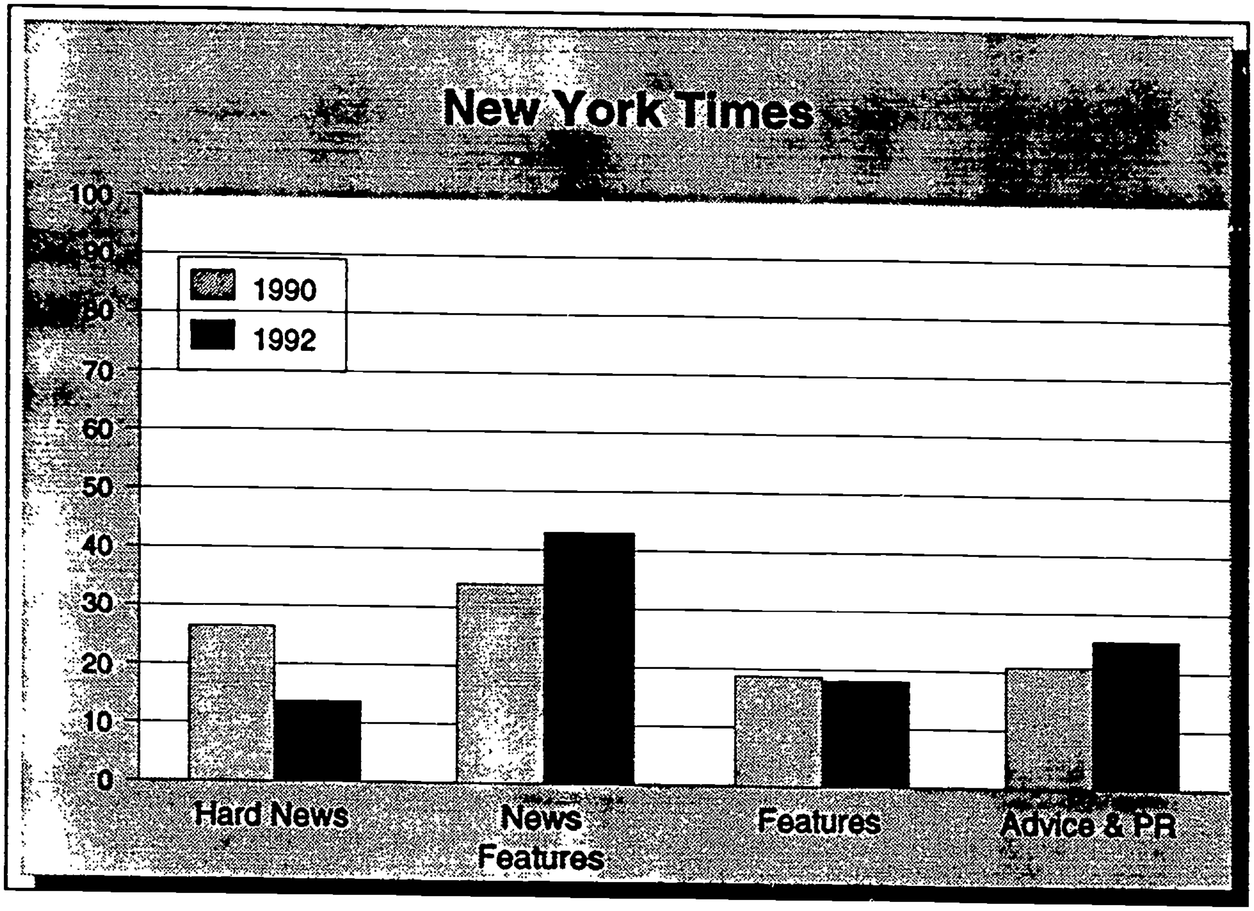
Chart B: Number and Distribution of News Stories by Category in Real Estate Sections

	New York Times		Washington Post		Chicago Tribune		San Francisco Examiner		Los Angeles Times	
	1990	1992	1990	1992	1990	1992	1990	1992	1990	1992
Local Controversy	7	4	14	6	2	1	5	0	2	0
Local Trends	13	5	7	6	9	5	14	6	1	5
Nat'l Real Estate News	1	1	18	14	7	8	3	2	3	1
Gov. Programs/Policy	1	1	16	14	3	13	3	3	3	3
Nat't Real Estate News, misc.	0	1	7	7	4	12	2	0	0	0
Hard News Totals	22	12	62	47	25	39	27	11	9	9
Development Industry Trends	14	8	18	5	8	4	6	1	4	6
Sales Industry Trends	4	11	2	6	5	8	1	0	2	0
Consumer/Investor Information/Trends	15	21	10	9	7	1	18	4	9	7
News Feature Totals	33	40	30	20	20	13	25	5	15	13

hard news stories and none were local disputes. The Los Angeles Times had 9 stories both years, but in 1990 it had 2 local controversies and none in 1992. The Chicago Tribune was the only paper that had more hard news stories in 1992, with 39 compared to 25 in 1990. However, the increase came almost entirely in national news; where it had 2 local controversies in 1990, there was only 1 such story in 1992.

Looking at the rest of the mix in the real estate sections, the actual amount of space in column inches devoted to News Features only shrank 8.9 percent and the amount of space given to Features changed the least--3.8 percent. Advice and Public Relations Information dropped 33.5 percent, mostly reflected in a larger than average drop in the two California newspapers, where advice has traditionally been very popular.

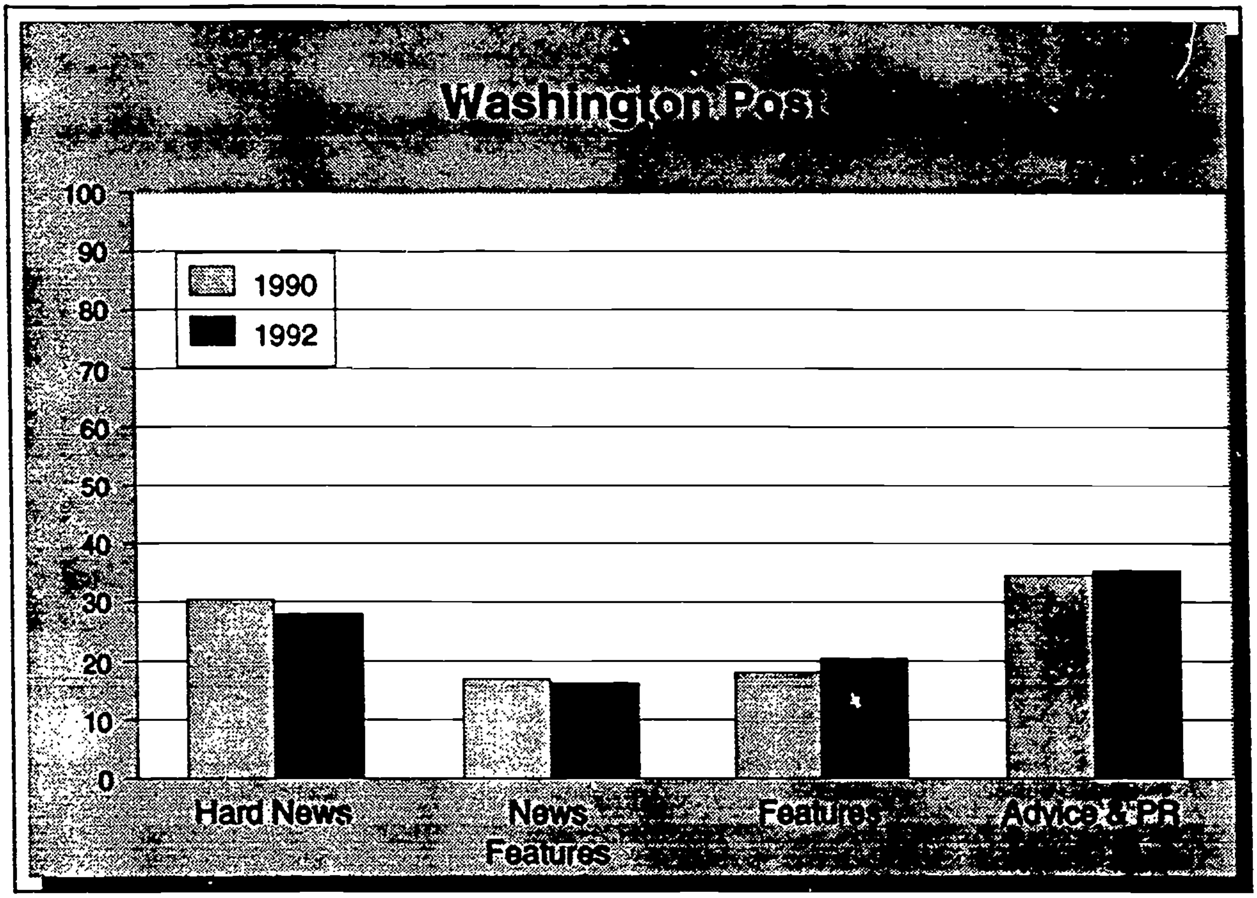
Chart C: New York Times, Distribution of Editorial Content as a Percentage of Space in Total News Hole



Looking at each paper individually, (see Chart C) the New York Times had a significant drop in Hard News coverage as a total of the available news hole between 1990 and 1992, with the loss of coverage specifically sharp in local stories. New Features increased in number from 33 to 40, much of that in a higher number of Consumer and Investor Information stories. Features took roughly the same percentage of the space but Advice and Public Relations

Information rose, most of it an increase in real estate advice, which nearly doubled by 1992.

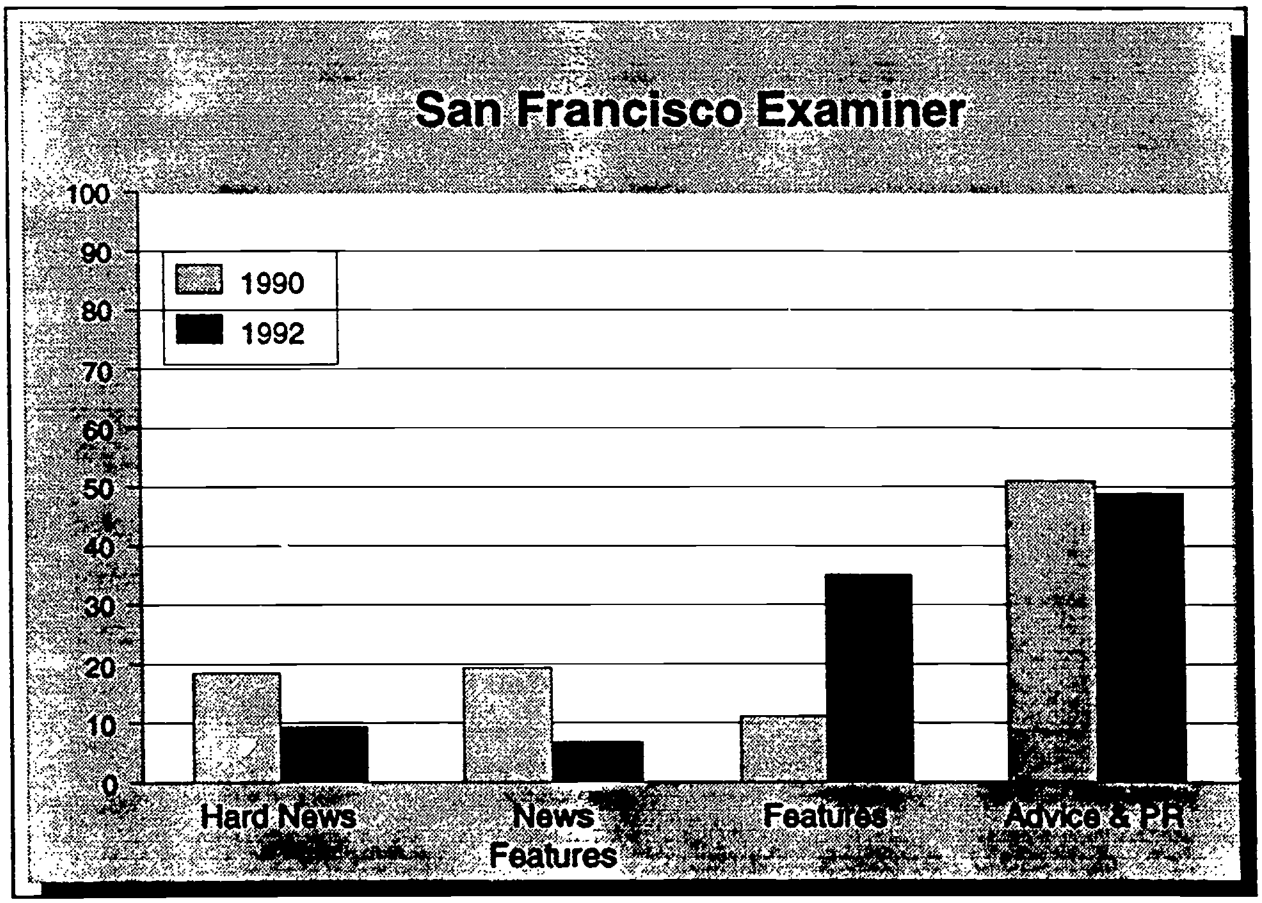
Chart D: Washington Post Distribution of Editorial Content as a Percentage of Space in Total News Hole



Coverage at the Washington Post showed the least amount of change in the percentage mix of editorial content, but nearly all the drop in Hard News coverage came in the number of stories about local controversies, which fell from 14 stories in 1990 to only 6 in 1992. In News Features, the Post covered significantly fewer development industry trends (down from 18 stories in 1990 to 5 stories in 1992). While Advice and Public Relations Information had the same portion of the news hole, advice dropped slightly and public relations picked up the difference.

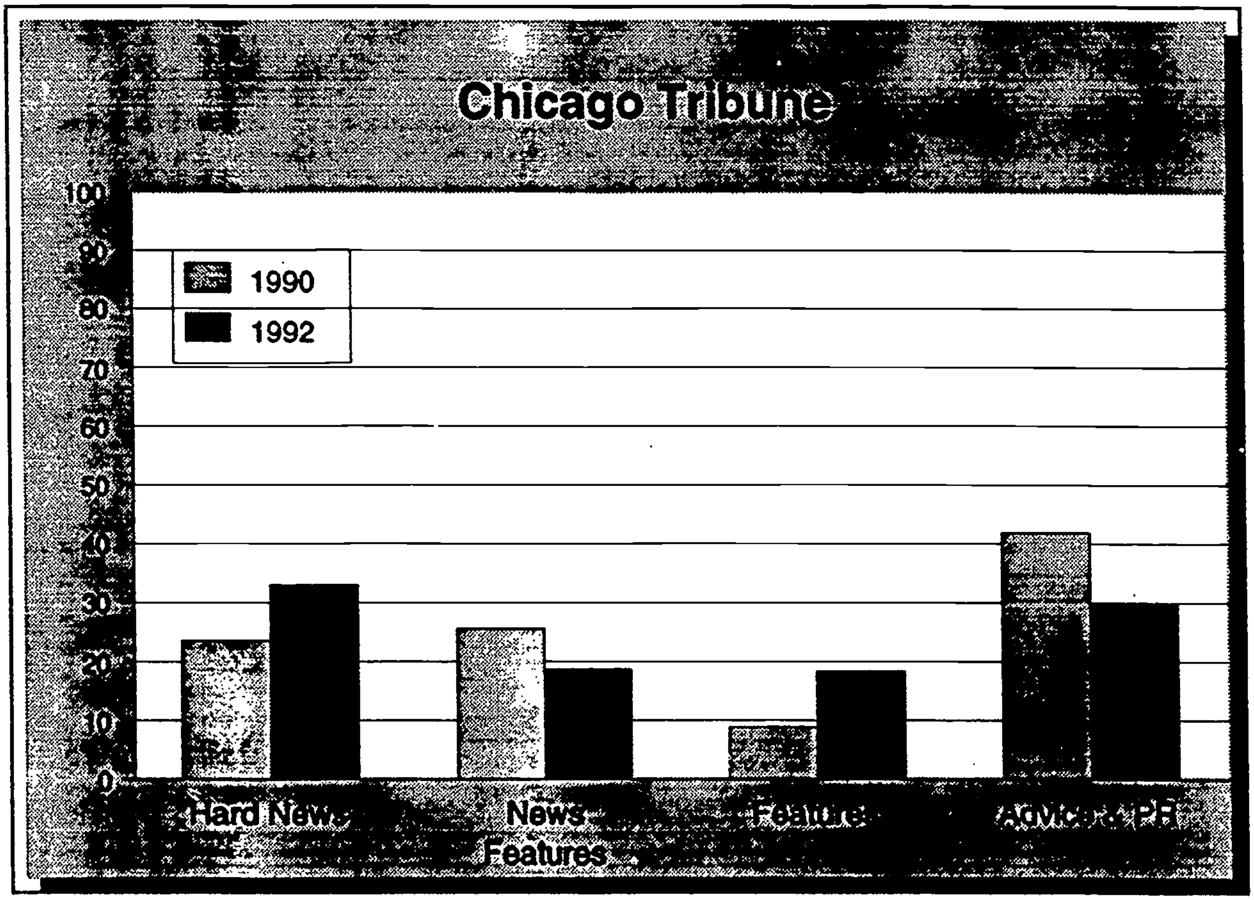
Chart E: San Francisco Examiner, Distribution of Editorial Content as a Percentage of Space in Total News Hole

At the San Francisco Examiner, Hard News and News Features both dropped significantly. The Examiner's coverage of local controversies dropped from 5 stories in 1990 to none in 1992, and local trend stories dropped from 14 in 1990 to 6 in 1992. In News Features, development industry trend stories dropped from 6 in 1990 to 1 in 1992, and Consumer and



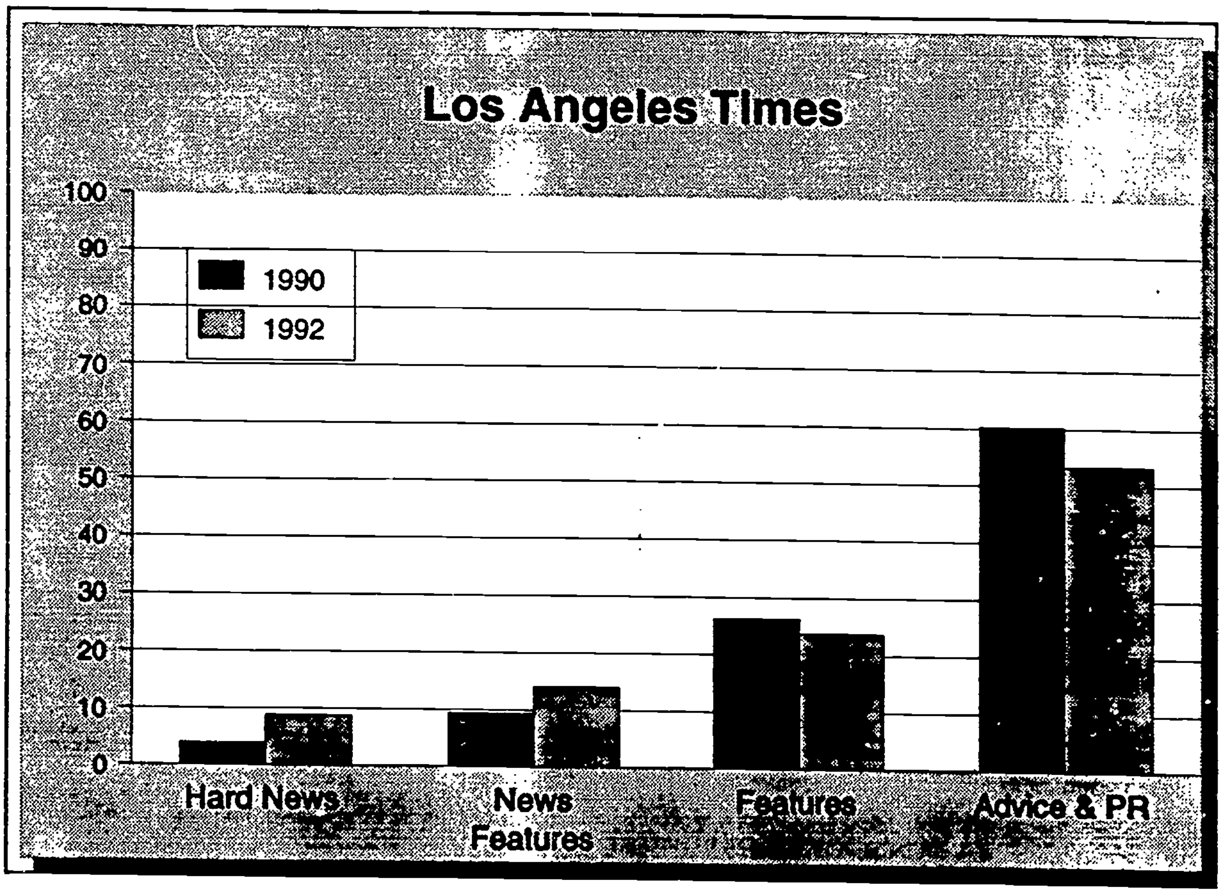
Investor Information stories dropped from 18 in 1990 to 4 in 1992. The big increase in the Examiner was in Features, specifically an increase from 6 percent of the news space devoted to interior decorating, home design and gardening in 1990 to a whopping 30 percent in 1992. Real estate Advice and Public Relations Information dropped slightly.

Chart F: Chicago Tribune, Distribution of Editorial Content as a Percentage of Space in Total News Hole



The Chicago Tribune saw an actual increase in the percentage of space devoted to Hard News, but that increase came through big jumps in national real estate news coverage with a corresponding drop in coverage of local stories. News Features fell at the Tribune, much of it in a drop in the number of stories about Consumer and Investor Information, from 7 stories in 1990 to just 1 in 1992. Features increased at the Tribune, all of it an increase in neighborhood profiles and non-controversial stories about historic preservation projects. Advice and Public Relations Information fell at the Tribune, equally shared between the two categories.

Chart G: Los Angeles Times, Distribution of Editorial Content as a Percentage of Space in Total News Hole



The Los Angeles Times saw an increase in the percentage of space devoted to Hard News, but actually covered the same number of stories, 9 each year. Yet local controversies were avoided in 1992 (down to 0 from 2 stories in 1990) and local trends increased (up from 1 in 1990 to 5 in 1992). News Features increased in percentage of space but actually dropped slightly in the number of stories, with the decrease in sales industry trends and consumer and investor information stories. Real Estate Advice took roughly the same percentage of the available space in the two study periods, but the amount of space devoted to Public Relations Information fell by from 17 percent of the total space in 1990 to 10 percent in 1992.

SUMMARY

The study found that during the 1990-1992 recession in the real estate industry, coverage of hard news in real estate sections weakened significantly in all five papers studied. Specifically, while there were 145 hard news stories in the real estate sections of the five papers over a nine-week period in spring, 1990, there were only 118 hard news stories during a similar period in 1992. More importantly, while there were 30 stories about controversial local real estate issues in the real estate section in 1990, there were only 11 in 1992. But perhaps most important is the decline in real estate coverage in the New York Times, the Washington Post and the San Francisco Examiner, papers that have set the standard for excellence in real estate reporting in the past. With metropolitan areas as complex and rich as New York, Washington, D.C. and San Francisco, there is no reason why continued coverage of local real estate stories--particularly controversial ones--should be neglected just because the editorial space in the real estate section contracts with dropping advertising revenues. If editors continue to fill their sections with the standard mix of hard news, news features, features and advice and public relations information, hard news about controversial--and meaningful--local issues gets pushed out and coverage weakens.

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Nonreaders, Single Newspaper Readers and Multiple Newspaper Readers: A Discriminant Analysis

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Nonreaders, Single Newspaper Readers and
Multiple Newspaper Readers: A Discriminant Analysis

Abstract

Motivational, demographic and broadcast media use differences between nonreaders, single newspaper readers and multiple newspaper readers were examined. The discriminant analysis suggests nonreaders and multiple newspaper readers are looking for items other than news stories in newspapers. Multiple readers used newspapers for advertising information more often than single readers. Nonreaders felt a low need for news information and low civic duty to keep inform. Nonreaders also were lower in education and watched national news less often.

Nonreaders, Single Newspaper Readers and
Multiple Newspaper Readers: A Discriminant Analysis

Mass communication researchers have long grappled with two important questions: how can the newspaper industry get more people to read newspapers? and how can the newspaper industry get people to read more newspapers? The first question, of course, addresses the problem of nonreaders who refuse to read any newspaper. The second question addresses the potential for luring current single newspaper readers into reading multiple newspapers.

The present study, through the use of a discriminant analysis, attempts to examine simultaneously these three distinctive groups of individuals: the nonreader, the single newspaper reader and the multiple newspaper reader. The findings could have important practical implications for the newspaper industry.

If this study can isolate differences between these three groups, the findings may offer suggestions to editors regarding how to get individuals to read more newspapers more often. This is especially pertinent considering two trends in the newspaper industry.

First, editors are becoming increasingly concerned with the decrease in newspaper penetration (for example, see Times Mirror, 1990). Thus, editors are examining ways to reverse this disturbing trend by luring nonreaders into a reading habit.

Second, while the number of cities with competing newspapers has steadily declined since 1910 (see Emery and Emery, 1984), about half the daily newspaper circulation in the United States is in cities in which more than one daily newspaper is published (Stone, 1988). Thus, luring single newspaper readers into buying multiple newspapers could be one way for newspapers to increase circulation. As Stone (1988) notes, if dual subscribers in a city such as Phoenix increased from 10 to 15 percent, circulation in this one city would rise by 20,000.

In addition, the potential for increasing the number of multiple newspaper readers could be even greater in areas where both local community newspapers and regional metropolitan newspapers are available. In these areas, residents might choose to take a local newspaper from their community and a metropolitan paper that also serves the area. This is the case of the current study, in which the area surveyed is served by a local paper and two metropolitan papers.

Nonreaders, single newspaper readers and multiple newspaper readers could differ in a wide range of ways. Three areas are examined here: motivations for reading a newspaper, broadcast media usage patterns and demographics. Data come from a telephone survey of 378 respondents.

Newspaper nonreaders

The social profiles of daily newspaper nonreaders have been portrayed in several earlier studies. In general, nonreaders are found to be relatively low in socioeconomic status. Nonreaders also tend to be rural residents, are either quite old or quite young, and often seek to disassociate themselves from social activities. Low broadcasting media usage also is sometimes noted as another characteristics of newspaper nonreaders.

A typical example of the sociological studies of nonreaders is Westley and Severin's (1964) analysis of the social backgrounds of the Wisconsin daily newspaper nonreaders. In a state-wide newspaper readership survey conducted in Wisconsin, Westley and Severin found that about 14 percent of their 1,055 respondents indicated that they usually do not read a daily newspaper. Westley and Severin also found that these people are relatively low in educational and occupational status, live in rural areas, are newcomers to their residences, are younger than 20 or older than 60, have isolated themselves from social activities and interpersonal communications, and are relatively strongly committed to a specific political party. There is no evidence to show that nonreaders are more likely to be males or females. Neither do the researchers find any significant difference between readers and nonreaders with respect to the hours they spend listening, watching or paying attention to broadcasting media.

Penrose, Weaver, Cole and Shaw (1974) partly replicated the Wisconsin study in North Carolina. Newspaper nonreaders were defined as those who offer a negative response to "Have you read a newspaper yesterday or today?" Similar to the findings of the Westley and Severin study, the North Carolina newspaper nonreaders were poorer and less educated. They also tended to be rural residents and either very young or very old.

While the Wisconsin study failed to find significant differences between readers and nonreaders in their broadcast media uses, the North Carolina study shows that those who do not watch television news "yesterday or today" are more likely to be newspaper nonreaders. This tendency is consistent with the so-called "all or nothing" inclination among audiences for their exposure to mass communications. Wright (1986), in explaining the meaning of this term, notes that those who use one mass medium heavily also tend to use other media regularly. On the other hand, people avoiding one mass medium are likely to also reject other mass communications.

Some of the characteristics of newspaper nonreaders are also found in the sociological analyses of newspaper nonsubscribers. Rarick (1973), for example, found that nonsubscription is associated with lower occupational and educational status. People who are inactive in social activities and interpersonal communications also tend to be nonsubscribers.

Schweitzer (1976) compared the social backgrounds of young subscribers and nonsubscribers to newspapers and found that subscribers are more likely to have professional-technical jobs than nonsubscribers. In addition, he found that those who have not married are more likely to be nonsubscribers. However, Schweitzer does not find significant associations between nonsubscription and several social and demographic factors. These factors include the amount of education, participation in social activities, length of residency, and ability of identifying public officials. Regarding the differences of media use between subscribers and nonsubscribers, his analyses show that subscribers watch more television news than nonsubscribers, but subscribers do not differ from nonsubscribers in the total time spent viewing television.

Lipschultz (1987) did a factor analysis of 12 avoidance items for readers and nonreaders. He found a three-factor solution suggesting that people's mentalities of nonreading consist of their dissatisfactions with the newspaper's utility, readability and credibility.

These findings partially support Poindexter (1979), who found a five-factor solution to her factor analysis. Poindexter found that nonreaders avoid the newspaper because of newspaper content, use of other media, poor eyesight, bias and lack of time.

McCombs and Poindexter (1983) discovered another motivational variable that was related to newspaper reading habits. They found a four-item index measuring respondents' perceived civic duty to keep informed was correlated with newspaper reading frequency. Nonreaders felt a low civic duty to keep informed.

Multiple newspaper readers

Several previous studies have found that multiple newspaper readers differ from single newspaper readers on many demographic variables. The Newspaper Advertising Bureau (1979), for example, concluded that higher income, education and social status were associated with readership of more than one paper a day.

Another NAB survey (NAB, 1980) also found age to be an important factor in multiple newspaper readership. This study found that individuals age 45 to 64 were nearly 50 percent more likely to read more than one paper a day than individuals in other age categories.

In a more recent study, however, Stone (1988) found single and multiple newspaper subscribers were extremely similar. Stone, in fact, concludes that single subscribers and multiple subscribers were similar on virtually all traits and media use variables.

While demographic variables have been examined in several studies, fewer attempts have been made to examine motivational differences between single and multiple newspaper readers.

Stephens (1978), in an examination of community attachments, found that some individuals are multiple newspaper readers because they are mobile and have ties to multiple communities. Thus, they depend upon the newspaper for information on their communities.

Stamm and Campbell (1981) also linked community ties with multiple newspaper subscribing. They found that the more involved in community affairs individuals were, the more likely they were to be multiple subscribers.

Bogart (1981), meanwhile, reported that multiple newspapers may perform different functions for readers. He argues that a second paper may be bought for particular features not found in the first.

METHOD

A telephone survey was conducted in a Midwestern county in November 1991. The area has a population of about 50,000 and a wide range of residents, from coal miners and farmers to university students and professors.

The area surveyed also is ideal for a study examining multiple newspaper readership. Several newspapers are readily available. In addition to the local papers serving the area, most residents could receive home delivery of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and Chicago Tribune. The New York Times, Wall Street Journal and USA Today also are available.

Respondents were selected using a form of random digit dialing. The first four digits were randomly selected from the area telephone directory. This method ensured that local exchanges were included. Including the fourth digit increased the likelihood that working phone numbers would be included. The final three digits were then randomly selected. The response rate was 60 percent.

Interviewers were students at a large Midwestern university. All went through a training session before conducting interviews. The process yielded 378 completed surveys.

Two questions measured respondents' reading habits. Respondents first were asked "How often in a typical week do you read a newspaper?" If respondents answered zero, one or two days a week, they were placed in the nonreader category. Respondents answering that they read newspapers at least three times a week were then were asked "What newspapers do you normally read at least twice in a typical week?" If respondents listed only one newspaper, they were placed in the single newspaper reader category. If respondents listed more than one newspaper, they were placed in the multiple newspaper reader category.

Several motivational and demographic measures were employed to examine differences across the three groups. The motivational items involved the traditional uses and gratification items (see Becker, 1979). Respondents were told that "Different people read newspapers for different reasons. I will read you a list of some of the reasons some people read newspapers. Tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, are undecided, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each reason." The motivations for reading were: to keep up with the latest events, to determine what is important, to obtain useful information for daily life, to help me form opinions about things going on around me, to help me make decisions on issues, just to pass the time, to understand what's going on, to be entertained, to give me something to talk about with other people, to use in my discussions with friends, because I agree with editorial stands, to strengthen my arguments on issues, to feel I am participating in current events, and for information in advertisements.

A final motivation variable involved an index developed by McCombs and Poindexter (1983). This "civic duty" index was formed by adding responses of the strongly agree to strongly disagree scale for the following: We have a duty to keep ourselves informed about news and current events; It is important to be informed about news and current events; So many other people follow the news and keep informed about it that it doesn't matter much whether I do or not; A good deal of news about current events isn't important enough to keep informed about. The Cronbach's alpha for this index was .81.

Two items measured respondents' broadcast media use. Respondents were asked how often in a typical week they watched local television news programs and how often in a typical week they watched national television news programs.

The demographic questions asked respondents their education level, age and income.

A discriminant analysis examined differences between the three groups. Discriminant analysis is "a statistical technique which allows the researcher to study the differences between two or more groups of objects with respect to several variables simultaneously" (Klecka, 1980, p. 7) -- which in the purpose of the present study. "Discriminating variables" are utilized to distinguish between groups. Thus, the motivational, media use and demographic variables mentioned above are examined with the intention of discovering which variables discriminate between which groups.

RESULTS

Among the 378 respondents, only 45 (12 percent) belong to the group of newspaper nonreaders, 220 (58.2 percent) belong to the group of single newspaper readers and 113 (29.9 percent) belong to the group of multiple newspaper readers.

A discriminant analysis first separates the discriminating variables into "canonical discriminant functions" based on intercorrelations between the variables. Mathematically, the maximum number of significant canonical discriminant functions is equal to the number of groups minus one. Thus, in the current study, the three groups are found to be distinguished by two significant canonical discriminant functions.

The significance of each function is determined by a chi-square that is computed based on the function's Wilks' Lambda, which is a multivariate measure of group differences over several discriminating variables (Klecka, 1980, p. 38). As the lambda increases toward its maximum value of 1.0, it indicates progressively less discrimination. Thus, when lambda equals 1.0, the groups are identical.

Function 1 produced a Wilks' Lambda of .785 (with a chi-square of 89.30, $p < .001$) and Function 2 produced a Wilks' Lambda of .942 (chi-square of 21.90, $p = .03$). Therefore, both functions are statistically significant.

Table 1 presents the Wilks' Lambda and univariate F-ratio of the discriminating variables. Again, the closer the lambda is to 1.0, the less discriminating the variable is.

The tests of significance suggest that several variables significantly distinguish between two or more of the three groups examined here. Four variables are significant at the $p < .001$ level: whether individuals use the newspaper to understand what's going on, whether individuals use the paper to keep up with events, whether individuals feel a strong civic duty, and the demographic variable of education level. Other discriminant variables that significantly distinguish between two or more groups were: whether individuals use newspapers to help them make decisions on issues, to feel they are participating in current events and to obtain useful information, and whether they watch national news -- all significant at the $p < .01$ level -- and whether individuals use newspapers to be entertained, strengthen their arguments and help them form opinions -- all significant at the $p < .05$ level.

Table 2 shows the group centroids of the discriminating functions. The group centroids indicate which functions best serve to contrast differences between which two groups (McLaughlin, 1980). A function discriminates between the two groups that have group centroid scores that are the most different. Since the group centroid is -1.13 for Group 1 and 0.39 for Group 3 on Function 1, this function discriminates between Group 1 and 3. Since the group centroid is -0.21 for Group 2 and 0.31 for Group 3 on Function 2, this function discriminates between Group 2 and 3.

Table 3 details the structure matrix of the discriminating variables. The structure coefficients indicate each variable's relative importance in the two discriminant functions. Here, the larger the coefficient, the more important the variable is to the function

The structure matrix for Function 1, the function that discriminates between nonreaders and multiple newspaper readers, mirrors the overall Wilks' Lambda results presented in Table 1. Three motivational measures -- whether individuals use the newspaper to understand what's going on, whether individuals use the paper to keep up with events, and whether individuals feel a strong civic duty -- were the most powerful discriminating variables. Respondents' education level and how often respondents watched national television news also were powerful discriminating variables for Function 1. Fifteen other variables -- in fact all but one of the remaining discriminating variables -- also were included on Function 1. Generalizations about these 15 other variables is dangerous, however. Lachenbruch (1975) argues that usually no more than three to five variables can "safely" be selected on a function before noise factors enter in.

Only one variable, whether respondents used newspapers for information in advertisements, distinguished between groups on Function 2, the function that discriminated between single newspaper readers and multiple newspaper readers. Thus, the only difference found here between Groups 2 and 3 was that multiple newspaper readers professed to used newspapers for advertising information more than single newspaper readers.

Table 4 presents the results of group classifications. If the respondents were randomly classified into the subgroups of nonreader, single or multiple newspaper reader, the expected percentage of correct classifications is only 33 percent (a one in three chance of placing an individual in the correct category in which he or she belonged). However, based on the discriminant functions, the correct classification rate is 59.26 percent. The analysis had an especially difficult time classifying individuals in Group 3. The analysis placed multiple newspaper readers in Group 2 with the single newspaper readers 84.1 percent of the time.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to simultaneously examine differences between three groups of individuals: nonreaders, or respondents who professed to typically read a newspaper two or fewer days a week; single newspaper readers, or respondents who typically read one newspaper at least twice a week; and multiple newspaper readers, or respondents who typically read two or more newspapers at least twice a week. A number of conclusions from the discriminant analysis can be drawn from the findings.

First, the results here support the conclusion of Stone (1988) that single newspaper readers are very similar to multiple newspaper readers. In fact, only one variable discriminated between the two groups: the use of newspapers for advertising information.

Thus, this finding suggests one implication for editors. If editors want to lure more single newspaper readers into becoming multiple newspaper readers, editors may consider providing different types of advertising, rather than different types of news content, for their readers.

This suggestion seems especially plausible, given the similarity of news content of newspapers. Several studies, in fact, have found that the selection of news stories does not vary much from newspaper to newspaper. Lindeborg and Stone (1974), for example, found that news presented on the front pages of six New York state newspapers was remarkably similar. Similarly, the Newspaper Advertising Bureau (1978), in a content analysis of a sample of dailies in 1971 and 1977, found that the proportion of news content by category was substantially the same.

Thus, since newspapers offer readers such similar news story products, perhaps readers seek out more than one newspaper for information other than news -- that is, advertising information. This explanation also supports the conclusion of Bogart (1981), who argued that a second paper may be bought for particular features not found in the first -- in the case here, different advertising.

Second, while the discriminant analysis here found only one variable that distinguished between single newspaper readers and multiple newspaper readers, many variables were found to discriminate between nonreaders and single newspaper readers. The nonreaders and single newspaper readers surveyed here differed greatly on several variables, including many of the uses and gratifications measures. Nonreaders had an especially low motivation to use newspapers to help them understand what's going on and to keep up with current events.

This finding, then, suggests that nonreaders -- as with multiple newspaper readers -- are looking for items other than news in the newspaper. Since keeping up with current events and gaining an understanding of what's happening are of secondary importance to nonreaders, perhaps these individuals are not reading newspapers because they feel newspapers provide little of what interests them. Thus, one way of luring the nonreader into a reading habit may be for newspapers to increase non-news items -- such as syndicated features or advice columns -- which might help to increase the perceived utility of the newspaper for nonreaders. Nonreaders then may find that the newspaper does offer them something useful.

Third, demographics and media usage patterns appear to play a much less important role in distinguishing between the three groups examined here. Education was found to be a powerful discriminating variable on Function 1, whic.. distinguished between the nonreader and multiple newspaper reader. But respondents' income level, age and sex were the last three variables selected on Function 1. If, as Lachenbruch (1975) argues, only three to five variables can be safely selected on each function, generalizations about these three demographic variables are inappropriate and dangerous.

The media use variables show a similar trend. How often respondents watched national television news was moderately powerful on Function 1 -- the fifth most powerful discriminating variable. How often respondents watched local television news, however, was only the 15th most powerful variable on Function 1. Again, generalizability is limited. Thus, the findings here offer only mixed support the "all or nothing" notion -- based on the assumption that individuals who do not read newspapers often also do not watch television news often (Wright, 1986). Individuals who read more than one newspaper typically watch more national news programs than nonreaders, but the same cannot be said about local news viewing.

Overall, then, the findings here shed some light on the differences between nonreaders, single newspaper readers and multiple newspaper readers. The findings suggest nonreaders and multiple newspaper readers both are looking for elements beyond news stories in newspapers. Perhaps by increasing non-news items, editors will be offering both of these groups additional reasons to increase their newspaper usage.

Of course, by de-emphasizing news, editors run the risk of alienating their typical reader. Thus, this is not to suggest that editors eliminate -- or even cut back -- on their news coverage.

But by providing a variety of other elements -- such as advertising and syndicated features -- newspapers may offer items that are perceived to be useful by a wider variety of individuals. Thus, non-news items may be one factor that may help editors get more people to read more newspapers.

Table 1. The Wilks' Lambda (U-Statistic) and univariate F-ratio of discriminating variables for the discriminant analysis of the sociological and demographic differences between nonreaders, single and multiple newspaper readers.

Variable	Wilks' Lambda	F-ratio
Understand what's going on	.917	16.961***
Keep up with events	.924	15.360***
Civic duty index	.929	14.377***
Education	.938	12.415***
Help me make decisions on issues	.959	8.044**
Feel I am participating in current events	.961	7.613**
Obtain useful information	.964	6.923**
Watch national news	.966	6.552**
To be entertained	.970	5.832*
Strengthen my arguments	.975	4.785*
Help me form opinions	.976	4.596*
Use in my discussions with friends	.980	3.785
Give me something to talk about	.981	3.680
Income	.983	3.276
Watch local news	.983	3.155
For information in advertisements	.984	2.972
Determine what is important	.985	2.908
Because I agree with editorial stands	.990	1.847
Pass the time	.993	1.414
Age	.999	0.810
Sex	.999	0.726

* -- p < .05
** -- p < .01
*** -- p < .01

Table 2. Group centroids for the discriminant analysis of differences between nonreaders, single and multiple newspaper readers.

Group	Group Centroid Function 1	Group Centroid Function 2
Nonreader	-1.13	0.24
Single Reader	0.03	-0.21
Multiple Reader	0.39	0.31

Table 3. Structure matrix for the discriminant analysis of differences between nonreaders, single and multiple readers.

Variable	Function 1	Function 2
understand what's going on	.661*	-.221
keep up with events	.621*	-.279
Civic duty index	.617*	-.098
education	.600*	.240
watch national news	.414*	.109
feel I am participating in current events	.400*	-.386
help me make decisions on issues	.370*	.060
to be entertained	.347*	-.338
strengthen my arguments on issues	.345*	.169
obtain useful information	.327*	-.150
help me form opinions	.324*	.240
give me something to talk about	.323*	-.117
use in my discussions with friends	.320*	-.042
determine what is important	.285*	-.152
watch local news	.251*	.029
because I agree with editorial stands	.241*	-.044
pass the time	.167*	-.161
income	.163*	-.018
sex	.139*	-.001
age	.036*	-.035
for information in advertisements	.127	.455*

Table 4. The classification result on the basis of the discriminant functions (frequencies and percentages).

	Predicted Group			
	Nonreader	Single Reader	Multiple Reader	Total
Actual Group				
Nonreader	14 31.1%	26 57.8%	5 11.1%	45
Single Reader	6 2.7%	192 87.3%	22 10.0%	220
Multiple Reader	0 0.0%	95 84.1%	18 15.9%	113

Note: The percentage of "grouped" cases being correctly classified is 59.26%.

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Sample Size in Content Analysis of Weekly Newspapers

by

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Presented to the Newspaper Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication at Kansas City, August 1993.

Sample Size in Content Analysis

of Weekly Newspapers

While there has been a decline over the last 40 years in the number and readership of daily newspapers in America,[1] the picture is different for America's weekly newspapers. The number of weeklies has dropped from 8,174 in 1960 to 7,476 by 1991. However, average circulation nearly tripled, from 2,566 to 7,323.

Even more remarkable, while total daily circulation grew 5.8% from 1960 to 1990 and Sunday circulation increased 31%, total weekly circulation increased 163%--from 20,974,338 to 55,181,047.[2]

Obviously, the weekly newspaper--once viewed as a candidate for extinction[3]--should be viewed as increasingly important for newspaper research. Yet the weekly publication cycle of these newspapers poses special sampling problems for content analysts. With only 52 issues in a year, should sampling be used? Can simple random sampling be used?

Variations of simple random sampling have developed to control for systematic variation in daily newspaper content. "Constructed week" sampling (assuring that all days of the week are represented in the sample) "assumes cyclic variation of content for different days of the week."[4] Because advertising space is typically larger in Sunday issues, more news is run. As a result, reliable samples must assure that Sundays are neither over- nor under-represented.

Little research is available to suggest whether there are similar cyclic variations throughout the year that make simple random sampling of weekly newspaper issues risky.

This article contrasts different sample types to assess their utility in representing weekly newspaper content. Five content measures are used (number of stories, number of photographs, number of local government stories, square inches of local government coverage, and percentage of stories about local government) and three sampling techniques are tested (simple random sampling and two "constructed year" samples--the first stratified by month and the second stratified by quarter).

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Most research on newspaper sampling has dealt with daily newspapers, and has addressed questions concerning sample size and sampling procedure: random, systematic, consecutive-day, or stratified.[5] Mintz[6] used a month of 1941 Pravada headlines as a population and drew a whole-week sample (a three-day, a six-day and an every-other-day sample of 15 days). Only the six-day and 15-day samples did not differ significantly from the population mean.

Stempel[7] examined front-page photos in a six-issue-a-week Wisconsin newspaper in 1951, comparing the mean computed for a year of issues with means for sets of 10 samples each of 6, 12, 18, 24 and 48 issues, using a random starting point and selecting every nth issue. He found 12 days--in two constructed weeks--sufficient to represent the year.[8]

Davis and Turner[9] tested sixth-day sampling of crime news in four papers with Sunday editions, drawing six six-day samples from each of two months for four papers and found no significant differences between sample and population means in 48 samples.

Jones and Carter[10] constructed (one randomly selected Monday, one randomly selected Tuesday, etc.) 30 separate weeks from a population of 21 days in examining four papers' newsholes. Of the resulting 120 "tests" of the samples, 85% were within 2% of the papers' "true" population newsholes.

Most recently, Riffe, Aust and Lacy[11] contrasted consecutive-day, simple random and constructed week sampling and found that "a constructed week procedure is more efficient than pure random or consecutive day sampling," because "constructed week sampling assumes cyclic variation of content for different days of the week be represented."

Simple random sampling works when more than 14 days are selected and population distribution is unknown, they argued, because of the Central Limits Theorem. "But relying on the Central Limits Theorem--and simple random sampling--becomes comparatively inefficient when the population distribution is known and not normal," as when daily papers are affected by cycles of different amounts of ads and news space. "In such cases, stratification based on that known and non-normal population distribution--as in the case of days of the week--yields better estimates with smaller samples."[12]

Despite the extensive research about sampling dailies, little is known about sampling to study weekly newspapers. Are there cycles (perhaps monthly or quarterly) that affect weeklies and need controlling through stratification? What is the optimal sample size and procedure to estimate a year's content in a weekly?

In order to answer these general questions, three research questions were addressed:

1. What number of simple randomly selected issues will yield an accurate estimate of the "true" per-issue means for a year's content? This question concerns the minimal sample size needed to accurately estimate the population means.

2. Does stratified sampling by month or by quarter provide a more efficient estimate of the per-issue means for a year's content than a simple random sample of the same size or larger? The constructed week has been found to be more efficient for dailies. Perhaps a similar procedure would work for weeklies.

3. Does the sample size needed for an acceptable estimate of the per-issue means for a year's content vary by newspaper and by content measure?

The third question concerns previous sampling research's implicit assumptions about daily newspapers. Most of these sampling studies have used issues from only one newspaper for a population and only one content measure. But can we assume that newspapers are similar in their patterns of allocating space for all types of content? For example, constructed weeks are more efficient because of cycles of content on the weekend.[13] If a particular newspaper does not contain such cycles, or the cycles are not applicable to a certain type of newspaper content, constructed week sampling is no better or worse than simple random sampling. This study developed recommendations that take into consideration variations across newspapers and across content measures.

METHOD

We explored the research questions with two Detroit suburban weekly newspapers selected because of availability of issues for a year. Newspaper one is located northeast of Detroit and had a free circulation of 20,997 for 1991, the year studied. Newspaper two is located west of Detroit and had a paid circulation of 17,574 for 1991. Both competed with other weeklies headquartered in the same city.

Fifty-two consecutive issues were coded by one coder for both newspapers to create two populations from which to draw different types and sizes of samples.[14] Five variables were measured for each issue: (1) number of stories (all stories that had separate headlines); (2) number of photographs; (3) number of local government stories (all stories about governing bodies located in the newspaper's hometown or county, including city council, school board, water boards, etc.); (4) square inches of local government copy; (5) percentage of all stories about local government (found by dividing content measure 3 by content measure 1).

After the content measures were coded, the per-issue mean for each measure and for both papers were determined for the entire year (i.e. the population means) and sets of samples were drawn. The sizes of simple random samples were 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14 weeks. Because no research was available about weekly newspaper sampling, the starting sample size (four issues) was arbitrary. It was decided to increase the sample sizes by two issues for the next set of samples because of the extensive time required to analyze the 320 samples used in the study.

The sample size for the monthly stratified sample was 12. Smaller sizes of monthly stratified samples would not have included issues from each month, and the next larger sample would have been 24 in order to include two issues from each month.

The sample size for stratified quarterly samples also was 12, but with three issues taken from each quarter (January-March, April-June, etc.). No smaller quarterly stratified samples were taken because analysis showed that the quarterly samples of 12 were poorer estimates of the population means than the monthly stratified sample and the simple random sample of 12 issues. We saw no need to take smaller samples with an inefficient method.

Twenty random samples were selected for each of the resulting sample-size and technique combinations. For example, 20 samples of four issues were selected randomly, 20 samples of six issues were selected randomly, 20 were selected randomly for eight issues, and so on. Of course, sets of 20 samples also were drawn using monthly and quarterly stratified samples of 12.

Overall, eight sets (six simple random, one stratified by quarter and one stratified by month) of 20 samples were selected for each of the newspapers, for a total of 16 sets of 20 samples each. Per-issue means and standard errors for the five content variables were calculated from each of the 320 samples.

Intervals around the sample per-issue means were calculated for each content measure in all samples (using the sample standard error). These intervals were used to determine what percentage of the 20 samples in a set for a given size and technique included the population mean within plus or minus one standard error and within plus or minus two standard errors.

To determine if a sample size and technique was efficient, the resulting percentages were compared to the percentages found in the distribution of sample means--the normal curve that justifies the Central Limits Theorem. That is, because it is a normal curve, in 95 percent of the samples the population mean should fall within two standard errors of the sample mean, and 68 percent of the samples should include the population mean within plus or minus one standard error of the sample mean.

A sample size was considered to be adequate when the percentage of intervals in its sample set that included the population per-issue mean equaled or exceeded the expected percentage of sample intervals based on the normal distribution. In comparing sampling techniques, the more efficient technique was the one that had the highest percentage of samples within the standard error interval, provided it exceeded the expected levels. The most efficient simple random sample size was the one with the smallest number of issues that equaled or exceeded the expected percentages, provided the next larger sample size did not drop under the expected percentages. For example, if 95% of sample means from 20 samples of size four were acceptable, but the percentage dropped to 80% for a sample of six issues, we viewed the 95% figure as an anomaly, and went to the samples of eight issues.

RESULTS

Population means and standard deviations for issues of the newspapers are presented in Table 1. The figures show that the two newspapers were noticeably different in some content measures. Newspaper one averaged more photographs, local government stories, square inches of local government copy and a higher mean percentage of space given to local government stories per issue than did newspaper two. Newspaper two averaged slightly more total stories. The two newspapers were fairly consistent in the variability of the measures, except for number of local government stories and square inches of copy about local governments. In both these variables, newspaper one's standard deviation was almost twice that of newspaper two.

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

The first research question asked how many simple randomly selected issues would be needed to get a good estimate of the population per-issue means. Table 2 presents the results for all five content measures and both newspapers. Based on the normal curve, the critical values are 95% of samples within plus or minus two standard errors and 68% within plus or minus one standard error. However, the use of 20 samples (in the denominator for figuring percentages) does not allow for a result of 68%. The closest figures are 65% (13 of 20 samples), which is below the critical value, and 70% (14 of 20) samples), which is slightly above the critical value. By necessity, a more conservative critical value of 70% was used here.

For the total number of stories, newspaper one reached the expected levels of 70% and 95% at 8 issues, but the sample of 10 issues fell below the levels (70% and 90%). So a sample of 12 issues seemed to be the conservative minimum needed for newspaper one. A similar pattern followed with newspaper two. Samples of 6 and 8 issues exceeded the expected percentages but the sample size of 10 was below this expected level. As with newspaper one, 12 issues seemed to work best. For number of photographs, newspaper one needed 14 issues before the expected levels were reached, while newspaper two needed only 12 issues.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Optimal sample size varied based on which of the three local government content measures were used and based on newspaper. Fourteen issues were needed for newspaper one before the expected percentages of 95 and 70 were reached for number of stories about local government. However, only eight issues of newspaper two were need to reach and maintain these levels.

For square inches of space about local government, newspaper one reached expected percentages at 8 issues, but dropped below this level with 10; 12 issues again reached the expected levels. For newspaper two, 14 issues were needed.

The final content measure was percentage of all stories about local government. Neither newspaper reached the expected level until 14 issues were sampled.

The second research question asked if stratified sampling by month or by quarter is more efficient than simple random sampling. Table 3 shows the comparisons of simple random sampling for 12 and 14 issues, monthly stratified sampling for 12 issues and quarterly stratified sampling for 12 issues. Simple random samples of 4, 6, 8 and 10 issues had already been judged inefficient and discarded.

In effect, each combination of sample size and procedure in Table 3 had 10 "opportunities to fail" (five content measures by two newspapers) to reach both the 95% and 70% critical values. Simple random sampling of 12 issues failed to reach one or both of the critical values in four of 10 opportunities, and quarterly stratified samples of 12 issues failed to equal the critical values in five of 10 opportunities.

TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

However, both the simple random sample of 14 issues and the monthly stratified sample of 12 issues equaled or exceeded both expected percentages for all five content measures in both newspapers. The monthly stratified samples exceeded expected percentages in 10 of 20 total comparisons (two newspapers by five measures by two critical standard error values) and equaled expected percentages in the other ten. By contrast, the simple random sample of 14 issues exceeded expectations in 17 situations and equalled expected percentages in three. So, the simple random sample of 14 provided more accurate estimates, as would be expected with a larger sample, but the monthly stratified sample was adequate. On the other hand, the simple random sample of 14 would take about 14% more time to complete than the monthly stratified sample of 12.

Selecting between the simple random sample of 14 or the monthly stratified sample depends on whether the researcher gives higher priority to accuracy or cost.

The third question asked if acceptable sample size varied by newspaper and content measure used. The results indicate that the answer is yes. The differences between newspapers and among content measures for population per-issue means in Table 1 were reinforced by data in Tables 2 and 3. Table 2 shows that the minimal simple random sample size was equal for the newspapers in only two of five measures--percentage local government (14) and total stories (12).

Data in Table 3 show that all four types of samples provided adequate estimates of the per-issue population means for total stories in both newspapers, but only three sample types provided adequate estimates for number of stories about local government in both newspapers. Only two sample types provided adequate estimates for both newspapers of percentage of stories about local governments, square inches of copy about local governments, and number of photographs in an issue.

CONCLUSIONS

One question underlying this research is whether weekly newspapers are subject to systematic variations similar to those that affect sampling of daily newspapers. It appears this is the case. An examination of means for both newspapers by month and by quarter showed a wide range of variations (although the variation was greater for newspaper one than for newspaper two). However, these variations may not be as extensive for weeklies as they were for dailies: in the study of sampling dailies it took a simple random sample of 28 issues to match the ability of one constructed week to infer to six months.[15] In this study of weeklies, the difference in size between an efficient simple random sample (14) and monthly stratified sample (12) was only 2 issues.

But because this research dealt only with one year, it cannot identify if the observed monthly and quarterly cycles are consistent across years. Still, the observed variations indicate that a method other than simple random sampling is more efficient in sampling weekly newspaper issues.

Equally important for a researcher to consider are the between-paper and between-content measure differences as they relate to sampling. The variations from newspaper to newspaper suggest that a researcher who does not already have some understanding of variations in content for the weekly under study would be wise to take the largest number of issues suggested here. Smaller simple random samples were accurate for some content measures, but the conservative approach of using a monthly stratified sample or 14 simple randomly selected issues is recommended because all weeklies are not the same.

Thus, someone interested in studying weekly newspaper content should either randomly select 14 issues from a year, or pick 12 issues, one from each month. The former is preferable when the results will be used for making risky decisions. Under this condition, precision is important. The latter method will be most useful when decisions are less risky and money and time constraints are of primary consideration.

This research cannot be generalized to all weekly newspapers, of course, because the study did not include a larger number of randomly selected papers. Replication will be necessary to determine if the sampling results obtained with these two papers are applicable to others, and to explore the impact of other content measures on sampling efficiency.

FOOTNOTES

1. Number of dailies declined from 1,772 to 1,600. Readership has declined in terms of the proportion of the total population, though actual circulation has not. For these and subsequent comparisons, see Facts About Newspapers '81 (Washington, D.C.: American Newspaper Publishers Association, 1991).
2. Ibid. "Total daily" combines both morning and evening circulations.
3. John Cameron Sim recounted a 1958 prediction by a top ad agency president that by 1987 "daily newspapers will increase circulation in proportion to population, but few weeklies and semi-weeklies will survive as the smaller towns and communities expand their populations." The Grass Roots Press: America's Community Newspapers (Ames, Iowa: The Iowa State University Press, 1969), p. xi.
4. Daniel Riffe, Charles F. Aust and Stephen R. Lacy, "The Effectiveness of Random, Consecutive Day and Constructed Week Sampling in Newspaper Content Analysis," Journalism Quarterly, (Spring 1993) in press. See also: Guido H. Stempel III, "Content Analysis," in Guido H. Stempel III and Bruce H. Westley, eds., Research Methods in Mass Communication, 2nd ed., (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1989, pp. 119-131.
5. See Riffe, Aust and Lacy, ibid., for a review of these studies.
6. Alexander Mintz, "The Feasibility of the Use of Samples in Content Analysis," in Harold Lasswell, Nathan Leites and associates, Language of Politics (New York: George W. Stewart, Publisher, Inc., 1949), pp. 127-152.

7. Guido H. Stempel III, "Sample Size for Classifying Subject Matter in Dailies," Journalism Quarterly, 29:333-334 (Summer 1952).

8. Because he used sample sizes that were multiples of six in examining a six-day-a-week paper, Stempel's procedure guaranteed stratification for day of the week, resulting in "constructed weeks."

9. F. James Davis and Lester W. Turner, "Sample Efficiency in Quantitative Newspaper Content Analysis," Public Opinion Quarterly, 15:762-763 (Winter 1951).

10. Robert L. Jones and Roy E. Carter, Jr. "Some Procedures for Estimating 'News Hole' in Content Analysis," Public Opinion Quarterly, 23:399-403 (Fall 1959).

11. Riffe, Aust and Lacy, op. cit.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. The issues for newspaper one ran from January 2, 1991 to December 25, 1991. The issues for newspaper two ran from February 7, 1990 to January 31, 1991. Although one person coded all of the issues, intercoder reliability for categories was checked by having two people code four randomly selected issues of one set of newspapers. The overall percentage of agreement for 310 story and photograph decisions was 97%. Agreement for individual categories was 94% for local government stories, 96% for all stories, and 100% for photographs.

15. Riffe, Aust, Lacy, op. cit.

TABLE 1

Population Means, Standard Deviations

and Coefficients of Variation

for the Five Content Measures and Two Newspapers

	Newspaper One			Newspaper Two		
Content Measure	Mean	S.D.	C.V.	Mean	S.D.	C.V.
Total stories in the newspaper	38.90	5.75	.148	41.60	7.95	.191
Photographs in the newspaper	24.37	4.95	.203	18.17	4.97	.274
Local government stories in the newspaper	11.79	4.75	.403	8.90	2.59	.291
Square inches of local government	247.40	131.49	.531	218.42	72.07	.330
Percent of stories about local government	29.90	9.80	.328	21.80	6.80	.312

N = 52

TABLE 2

Percentage of Random Sample Means in Sets of 20 Samples Falling Within One and Two Standard Errors of Population Mean for Two Newspapers and Various Types of Variables

	Newspaper One		Newspaper Two	
Within:	2 S.E.	1 S.E.	2 S.E.	1 S.E.
Days in Sample	%	%	%	%
Total Stories in Issues				
4	100	65	70	55
6	90	65	100	70
8	95	85	100	75
10	90	70	90	65
12	100	75	95	70
14	100	100	100	85
All Photographs in an Issues				
4	95	55	80	65
6	90	70	90	60
8	90	45	90	55
10	95	60	90	60
12	90	80	100	75
14	100	80	100	90
Stories About Local Government				
4	85	65	85	65
6	95	70	95	50
8	100	65	95	70
10	90	65	95	75
12	90	75	95	75
14	100	85	95	80

	Square Inches of Space About Local Government			
4	90	80	85	70
6	90	70	85	55
8	100	85	90	60
10	90	65	95	65
12	<u>95</u>	<u>70</u>	90	60
14	100	70	<u>100</u>	<u>75</u>
	Percentage of Stories About Local Government			
4	85	50	90	55
6	95	55	95	65
8	100	60	95	80
10	85	65	90	55
12	90	70	95	65
14	<u>100</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>80</u>

Note: Underlined pairs of percentages reflect estimates of maximium efficiency.

TABLE 3

Percentage of Random Sample, Monthly Stratified, and Quarterly Stratified Means in Sets of 20 Samples Falling Within One and Two Standard Errors of Population Mean for Two Newspapers and Various Types of Variables

Within:	Newspaper One		Newspaper Two	
Type of sample	2 S.E. %	1 S.E. %	2 S.E. %	1 S.E. %
	Total Stories in Issues			
Simple Random (N=12)	100	75	95	70
Stratified by Month (N=12)	100	85	100	80
Stratified by Quarter (N=12)	100	75	95	85
Simple Random (N=14)	100	100	100	85
	All Photographs in an Issues			
Simple Random (N=12)	[90	80]	100	75
Stratified by Month (N=12)	95	80	95	85
Stratified by Quarter (N=12)	95	80	[100	65]
Simple Random (N=14)	100	80	100	90
	Stories About Local Government			
Simple Random (N=12)	90	75	95	75
Stratified by Month (N=12)	95	70	95	70
Stratified by Quarter (N=12)	95	80	[95	60]
Simple Randon (N=14)	100	85	95	80

	Square Inches of Space About Local Government			
Simple Random (N=12)	95	70	[90	60]
Stratified by Month (N=12)	100	75	95	75
Stratified by Quarter (n=12)	[100	60]	[95	65]
Simple Random (N=14)	100	70	100	75
	Percentage of Stories About Local Government			
Simple Random (N=12)	[90	70]	[95	65]
Stratified by Month (N=12)	95	75	95	70
Stratified by Quarter (N=12)	[100	65]	95	70
Simple Random (N=14)	100	85	95	80

Note: Brackets represent failures to reach critical values for both levels of probability.

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How Four Newspapers Covered the 1992 Los Angeles and Related "Riots"

Abstract

Media coverage of African Americans in both routine and civil disorder situations has been criticized; historically, the former has been limited and negative and the latter has been establishment oriented and has failed to delve into issues behind such disorders. This study examined four newspapers' coverage of the Los Angeles and related riots. It found some differences in coverage by newspaper, these differences the likely result of geographical location of the papers.

For the four newspapers together, it found that coverage was considerable. Also, it found that topics such as the actual riot and law enforcement/government received the most coverage, while the cause of the riots received the least. The enhanced coverage of less favored groups during extremist behavior and the lack of coverage of causes is possibly the result of news values such as timeliness and proximity and routines of news production such as deadlines. But ideological factors may also be responsible. While news values and routines might dictate the focus on event coverage which in turn implies individual blame, the status quo orientation of the press may make it avoid the issue (cause) stories because such stories are more likely to assign system blame.

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How Four Newspapers Covered the 1992 Los Angeles and Related "Riots"

Introduction

Complaints about quantity and quality of media coverage, both in news and entertainment content, of groups of people--defined by nationality, gender, race, etc.--are not uncommon. For example, apart from scant coverage, the Third World is angry about its "coups and earthquakes" coverage, women complain about sexist coverage, and African Americans dislike their stereotypical coverage. While coverage of all such groups and others is worthy of study, this paper singles out coverage of racial groups, specifically African Americans, for examination. In particular, it examines how newspapers from different parts of the country covered the riots spurred by the acquittal of the police officers tried in the Rodney King beating case.

Concern About and Study of Media Coverage of African Americans

Media coverage of African Americans outside and, particularly, within civil disorder situations, has been the subject not only of study but also of concern. First, the concern about press coverage of African Americans. As early as 1922, the report of the Chicago Committee on Race Relations condemned the practices and policies of the Chicago press with respect to news about African Americans and laid part of the blame for the 1919 racial conflict on their reportage.[1] Such criticism is heard even today; routine stereotypical and negative coverage of African-Americans in the media does not provide an understanding of black reality and results in racial disharmony. Similarly longstanding is concern over coverage of the actual riots themselves which typically tends to portray the participants in negative light.[2]

The study of media coverage of African Americans over time, in both everyday and riot situations, while initially small, has documented its scant, stereotypical, and slanted nature.

Based on the limited research conducted in earlier years, Paletz and Dunn[3] provide an overview of the biased nature of newspaper coverage of riots from 1919-1965. While they consider the deliberate restraint used in local riot (1967) coverage by the Winston-Salem Journal (in accordance with guidelines for such coverage) exemplary compared with the blatant negative attitudes apparent in other earlier coverage, they conclude that it still failed "to provide a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events" because it did not contribute "to an understanding of the nature of Afro-American grievances or of conditions in that community."[4]

Tracing similarly longitudinal (up to the 1965 LA riot) coverage of African-Americans in two Los Angeles newspapers, Johnson, Sears, and McConahay conclude, "it is just as well that press coverage of blacks was so rare for so many years, because the content of it was mostly degrading."[5] The post-riot period (1965-66) did not show increased or more "sympathetic attention to black grievances."[6]

Studies outside the framework of civil disorder news have also examined black (in)visibility and its nature. Southern newspapers gave little attention to the story of desegregation and made no attempt to "delve into the issue or 'background' it."[7] Articles about black officials while longer were placed in less desirable positions and were more negative than articles about white officials.[8]

Newspapers not only minimized news about African Americans, but also subordinated general news about them to anti-social news.[9] Coverage of African

Americans formed only a very small portion of Life's content in sample years from 1937 to 1972.[10] Also, coverage of everyday black life was more or less absent. According to one study,[11] the type of story in which African Americans appeared most often had to do with civil rights and the positions blacks were shown as occupying were blue-collar. Also, while blacks were in about one-fourth of the sample newscasts, they were "seen but not heard" leading the author to conclude that "in the context of world and national affairs, the viewpoint of blacks is seldom expressed."[12]

Other studies have found changes in coverage in recent years. For example, Stempel[13] found that pictorial coverage of blacks, while small in 1960, had increased in 1970 in both news and advertising content. Colle[14] traced positive changes in black images in film and television and listed reasons for the same. Lambert[15] found that 1964 articles about African Americans in Look magazine were more favorable than 1959 articles; the '64 articles also covered African Americans as members of society. Martindale[16] found that while coverage of blacks in four leading US dailies continued to be small, stereotypical coverage decreased in the 1970s over the 1950s.

Consequences and Causes of Media Coverage

Concern about, and study of, media coverage of groups of people is rooted in a recognition of the consequences of such coverage. The Kerner Commission suggested that inadequate and negative coverage of blacks was at least partially responsible for the "black-white schism."[17] According to Sentman, coverage influences understanding and "the impression of that group's place in society. Equally important may be the impact of [that group's] cumulative coverage over time."[18]Johnson, Sears, and McConahay[19] argue that black invisibility and the nature of coverage given them in the press has confused whites' understanding of racism, has facilitated the exploitation of black people by whites, and has created white fear of blacks. Gist suggests that it is highly plausible that such coverage "might be a factor in engendering racial antipathies and prejudices."[20]

Consequences apart, researchers have also attempted to address reasons for such coverage. Gist's survey of editors indicated that "'news value' was the deciding factor" in determining coverage. He concluded that such coverage is probably the result of editors' "hypersensitiveness to the wishes and interests of their white readers."[21] According to Paletz and Dunn, their sample newspaper "presented the [1967 Winston-Salem] riot almost exclusively from the perspective of law enforcement and city officials."[22] Also, the reporting practice wherein all field reports were sent to the office and written up by one veteran reporter and the presence of only one African-American on the staff (combined with the fact that one of his two stories was dropped) resulted in a lack of presentation of divergent viewpoints. Paletz and Dunn concluded, "media act to maintain sociocultural consensus.... All may not be well in the society, but this is no way to change the situation. This general attitude is abetted by the way the press is organized and manned."[23]

Similarly, Johnson, Sears, and McConahay[24] considered "formula reporting" (i.e., reporting from the perspective of the status quo, for e.g., blacks as disrupting the peace of civilized society) to be responsible for such coverage. Martindale[25] suggested that white editors might unconsciously convert the stereotypical images of blacks into a framework through which news of blacks is filtered.

Much of this type of literature has now been organized into a theory of news content which includes personal biases and values,[26] workplace values,[27] routines of news production,[28] organizational imperatives,[29] and ideology[30] as factors which influence news content. Generally, as a result of a combination of these factors, less powerful people, groups, and causes receive little attention in the media. Often, increased attention is focused on them only when they become extremists and then this attention is filtered through establishment eyes. One of the consequences of such coverage is that media fail to seriously assess the issues behind extremist behavior. In 1968, the Kerner Commission concluded similarly, "the media failed to report adequately on the causes and consequences of civil disorders and on the underlying problems of race relations."[31] However, Martindale[32] found that by the 1970s, sample newspapers were providing more explanation of black problems and causes of black protest as compared with the relative inattention of the 1960s.

This study is basically descriptive in nature. Given the concern about the nature of coverage accorded African Americans, in general, and the lack of attention to the issues/causes behind extremist behavior, in particular, the questions this paper addresses are:

1. How did four U.S. newspapers cover the Los Angeles and related riots in terms of both attention given and issues covered?

2. How did this coverage differ by newspaper?

Method

Content analysis was the method of study. Sample selection included purposive selection of four newspapers to represent four regions of the United States and systematic selection of stories from these papers. The four newspapers selected were (the national editions, where relevant, of) the West coast's Los Angeles Times (also selected for its site), the East coast's New York Times (also selected because it is considered the newspaper of record), the Midwest's Chicago Tribune, and the South's Atlanta Constitution.

All relevant titles (related to the riots) were checked in the respective indexes of the newspapers. Once the appropriate title was located within each index, a systematic sample of 50% was selected using a random starting point and a skip interval of two. The sample dates were April 30, 1992 (first day of coverage of the riots) to July 31, 1992 (number of stories had tapered off considerably by then). This selection process specified a total of 478 stories. The useable sample was 473 because of wrongly indexed items and missing microfilms.

Once each sample story was located on microfilm, it was coded for date, newspaper, number of lines, number of words, size (less or greater than one column length in number of words), page (front or otherwise), placement on page (above or below fold), story type (story, opinion, feature, other), byline (staff, wire, name, other), and topic (riot, law enforcement/government, reaction, consequences, causes, after-riot, other).

For each sample newspaper, the average number of words per line was calculated; this was used as a standard to calculate number of words in a story (by multiplying number of words per line with number of lines in the story). When a story changed column width, coders calculated average number of words per line for that column width and used it in calculating number of words in that story. Similarly, for each newspaper, the number of words in a standard (full) column was calculated. This number was compared with the number of words in the story to determine whether the story was greater than one column length in size.

A story got a point each for being greater than one column length, appearing on the front page, and starting above the fold. The sum of these points was the prominence score for the story.

Categories for story type, byline, and topic were derived from initial pretests on non-sample data. Within story type, story referred to hard news, opinion material included editorials, op ed pieces, and letters, and features included news analysis, commentary, and features. Within byline, staff stories were those for which the writer could be clearly identified as a staff member, wire referred to wire stories, names referred to stories with signed names whose affiliation was not clear, and other was for unsigned material.

Within topic, riot included all stories focusing directly on the riots in Los Angeles and related riots in other cities. Law enforcement/government stories included stories about the police, fire department, government officials, National Guard, etc. Reaction stories were about reactions to the verdict or the riot. Cause stories looked into reasons for the riots and consequence stories dealt with results of the riots. After-riot stories included reconstruction, rebuilding, follow-up, etc.

Altogether six coders were used. Intercoder reliability, using Holsti's formula, on 20 stories recoded by the coders was 90% for number of words, 91% for size, 92% for story type, 84% for byline, and 67% for topic. As microfilm copies of stories were used for the reliability test, it was not possible to code page and placement on page; these are not difficult coding decisions and as such can be expected to be made with high reliability. Also, for this reliability test, coders counted number of lines. The researcher then used the established standards--number of words per line and per column for each newspaper--to do necessary calculations and check for agreement. For non-standard column widths, the researcher used the original coders' standard to make the calculations and check for agreement. A leeway of 50 words either way was allowed in calculating intercoder reliability for number of words. For story type, byline, and topic, the majority coding decision was used as the correct decision to check for agreement.

Findings

For the total sample, the mean number of words was 1002 and mean prominence was 1.5 (Table 1). From a high of 427 stories (90%) in May, number of stories declined to five (1%) in July. One hundred and eleven (24%) stories received front page treatment and 316 (67%) were above the fold. Also, 265 (56%) of the stories were larger than one column length. Most stories (61%) had a staff byline and very few (2%) were wire stories.

Most of the coverage was in the nature of "stories" (74%). There were 44 (9%) opinion pieces, and 77 (16%) features. After-riot stories were largest in number (21%) followed by reaction and law enforcement/goverment stories (20% each). Stories about causes of the riot were the smallest in number (7%).

An analysis of story type by topic revealed a significant association (chi-square= 52.44; p. = .00) (Table 2a). While most topics were covered mainly as "stories," causes of the riots were discussed in all formats--stories, opinion pieces, and features--about evenly.

The mean number of words did not differ significantly by topic and story type (Tables 2b and 2c respectively). That is, no one topic or story types was singled out for larger treatment. Mean prominence differed by topic (Table 2d), but did not differ by story type (Table 2e). Riot, law enforcement/government, and consequence stories received more prominent coverage than other types of stories.

How did the coverage differ by newspaper? The _LA Times_ had the largest number of stories (61%) and the _Chicago Tribune_ the least (7%) (chi-square = 365.27; p. = .00) (Table 1).

The _Chicago Tribune_ and _Los Angeles Times_ used more front page stories than did the _New York Times_ and _Atlanta Constitution_ (chi-square = 8.0; p.=.046) and had a higher percentage of stories greater than one column length (chi-square=8.8; p.=.03). The _Chicago Tribune_ and _Atlanta Constitution_ placed a higher percentage of their stories above the fold than did the _Los Angeles Times_ and _New York Times_ (chi-square=10.02; .02).

The above (paragraph) findings were reflected in the mean prominence scores (Table 3a). The _Chicago Tribune_ stories were the most prominent, the _New York Times_ the least (F=3.94; p.=.01). Mean length of stories also differed by newspaper with the _Los Angeles Times_ having the largest and the _Atlanta Constitution_ the smallest stories (F=7.22; p. = .00) (Table 3b).

The _Los Angeles Times_ and _New York Times_ had a much higher percentage of "stories," while the _Chicago Tribune_ and _Atlanta Constitution_ had a more even distribution across stories, opinion pieces, and features (chi-square=59.82; p. .00).

Finally, the _Chicago Tribune_ focused more on cause, consequence, and riot stories than did the other newspapers. The _Los Angeles Times_ and _Atlanta Constitution_ had more after riot and law/government stories and the _New York Times_ had more reaction stories.

Summary and Conclusion

As would be expected, the riot story received the most attention in the _Los Angeles Times_; this paper had the largest number of stories and these stories had the largest length and high prominence. However, the _Los Angeles_

Times had the smallest percent of cause stories and editorial and feature material.

The New York Times also gave the story substantial coverage. In fact, when coverage tapered off by July even in the Los Angeles Times, the New York Times continued to cover the story. But New York Times had the least prominent coverage and the smallest story length. It also had the second largest percent of cause stories. Further, the New York Times was less heavily reliant on its own staff.

These differences in coverage by the two newspapers may be attributed to geography and editorial policy. For the Los Angeles Times, the story was a local one also probably contributing to larger, more prominent, and story/event oriented coverage. The New York Times, in keeping with its reputation as an elite and serious "national" newspaper and being physically distant from the events, had a more even-handed approach, giving the story importance, following the story through the months, having a more even distribution of stories by byline, and focusing some attention on cause.

Geographical distance and regional scope might also explain the smaller coverage of the story in the Chicago Tribune and the Atlanta Constitution. Distance might also be the reason for their less event and larger editorial/feature and, to some extent, cause orientation coverage as compared with the Los Angeles Times. However, the Chicago Tribune and the Atlanta Constitution differed in length and prominence of stories; the Chicago Tribune had longer and more prominent coverage.

For the four newspapers together, it may be said that coverage was considerable. While no comparative base was included in this study (for example, routine coverage of African Americans), it appears that the Los

Angeles riot story did receive substantial attention at least in May. The Los Angeles riot story also seemed to be prominently covered. At least a fourth of the time, the story was on the front page, two-thirds of the time, it was above the fold, and half the time it was greater than one column length in size. Yet another indicator of the attention given to the story and the importance attached to it was the large use of staff stories (61%); only two percent of the stories were wire.

Large coverage of less powerful groups when they engage in extremist behavior is a media practice previously noted. Combined with the lack of routine coverage of these groups, this media practice tends to provide an unbalanced picture. Further complicating the matter is the fact that such coverage is event oriented with implications for blame assignment. In this study, for example, direct, hard news type of coverage of the events ("stories") dominated; features and editorials together formed only a quarter of the stories. This dominance of the "story" format is also reflected in the topics covered (and the higher prominence some of them received): actual riot, after-riot, law enforcement/government stories, etc. Such a format implies individual blame for events, further reinforcing negative stereotypes.

On the other hand, cause stories (i.e., issues behind civil disorders) which are more likely to imply system blame formed only seven percent of the total stories; in fact, they were the smallest category.

This enhanced coverage of less favored groups during extremist behavior and the lack of coverage of causes is possibly the result of news values such as timeliness and proximity and routines of news production such as deadlines. Indeed the even distribution of cause stories across formats (stories, editorials, and features) makes precisely this point; editorials and features lend themselves to such coverage. Given that stories far outnumber editorials and features, the proportion of issues coverage is bound to be small. But ideological factors may also be responsible. While news values and routines might dictate the focus on event coverage which in turn implies individual blame, the status quo orientation of the press may make it avoid the issue (cause) stories because such stories are more likely to assign system blame.

Table 1
Distribution of Stories by Month, Page, Placement, Size, Byline, Story Type, and Topic, by Newspaper

	LATimes		NYTimes		Chicago Trib		Atlanta Con		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total	288	61	118	25	31	7	36	8	473	100
Chi-square = 365.27; p. = .00.										
Mean # words									1002	
Mean prom									1.5	
Month										
April	3	1	1	1	2	7	0	0	6	1
May	262	91	101	86	28	90	36	100	427	90
June	23	8	11	9	1	3	0	0	35	7
July	0	0	5	4	0	0	0	0	5	1
Page										
Front	78	27	18	15	9	29	6	17	111	24
Other	210	73	100	85	22	71	30	83	362	77
Chi-square = 8.0; p. = .046.										
Placement										
Above fold	183	64	77	65	26	84	30	83	316	67
Below fold	105	37	41	35	5	16	6	17	157	33
Chi-square = 10.02; p. = .02.										
Size										
>=1 coln	172	60	56	48	21	68	16	44	265	56
<1 coln	116	40	62	53	10	32	20	56	208	44
Chi-square = 8.8; p. = .03.										
Byline										
Staff	204	71	32	27	21	68	30	83	287	61
Wire	0	0	7	6	3	10	1	3	11	2
Name	67	23	57	48	6	19	5	14	135	29
Other	17	6	22	19	1	3	0	0	40	9

Note: Chi-square analysis not reported because 31% of the cells had an expected cell frequency of less than five.

Table 1 Continued

	LATimes n	LATimes %	NYTimes n	NYTimes %	Chicago Trib n	Chicago Trib %	Atlanta Con n	Atlanta Con %	Total n	Total %
Total	288	62	118	24	31	7	36	8	473	100
Story Type										
Story	238	83	83	72	12	39	17	47	350	74
Editorial	9	3	16	14	10	32	9	25	44	9
Features	41	14	17	15	9	29	10	28	77	16

Note: Two "Other" stories removed; chi-square = 59.82; p. = .00.

	LATimes n	LATimes %	NYTimes n	NYTimes %	Chicago Trib n	Chicago Trib %	Atlanta Con n	Atlanta Con %	Total n	Total %
Topic										
Riot	32	11	7	6	8	26	3	8	50	11
Law/Govt.	60	21	19	16	4	13	9	25	92	20
Reaction	55	19	32	27	3	10	5	14	95	20
Consequence	29	10	9	8	5	16	4	11	47	10
Cause	15	5	12	10	5	16	2	6	34	7
After-riot	65	23	20	17	6	20	10	28	101	21
Other	32	11	19	16	0	0	3	8	54	11

Chi-square = 33.73; p. = .01.

Table 2a
Distribution of Topics by Story Type

Topic	Story n	Story %	Opinion n	Opinion %	Features n	Features %	Total n	Total %
Riot	42	84	3	6	5	10	50	11
Law/Govt.	82	89	6	7	4	4	92	20
Reaction	61	64	8	8	26	27	95	20
Consequences	35	75	4	9	8	17	47	10
Cause	14	41	11	32	9	27	34	7
After-riot	77	77	5	5	18	18	100	21
Other	39	34	7	13	7	13	53	11

Note: Two "Other" stories removed from Story Type; chi-square = 52.44; p.=.00.

Table 2b
ANOVA: Main Effect Topic on Number of Words

Topic	Mean No. Of Words	F	P
Riot	1205	1.56	.16
Law/Govt.	1060		
Reaction	857		
Consequences	938		
Cause	991		
After-riot	1033		
Other	979		

Table 2c
ANOVA: Main Effect Story Type on Number of Words

Story Type	Mean No. Of Words	F	P
Story	1043	3.0	.051
Opinion	779		
Features	946		

Note: Two "Other" stories removed.

Table 2d
ANOVA: Main Effect Topic on Prominence

Topic	Prominence	F	P
Riot	1.68	3.02	.01
Law/Govt.	1.61		
Reaction	1.24		
Consequences	1.64		
Cause	1.38		
After-riot	1.5		
Other	1.19		

Table 2e
ANOVA: Main Effect Story Type on Prominence

Topic	Prominence	F	P
Story	1.47	.77	.47
Opinion	1.3		
Features	1.48		

Note: Two "Other" stories removed.

Table 3a
ANOVA: Main Effect Paper on Prominence

Newspaper	Prominence	F	P
Los Angeles Times	1.51	3.94	.01
New York Times	1.25		
Chicago Tribune	1.81		
Atlanta Constitution	1.44		

Table 3b
ANOVA: Main Effect Paper on Number of Words

Newspaper	Mean No. Of Words	F	P
Los Angeles Times	1111	7.22	.00
New York Times	876		
Chicago Tribune	917		
Atlanta Constitution	626		

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INTERNATIONAL DIVISION

The Stability of "Bad News" in Third World Coverage: 22 Years of New York *Times* Foreign News

Daniel Riffe
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Presented to the annual convention, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Kansas City, 1993.

The Stability of "Bad News" in Third World Coverage:
22 Year of New York Times Foreign News

Critics claim there are quantitative and qualitative differences in how American news media treat the rest of the world.[1] Studies have explored "imbalance" in the flow of news, examining the visibility and treatment of nations[2] or regions.[3] This study of the New York Times examines the alleged Western overemphasis on negative news in coverage of the Third World.

The IAMCR "world of news study" showed that national press systems devote the most attention to events in their "immediate geographical region"; the plurality of stories in seven U.S. media in two 1979 sample weeks were about events in North America.[4] But Gerbner and Marvanyi, using a single 1970 week, found events in North America the focus of only 10.6% of coverage in nine U.S. papers; a quarter (28%) dealt with Western Europe while news of Africa accounted for only 3.8%.[5]

Semmel called four prestige dailies' world view during three months of 1974 "Eurocentric, big-power dominant, and western-oriented." And "only a few countries are important or deemed to be of interest"; nations outside this "prevailing American world perspective receive minimal attention or no attention at all."[6]

On the other hand, Haque's study of Third World news in three prestige dailies during nine months in 1979 "fail(ed) to show a Eurocentric media focus in the elite press." It did not, however, address "the Third World allegation of negative, stereotypical and ethnocentric bias of Western media coverage."[7]

These inequities in amount of coverage have been attributed to consistency between U.S. diplomatic policy and "press policy";[8] to structural factors (e.g., number of correspondents overseas[9] or government controls of correspondent access);[10] to changing reader interests;[11] and to cultural affinities, trade relations and levels of national "eliteness."[12]

Studies have also examined whether there is an overemphasis on conflict, "coups and earthquakes"[13] in foreign coverage. For example, a study of two prestige papers' 1970-79 coverage showed Third World news was "rife with conflict," an emphasis absent in news of Western nations.[14]

Two points are apparent from this cursory review. First, the bulk of the cited studies are dated. Further, most have been narrow in chronological design, examining short periods of coverage (e.g., Gerbner and Marvanyi's single 1970 week).[15] As Stevenson wrote, most content analysts pick an "arbitrary sample of time and an equally arbitrary sample of news media."[16] Even the IAMCR study focused on only 12 sample days' issues from 1979,[17] though examining many newspapers.

There have been longitudinal studies, of course. Weaver, Porter and Evans examined television foreign news over a 10-year period (1972-81).[18] Gonzenbach, Arant and Stevenson examined 18 years of televised foreign news.[19]

Longitudinal print studies have also been infrequent,[20] though Riffe and Shaw used a 10-year longitudinal design.[21] Potter analyzed eight prestige U.S. papers' content in 1913, 1933, 1963 and 1983, finding both quantitative and qualitative imbalance: "the proportion of Third World coverage is growing" and "(n)ews coverage about the Third World and the East (when it appears) is much more likely to be sensational in nature."[22]

While Potter's design permits an unusually long perspective, its irregular-interval data points limit its usefulness for pinpointing precisely any changes in long-term trends in coverage. Riffe, et. al., last year reported a 22-consecutive-year design, albeit involving only the New York Times.[23]

This study reports further analysis of that data set and examines differences in coverage of international events, focusing on how topics vary according to geopolitical focus of the news event.

Research Objectives

The goal was to explore the prevalence of negative or "bad news" in international coverage. Given past debate over inequities in foreign coverage (particularly of the Third World), has coverage of different geopolitical regions changed, or has ("coups and earthquakes") "bad news" continued to dominate?

Obviously, the New York Times is atypical. It maintains an overseas staff and multiple news services. But coupled with a longitudinal design, its routine level of foreign coverage represents a sensitive means of locating long-term trends and subtle patterns.

Method

All international news was coded in microfilmed issues from two constructed weeks (two randomly selected Sundays, Mondays, etc.) per year from 1969 to 1990 inclusive, or 308 total issues. (The study merged an existing and a new data set. The 1969-79 data were collected previously, while the 1980-90 data were collected in spring 1991.) According to a sampling study, two constructed weeks per year is the optimal sample size for estimating a newspaper's content.[24]

Items were coded for topic and focus (the nation involved), then recoded to geopolitical region using the World Bank categories of First (Western industrialized nations and Japan), Second (Communist or socialist nations) and Third World that dominated newsflow debate through the '70s and '80s.

An initial 26-topic coding scheme was collapsed to 14 categories:[25] internal (within-nation) politics, internal conflict, internal economics, social policies, science and technology, arts and the media, international relations, between-nation conflicts, international economics, displaced persons and refugees, miscellaneous "bad news" (crime, accidents, disasters, etc.), sports, human interest and religion. Average between-coder agreement was 0.82.[26] Ultimately, a "bad news" category was created by combining internal conflict, between-nation conflict, displaced persons and refugees, and the existing miscellaneous "bad news."

Findings and Discussion

Table 1 examines topic percentages in Times international coverage across the 22 years. But before examining the "mix" of topics that those percentages reveal across two decades, note that the declining annual frequencies (the N for each year; e.g., 1969's 685) provide striking evidence of a "shrinking foreign newshole," as reported elsewhere.[27]

Generally speaking, the mix is heavily weighted toward international relations and internal politics, as well as internal and between-nation conflict. In every year, in fact, those four categories accounted for at least 4 of 10 items.

The number of topic categories makes "trend-spotting" difficult, but some shifts in topic emphasis are apparent. For example, international sports news waned in the late '70s. News of nations' internal politics, on the other hand, nearly doubled from the early '70s. Negative news of internal conflict showed parallel growth, though it decreased slightly during the last four years of the study.

Most intriguing was the "cycling" of a second negative topic, international (between-nation) conflict coverage: that topic accounted for 17% of items as the '60s ended, ebbed to 6% by 1976, rebounded to 16% in 1983, then dropped to 5% in 1988. A similar cycling was apparent in economic news, both within and between nations.

Overall, the data showed a shift in Times emphasis. Until 1981, and except for 1974, international relations was the most or second-most frequent topic. In the '80s, internal politics dominated; it was the most frequent topic in six of the last ten years. And when it was supplanted, it was replaced not by international relations, but by internal conflict. This shift may reflect a "post-Iran" awareness that news impacting the U.S. is not limited to superpower international relations; even non-superpower nations' domestic conflicts may have global repercussions.

The initial miscellaneous "bad news" category (crime, accidents, disasters, etc.) accounted for, on average, only 7.9% of items per year, peaking in 1971 and bottoming in 1983.

Table 2 examines the data in terms of geopolitical focus and topic, as preparation for examining the relationship of those two variables. Here, however, a broader category of "bad" news is used, created by combining Table 1's internal conflict, between-nation conflict, displaced persons and refugees, and the existing miscellaneous "bad news." (Admittedly, the remaining, unused categories may not qualify as "good" news, but these four are unmistakeably "bad" news.)

Before proceeding with that analysis, however, note the distribution, across years, of news items from the First, Second and Third Worlds. Though changes were subtle, there did occur a gradual change. Specifically, the '80s saw an increase in Third World news, peaking at nearly half of all coverage (48%) in 1984 and 1986. The highest level during the '70s was 1979's 43.8%. From 1969 to 1979, there were no years when Third World news was more than 45% of international news. By contrast, seven of the 11 years from 1980 to 1990 saw Third World news account for more than 45% of foreign news.

When ranks are assigned to years (the most recent ranking

'1') and to the percentage of a year's news from a region (the largest percentage of Third World news, 1986's 48.4%, was ranked '1'), it is possible to index the amount of change by computing a correlation coefficient between ranks, _tau_, to use as a 22-year trend score. _Tau_ for Third World news was 0.34, which is significant at the .05 level, indicating positive growth in news of that region over the 22 years.

There was a concomitant decrease in First World news. Only four times during the '80s did the percentage of First World news surpass 40%; from 1969 to 1979, the percentage was _above_ 41% in every year. The computed trend score for First World news was negative and significant (-0.49, $p<.001$), indicating this overall decrease.

Ironically, percentages of First and Third World news were equal overall (43%).

Second World news? The numbers were smaller (14%) and there was no clear trend (_tau_ = .10, n.s.), despite the post-1985 monotonic increase (the result of Glasnost?).

Table 2 also examines the composite "bad news" category's prevalence in the coverage. Overall, 35% of the nearly 10,000 items in the 22-year study qualified as negative news. As striking as that figure is, it exists in something of a void; we lack similar data on percentage of bad news in _domestic_ coverage to compare with it.

However, it is possible to compare across years. The "peak" year for bad news was 1985, while the least bad news was reported in 1990. Recall that Table 1's simple "bad news" category (crime, accidents, etc.) had peaked in 1972.

There is not, however, any discernible trend in the data, despite the range of percentages; _tau_ for the 22 years is an insignificant -0.03. But there were five instances where the year-to-year change was statistically significant (by the Z-test for significant differences between proportions, $p < .05$): 1982-83, 1983-84, 1985-86, 1988-89 and 1989-90. The 1989-90 decrease is intriguing. Does it reflect the influence of more positive coverage of the newly democratized Eastern block nations?

Table 3 provides the "meat" of the analysis, reexamining the percentages of bad news, but controlling for geopolitical region. The inequality in the 22-year totals is startling: across all 22 years, only 22% and 27% of First- and Second-World news was bad news, while a full 50% of Third-World news was bad news. Recall that Table 2 showed only 35% of all items, _ignoring_ geopolitical focus, were bad news.

In nine years, bad news accounted for a majority of Third World news items, with the largest percentage (57.8%) in 1985. In only two years were fewer than 40% of Third World items about bad news. The most "flattering" view of the Third World was provided in 1977, when fewer than a third of the items qualified as bad news. That 1977 percentage was significantly smaller (by the Z-test, $p <.05$) than the 1976 total, while 1978 was significantly larger than 1977. The only other significant change was between 1989 and 1990.

But if it is clear that bad news was a large part of coverage of the Third World, the question remains whether that proportion was increasing or decreasing. In fact, it did not: _tau_ was a non-significant -.05. Meanwhile, the overall foreign newshole was shrinking, while the proportion of coverage devoted to Third World news was increasing (_tau_ = .34).

The largest annual proportions of bad news in First World and Second World news (38% and 39%, respectively) were still well below the overall percentage for Third World news. Trend scores (_tau_) for these two also showed no significant patterns of increase or decrease.

In discussion of Table 2, the significant 1989-1990 change in total bad news had been tentatively attributed to more positive coverage of Eastern bloc nations in 1990. Table 3 shows that was not the case. The 1989-1990 change reflected decreases in First and Third World bad news.

Conclusions

Some would argue, justifiably, that the _Times_ is atypical, and that finding an "over"-emphasis on bad news in the _Times_ can't be generalized to other papers. After all, the paper produces more foreign coverage than most papers. And studies have shown that increased media _attention_ to a nation, regardless whether friend or foe, results in more negative news about that nation because of journalistic news values.[28]

Moreover, others might suggest that to judge the percentage of bad news to be an "over"-emphasis is risky. They would suggest that bad news coverage of Third World nations mirrors the bad news occurring there.

After all, 35% of <u>all</u> foreign news, regardless of focus, is bad news.

Those arguments, however, ignore the regional disparities: half of Third World news is bad news, but only a fourth of First and Second World news is bad news.

More important, perhaps, is the world view that results from both the qualitative difference in coverage of regions and the quantitative trends.

If these data are at all generalizable beyond the <u>Times</u>, the foreign newshole is shrinking. In particular, First World news is decreasing significantly. But <u>Third World news as a proportion of all foreign news is increasing significantly. And nearly half of it is bad news.</u>

That means that Third World bad news seems even more prevalent by comparison. Americans read less negative news about those nations "like" them than about those "unlike" them.

Arguably, negative images of Third World nations ("as rife with conflict")[29] may be more important now, given the de-emphasis on foreign news and on First- and Second-World News.

Bad news is a staple in all reporting, of course. But the data reported here suggest that the disparities among regions that were criticized in the '60s and '70s have continued into the '90s.

Notes

1. Mustapha Masmoudi, "The New World Information Order," Journal of Communication, 29:2:172-198 (Spring 1979).

2. See, for example, Jyotika Ramaprasad and Daniel Riffe, "Effect of U.S.-India Relations on New York Times Coverage," Journalism Quarterly, 64:537-543, 663 (1987).

3. Daniel Riffe and Eugene F. Shaw, "Conflict and Consonance: Coverage of Third World in Two U.S. Papers," Journalism Quarterly, 59:617-626 (1982).

4. Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi, "The 'World of News' Study: Results of International Cooperation," Journal of Communication, 34:1:121-134 (Winter 1984).

5. George Gerbner and George Marvanyi, "The Many Worlds of the World's Press," Journal of Communication, 27:1:52-66 (Winter 1977).

6. Andrew K. Semmel, "Foreign News in Four U.S. Elite Dailies: Some Comparisons," Journalism Quarterly, 53:732-736 (1976).

7. S.M. Mazharul Haque, "Is U.S. Coverage of News in Third World Imbalanced?" Journalism Quarterly, 60:521-524 (1983).

8. Ramaprasad and Riffe, op. cit.; Haque, op. cit.

9. See John A. Lent, "Foreign News in American Media," Journal of Communication, 27:1:46-51 (Winter 1977); or Daniel Riffe, "Foreign Staff Reductions and News Coverage: An Exploratory Comparison of Two Newspapers' Content," paper presented at annual convention, Association for Education in Journalism, East Lansing, 1981.

10. Daniel Riffe, "International News Borrowing: A Trend Analysis," Journalism Quarterly, 61:142-148 (1984); C. Anthony Giffard and Lisa Cohen, "South African TV and Censorship: Does It Reduce Negative Coverage?" Journalism Quarterly, 66:3-10 (1989); and Daniel Riffe, "A Case Study of the Effect of Expulsion of U.S. Correspondents on New York Times Coverage of Iran During the Hostage Crisis," International Communication Bulletin, 26:11-15 (Spring 1991).

11. Michael Emery, "An Endangered Species: The International Newshole," Gannett Center Journal, 3:4:151-164 (1989); and Vernone M. Sparkes and James P. Winter, "Public Interest in Foreign News," Gazette, 26:149-170 (1980).

12. Herbert G. Kariel and Lynn A. Rosenvall, "Factors Influencing International News Flow," Journalism Quarterly, 61:509-516, 666 (1984); and Al Hester, "International Information Flow," in Heinz-Dietrich Fischer and John C. Merrill (eds.) International and Intercultural Communication, 2nd ed. (New York: Hastings House, 1976), pp. 242-250. For an empirical test of these factors, see Tsan-Kuo Chang, Pamela J. Shoemaker and Nancy Brendlinger, "Determinants of International News Coverage in the U.S. Media," Communication Research, 14:4:396-414 (August 1987).

13. Riffe and Shaw, op. cit. For discussion, see Mort Rosenblum, Coups and Earthquakes: Reporting the World for America (New York: Harper & Row, 1979); Leonard Sussmann, Mass News Media and the Third World (Beverlv Hills: Sage, 1977). More recently, see John M. Hamilton and George A. Krimsky, "'Juju' News from Abroad," Gannett Center Journal, 3:4:137-150 (1989).

14. Riffe and Shaw, op. cit.

15. Examination of different sampling techniques suggests that the consecutive-day sample used in this influential Gerbner and Marvanyi study is of highly questionable efficiency and accuracy. See Daniel Riffe, Charles Aust and Stephen Lacy, "The Effectiveness of Random, Consecutive Day and Constructed Week Sampling in Newspaper Content Analysis," Journalism Quarterly (in press).

16. Robert L. Stevenson and Richard R. Cole, "Some Thoughts on the Future of Content Analysis," Gazette, 30:167-176 (1982).

17. Robert L. Stevenson and Donald Lewis Shaw, eds., Foreign News and the New World Information Order (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1984).

18. James B. Weaver, Christopher J. Porter and Margaret E. Evans, "Patterns in Foreign News Coverage On U.S. Network TV: A 10-Year Analysis," Journalism Quarterly, 61:356-363 (1984).

19. William J. Gonzenbach, M. David Arant and Robert L. Stevenson, "The World of U.S. Network Television News: Eighteen Years of Foreign News Coverage," paper presented at the annual convention, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Boston, 1991.

20. Al Hester, "Theoretical Considerations in Predicting Volume and Direction of International Information Flow," Gazette, 19:238-247 (1983).

21. Riffe and Shaw, op. cit.

22. W. James Potter, "News from Three Worlds in Prestige U.S. Newspapers," Journalism Quarterly, 64:73-79, 276 (1987).

23. Daniel Riffe, Charles F. Aust, Ted C. Jones, Barbara Shoemake and Shyam Sundar, "News Items in the 'Shrinking Foreign Newshole': The Case of the New York Times," paper presented at the annual convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Montreal, 1992.

24. Riffe, Aust and Lacy, op. cit.

25. Riffe and Shaw, op. cit.

26. Ole R. Holsti, Content Analysis for the Social Sciences (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), pp. 137-140.

27. Riffe, Aust, Jones, Shoemake and Sundar, op. cit. See also Riffe and Shaw, op. cit.

28. Ramaprasad and Riffe, op. cit.

29. Riffe and Shaw, op. cit.

TABLE 1

Percentage of Topics of International News Items in the New York *Ti*
by Year (1969-1990)

TOPIC:	YEAR: '69 %	'70 %	'71 %	'72 %	'73 %	'74 %	'75 %	'76 %	'77 %	'78 %	'79 %	'80 %	'81 %	'82 %	'83 %	'84 %	'85 %
International																	
relation	15	16	17	13	15	12	14	13	18	17	13	14	12	14	13	15	12
conflict	17	16	16	18	14	13	10	6	7	8	7	9	13	14	16	12	15
economy	6	8	9	7	9	9	10	10	8	8	10	5	8	7	11	7	7
Internal																	
politics	10	8	7	8	5	13	12	12	14	15	12	13	14	19	17	14	15
conflict	9	9	10	9	13	11	13	13	14	14	15	15	10	16	10	16	18
economy	6	7	6	8	9	10	11	13	7	7	8	10	11	9	15	9	5
"Bad News"	6	8	8	12	10	5	7	10	7	9	7	8	8	8	4	9	11
Social Policies	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	3	2	1
Science & Technology	2	2	5	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	1	2	2	1
Arts & Media	6	3	3	3	4	4	2	4	5	3	4	3	4	2	2	2	3
Displaced Persons	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	4	2	4	1	1	1	2
Sports	13	14	10	12	14	12	10	11	9	9	11	10	4	5	5	6	8
Religion	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	0	0	2	0
Human Interest	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	5	3	4	5	4	3	1	3	2
TOTAL	99	100	100	100	102	100	100	100	101	100	99	100	99	100	100	100	100
N =	685	677	562	530	529	540	546	591	433	474	503	357	367	386	392	376	348

NOTE: Columns may not add to 100% because of rounding error.

TABLE 2

Percentage of New York Times Foreign News Items From Three Geopolitical Regions and Percentage of Items that are "Bad News," by Year

YEAR:	GEOPOLITICAL FOCUS: First World %	Second World %	Third World %	(N)	Bad News %
1969	45.4	18.8	35.8	(685)	32.8
1970	46.2	13.0	40.7	(675)	34.9
1971	41.4	15.8	42.8	(563)	35.8
1972	45.3	14.0	40.7	(530)	40.4
1973	46.3	11.3	42.3	(529)	37.2
1974	44.2	12.6	43.1	(540)	32.0
1975	47.2	9.3	43.4	(546)	32.4
1976	45.7	13.4	40.9	(591)	31.6
1977	48.3	11.8	40.0	(433)	29.6
1978	43.0	13.7	43.2	(474)	32.9
1979	44.2	11.9	43.8	(504)	33.0
1980	38.3	14.2	47.5	(360)	33.6
1981	40.0	17.3	42.7	(370)	35.0
1982	41.1	11.7	47.2	(392)	40.3
1983	41.1	12.8	46.2	(392)	31.6
1984	38.3	13.5	48.3	(379)	38.6
1985	41.8	10.3	47.9	(349)	46.0
1986	40.2	11.4	48.4	(341)	38.0
1987	41.9	12.9	45.2	(310)	32.6
1988	39.0	18.0	43.0	(328)	31.3
1989	37.9	20.3	41.8	(311)	39.3
1990	40.4	21.4	38.3	(332)	26.2
TOTAL	43.0	14.0	43.0	(9,934)	35.0
Test for trend: tau=	-.49***	.10	.34*	-.78***	-.03

* p = or < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

TABLE 3

Percentage of New York *Times* Foreign News Items That are "Bad News," by Geopolitical Focus and by Year

	First World Bad %	(n)	Second World Bad %	(n)	Third World Bad %	(n)
1969	19.6	(311)	26.4	(121)	52.2	(253)
1970	21.2	(312)	19.2	(73)	53.6	(291)
1971	23.6	(233)	14.3	(84)	54.7	(245)
1972	26.3	(240)	39.4	(71)	56.2	(219)
1973	23.7	(245)	30.5	(59)	53.8	(225)
1974	17.6	(239)	25.0	(68)	48.9	(233)
1975	17.8	(258)	26.0	(50)	49.6	(238)
1976	21.5	(270)	28.6	(77)	43.9	(244)
1977	25.8	(209)	36.7	(49)	32.0	(175)
1978	24.0	(204)	22.6	(62)	44.7	(208)
1979	16.6	(223)	35.6	(59)	48.9	(221)
1980	21.7	(138)	19.6	(51)	47.6	(168)
1981	23.1	(147)	36.5	(63)	45.2	(157)
1982	36.3	(160)	30.4	(46)	46.7	(180)
1983	14.9	(161)	24.0	(50)	48.6	(181)
1984	17.2	(145)	34.7	(49)	57.1	(182)
1985	37.7	(146)	22.2	(36)	57.8	(166)
1986	25.4	(134)	27.0	(37)	50.9	(163)
1987	19.4	(129)	17.5	(40)	49.6	(139)
1988	17.2	(128)	18.6	(59)	49.6	(139)
1989	25.4	(118)	33.3	(63)	55.4	(130)
1990	14.9	(134)	25.7	(70)	37.8	(127)
TOTAL	22	(4,284)	27	(1,337)	50	(4,284)

Test for trend:

	First World	Second World	Third World
tau =	-.061	-.07	-.05

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Moeller Award: Top Student Paper

PRESS THEORY FOR THE POST-COLD WAR ERA:

TOWARD RECAPTURING THE PUBLIC SPHERE DIALOGUE

Presented to the Mass Communication and Society Division, Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication annual convention, August 11-14, 1993, Kansas City, Missouri

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PRESS THEORY FOR THE POST-COLD WAR ERA: TOWARD RECAPTURING THE PUBLIC SPHERE DIALOGUE

In 1956, the year that Nikita Khrushchev gave his "secret speech" denouncing Stalin to the 20th Party Congress in Moscow, a trio of American academics set forth a typology of Four Theories of the Press, essentially celebrating the rise of the "social responsibility" theory in the United States and contrasting it with its "opposite," the Soviet Communist theory. Based in part on an ethics project one of their number had undertaken for the National Council of Churches, their typology described these theories as contrasting modern iterations of the two classic press philosophies. These are, of course, the original authoritarian born with Gutenberg and the first glimmerings of an opening for widespread access to the potentially subversive ideas that printed matter could contain; and the Enlightenment-based libertarian theory that opposed it, generally traced in history to 1644 and Milton's Aeropagitica, his plea for the right to disseminate opinions independent of state control (except for Catholics -- the source, in Milton's view, of authoritarian information control over "truth").[1] An emerging social responsibility theory was supposed to limit the excesses of libertarianism in the quest for truth in the marketplace of ideas; its outline had been formalized in the report of the Hutchins Commission on Freedom of the Press (1947). In contrast, the Soviet theory was defined as a version of authoritarianism, in which the Communist Party presumed it had a monopoly on truth on behalf of the people, and used the press as an active lever of government in constructing a new social reality.

In Four Theories, Siebert, Peterson and Schramm wrote of a presumed Soviet Communist monolith, at the time unaware of the just-beginning Soviet thaw -- indeed, a movement of which Soviet citizens themselves were only vaguely aware (and still feared to publicly acknowledge). Short-lived as it was, that break in totalitarian control had a major formative impact on such future party operatives as Mikhail Gorbachev and his early braintrust of perestroika, the "children of the 20th Party Congress" who led the end of the Cold War thirty years later.[2]

That the authors thought they were describing a reality which changed even as they described it is a warning of the danger of attempting normative theory, and typologies in particular. Categories are simplifications that can never capture "reality"; while they may seem to apply to everything in general, they certainly describe nothing in particular. The boxes around "types" always have permeable lines where categories leak into one another. But Four theories had, and continues to have, an important role in shaping how press theory is taught, and how the ideal of the press as an agent of democracy is conceptualized. As new democracies emerge while other states (or former states) devolve into authoritarianism and ethnic warfare, normative thinking about the role of the press in society seems to demand new attention outside the limits of descriptive categorical boxes and the former overlay of U.S.-Soviet ideological competition.

Certainly for the governments and people of the successor states of the Soviet Union, thinking about theories of the press, both ideal models and empirical examples, is much more than an academic enterprise. They are in the midst of conscious debates about the type of press systems they ultimately will have, as well as chaotic change in the organization and financing of media organizations. The case of Russia provides a point of departure for considering the possibilities of a role for the press as a agent of the emergence and institutionalization of democratic ideals as a new political system is in the process of being invented.

The former Soviet Union arguably stands at the moment when the mass media-driven "refeudalization" of the public sphere as described by Jürgen Habermas (1991/1962) will or will not occur, developments which will be closely intertwined with the fate of the post-Soviet press. Habermas' "public sphere" -- that space between the people and the state where public opinion was historically shaped and negotiated -- offers a useful foundation for grounding theories of the press and evaluating a post-Soviet future. While the subtitle of Four Theories proclaimed it considered "what the press should be and do," the approach of the book was more a consideration of what governments thought, and what private capital thought from a purely "anti-government" perspective. The power of the typology is evidenced in that all modifications and revisions for 35 years since have been a reaction to the scheme they first laid out. But in many ways, Four Theories obscured more than it revealed. The book and subsequent typologies[3] that aspired to revise it typically attempted to identify and assess the empirical realities of press systems while at the same time describing philosophical foundations. This mixture of levels of analysis is part of what creates the resulting theoretical murkiness.[4]

Habermas offers a deeper context for evaluating the "ought" of what the press is and does in relation to the state and the people. Although not writing a theory of the press by any means, his work has contributed to widespread recognition and broader understanding of the historical reality underlying Western liberal assumptions about the role of the press in democracy. Indeed, his conception of the "public sphere" has become a widely used new catchphrase for the classical ideal of the agora, in which the press makes communication possible in a society where face-to-face speech between citizens and governments is inconceivable. His public sphere is a broader realm than mere politics, but at the same time more specific than a "public arena" because it speaks specifically to relations between citizens and government and the legitimation of state power, in which the press has been an actor and a tool. His evolving critical theory of society has not simply assumed the press is a fundamental mediator of the public sphere -- he asked why this was so, how it came about, and why certain modes of press operation became unquestioned norms. What Habermas described as "refeudalization" of the public sphere was a process that occurred as an outcome of the evolution of Western capitalism and was a fait accompli in the West.[5] His Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, first published in German in 1962 (the year of the Cuban Missile crisis), saw no real hope for change under the structures of "late welfare capitalism" in a mass democracy.

Russia today has the opportunity to recognize this critique and make conscious choices about whether a counterpart of this refeudalization must inevitably occur as a correlate of establishing a market economy and a democratic polity. The following discussion considers the applicability of the "ought" of Habermas' theory of communicative action to the Russian case, and the role of the press in structuring a social order in which "ideal speech" toward a democratic society might occur. It assesses the Russian and U.S. press in the dichotomous context of the authoritarian theory of press subordination to state interests, versus libertarian rights-based claims that the press should be used (and owned) by private individuals as a stronghold against the state. As Lippmann (1937) expressed the American rationale for the libertarian view, private enterprise is assumed to be the only force strong enough to resist the power of the state (p. 437).

Situating the empirical assessment of normative theories in time and space draws attention to the very different U.S. and Russian historical contexts that inform the possibilities for how press theories might be operationalized in the future. In the U.S., government intervention is anathema for almost any reason, while in Russia the government can be a natural site for ensuring that the press serves democracy free from the anathema of market inequities. When such questions are removed from either-or absolutes and the reflexive self-defense reaction on either side that delimited such debates in Cold War posturing in the past, press philosophies -- as ideals and as operative reality -- can be considered as something other than ideological alternatives.

This exploration of the purposes and possibilities of the role of the press in the public sphere argues that it is necessary to consider means to operationalize ideals by looking beyond extremist and simplistic views of the ultimate primacy of either the state or the market, a perspective in which Habermas' philosophy has particular utility. By considering not just how certain kinds of government intervention may enhance or inhibit a democratic role for the press, but also the "other" end of communication processes -- how individuals use the media in society -- the following discussion frames theory and ideals as both essential and useable touchstones in the continuing debate over real-world possibilities.

THE RUSSIAN STRUGGLE FOR PRESS CONTROL

Certainly the Russians believe the press has a crucial role to play in shaping the future of the state, and are devoting a great deal of energy in their political struggle to how the press will be allowed to function in the new democracy. President Boris Yeltsin and the Supreme Soviet, Russia's standing legislature, still populated with numerous old-line Communists who oppose the pace (and some, even the goals) of free-market reforms, went to war during last year's session of the full Congress of Deputies over the right to control Izvestia, traditionally the press organ of the Soviet government (parallel to Pravda's role as the organ of the Communist Party), after the Izvestia worker's collective of journalists asserted their right to take an independent line following the coup attempt of August 1991 -- a line which happened to support Yeltsin's fast-paced market reforms that many members of the Supreme Soviet opposed. Yeltsin and the Izvestia journalists won that conflict, at least for the time being, but such resentments continue to smolder and other open battles continue to be waged.[6]

Another press-related contest at the highest levels of power demonstrates the centrality of press issues to political jockeying for power and position. After Yeltsin supporter Mikhail Poltoranin was removed from his post as vice premier to assuage the conservative opposition, he re-emerged as the head of a new "Federal Information Center" founded by presidential decree on Dec. 25, 1992. The Russian parliament, led by Prime Minister Ruslan Khasbulatov, an intransigent Yeltsin opponent, has vociferously attacked the center's creation, "as they believe that the FIC can monopolize public opinion influencing the outcome of the referendum on the major provisions of Russia's constitution" (Grishchenko, 1993).[7]

Most recently, in a raucous special session of the full Congress of People's Deputies (convened in reaction to Yeltsin's declaration of "special rule" by presidential decree and in which he barely survived an impeachment attempt), the Deputies on March 29 passed a hastily drafted resolution placing state television and radio under legislative control, wresting it away from the executive branch. Declaring the Congress' move a grave setback for glasnost, the administration claimed the resolution violated the Law on the Press and would be challenged in the Constitutional Court (Bohlen, 1993b), but as of the end of March, the outcome and implications of this latest maneuver remained uncertain.

The on-going power struggles and the continuing birth of new newspapers as the first act of every new interest group that emerges in Russia is evidence that the press is still seen as a central actor, both as a source of public expression and a potential means for the government to attempt to influence public opinion. Indeed, editors and journalists were among the first groups in society that Gorbachev originally sought to enlist for the promotion of perestroika and democratization, programs in which glasnost in the news media was a fundamental element (although the eventual outcome in the fall of the Communist Party and his leadership was obviously far from what he had intended). The press in Russia is unquestionably viewed as a major participant in the public sphere.

The current debate in Russia can be framed as two distinct arguments, one proceeding from a shared assumption that the press should join in a quest for truth that ought to be pursued in the public sphere; and the second taking an opposed view that the state should play the leading role in deciding what the public sphere ought to be allowed to discuss. In the first argument, libertarian proponents of unfettered "freedom" and purely private financing of the press oppose those who would restrain commercialism with a version of a social responsibility model that allows room for government intervention to enforce "responsibility."

It is this shared philosophical definition of freedom, but different visions of operating principles, that describes the current mix of commercial, political, serious and "popular" newspapers being published in the primary urban centers,[8] and under which advocates of a need for greater responsibility constantly charge the press with promoting negativism, slander and worse (Tolz, 1993) -- although simply publishing these charges in other newspapers is more common than lawsuits in the current chaos. During his term as press minister, the liberal Yeltsin ally Mikhail Poltoranin expressed the view of many when he wrote that, "the general standards of the press depress us. People are indignant about cases of disinformation, shamelessness, calls for violence, and its kind of maniacal attraction for demeaning human dignity" (Poltoranin, 1992). His view from a liberal, pro-democracy position was that stronger laws to clarify journalistic responsibility would rein in these excesses -- exactly what libertarian advocates fear. Their focus is on who defines what is "responsible" as well as on the strings that might be attached to government financial assistance on behalf of press diversity, both seen as steps along the "slippery slope" to government control over content.

The same criticism of press irresponsibility used by liberal proponents of social responsibility does in fact feed the opposition position of conservatives who seek a return to having "responsible" defined solely by state officials, who should determine what information is appropriate for the press to disseminate. In this view, press revelations about the Soviet past (and even scandals in the present) harm the self-image and prestige of the country and are a drain on social morale.[9] This neo-Soviet position is not now the ascendant view of what role the press should play in society, but its power should not be underestimated as a possible future.

HABERMAS AS AN IDEAL

Before considering the question of whether and to what degree the market or the government will be responsible for shaping the future of the Russian press and its relationship to creating a democracy, it is important to anchor the argument about "is" and "will be" more firmly in the underlying question of "ought." This requires a return to the role Habermas has described the press as playing in a time of massive social change. Russia today stands at the stage analogous to that in which Habermas suggested the refeudalization of the public sphere occurred in the West -- where the press is "a mediator and intensifier of public discussion, but not yet the medium of a consumer culture" (1974, p.53). From this perspective, libertarian extremists are saying "let the refeudalization proceed" while social responsibility advocates hope to temper what Habermas suggests the market will inevitably impose.

Habermas has increasingly begun to appear as a referent in mass communication literature, breaking out of purely critical studies tradition. Considered a pragmatic and less rigidly ideological representative of the Frankfort School of critical theory (the translator of his Communicative Action notes that he has been called "the last great rationalist"), it is not surprising that a philosopher has attracted widespread attention in communication research traditions for the central role he assigns to the press in social life. Habermas has assumed a particular commitment to useability -- the idea that a social theory must cross philosophy and empirical social science. He pursues rationality by investigating the critique of rationality, and expresses his goal as linking "the formation of basic concepts and the treatment of substantive issues" (1984, p. xi). Habermas' conception of the "ideal speech situation" or "ideal discourse" is linguistic, phenomenological and perhaps even transcendental, but he rejects the label of "metatheory" for his work because his goal is to arrive at useable foundations. Communication, the legitimation of state power, and the press are intertwined in his dense volumes, an extensive body of work rapidly appearing in English translation. And his thought has been written about enough to be widely accessible. His philosophical thinking has launched a virtual explosion of applications and empirical studies out of his formalist, "utopian" conception of the ideal speech situation.[10]

Fundamentally, Habermas posits an ideal situation in which "everyone" has a fair shot at participating in democratic argumentation. His conception is an ideal discourse that eliminates repression and inequality (Meyer, 1992) and is therefore not necessarily any system that exists in reality anywhere in the world. But central to this normative ideal is the focus on a process of communication -- not of the speaker and the listener but of equal communicators seeking to understand one another and the larger society in which they must live, negotiate shared meanings, and arrive at justice and self-realization for all members of society (the ideal, which is pre-supposed in the structure of communication itself, would have application on a local or global level).

Critical theory prior to Habermas was much less interested in communication as a potential negotiated transaction. In the view of those who Habermas references as the "classical" social theorists -- Weber, Durkheim, Mead, Parsons, Marcuse, Adorno -- audiences were alienated by modernism, passively influenced by propaganda, in the thrall of consumer culture, or suffering from the disaffectation that is the result of hegemony, depending on source of a particular viewpoint.[11] Whether conceptualized as active or passive, conscious or unconscious, the hypothetical "audience" of earlier strands of critical theory was not viewed as a participant in a transactional dialogue, or as constructing its own meanings -- whether shared, oppositional, or otherwise, as various perspectives on audience studies and reception studies have argued. Mass audiences were assumed to be deeply affected in some way by the mass media (and mass culture in general). But they generally were not talking back.

How "talking back" might occur is part of what Habermas is attempting to outline as a normative system. In particular, as Forester (1985) expresses Habermas' basic question, he is interested in solving the puzzle of "How can we understand the social construction and management of political consent?" and approaches it from a fundamental communicative standpoint. The roots of these questions are linked specifically to the press in The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, in which the mass press was an agent of "refeudalization."

Briefly stated, this theory runs as follows: the genesis of newspapers under libertarian press theory originally created an opportunity for the public (although only the bourgeois public) to communicate with themselves and state power through newspapers, which challenged and replaced the norms of the feudal age wherein the nobility had simply displayed their power before the public. In these early newspapers, "a press that had evolved out of the public's use of its reason and that had merely been an extension of its debate remained thoroughly an institution of this very public...the capital for running the enterprise was only secondarily invested for the sake of a profitable return" (1991, pp. 183-84). But this opening for rational debate by private individuals about their place in the public structures of power was then gradually lost again to new concentrations of elite power, when profit over polemics became the goal of the owners. The evolution from "a journalism of conviction to one of commerce" (1974, p.53) saw the emergence of the new press lords.

In his later work, Habermas narrows his social theory investigations to philosophical concepts of self and subjectivity, in which the role of the press is not addressed explicitly. In contrast, others have suggested that normative thinking needs a wider evaluative frame. For example, McQuail (1992), suggesting that it might be wise to give up the pursuit of press theories because they can, among other problems, be "over idealistic" (p.66), also argues that the press-state relationship fails to account for other forms of media, from cinema, music and video to sport, fiction and entertainment on television that reproduce state power on other levels and that should be accounted for in social-normative thinking. New technologies and "development participant" concepts of communication, following the tradition of the cultural critique of Raymond Williams (1966) and others who emphasize the need to consider a "right" to transmit as well as to receive, have transformed definitions of what mass communication entails.[12] These are important points. So, indeed, is the need to move beyond media to consideration of the communication functions of education, architecture, and policymaking, as well as other forms of cultural transmission (or negotiation), and how hidden but fundamental structures such as patriarchy have shaped them.[13]

But in a "public sphere" frame, as opposed to larger cultural questions, explicit political content does exist in "the press" and is both expressed and understood as something distinct from music, soap operas, the spectacle of big-time sports, or the design of urban skyscrapers. This is not to deny the ideological content or implications of all elements of communication industries or the symbolic world. But the explicit press-politics role still demands continued attention to the way it is used, in the way it is ignored, and particularly in the way it is created. As Sparks (1992) has noted, "the press is still crucial to the possibilities of democratic life" (p.38). Using Habermas as a framework may seem to be an "over idealistic" source to inform real-world debates, but his thought is a critical addition not only to envisioning hopeful possibilities for the future, but as a way of analyzing what trends and structures must be considered as potential determinates of the possible outcomes in Russia.

FORMS AND NORMS

Trends and structures that emerged in the U.S. past can be informative for the Russian present. Without overstating the comparison to a different (and pre-nuclear) age, there are obvious parallels in Russia's chaotic market today to the age of the "robber barons" in the development of American capitalism. In the same vein, U.S. press history offers useful lessons for the post-Soviet present and how Russia's differences might be turned to the advantage of democratic processes (Holstein, 1993). The structures and forms of journalism as practiced in the U.S. today evolved out of libertarian theory and became "refeudalized" in ways that seem to reduce rather than enhance the public sphere role of the press.

Hallin (1985) provides a telling example of what has changed in the press in comparing a newspaper published by Benjamin Franklin to a CBS network news report today. The early newspaper "speaks to its readers in a personal tone, at an equal level. It invites them to participate in political discussion. CBS speaks to its audience as a provider of authoritative information. It solicits nothing beyond their attention, solicits of them no active role regarding the political material reported...." (p. 153).

This interactional concept of the function the press might serve in the public sphere is what Habermas believes was lost in the historical bourgeois public sphere, as capturing an ever-larger audience to deliver to advertisers replaced the dissemination of political polemics as the "purpose" of the press. His outline of this transformation presented an admittedly over-simplified and romanticized version of the past, as he later stated (Meyer, 1992), but his essential point retains its power. The implications of this "commodification" of a mass audience for the role of the press in sustaining democracy have been explored by various authors who look to the past for ideals that might be reconstituted for the American future, but that could have equal applicability to Russia's evolving mass-mediated public sphere.

Early American newspapers viewed readers as voters (Baldasty, 1991) and editors and publishers (often co-terminus in that era) considered it a duty to speak their minds.[14] Horace Greeley announced his New York Tribune would be free from "gagged, mincing neutrality" when he founded his newspaper in 1841 (Lasch, 1990, p. 4). Another editor, just after the Civil War, declared that any publisher who failed to take a stand for one of the two major parties was "a man without opinions, or without principles, or without perception, and in either case is wholly unfit to be an editor" (McGerr, 1986, p. 116, quoting G.W. Curtis). As another historian has noted with direct attention to the transactional nature of the early American press, it was these political and contentious newspapers that "made the *dialogue* possible" in the early American democracy (Nord, 1991, p. 405, emphasis added). Carey (1987), in an historical overview of the development of the U.S. press, suggests the real problem today is that the public itself has been dissolved as a site of discourse on public life.

His recommendation for its reconstitution, following Kenneth Burke and the other "dialogue" arguments here, is also to conceive of journalism "less on the model of information and more on the model of a conversation" (p. 14).

Hallin (1992) thinks progress on restoring the public sphere might be made through the media by acknowledging the "passing of the high modernism of American journalism," when the role of the U.S. journalist in society once "seemed fully rationalized" (p. 16) as an "objective" reporter of political debate. In his developing critique of the democratic role of the press, Hallin emphasizes how the modus operandi of professionalized U.S. journalism has turned to considering and reporting the means, forgetting what the ultimate ends are or ought to be. He has extended Habermas' critique of the impact of "the scientization of politics" to the scientization of the press: in the rise of forms of journalism that focus on means, strategies and techniques -- technical questions -- over ends, something critical to a public sphere dialogue has been lost.

Most of these and similar analyses link this kind of negative impact of professionalism to the increasing emphasis on supposed "objectivity" that became embedded in journalism as a "strategic ritual" (Tuchman, 1976) in which detachment or disinterest has become transmuted into cynicism; reporting focuses on the processes of politics (the horse race and whose campaign is more <u>effective</u>), rather than the ends to be achieved as the result (what the candidates <u>stand</u> for). The importance of campaign spin doctors who manage the press and the sound bites, and the spectacle of politics as a series of staged "media events" have become the norm in the U.S. In coverage of politics, journalists became "players in a game not of their own scripting; they could be had, and were actively being had, by savvy handlers" (Gitlin, 1991, p. 123; Semetko, et.

al., 1991). This insidious link between reporters and sources has a long history in the specific context of how "political reporting" arose as a distinct subset of the organization of journalism into a profession and how the close intertwining of elite journalists and "official" sources evolved as a mutually advantageous system of reporting on political affairs.[15] Gitlin's "prehistory" of sound bites and spectacles, from mass rallies to negative sloganeering, also reminds us these are not new phenomena, but there is indeed a qualitative difference today. The mass rallies of old expected their audiences to march in the parade; the mass media of today are agents and enablers of sitting on the sidelines passively (even if cynically) just watching the spectacle go by. The result is "political withdrawal along with pseudo-sophistication" that drives a different kind of politics focused on personalities and the packaging of empty pageantry and photo opportunities which define "the politics of the consumer society" (Gitlin, 1991, p. 132, 131).

The norm of U.S. and much of Western journalism is that experts speak about politics while the public has been increasingly distanced from participation. As Schudson (1978), Tuchman (1976), Schiller (1981), Gans (1979) and other sociologists of news production have shown, the ideology embedded in the routines of newsgathering may be more significant to what is reported than the ideology in reporters' heads. But as Hallin (1985) has noted, such a perspective fails to explain why particular ideologies and norms became the dominant ones. The forms of "news" that seem to emerge from these unthinking routines are part of creating the fragmented representation of reality that has ideological consequences for structuring an atomized, randomized world without context. The narrative forms of news, especially (but not only) on television, can in fact actively discourage the viewer from making connections between ideas.[16] The disassociation of the experts and officials on the news from the lived experience of most viewers makes television seem to present "news from another planet" (Lewis, 1991, p. 142) or, ranging even farther afield, "news from nowhere" (Epstein, 1973). Fragmentation and "expertise" seem inextricably linked with each other, and to public distancing from public sphere participation.

Habermas' attachment of culpability to the "scientization" of public sphere questions in the past suggests how an understanding of the way things used to be can offer ideas that might be recaptured from older norms -- even in the modern media context that includes broadcasting. Hallin suggests a return to an older form of the journalist's personal voice, something not quite like the "new journalism" of the late 1960s, but closer to the days of Edward R. Murrow or Bill Shirer, when the voice of the journalist was acknowledged rather than concealed with artificial professional distance and "objectivity."

WHAT IS TO BE DONE? RECAPTURING THE DIALOGUE

This is in fact very much like the form of journalism practiced in Russia today -- a more personal and polemical involvement in issues, as opposed to professional detachment. The traditions of Soviet journalism have always defined "news" as "opinion and interpretation rather than description of individual, isolated events" (Hopkins, 1970, p. 158) or the collection of "factoids." Not only do journalists have an explicit right to gather information under the new Russian Law on the Press, their professional independence to express their views is ostensibly protected from encroachment not just by the government, but also by owners. When the recent creation of the new Federal Information Center led to charges that it was being established as a propaganda arm for Yeltsin's presidency, the current Russian press minister denied it could be possible on the grounds that any attempt to interfere with editorial collectives' professional autonomy "would be a gross breach of the law" (Fedotov, 1993). Even considering that the current law is very much untested -- indeed, is still being contested by conservatives and Communists who disagree with its emphasis on freedom from government control -- M. Fedotov stressed that the current priorities of his press ministry include two areas of emphasis: protection for the right of citizens to information and "of the corresponding professional rights of workers in the press" (Vaynonen, 1993, p. 33). This includes protection against "encroachments by founders," in which Fedotov includes not only new capitalist owners, but politicians who have newspapers that serve as "official" organs of parties and government units (p. 34).

The voice of the Russian press also is generally not only personal, but unabashedly polemical. Pravda claims its journalists intend to protect "working people" from ill-guided government and will "serve this cause with commitment and, if necessary, with anger" (Yashin, 1992, p. 38). Also planning to be angry is a new newspaper founded by the "Economic Freedom" Party last fall as a party newspaper that also takes an "independent" line. Sounding very much like Horace Greeley and his contemporaries, the editors announced the newspaper seeks to be "to be feared and hated by parasites and careerists, bribe-takers and rogues of all kinds, bureaucrats and scoundrels" (Borovoy, 1992). Izvestia's editorial view, following its emergence from the political struggle over its control, claims its intention is "to serve democracy and human rights" and "to inform our readers honestly and objectively without concealing our views but also without imposing propaganda cliches on anyone" (Nadein, 1992, p. 45, emphasis added).

This is a different definition of "professional" than what is implied in the American concept that equates journalistic professionalism with a "technical" perspective of detached objectivity. The different context of the Russian definition is manifest in the expressed political viewpoints from which "objectivity" proceeds. From this perspective, professionalism can mean more than detached cynicism. It can also mean commitment.

WHAT ROLE FOR PROFESSIONALISM?

Interestingly, the social responsibility theory outlined in Four Theories suggested that professionalism might be a source for the institutionalization of a "public trust" ideal as a new norm to supersede the negative effects of commercialism in American journalism. This was offered up as an alternative to the threat of government intervention that the Hutchins Commission had suggested as the potential enforcer of journalistic responsibility (Commission, 1947) -- a threat which accounted for much of the negative media reaction to the report when it was issued (Siebert et. al., 1956/1973, p. 85). Historically, American journalism has a cherished tradition as the voice of the underdog (although more often as the idealized exception than the operational norm, as Schudson (1978) and Schiller (1981) have amply documented in their historical studies of the evolution of American journalism). In modern times, Weaver and Wilhoit (1986) found an image of altruism to be a strong motivation for professional journalists in the U.S., which Gans (1979) also identified in the context of how individual journalists maneuver to break out of organizational constraints.

This conceptualization of professionalism is what allows, and in fact requires, the routines and norms of commercial U.S. journalism to continue to grant access to "out-groups." Despite a well-documented tendency for American journalists to prefer official sources, non-official sources do get "in." The slowness of the process by which commercial journalism's norms let out-groups make their voices heard in the mainstream press fits the fundamental journalistic frame: gradualist change and Progressive, "good government" values (Gans, 1979). Within the status quo frameworks of existing state and business relations and of the capitalistic, commercial press, there is no real mystery to what makes "news" and out-groups have learned the strategies that succeed. Thus there is more access than an over-emphasis on theories of hegemonic capitalistic control would admit. For example, alternative interpretations of the Vietnam War did enter the mainstream media; environmentalists opposing big business have learned how to attract media coverage -- as have terrorists (Schlesinger, 1991).

This development, however, is part of what Habermas criticizes as harmful to true communication in the public sphere. Habermas' critique is that it is not "people" who have emerged, but "interests." The public sphere dissolves when it is mediating competing interests, rather than serving as a forum for the rational discourse of private individuals. Governments that manage interests rely on consensus of what is technically possible rather than what is morally right; while interest groups must rely on publicity and strategic action (gamesmanship, in common parlance) to fit themselves into the commercial media's norms. This is not "communication" in the ideal sense Habermas describes.

Dahlgren (1991) suggests a two-tiered public sphere is emerging in the formation of oppositional groups as they compete for media attention, and in a similar vein Jakubowicz (1991) has suggested that three public spheres were operating in Poland as Soviet power was contested by the Catholic church and Solidarity. As a positive development, such a conception of multiple spheres shows a path for new interpretive frames to enter the dominant discourse. But it is not necessarily a public sphere in the ideal sense Habermas describes unless there are opportunities for discourse that provide equal access in a "rational" (as opposed to strategic or technical) framework. This would have been true, for example, in Poland were fundamental ends and moral rights were being debated. It is more problematical from the "special interests" perspective of American politics. Essentially, however, whether rational or strategic communication is taking place as out-groups seek to be heard, it is the self-definition of journalists who view their role as transmitting a diversity of opinions -- the pursuit of the myth of objectivity -- that offers one approach to the question of how "ideal speech" might be approximated. In the U.S. tradition, the problematical idea of objectivity at least sends journalists to search for sources with whom they do not necessarily agree, which gives regular (even if limited) access to oppositional views in a tentative form of dialogue. The greater the journalist's autonomy from the commercial interests of owners, the more common this phenomenon can be -- and, correspondingly, the broader the framework within which opposition can be articulated.

The development that offers hope for how journalistic norms might evolve in Russia to a potentially more autonomous professional ethic, is the attention devoted to the rights (as well as the special responsibilities) of journalists in the Law on the Press of 1990, which specifically stated that no journalist could be required to write against his or her convictions, principles reaffirmed in the Russian Press Law that became effective Feb. 6, 1992.[17] Although members of the government opposed to Yeltsin continue to call for amendments to the law, the principles affirm a search for a moral high ground that would be embodied in journalists themselves.

This emphasis also is expressed by such views as those of the dean of the journalism school at Moscow State University. Writing in Izvestia two weeks after the August coup of 1991, he suggested that the "big lie" about Gorbachev's "illness" would not have been possible if journalists had known the whereabouts of his dacha (still a secret before his internment there) and then taken the initiative to go out and see his condition for themselves. In so doing, journalists would have been acting -- appropriately -- as surrogates for the people's right to know things for themselves rather than be forced to reply on government reports. "The press must be responsible," he wrote, "but not to the President, the Prime Minister, or the Supreme Soviet, but rather to the people, to its readers, listeners and viewers" (Zassoursky, 1991).

Journalists can thus be viewed as protecting the democratic "dialogue" that has so often been recommended. But for a dialogue to occur, the public has to talk back. This other end of the transaction also raises questions for the public sphere role the press should be expected -- or compelled -- to perform.

A DUTY TO COMMUNICATE

The social responsibility theory of the press also implies a social responsibility of citizens to be informed. This public affairs duty of citizens in a democracy was explicit in the Hutchins Commission report, which in 1947 was to some extent a reaction against the presumed monolithic power of Nazi propaganda, implying that things could have been different in Germany if citizens had taken seriously their duty to be informed about political events.

Habermas' public sphere, too, assumes a duty of individuals who live in society to participate, and to allow others to participate. It is an assumption of public life from the Greek agora that made political participation the highest calling of a "citizen"; it was explicitly part of the democratic theory of the founders of the United States (and as the concept of citizenship has expanded beyond white males of the propertied classes, so has the concept of duty). Throughout liberal theory, the role of the press and the role of a public sphere of citizens informed by the press is posited to be essential to democracy; correspondingly, a commercial press has long been criticized for delimiting access to such rights. As the current Russian debate about government subsidies shows, it is standard thinking to assume an immeasurable value to protecting a plurality of voices. But what is a realistic government obligation to provide for diversity when the people supposedly benefitting don't necessarily avail themselves of their options?

A presumed government obligation to provide subsidies to newspapers is frequently characterized by Russian journalists and politicians as protection from an inequitable market and utterly essential to press freedom itself. As the Council of Journalists' Union stated in a proclamation in favor of subsidies, "Only the state can protect subscribers and ensure their legitimate right to information" (Government, 1991). But advertising also is simultaneously being accepted as a foundation for the press even as "workers collectives" claim ownership and the right to elect their editors. There also are thoroughly commercialized editors who attack the very idea of subsidies as the specter of renewed government information control. One calls them a "blasphemy" and "a disgrace for the journalists who take them" (Bohlen, 1993).

Alternately, subsidies are called unfair protection for lazy editors who expect to be rescued from their own poor planning by the state and "see future subsidies as wages" (Fedotov, 1993, p. 23). The current direction of the debate as characterized by press minister M. Fedotov seems to be that the market (defined as consumer choices about which newspapers to purchase) will be allowed to rule ("There must be natural selection: some will survive, some will perish," p. 32), but at the same time, the government will help -- a little. Printing and distribution have been declared monopoly enterprises (Yeltsin, 1992) to allow the government to attempt to control the kind of rampant inflation under which newsprint costs at one of the largest newspapers, Komsomolskaya Pravda, rose in 1992 from 300 rubles per ton to 13,000 rubles per ton (Clines, 1992). Direct subsidies have been committed to non-commercial newspapers, although the emphasis of the current program is on subsidizing publications for children, and scientific, medical and cultural journals. While major newspapers in Moscow and St. Petersburg have received support, including pro-Yeltsin Izvestia and anti-Yeltsin Pravda, charges of political favoritism in the allocation system continue to fly. Other proposals for indirect subsidies, such as favored postal rates, and special loans and tax treatment are locked in parliamentary battles.

A council of editors and parliamentary deputies is being discussed as the best means to formulate directives for how the current ad hoc subsidy program is to be administered in the future, but it is plain that subsidies will be limited. The press minister has made clear that financial reality will set boundaries to the on-going debate: "We should not support all newspapers and journals without exception -- there is not enough money to go around" (Fedotov, 1993, p. 33). The resolution of funding problems in the press is not the highest priority given Russia's larger economic crisis, but the situation stands at a critical juncture. No matter what the size of the grants involved might be, the principle of government subsidies for newspapers is an important one in shaping what kind of newspapers will survive in the current economic jungle.

Applying Habermas to this debate would question the wisdom of those who would recommend advertising as a financial base in lieu of government involvement in press financing: when the press is inserted into the process of mediating the public sphere, its role ought to be to contribute to a discourse of higher goals and values; a commercial press based on advertising by definition cannot assist in this function. The wholly commercial press assumed in the libertarian perspective inevitably elevates consumer values over political ones and, by implication, over the public good. Following this line of reasoning, government subsidies might in theory prevent the structural transformation of the public sphere into a vehicle for the promulgation of consumerist values.

But how might this idealized proposal turn out in reality? One example of an operating model of government protection of plurality is Scandinavia, where subsidies to the press over the past 20 years have been designed with the explicit intention of sustaining diverse political content in newspapers. The popularity of suggesting the Nordic model as a solution to the many problems of an advertising-dependent press merits an overview of the problems the Scandinavian press has encountered.

THE NORDIC MODEL -- NOT?

The role explicitly assigned to the press in the Nordic nations does seem close to the concept of idealistic visions about the media acting in the public sphere. Indeed, Denmark's media policy explicitly called on Habermas as informing the rationale for state support for the press (Cheesman and Kyn, 1991). Another observer notes, "There are few countries where the press is so important to the total political process as it is in Sweden" (Picard, 1988, p. 31, quoting Board, 1970). But current trends are not encouraging.

In 1988, Picard could write optimistically about the democratic socialist press, claiming the success of the Nordic model for supporting freedom, independence and democratic pluralism; there might be caps on financial support, but there was an overall political commitment to nurture the continued functioning of a public sphere through a diversity of newspapers. In 1991, a new survey of the Nordic press was not so sanguine.[18] Costs are up, the number of newspapers is down; monopolization is spreading and market interests are gaining ascendancy after years of being held at bay through political decisions to promote press diversity through public funding.

Finland has seen a pattern of larger provincial newspapers purchasing smaller papers in their region, leading to increasing concentrations of ownership and fewer choices for readers in smaller urban areas (Jyrkiäinen and Hujanen, 1991). The tendency of Denmark's newspapers to move from political partisanship to an "omnibus" outlook means Danish newspapers are becoming increasingly alike and "do not very well reflect any democratic plurality" (Cheesman and Kyn, 1991, p. 6). Sweden seems to be "drifting away from its traditional political context" with the decline of the Social Democratic political consensus and rise of Conservative Party leaders who have traditionally opposed the press subsidy system; and is experiencing a greater trend toward the primacy of market forces in measuring newspapers' success (Weibull and Anshelm, p.56).

The Social Democratic versus Conservative philosophy on subsidies is a consistent pattern, fitting their opposed political views toward government-directed intervention to achieve a "social good," such as that which a press subsidy system represents.[19] Norway, too, has faced Conservative Party attempts to cut press subsidies for the past decade; last year, the new Conservative government suggested abandoning the system altogether (so far, the Conservatives have been held off only by opposition from its coalition partner, the Center Party). Nonetheless, the main direction of change in Norway also has been "toward increased importance of the market" (Østbye, 1991, p. 19).

The press of Sweden in particular has especially been touted as "probably the freest in the world' (Sparks, 1992, p. 48) and an example of how the press may be both government subsidized and free. But it also should be noted that this model of journalism is still very much tied to the status quo, with subsidy formulas tied to political parties and the ability of new parties to gather critical mass <u>prior</u> to qualifying for subsidies. And declining circulation of the newspapers of smaller parties suggests that the public is not necessarily as interested in paying attention to the political press as it is in receiving the broader mix of content that an "omnibus" press provides.

NO ESCAPE FROM THE COMMERCIAL PRESS?

Thus the point of other elements of culture transmitted or transacted via the press must be taken into account -- people will get their news from outlets that also meet their other wants and needs. Just as Americans in two-newspaper towns used to select the newspaper they subscribed to based on which one had their favorite serialized comic strips, the public audience for democratic information seems to by and large consider political news incidental to the other purposes that the press serves in their daily lives. The problem is perhaps not so much a production failure in what is available, as a consumption failure in what the public seems to want to read (Entman and Wildman, 1992).

Russia also is seeing a contraction in readership, despite the level of public interest that might be imputed in a young democracy where first principles for organizing the government itself are at issue. Certainly consumption was extensive when the shift away from state control of the press broadened opportunities to openly debate political ideas. The Soviet transition began with everyone reading everything, a virtual explosion of "news" that built steadily after Gorbachev announced his policy of glasnost in a speech to the Central Committee Plenum in January 1987. Initial progress was slow and uneven and less an agent of change than "an affirmation that change had taken place" (Johnson, 1990); but overall newspaper and magazine circulations exploded, increasing by one estimate by over 18 million in 1989 alone (Lapidus, 1989). The explosion also included immediate success for newspapers and magazines devoted to reports of UFOs, beauty pageants, and complete with soft-core pornography (McNair, 1991). But the reformist political press was hugely popular. Public bulletin boards outside editorial offices in Moscow and St. Petersburg where new editions are posted were crowded with readers. One writer, tongue firmly in cheek, blamed glasnost for a decline in productivity in Moscow with the complaint: "How can you work when there is so much to read?" (Guide, 1988, p. 39).

In 1993, the press is no longer as diverse or extensive. During the past year, the circulations of the leading newspapers dropped by an average of a third, while the cost of subscriptions increased more than twenty-fold (20 times, not 20 percent). A journalist at the influential weekly Moscow News assessed the situation as a function of how "the population's excessive attention to public and political affairs and, accordingly, to publications has dropped to a normal level" (Veslov, 1993, p. 31).

Some of the most dramatic circulation fall-offs as reported in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press (Circulation, 1993), are the pro-government Komsomolskaya pravda, from 12.9 million to

1.8 million; and Izvestia, from 3 million to a mere 800,000 subscriptions, with similar proportional changes in kiosk sales. Pravda, still calling itself the voice of Communism but with a new dedication to democratic methods for its achievement, has seen its subscriptions reduced by half since January 1992, from 983,000 to less than half a million in the January 1993 subscription period; its circulation as the official voice of the ruling Party was once 11 million. As a "non-commercial" newspaper, Pravda is eligible for government subsidies, but now receives the bulk of its financial support from a Greek publishing company headed by an old-line Greek Communist linked both to a shady background with the KGB and to arms deals.[20] It remains a consistent critic of the government, and its continued receipt of subsidies is considered a test of how even-handed the government subsidies program will be. After an initial faltering following the coup attempt of August 1991, when Pravda and several other newspapers were temporarily banned, the government seems to be meeting the test and continuing to provide support to this opposition voice.

The public, however, seems to be making its newspaper reading decisions based less on whether a newspaper supports or opposes market reform than on other content. Among the most successful new newspapers today are those that share a focus on popular culture, crime and sports. As a New York Times reporter concluded after talking with the editor of one of Moscow's most successful commercial newspapers, Moskovsky Komsomolets, "Russian readers are weary of news, particularly about politics" (Bohlen, 1993). And the editor explains with pride the inspiration for his newspaper's winning formula: their stories are packaged "in short, concise form, with headlines that don't make people think too long." Its subscriptions held relatively steady, dropping from 1.7 to 1.2

million and kiosk sales from 1.6 to 1.3 million; its smaller counterpart with a popular culture focus, Vechernaya Moskva, was one of the few newspapers whose subscription sales actually rose, from 430,000 to 480,000.

The current situation in Russia, as well as the recent Swedish experience, seem to validate Spark's (1992) conclusion in an overview of the prospects for Eastern Europe that the economic logic of newspapers dictates inevitable stratification, with a "serious" and a "popular" press serving two economically defined classes (Gitlin's (1991) term as applied to the U.S. press and politics is "bifurcation"). In the economic logic of newspapers, advertisers are simply more interested in elites (who have funds to purchase commodities). Unlike the logic of television where ad rates are tied to market shares, newspapers get no direct benefit in being able to charge more to advertisers to attract those other readers; serving additional readers is simply a cost of printing extra issues. Thus newspapers serving an "upscale" market (and most likely to concentrate on serious political content) can attract ads and succeed with a relatively smaller readership base than those serving poorer readers, which tend to be more dependent on sales for a larger proportion of revenue and therefore turn to sensationalism to generate newsstand purchases. The emergence of a more serious press for elites and a less serious one for the hoi polloi seems endemic when commercial concerns -- that is, advertising and market sales -- are the sole economic foundation for the press. But Russian developments, which clearly bear out the emergence of this bifurcation, also indicate that it is not necessarily the impact of advertising alone that drives the segmentation. Indeed, the newsprint shortage ensures that space limitations will prevent much expansion of advertising content for the time being.

Curran and his co-authors (1980) also warn against overstating the serious-versus-popular press division; the quality press also tends to be heavily loaded with "human interest" stories, and a high proportion of quality press readers are also readers of the "popular press." And Sparks (1992) notes that the natural monopoly outcome of newspaper economics is not necessarily to be deplored in the context of providing political information to citizens. Viewed from the perspective of what the public wishes to purchase in the market, competitive pressure can lead to an emphasis on sensationalism over serious (meaning political) content in the race to capture the reader's fleeting attention. A comfortable monopoly allows editors (based on a professional commitment to the public sphere) to include more serious political information than they otherwise might. The "comfort" provided by subsidies that soften the dictates of the economic jungle might meet the same need. As Sparks (1992) states flatly, referring to John Keane's (1991) analysis of media and democratic theory, the extremist libertarian view that any interference with the market is wrong are spouting "crude ideology unenlightened by any acquaintance with the real world" (p. 47).

Entman and Wildman (1992) point out in their economic analysis of the fallacy of the "marketplace of ideas" metaphor that advocates of the efficiency of economic markets make the claim that they must distance themselves from value judgements because values are out of the purview of economic analysis. But that choice -- opting out of the debate over what the ends of the market ought to be -- is a value judgment in itself, and needs to be acknowledged as such. Fundamentally, such an argument assumes that the ends have no value worth arguing about. If market efficiency defined by consumer sales becomes the only criteria for press "success" in a survival of the fittest jungle, then something ineffable will indeed have been lost. This essential point is what Habermas asks us to recognize.

REACHING FOR WHAT OUGHT TO BE

In a critique of Habermas and his philosophy of "ideal speech," another philosopher, Richard Bernstein, has noted that Habermas poses "the old problem that has faced every critical theorist" (1976, p. 224): what is the motivation for the public to overcome distorted communication and strive toward an ideal?

Certainly Habermas is writing, as his terminology expresses, on an ideal level; how people are to be made to pay attention (and follow the rules for equity) is left unconsidered. He emphasizes the right of the public -- indeed, the duty of each individual member of the public -- to engage in "communicative action" oriented to achieving understanding, as opposed to "strategic speech action" in the service of selfish interests. But of course, in "real life," people don't think in terms of "speech actions," whether ideal, strategic or otherwise -- it's a nonsense term in lived reality. As Schudson (1989) has pointed out, journalists are offended even by the terminology that discusses news as "constructed," a concept that, like the "ritual" notion of objectivity, has become a commonplace in academic criticism of the press. But Habermas' critical theory makes a judgement that a tangible relationship between the press and democracy ought to be pursued, and that news ought to be constructed in a way that enables people to have a role in the communication that links society to state power.

Such an admittedly "ideal" conceptualizations offers no more than a yardstick against which empirical reality can be measured -- along the lines of a Kantian regulative principle. But its power is in constructing ways of thinking about norms and ideals, and for locating "utopian" dreams as goals to be pursued. This is the very plea that Dahlgren (1991) makes for viewing the idealized public sphere concept not as distant philosophical meanderings, but as a site for human intervention and a vision of hope for the future. An articulated social responsibility ideal of the press as a public trust is a "real world" belief that can be called upon to serve as a bulwark against the ultimate erosion of the type of content in the press that serves thoughtful, and even rational, democratic debate.

What Bernstein is asking is how these ideals are to become concretely realized and objectively instituted and not remain "mere" ideals. The current Russian administration seems to think such a process might be initiated by ukase. It often has been suggested that what Russia needs most, now that prior censorship has been abolished, is to establish a "culture of press freedom" (Fedotov, 1993, p. 32) -- surely an idealized goal. But in March, a presidential council was actually created and charged with finding ways to promote press freedom and foster "democratic culture" within the mass media.[21] This is a further example of how reaching for an ideal can be sustained by forms of government "intervention." Seeking to institutionalize professional norms that keep journalists attached to higher goals, or providing subsidies that sustain political diversity, hardly represent final answers Bernstein's questions. But the key to making a beginning is that ideals must be consciously admitted to the discussion of possible futures.

A diverse, political, dialogic press is a place for maintaining the possibility that alternative voices can be expressed and heard, and for maintaining a space in which the public is invited and urged to engage in a public sphere dialogue. Even in the current chaos in Russia, belief in a press that serves public sphere concerns serves as a brake on the worst potential excesses of commercialization. It energizes both the continued quest to eliminate government control where it remains a problem outside the urban centers, and the need to institute norms of journalistic professional responsibility that neither glorify unbridled libertarianism nor over-emphasize fears that government involvement must inevitably mean authoritarianism.

Most importantly, it is commitment to ideals that places questions about the role of the press on the public agenda as fundamental problems to be solved in building and sustaining a democratic society. Looking to the press as a nexus of the admittedly idealized public sphere provides a critical site where real-world problems of policies and national direction can be negotiated among those who wish to join the conversation.

[Paper submitted for AEJMC review March 28, 1993--political events referenced current through that date only; updated in presentation.]

ENDNOTES

1. See Smith (1988) for a lucid historical discussion of the often misappropriated content of Milton as the origins of libertarian press theory.

2. Mickiewicz (1981), Remington (1988) and McNair (1991) have demonstrated that centralized Party control over the "official" press, even outside the samizdat dissident literature tradition, was never as absolute as U.S. mythology would have it.

3. Primary references in the on-going revision of Siebert, Peterson and Schramm in the U.S. research tradition include Lowenstein and Merrill (1971 and 1979 rev.), Merrill (1974), Hachten (1982 and 1991 rev.), Altschull (1984), and Picard (1985). Mundt (1991) provides a useful, if superficial, brief overview of the main points of the above and includes the frequently overlooked, broadcast-specific typology proposed by Head (1985). Akhavan-Majid and Wolf (1991) have proposed an "elite power group theory" that equates the press with state actors rather than as mediators among them and the public. For references to a broader international perspective on these debates, see the following note.

4. McQuail (1992) presents a useful critique of the difficulty of pursing press theory at all--"four (or more?) theories --as he puts it (p. 65), but also has participated in the attempts to categorize press theories and operations with a useful discussion of a "development participant" model that takes a broader cultural perspective on mass communication than "the press" alone. The question of development journalism associated with the "Third World" press and its misappropriation into U.S. interpretations of press theory and the New World Information and Communication Order debate has been addressed in Aggarwala (1978), Sussman (1979), Servaes (1986), and Ogan (1982).

5. Habermas' analysis, specifically centered on the specific historical experience of Western Europe, has been taken by extension to represent the general outline of the American experience as well.

6. This struggle, launched in April, 1992, and continuing through most of the summer, was ostensibly over ownership of Izvestia's plant and printing facilities, claimed as the continuing property of the Supreme Soviet and without which the journalists' collective would have found it impossible to publish the newspaper. The tug-of-war eventually subsided after the legislature caved in to Yeltsin's right to resolve the issue by a presidential decree acknowledging the rights to ownership of the editorial collective.

7. The referendum was Yeltsin's call to let the people decide whether the president or the parliament should have greater power under a new form of government, which he wanted to organize in early April 1993 and which the deputies--who were elected before the fall of Communist Party--opposed.

8. Regional newspapers in many cases are still very much organs of provincial leaders, who frequently are the same officials who were in charge under Communist Party rule. These local newspapers and the national and ethnic press of emerging states both in the Commonwealth of Independent States and former territories of the U.S.S.R. that have elected to forge separate identities present different questions beyond those that apply specifically to Russia's all-Commonwealth press (published primarily in Moscow and St. Petersburg).

9. This conception has much in common with the "developmental journalism" model that gained popularity in the Third World during the 1970s and became the source of the New World Information and Communication Order debate in the UN. Despite the validity of many questions raised by NWICO about the North-South news flow, the debate ultimately became defined as yet another East-West, Cold War contest and ended in the U.S. withdrawal from UNESCO. See the authors cited in note 4 above, and also MacBride (1980).

10. A representative collection is Dahlgren and Sparks (1992). Forester (1989) ranges beyond communication, applying Habermas' thinking to policy in several fields -- education, public policy, and architecture, as well as the press.

11. Habermas also considers and critiques philosophers from Kant to Marx, and addresses the critical theory of Horkheimer-- who, Habermas notes (1984, p. 369), already had in view the thoughts on power that Foucault later "thematized" (Foucault is addressed in Lectures on Modernity). Links to Gramsci's concept of hegemony have been added by interpreters of Habermas; like Gramsci, his focus is on the uses and misuses of language and construction of meaning as central to how public opinion is negotiated in relation to state power.

12. On the UN declaration on a fundamental and universal human right to communicate, see the MacBride Report (1980).

13. Habermas has in fact expressly addressed architecture in an essay in Forester's edited volume (1985), but has not dealt with patriarchy beyond specifying that ideal speech admits of no hierarchical relationships, presumably including those that would be gender-based. See Fraser (1987) for a feminist critique of Habermas.

14. See Baldasty (1992) for a recent analysis of how commerce replaced partisanship in the early American newspaper.

15. See Leonard (1986) on the origins of political reporting.

16. See Altheide and Snow (1991) for a discussion in a McLuhan tradition of the infiltration of formats and perspectives generated by "media logic" into broader cultural spheres.

17. See The Current Digest of the Soviet Press XLII (20) for the complete text of a report on the 1990 "Law on the Press and other Media" as published in Izvestia (1990, June 20).

18. See the special issue of The Nordicom Review of Nordic Mass Communication Research 2 (December 1991) on "Media in Transition: Studies of Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland."

19. A traditionally strong Conservative Party in Iceland prevented the creation of direct press subsidies when other Nordic nations were implementing them in the late 1960s, although Iceland also did not suffer from the same newspaper mortality trends that spurred their creation elsewhere.

20. The sale of a 55 percent share in Pravda and speculation about the publisher, Yannis Yannikos, was first reported (July 30) in the Athens newspaper Pontiki. The wire service ITAR-TASS reported (Aug. 24) that Russian journalist Pavlos Anastasiadis, in his book Dancing with Bears, details the Yannikos connections to the KGB.

21. Yeltsin created the council on March 5 by presidential decree and named a dozen prominent journalists to the new board, including the editor of the popular pro-democracy weekly Argumenty i fakty and the chairman of the Russian Union of Journalists (Tolz, 1993).

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Commission on the Status
of Women - AEJMC

ABSTRACT

WOMEN MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE NEWSROOM

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Increasing the number of women in the newsroom was both a matter of equality in employment and in news coverage of women and women's issues. Now that women average 34 percent of the daily newsroom staffs, are they making a difference? Editors at the top 100 circulation daily newspapers were questioned, and all but three of the 52 respondents agreed that women are making a difference, especially in introducing new topics and expanding the definition of news.

Submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women in Journalism and Mass Communication, AEJMC, Kansas City, KS., August 11-14, 1993.

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of Women - AEJMC

WOMEN MAKING A DIFFERENCE

IN THE NEWSROOM

Marion Tuttle Marzolf
University of Michigan
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Submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women in Journalism and Mass Communication, AEJMC, Kansas City, KS., August 11-14, 1993

The inadequate treatment of women and women's issues by the contemporary press has been a consistent theme of criticism during the past two decades of women's struggle for equality and equal rights. The mainstream newspapers have been criticized for stereotyping of women, segregating them in women's pages, trivializing their issues, and ignoring them as sources of page one news.1

Traditional women's pages of the 1960s were seen as part of the problem and many were dropped or refashioned as lifestyle or feature sections in 1972-73. Women's news and issues were to be "mainstreamed" throughout the newspaper. Newsroom doors were cracked open to allow more than the token one or two women into the city newsroom and into the other solidly male domains of sports, business, and editorial writing.2 Today, women can be found in every section of the daily newspaper and in every job category. But they are still paid less -- 81 percent of what the average male journalist earns.3 Women reached 34 percent of daily newsroom staffing in the 1980s and remain at that level in 1992.4

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1 Butler, M. and Paisley, W., *Women and Mass Media: Resource Book for Research and Action* (New York: Hastings House, 1980).

2 Mills, Kay., *A Place in the News: From the Women's Pages to the Front Page* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1988).

3 Weaver, David H. and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, *The American Journalist in the 1990s: A Preliminary Report* (Arlington, Va.: Freedom Forum, 1992).

4 Weaver, David H. and G.Cleveland Wilhoit, *The American Journalist: A Portrait of U.S. News People and*

Press critics assumed that providing equality of opportunity and access to women in the newsroom would have the additional benefit of serving democracy by creating a more representative newsroom. Newsrooms with more women and with racial minorities would reflect the readership and the community, altering at least some of the news coverage and approaches. But in the 1970s the emphasis was on equality, not diversity. Rarely did anyone think to ask: "How was this change in news values to come about in a profession with two centuries of tradition that had developed the action-oriented, "scoop mentality" of daily news?

Stories about money, power and politics, conflict, winning and losing, the abnormal, sensational and shocking make the front page. Features, quality of life, and "people" stories go inside, usually. Another half century has cemented in place strict allegiance to objectivity as the proper role for professional reporters. Diversity wasn't prized, in fact, it was suspect as subjective. Codes of ethics in journalism are voluntary and libel and privacy laws are counterbalanced by vigorous appeals to freedom of speech and press and the "right to know." The newcomers to the newsroom quickly learn what's in and out, what goes and

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Their Work (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1986). See also, 1992 study, p. 9.

what doesn't by observation. Standards are set at the top, and they do vary.5

But the "scoop mentality" and hunt for the latest and freshest developments also keep the news values dynamic, so change is possible. Controversy, dissent, protest and civil unrest are chronicled quickly to maintain the newspaper's currency and credibility. Shifts in public interests and new trends are reported, and reader interests are carefully watched. In the early 1970s, it became clear that most were dissatisfied with the traditional woman's page, which was blamed for reinforcing traditional, home-bound roles for women. Even editors of women's sections that had dumped the trivia and introduced news and trends were encouraged by the shift to lifestyle reporting and redesigned sections.

Women's news went into the mainstream; that was the idea. The problem was that it didn't quite work out that way. Lifestyle pages became entertainment oriented and critics saw women's issues still ignored or buried in the news sections. Now that 34 percent of the newsroom is female, compared to 23 percent twenty years ago, and with one in each six editors a woman, are the women's voices making any difference? Can they?

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5 Breed, Warren, "Social Control in the Newsroom: A Functional Analysis," Social Forces 33: 326-55.

Research on women during the past twenty years supports the notion of gender differences in several areas: the way women look at values and ethical problems (Gilligan); their different life stories (Heilbrun); conversation more about relationships than facts (Tannen), and a consultative management style (Kelly).6 Historian Gerda Lerner challenged colleagues to look at history as seen through the eyes and experience of women in order to enlarge the whole story of the past. In the newsroom, we can anticipate differences in story ideas, style and approach, treatment of sources and managerial style. Historically, we know that newswomen have been treated differently by their employers and by male colleagues.

The socialization of employees to the existing structures and values of an organization is well established in the literature, and the newcomers who are also minorities usually must adapt and adjust if they wish to remain. A few may become "exceptions." In the male-dominated newsrooms of the past, this has meant women were destined for the women's department, with only a few allowed to work in news where they had to live up to the male style and bravado. The obstacles to change in the newsroom are strong, but as the

6 Gilligan, Carol, *In A Different Voice* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1982); Heilbrun, Carolyn, *Writing A Woman's Life* (New York: Norton, 1988); Kelly, Rita Mae, *The Gendered Economy* (Newbury Pk., CA: Sage, 1991); Lerner, Gerda, *The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History*,)(New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

outside world changes, ripples of change are also evident inside. Pressure and profit motives can make managements respond; there are new faces are in the newsrooms today.

One theory of workplace organization presented by Rosabeth Kantor describes the change in treatment of minorities moving from token to parity status.7
When a minority group has reached about 35-40 percent, she says, it becomes a "tilted group" and may form coalitions that influence the culture of the group. This influence increases as the group reaches parity (40-50 percent). Many of today's top circulation newspapers are in the "tilted" stage, and a few are approaching parity.

It's time to ask: "Are women making a difference, influencing news decisions and workplace culture?"

This paper examines supervising editors' perceptions of differences in the newsroom now that there are more than token numbers of women employees. Responses are from supervising editors at 52 of the 100 largest circulation daily newspapers in the United States, which represents 15.1 million circulation, a quarter of the total U.S. daily newspaper circulation. The purpose of the study was to find out whether or not editors at the leading newspapers

7 Kantor, Rosabeth Moss, *Men and Women of the Corporation* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

perceive any differences and what they might be. The study also identified which newspapers had newsrooms with 35 percent or more women employed that also had women in leading supervisory roles. This information was to be used in developing the next stage of the research, which will look in detail at the working process in a few selected newsrooms where conditions are favorable for change.

Method

Editor and Publisher International Yearbook lists the lagest 100 circulation newspapers each year. That list for 1992 was used for this study.8 Newspapers in the group represent three size categories: 14 newspapers 500,000+ circulation; 24 newspapers 250-500,000 circulation; 62 newspapers 100-250,000 circulation. Managing editors at these newspapers were sent a brief questionnaire with a stamped, return envelope and a cover letter asking the respondent to provide name, title, and newspaper name if willing to participate in follow up research. The first mailing was in March 1992,
with a second mailing in April. There were 52 usable replies and 4 unusable.

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8 *"Top One Hundred Daily Newspapers in the U.S. According to Circulation, Sept. 30, 1991, Editor and Publisher International Yearbook 1992*, (New York: Editor and Publisher, 1992), p 27.

Responses: Percentage of Women in Newsroom

Circulation	20-30%	35-40%	40-50+%	Total	%
500,000+	1	5	1	7	13%
250-500,000	5	8	2	15	29%
100-250,000	9	19	2	30	58%
Total	15 (29%)	32 (62%)	5 (9%)	52	100%

A third and different mailing was sent to the 44 non-respondents in March 1993, simply asking for the percentage of women in the newsroom and job title of the top-ranking newswoman on the staff. There were 29 responses. This mailing was done to determine whether or not the respondents to the first questionnaire tended to be from the newsrooms with largest percentage of female employees. But the groups were very close: 69 percent of original respondents' group and 71 percent of the followup group had 35 percent or more female employees. The remaining papers in both groups had 20-30 percent female employees in the newsroom. So, the questionnaire respondents do appear to represent the range of female employment in the top 100 newspapers. But the questionnaire respondents had more women at the managing editor level and up: 60 percent for the original respondents' group and 49 percent of the followup group.

The questionnaire asked editors to report the percentage of women in the newsroom, circulation size and total newsroom employees, the title of the job held by the highest ranking female editorial employee, plus a list of other supervisory editing jobs held by women. The editors were asked to respond whether or not it made a difference to have more women working in the newsroom? And if there was a difference, they were asked to respond to five possible areas of difference: topics covered; newsroom environment; treatment of sources; language and writing style; and other. The respondents were asked to provide the number of years they had spent in newspaper work.

Results

Women are making a difference in the newsrooms of this group of top circulation daily newspapers, according to the editors who responded. The most significant difference is defining the news and expanding the range of topics considered news: women's health, family and child care, sexual harassment and discrimination, rape and battering, eldercare, homeless mothers, quality of life and other community social issues.

Forty nine of the responding editors (32 men and 20 women) agreed that women made a difference in expanding the range of topics covered. Men and women agreed on this: 84 percent of each group marked this response. A few marked other areas, but not the overall question. This response rate was the same regardless of newsroom size or percentage of women in the newsroom.

About half of the men and half of the women editors also agreed that newsroom environments had changed as a result of having more women working there. These differences were: decreasing the cursing, off-color jokes and sexual harassment and encouraging more collaborative discussion and teamwork. But more male editors than female editors thought women treated sources differently. Only 12 editors found differences in writing style or language.

Women Make a Difference?

	No	Yes	Topics	Environ.	Sources	Lang
Male editors	1	31	28	17	19	8
Female "	2	18	17	11	6	4
Total	3	49	45	28	25	12

Total respondents: 32 male; 20 female N= 52

The number of women editors who responded to the questionnaire is significantly greater than their reprsentation in newsroom management. One of six supervising editors is female in the typical daily newsroom today, but two of three of these respondents were women editors. Furthermore, 18 of them were at the level of asistant managing editor or above. Fifteen were at newspapers of 100-250,000 circulation. It is probable that high ranking women editors at these papers were handed the survey, even if it had been sent to a male managing editor. But the similiarity in responses between men and women indicates a strong consensus on this subject. Thirty six of the respondents had 20 or more years of newsroom experience, and this also suggests a shared profesional background between men and women. There were 14 women and 22 men in this category, which is also larger than typical. According to Weaver and Wilhoit's latest study (1992), women with 20+ years of experience make up 24.2 percent of the total women in newsrooms.[9]

9 Weaver, 1992 study.

Percentage of Women in Newsroom

Circulation	20-30%	35-40%	40-50%	Total	%
500,000+	1	5	1	7	13%
250-500,000	5	8	2	15	29%
100-250,000	9	19	2	30	58%
Total	15	32	5	52	100%
	29%	62%	9%		

Highest Ranking Woman in the Newsroom

Editor, Executive Editor, Associate Ed., Deputy Ed., Ed. Pg. Ed.	13	25%
Managing Editor	18	35%
Assistant ME	18	35%
Metro, City, Sunday Ed.	3	5%
Total	52	

Here are some of the observations made by the editors who did see changes in the newsroom:

--There is more attention to the entire range of women's or family issues, from child care to workplace concerns, from sexual harassment to abortion, more on health, poverty, aids, parenting, social and educational issues.

--More people-oriented coverage because women are on the city desk. More stories concerning women-related issues are now on the front page and in the metro section - not just in the features section.

--We have surveyed our women readers and organized in in-house group to critique our coverage. The results - we have a woman assigned to oversee our page one decisions.

--Women have different experiences, points of view, than men and their increase in management and editing positions has positively diversified news coverage.

--Women react to more topics that include sensitivity, and we are more likely to be outranged by sexist behavior.

On newsroom environment:

--Cheesecake has virtually disappeared. Sexist, off-color jokes are out - totally.

--More involvement and participatory decisions, more sensitivity to needs of others, more problem-solving and communication-oriented, less cursing and incivility.

--News meetings are a bit less confrontational. The newsroom is more collaborative in style, more like the real world, more team-oriented. People are more willing to address feelings.

--Women have better people skills.

Regarding news sources:

--More awareness of sexist language, of the female perspective, and greater sensitivity to feminist concerns, courtesy titles, play of rape cases, rape victims, children, battered women, stereotyping.

--Greater concern for news sources on the part of all reporters and editors.

--We include more women as sources and news resources.

--We have made a conscious effort to broaden our coverage of women and to ensure our female staffers have a significant impact on our editorial decisions.

--About language use:

--More sensitivity about gender stereotyping, innuendos, offensive and sexist languge.

--More storytelling in topics about women and family and less sports metaphors.

Discussion

This study of editors' perceptions about the differences made by having more women in the newsroom reveals a much more positive and active contribution from women than is conveyed by studies of news content or reporting by females. A recent study found only 13 percent of the news sources on the front page were women, 34 percent of the bylines were female, and 32 percent of the subjects in the photographs were women. This is contrasted to the population which is 52 percent female, the labor force, 45 percent female, and the regular daily newspaper readers who are women, 45 percent.10

Mainstreaming of the news of women's issues means, of course, that these stories must compete with all the top news stories for space on page one. The front page is still defined by traditional news values, but some women's issues stories do make page one. More often they are found inside the paper, or not found at all. No one is responsible especially for gender or women's issues at most newspapers, so it takes a number of individual actions by reporters and editors to point out these new news values. Editors in this study and prizewinning journalists featured in other studies do believe that women are expanding the definition of news.11 To examine that, a study that looked at overall newspaper content would be needed. So far, one has not been located.

Content analysis of lifestyle pages of the 1970s found that already there was an emphasis on entertainment and celebrities, while news of family, community, and quality of

9 Friedan, Betty and Woodhull, Nancy, *Women, Men and Media: Show Window or Window Dressing? Women in the News* (Virginia: M. Junior Bridge, 1992) and Bridge, Junior, "No News is Women's News," *Media & Values*, Winter 1989, 11-13.

11 Ricchiardi, Sherry and Young, Virginia, *Women on Deadline: A Collection of America's Best* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1991).

life was diminished, compared with content of the former women's pages.12 Current research by publishers and consultants has noted the sharp decline in female active daily newspaper readership since 1970, from 77 to 45 percent. They say women are busier than ever today, have less free time, and television and newspaper usage are down. They still read magazines, however. The research also shows that women readers feel they do not have a place in the paper and do not find stories or ways of writing the stories that really appeal to them. Other studies show that women and men rank news topics quite differently. Women put local community first, whereas, men put sports first.13

As a result of the new research, since 1991 a few daily newspapers have introduced new women's sections or pages, aimed at defining the complex and diverse nature of women's lives today, cutting across divisions of age, class and education and linking women on the issues that especially interest and touch their lives -- so-called "women's issues."14 Other newspapers are trying to find ways to make

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12 Guenin, Zena Beth, "Women's Pages in Newspapers: Missing Out on Contemporary Content," *Journalism Quarterly*, Spring, 1975.

13 Miller, Susan, "Women's Lifestyles: A Special Report," *Scripps Howard Editors Newsletter*, Spring 1989.

14 East, Catherine, *New Directions for News, Special Report* (Washington,D.C. Women's Studies & Policy Center of George Washington University, 1984), Braden, Maria, "Women: Special Again," *WJR*, June 1991, 30-32. Shaw, Bob, "Registering Lifestyle Changes," *APME Committee Report*, 1990. Pearl, Daniel, "Newspapers Strive to Win Back Women," *Wall Street Journal*, May 4, 1992, B1,B8.

"mainstreaming" of women's news more effective, in order to serve women readers and not turn away those, especially the younger generation, who find separate spheres within the newspaper offensive. One innovation is to have specialists as reporters or editors for gender or women's issues.

Change is clearly on the agenda for daily newspapers as they try to hold readers against the advances of new technology, changed lifestyles, time and money demands. Despite important gains for women in the news, parity and equal power and prestige still are still in the future, and the glass ceiling all too close.15 Women's caucuses at some newspapers are organizing to improve women's working conditions and to raise equity issues again. Women have already made a difference in the newsroom, and the potential for greater change is there, if the organizational theories are correct. But we do need to know more about the experiences and motivation of women in this profession, the values and editing styles of women now in supervisory roles, and how women are defining their issues and their news. This study is only a first step in tapping some of these perceptions from the working newsrooms and suggests that more in-depth studies are needed to flesh out the details.

15 Creedon, Pamela J. *Women in Mass Communication: Challenging Gender Values*, (Newbury Park, CA, Sage, 1989). Robinson, G. J. and Sixt, Dieta, *Women & Power: Canadian and German Experiences* (Montreal: McGill Studies in Communications, 1992).

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THE *NEW YORK TIMES'* AND THE *WASHINGTON POST'S* COVERAGE OF THE TIANANMEN INCIDENT AND THE U.S. CHINA POLICY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the press/foreign policy relations through a case study of the *New York Times'* and the *Washington Post's* coverage of the Tiananmen incident in 1989, and the Bush Administration's policies towards this incident. Results indicate that while these leading U.S. elite newspapers were highly consistent with Bush's overall policy, the two sides were found independent of each other. In addition, results present that there was no significant difference between the two newspapers' coverage of this incident.

INTRODUCTION

From those who hold scholarly interest in press/foreign policy relations, two major voices are often heard. While one falls into "the press-as-active-biased-participant school," the other belongs to "the press-as-putty-in-the-hands-of-the-president school" (Berry, 1990).

A brief review of the recent literature on the press/foreign policy relations would explain this point. In his over 1,000 page-long doctoral dissertation, Cozean (1979) presented a historical review of the political role played by the U.S. press, and content analyzed the coverage of the U.S. elite press on the Cuban revolution (1952-1962). He suggested that the U.S. news media developed "a strong tradition of an adversary role toward government, especially the White House, regardless of its occupant's political affiliation" (p.1147).

Cohen (1986), who took as a reference point the process by which foreign policy is made and implemented, examined the effects and roles of the media at each stage of policymaking process. The results presented that the media are influential in the formulation of foreign policy.

Larson (1990) examined the role of television coverage in U.S. policy towards South Korea, and found out the political impact of television's dramatic visual focus, its use of consistent visual images, its expansion of the geographical scope of the policy process and its personalization of policy.

O'Heffernan (1991) found evidence of active media roles and specific media influences in the foreign policymaking process by probing into policymakers' perceptions of separate and discrete television effects on the foreign policy process.

By contrast, Larson (1986), who content analyzed U.S. television network news coverage of Iran between 1972 and 1981, found that television news had a propensity, shared with the print media, to follow or reinforce U.S. government policy.

After a study of front page news and editorials from the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, Chang (1988) suggested that news coverage of U.S. China policy reflected the ups and downs of the Sino-American relations, which followed closely the U.S. policy towards China and Taiwan. Still focusing on the press/foreign policy relations, Chang (1989) found the great impact of presidential statements on press editorials about U.S. China policy. He concluded that "in the U.S. China policymaking process, government policy influences press position on the issue, and not vice versa" (Chang, 1989, p.492).

Malek (1988) content analyzed the *New York Times*' editorials about Iran and reported that there was a great affinity between the *Times*' editorial position and U.S. government policy towards Iran's internal and foreign relations, particularly those related to the United States.

Also devoted to the study of the press/foreign policy relations, Berry (1990) criticized both "the press-as-active-biased-participant school" and "the press-as-putty-in-the-hands-of-the-president school." To him, neither of them offered a satisfactory and comprehensive explanation of the role of the press in foreign policymaking process. As he put it, while the former only focused on "the press's reports of failed policy outcomes," the latter merely observed "the early stages of foreign policy where the press goes along with even the most bizarre policies" (p.xviii). With a careful observation, Berry (1990) suggested that "the press's independent role in foreign policy is minimal and its manipulation by government is equally minimal" (p.xii).

Although justifiable and free of one-sidedness, this assumption was mainly based on some **special** cases. That is, all the five cases Berry (1990) studied were notable U.S. foreign policy failures which dated back to the Kennedy Administration: for Kennedy, the Bay of Pigs; for Johnson, the U.S. combat in Vietnam; for Nixon, the Cambodian incursion; for Carter, the Iran hostage crisis; and for Reagan, the 1982-84 intervention in Lebanon. Berry (1990) deliberately selected these five failure cases, which he believed would give the press the chance to accept the government's assumptions about foreign threats and about the U.S.'s opportunities at the policies' formulation and execution stages, and would make it necessary for the government to manipulate the press at the outcome stage.

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

Based upon the previous studies of others, this paper was intended to further observe the press/foreign policy relations and test Berry's (1990) assumption in the Chinese context. The Bush Administration's foreign policy towards the Tiananmen incident that took place in Beijing in 1989 and the *New York Times*' and the *Washington Post*'s coverage of this incident were selected for a comparative case study. The rationale for conducting such a study is that the Tiananmen incident had drawn great attention from both the U.S. government and the U.S. press. And it did not involve any foreign policy failures which Berry (1990) deliberately selected for his study.

To achieve this purpose, the following questions were addressed in this article: What were the Bush Administration's responses to the Tiananmen incident? How did the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* cover this incident? How did these two leading U.S. elite newspapers react to the U.S. government's policies towards this incident?

Based on Berry's (1990) assumption that "the press's independent role in foreign policy is minimal and its manipulation by government is equally minimal" (p.xii), the following hypotheses were formulated for this study:

Hypothesis 1 The Bush Administration and the two leading U.S. elite newspapers held a similar attitude towards the Tiananmen incident.

Hypothesis 2 The Bush Administration and the two leading U.S. elite newspapers were independent of each other in their responses towards the Tiananmen incident.

Following the same rationale, a third hypothesis was also deduced for the comparison of the two newspapers' coverage.

Hypothesis 3 There was no significant difference between the *New York Times*' and the *Washington Post*'s coverage of the Tiananmen incident.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In this paper, **the Tiananmen incident** refers to all the happenings including Chinese students' demonstrations asking for freedom and democracy in Beijing and other major cities like Shanghai, and the Chinese government's crackdown of the students' movement by force, which occurred during the period from the early March 1989 when Hu Yaobang, the former General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, died, to the mid-June when a martial law was enforced in Beijing.

This analysis was focused on the Bush Administration's responses to this incident, and the *New York Times*' and the *Washington Post*'s coverage of it from June 1 through June 10, 1989, the most intense phase in the Tiananmen incident. If June 4, the day the Chinese government used the army to crack down on the student demonstrations, was the climax of the incident and the turning point of Bush's policy, the three days before June 4 could be regarded as the prelude of the incident, and the six days after June 4 the postlude of the incident.

Bush's Policies

In this study, Bush's responses to the Tiananmen incident was regarded as the indicators of the U.S. government's China policy during this period of time.

The U.S. Constitution gives the president powers of initiative in national defense and foreign relations. In these areas, the president is the "ultimate decision maker" (Hilsman, 1971, p.18), and "there is no substitute for presidential leadership" (Katzenback, 1973, p.2). George Bush knew well that he had the right to "set the foreign policy objectives and actions taken by the executive branch" (*The Public Papers of the Presidents*, Vol.I, 1990, p.672).

Specifically, *The Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States* (hereafter the *PPP*) was used as the source for Bush's responses to the Tiananmen incident. For the convenience of study, his responses were summarized into five categories: the attitude towards the Chinese student demonstrations in general, the attitude towards the Chinese senior leader Deng Xiaoping, his responses before June 4, his responses after June 4, and his policy for the Sino-American relations after the happenings on June 4.

---- Bush's responses to the happenings in China before June 4:

On May 21, 1989, at a news conference with Francois Mitterrand, Bush for the first time mentioned in public the student demonstrations in China. He said, "We do support freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press; and clearly, we support democracy. I don't want to be gratuitous in giving advice, but I would encourage restraint. I do not want to see bloodshed. We revere the model of Martin Luther King in this country for his peaceful protest; and so, I might suggest a familiarization with that for the people in China. And I would urge the Government to be as forthcoming as possible in order to see more democratization and to see a peaceful resolution of this matter" (*PPP*, Vol.I, 1990, p.586).

From Bush's words, two points can be clearly seen: First, he supported the student demonstrations, which he regarded as a movement for democracy. Second, he encouraged restraint from both the Chinese government and the students, and favored a peaceful resolution.

---- Bush' responses to the Tiananmen incident after June 4:

On June 5, 1989, Bush said at a news conference in the White House, "The demonstrators in Tiananmen Square were advocating basic human rights, including the freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of association. These are goals we support around the world, ... In recent weeks, we've urged mutual restraint, nonviolence, and dialog. Instead, there has been a violent and bloody attack on the demonstrators. The United States cannot condone the violent attacks and cannot ignore the consequences for our relationship with China, ... This is not the time for an emotional response, but for a reasoned, careful action that takes into account both our long-term interests and recognition of a complex internal situation in China" (*PPP*, Vol. I, 1990, p.669).

Here, Bush was stronger and clearer in his support to the Chinese students, but still cautious about what actions to take. The actions the Bush Administration took in response to the use of the army by the Chinese government included: "suspension of all government-to-government sales and commercial exports of weapons, suspension of visits between U.S. and Chinese military leaders, sympathetic review of requests by the Chinese students in the United States to extend their stay, offer of humanitarian and medical assistance through the Red Cross to those injured during the assault, and review of other aspects of the bilateral relationship as events in China continue to unfold" (*PPP*, Vol.I, 1990, p.670).

Bush believed that "the suspension of certain military relations (with China) is better than moving against -- on the economic side" (*Ibid.*, p.672). It is evident that Bush favored cautious reactions and sanctions not involving economic sides which he believed would hurt the Chinese people.

---- Bush's attitude towards Chinese senior leader Deng Xiaoping:

In a news conference held in the White House on June 8, 1989, Bush was asked whether he thought Deng should be responsible for the massacre. He answered, "Let's not jump at conclusions as to how individual leaders in China feel when we aren't sure" (*PPP*, Vol.I, 1990, p.696). At another White House news conference, Bush reminded his interviewer that Deng "moved China towards openness, towards democracy, towards reform" (*Ibid.*, p.671). In his talks about the Tiananmen incident, Bush always used the term "the Chinese leaders" rather than the name of any individual Chinese leader. As Bush explained himself, "I don't want to pass judgment on individual leaders" (*PPP*, Vol.I, 1990, p.696).

From what Bush said, it is obvious that he was cautious to blame Deng Xiaoping, and his attitude towards Deng was quite ambivalent.

---- Bush's reevaluation of the Sino-American relations after June 4:

Even after June 4, Bush several times emphasized that he was trying "to protect and preserve a long-time relationship that is very important to the United States. It's in the national security interest, in the geopolitical interest, of the United States to have a relationship" with China (*PPP*, Vol.II, 1990, p.1222). As a result, he considered that the ideas to call back the U.S. ambassador to Beijing "would be 180 degrees wrong" (*PPP*, Vol.I, 1990, p.671). He also believed that to act emotionally to break the relationship with China immediately would have counterproductive effect, especially "when the students in China were fighting for freedom and needed the support from the world" (*PPP*, Vol.I, p.672).

In all Bush's speeches, it is evident that he held the prevalent stance of criticizing the Chinese government and sympathizing with the student demonstrators. In fact, this stance represented the U.S. government's overall policy towards the Tiananmen incident.

The *Times*' and the *Post* 's Coverage

In this study, the coverage of the Tiananmen incident by the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* was analyzed and compared with the Bush Administration's policies. Here, the term **coverage** refers to all the news discourses including news stories, news analyses and editorials concerning this incident. Although usually a newspaper's opinions can be obtained directly from its editorial sections, it was impossible to solely depend on them in this study, because few editorials were devoted to the Tiananmen incident in these two newspapers, and the bulk of their coverage was news stories. The attitudes of the two newspapers were discerned in this study by examining factors like the voices and the appeals in those news discourses under analysis.

The unit of analysis was a complete news discourse, such as a news story or an editorial, which is usually believed to be the smallest completely self-contained message in a newspaper. A news discourse is popularly perceived as a unified whole rather than smaller bits and pieces. This is because newspaper reporters and editors "produce news stories as if they **were** unified wholes, or 'packages' of information" (Hofstetter, 1976, p.27).

The classical methodological approach to examine news discourse has been content analysis, which is "the accurate registration of singular elements in texts" (Van den Berg and Van der Veer, 1989, p.160). This "hard" approach (Johnson, 1985) is mainly "based on observable countable data such as words, phrases or sentences" (Kobland, Du and Kwon, 1992, p.68). This inherent limitation has led to much criticism on content analysis for merely focusing on the surface structure of terms exploited in news discourse, and for often ignoring the nuances and subtleties of meanings which can only be understood through a process of contextual analysis (Wang, 1991; Hackett, 1984; Carney, 1972; Holsti, 1969). Nevertheless, it is agreed that content analysis is still an effective method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables (Wimmer and Dominick, 1991; Kerlinger, 1986; Krippendorf, 1980).

Given the flaws of using content analysis alone, this study draws strength from both contextual analysis and content analysis. Borrowing liberally from the critical studies' concern for the form and context of meaning, **contextual analysis** turns out to be "an alternative to pluralistic-based, quantitative news studies" (Barton, 1990, p.15). It is concerned with both the news form (which consists of news voices and news appeals) and the audience orientation (which values the individual news user's political judgment). This approach enables the researcher of news discourses to assess the potential influence of news language "within the interactive dimensions of audience orientation and news form" (*Ibid.*, p.15).

Adopting contextual analysis (Barton, 1990) first, all the coverage of the Tiananmen incident collected from the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* from June 1 through 10, 1989 was examined to find out whether the two newspapers were consistent or not with Bush's overall policy towards this incident. Then, articles were picked out and grouped according to their relevance to the Bush Administration's four specific policies: the pre-June 4 policy, the post-June 4 policy, the reevaluation of the Sino-American relations, and the attitude towards Deng Xiaoping.

Some basic questions were addressed to test whether the ideas conveyed in the news discourses under observation were consistent or not with the President's policies. Two aspects -- news voices and news appeals -- were taken into consideration for the observation.

In the process of analysis, news voices heard in each news discourse was identified to locate whether a piece of information in a news story is favorable or unfavorable of, or neutral about Bush's policy. As Barton (1990) explained, news voices are used "to identify the range of elements, including people, words, images, and sounds, selected to participate in news discourse" (p.16). In this analysis, the notion **news voices** was operationalized as the competing ideas conveyed in a news discourse, and expressed by different people such as Bush himself, the congressmen and other U.S. government officials. If a news discourse only contained Bush's voice, or those voices in favor of his opinions, it was regarded as consistent with the U.S. government policy; if it only contained some competing voices, it was considered as inconsistent with Bush's policy; if it contained the voices of both sides, it was treated as neutral or ambiguous. Then, further observation was conducted from the dimension of news appeals.

According to Barton (1990), news appeals are "essentially rhetorical expressions representing the orientation to policy assumed by the news coverage" (p.18). They are usually constructed and "read" separately or in combination as appeals to government authority, to general public, to community guardians, to politically organized and well-informed groups, to individuals with political conscience, and to ideal social order "involving an open, participatory democracy" (*Ibid.*, p.19). As Barton (1990) further explained, news appeals are also "combined with a host of other rhetorical elements including invocations, metaphor, and proofs, all of which contribute to arguments about policy" (p.19).

In this study, the notion **news appeals** was conceptualized as the hidden biases carried by the rhetorical vehicles and connotational expressions in a given news discourse. If connotational expressions contained in a story were to the liking of Bush and those who were in favor of his opinions, the story was regarded as appealing to Bush's policy; if the connotational expressions suited the palate of those people who held competing ideas, the story was categorized as appealing to those who were unhappy about Bush's policy.

Here, attention was first directed to the headline and the lead of a news discourse, as both of them are regarded as meaningful indicators for the major information a newspaper intends to convey (Van Dijk, 1985), and as cues for the tone and tenor of a news story (Edelman, 1988).

When both news voices and news appeals in a news discourse had been observed, the results were put together to generate an overall impression of the story -- whether it was consistent with Bush's policy or not. The following is an example of the analysis.

LAWMAKERS ASK STRONG U.S. ACTION
Punish Authorities, White House Told
By Bill McAllister
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Bush returned to Washington yesterday without making any additional comment on the violent end to the pre-democracy protests in China, even as several liberals and conservatives in Congress called on him to punish Chinese authorities for allowing troops to massacre the Beijing demonstrators.

Members of Congress from a wide political spectrum denounced the president and Secretary of State James A. Baker III as too timid in their reactions. Conservative Republicans were in the forefront, warning that Congress will take action if the president doesn't move immediately.

"It's folly. We should stand with these young people," said Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), who vowed to block a sale of aircraft electronic components to the Chinese as an expression of U.S. anger. He was joined by Rep. Mickey Edwards (R-Okla.), a member of the House GOP leadership, who accused the administration of "over-analyzing" the Chinese situation. "You have to act on an outrage like this immediately or it has no impact at all," Edwards said.

White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said the administration would not "act precipitously. We want to make sure our response is correct." He said the president would "consider all the options and choose an appropriate course when the time is right."

The White House issued a statement Saturday that Bush "deeply deplored the decision to use force against peaceful demonstrators" and sought a return to more normal relations with China. Deputy White House press secretary Steven Hart said that adequately expressed the administration's position. Members of Congress said, however, that it was not enough.

"We have to make it clear that the United States will not continue to conduct business as usual with a government that engages in the wanton slaughter of its own people," Rep. Stephen J. Solarz (D-N.Y.) said on CBS's "Face the Nation." "And I have to say that if the president doesn't take the initiative in changing American policy in this regard, the Congress will do it for him." Solarz heads the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific affairs.

Two more cautious voices were those of Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Sen. Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.). "If the crackdown continues and there is further loss of life, this cannot help but affect relations between the U.S. and China," Pell said.

Lugar appeared on NBS's "Meet the Press" and echoed the administration's position that the United States has little impact on events in China. He urged Congress to let Bush take the lead, but he faulted the administration for not being more forceful.

"We must make it clear that this is unacceptable," Lugar said. "We should encourage the symbolism of the Statue of Liberty." He referred to a similar statue the Chinese students erected in Tiananmen Square. Lugar said he would urge the administration to "send thousands of replicas of the Statue of Liberty to China."

Helms, Solarz and Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.), chairman of the Senate subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific affairs, called for an immediate end to U.S. military aid to China. "Our relations with the Chinese people will strengthen and grow as they struggle for freedom, but our relations with the authorities who perpetrated these crimes have been dealt a bloody blow," Cranston said.

Sen. Christopher J. Dodd (D-Conn.), a member of the same subcommittee, said "a reaction that is not solely rhetorical may be necessary. I wouldn't rule out an economic response."

(From the *Washington Post,* Monday, June 5, 1989, p.A24)

This news story involves people's different responses to Bush's post-June 4 policy towards the Tiananmen incident. Four questions were addressed to examine it here: (1) Is this story in favor of cautious responses and limited actions against the Chinese government only? (2) Does it present both opinions for cautious and stronger actions as well? (3) Does the story ask for stronger responses and disagree with Bush on his decisions? (4) Does the story ask for weaker actions than Bush's? To answer these questions, the voices of the news story were examined first. Here, both congressmen's and the Bush Administration's opinions about how to response to the Chinese government's crackdown on the student demonstrations were presented, i.e., the voices from both sides were heard. Therefore, the story was labeled as neutral in voice.

When attention was directed to the news appeals, however, it could be easily noticed that they particularly appeal to the palate of the congressmen rather than Bush. The first hint is the heading of the story, "Lawmakers Ask Strong U.S. Action." This headline suggests that the story would focus on the outcry of those congressmen who asked for strong actions. The opinions of the Bush Administration would not be the center of attention in this story. The word "strong" implies that Bush's response was too weak. The subhead, "Punish Authorities, White House Told," again emphasizes the congressmen's views, insinuating that Bush was so reluctant to punish the Chinese authorities that he needed to be told to do more.

Biases could also be noticed in the lead of this story. The words like "without" and "even" reveal the writer's unhappiness about Bush's response. In the body of the news story, the writer, when reporting the congressmen's opinions, used such loaded words of attribution as "denounced," "warning" and "accused," which carried connotations and implied that the President was "wrong." But only neutral and straightforward words like "said" and "issued' were used to report Bush's opinion. So, it is not difficult to assess from the appeals of this story that it favors the congressmen's rather than Bush's opinions. On the whole, this story was considered as inconsistent with Bush's China policy.

After a contextual analysis of all the news coverage of the Tiananmen incident by the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, the quantitative method in content analysis was adopted to sum up and compare the findings, which were presented as follows.

RESULTS

A total of 142 news discourses (with 84 taken from the *New York Times* and 58 from the *Washington Post)* covering the Tiananmen incident from June 1 through June 10, 1989 were analyzed. The Bush Administration's China policies towards this incident were categorized as: (1) the overall policy; (2) the attitude towards Deng Xiaoping; (3) the policy before June 4; (4) the policy after June 4; and (5) the policy for the Sino-American relations after the happenings on June 4.

Results (see Table 1) present that the frequencies of news discourses in the two newspapers that were consistent with the Bush Administration's overall policy towards the Tiananmen incident were very high, with the *Times*' coverage at 96.4 percent and the *Post*'s coverage at 94.8 percent. This finding supports Hypothesis 1 that the Bush Administration and the two leading U.S. elite newspapers held a similar attitude towards the Tiananmen incident.

Meanwhile, results indicate that as far as the Bush Administration's four specific policies were concerned, the consistency of the two newspapers' coverage with them varied from policy to policy. While the highest consistency frequency for the *Times* was 75 percent for the "pre-June 4 policy," its lowest consistency rate was zero for the "attitude towards Deng Xiaoping." Similarly, while the *Post*'s highest consistency rate (100%) was also concerned with the "pre-June 4 policy," its lowest consistency frequency (40%) was for the "attitude towards Deng Xiaoping" as well. These findings support Hypothesis 2 that the Bush Administration and the two U.S. elite newspapers were independent of each other in their responses towards the Tiananmen incident.

The results also show that none of the differences between the *Times*' and the *Post*'s consistency frequencies was statistically significant (with $p<.05$ and $df=1$) (see Table 1). These findings support Hypothesis 3 that there was no significant difference between the *New York Times*' and the *Washington Post*'s coverage of the Tiananmen incident.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As stated at the outset, this paper, through a case study of the Tiananmen incident, was intended to observe the press/foreign policy relations. Results that largely support Hypotheses 1 and 2 set up for this study indicate that although slight differences did exist between the responses of the Bush Administration and the two leading U.S. elite newspapers, the U.S. government and the U.S. elite press held a similar opinion about the Tiananmen incident. These findings do not support the assumptions suggested by either "the press-as-active-biased-participant school" or "the press-as-putty-in-the-hand-of-the-president school." Instead, it suggests that Berry's (1990) assumption -- "the press's independent role in foreign policy is minimal and its manipulation by government is equally minimal" (p.xii) -- also holds true in the Chinese context. The first part of Berry's assumption was supported by the finding that the *New York Times*' and the *Washington Post*'s coverage of the Tiananmen incident was highly consistent with the Bush Administration's overall policy towards this incident. The second half of Berry's suggestion was verified by the small amount of inconsistency these two newspapers showed in their coverage with some of the specific U.S. government policies.

The overwhelming consistency between the two newspapers' coverage and the Bush Administration's overall policy towards the Tiananmen incident was largely due to some "unquestioned collective universals" (Kobland, Du and Kwon, 1992, p.64) beyond the White House and editorial rooms of the two newspapers, which were "the hegemonic ideology" (Eagleton, 1991; Hall, 1982; Gramsci, 1971) dominant in the United States.

For decades, China and the United States, the two countries with entirely different social systems, are incompatible with each other in terms of ideology. In fact, any weakening of one side would mean the reinforcing of the other. Since the Chinese student demonstrations were aimed to achieve democracy and freedom in a what Bush called "totalitarian system" (*PPP*. Vol.I, 1990, p.670), it would naturally win the favor of U.S. political elites, including the President.

As the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, the two leading U.S. elite newspapers, are rooted on a democratic and libertarian soil, and oriented to "the need for profit from media operations" (McQuail, 1987, p.64), they are bound to uphold such beliefs as human rights, and freedom of speech and assembly, which are highly valued in their home country. This can be explained by the assumption that "media work in a field of social forces" (McQuail 1987, p.141). According to McQuail (1987), the media organization functions under three types of social forces: (1) economic pressures from media owners and advertisers; (2) social and political pressures from legal/political control and other social institutions; and (3) professional pressures from audience interest and demand. Under these three social forces, the attitude of the two newspapers towards the ideology-oriented Tiananmen incident, just like that of the Bush Administration, was inevitably predetermined by the hegemonic ideology in the United States.

Although the President and the press are rooted on the same social-cultural soil and under the similar social forces, which led to their similar overall attitudes towards the Tiananmen incident -- to support the student demonstrators, they had different considerations and responsibilities. This led to the second finding in this study that the Bush Administration and the U.S. elite newspapers were independent of each other in terms of their responses to the Tiananmen incident. This mutual independence was indicated by Bush's self-confidence in and determination of his cautious policies, and the wide and varied coverage of the two elite newspapers, which often overdistanced the President's policies (such as the attitude towards Deng Xiaoping).

Bush's reluctance to criticize Chinese senior leader Deng Xiaoping resulted from both his first-hand knowledge of Deng's open-minded past, and his personal friendship with Deng. Bush visited China just one month after he had assumed the presidency, and shared a determination with Deng "to solve many bilateral and global issues" (*PPP*, Vol.I, 1990, p.143). This is accounted for by the human behavior model Brewer (1980) formulated to analyze U.S. foreign policymaking. According to Brewer, different foreign policies are "partly the result of different personal experiences and backgrounds" (p.35).

When many voices in the United States asked the Bush Administration to take economic sanctions against China, and to cut off the diplomatic tie with the Chinese Government, Bush did not take any rash actions. The reason for his "reluctance" to "punish" the Chinese authorities by any economic means, as he held out, was that he did not want to "hurt the Chinese people," and his concern was "with those in the military who are using force" (*PPP*, Vol.I, 1990, p.670).

As a matter of fact, there were several political strategies behind Bush's public rhetoric. The first and the most important one was the national interests of the United States. When interviewed by a Chinese journalist in Beijing on February 26, 1989, Bush said on the CCTV (China Central Television Station) screen, "We have some economic problems at home, and I wanted to assure the Chinese leaders that I am going to do my level best to get our deficit down" (*PPP*, Vol.I, 1990, p.144). It is widely held that during the Tiananmen incident, Bush tried to develop a foreign policy primarily to satisfy the domestic political powers who elected him and who did not want the profitable trade with China to be interrupted, despite the human rights abuses in China.

With regard to his ideological strategy, Bush believed "that the commercial contacts have led, in essence, to this quest for more freedom" in Tiananmen Square (*PPP*, Vol.I, 1990, p.670), and wanted to see the U.S. ambassador "stay involved and continue to work for human rights and for democracy" in Beijing (*Ibid.*, p. 671). What was more, he wanted to play the China card against the former Soviet Union. He well understood that the Sino-Soviet relations were officially normalized when Mikhail Gorbachev visited Beijing in May 1989, first of its kind in over three decades. So he did not want to push China to the Soviets.

Bush also well understood that "China has historically been less than totally interested in what other countries think of their performance" (*PPP*, Vol.I, 1990, p.672) on the one hand, and had a feeling that currently "China wants to be more acceptable in the family of nations" on the other (*Ibid.*, p.672).

All the above assumptions could well be among Bush's considerations, when he responded to the Tiananmen incident with the suspension of certain military relationships rather than with the economic sanctions urged by many people. Cautious or even ambivalent as it were, Bush's policy was self-serving in nature, indicating that he was a mature politician.

As to the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, the three social forces they were confronted with consisted of all sorts of people with diverse political views, economic interests, and personal demands. Being a channel for the audience in a libertarian system to be informed and to communicate with each other, the two newspapers understandably had to include in their coverage different and even conflicting voices from all sides.

In short, while the same political conviction made the President and the press share a similar overall attitude towards the Tiananmen incident, different political strategies enabled them to be independent of each other when the President made his particular policies, and the two papers their specific coverage.

This conclusion is also justified by the third finding of the study that although the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* were slightly different in their reporting focuses, there was no statistically significant difference between their coverage of the Tiananmen incident. This is because both newspapers function under the same social forces, even though their owners may have different economic interests, and their professionals may have diverse educational backgrounds and journalistic experiences.

Although the study of media content, as focused in this study, "can tell us something over and above what its originators intended to say or transmit" (McQuail, 1987, p.176), the press/foreign policy relations cannot be fully understood till attention is extended to the media production, where a close examination of the media institution, the media organization, and the mass communicator is possible. It is only from these three levels that how the press' performance is related to the U.S. foreign policy in general, and how it was related to the Bush Administration's policy towards the Tiananmen incident in particular can be fully explained. This untouched dimension in the current paper needs to be explored in future studies.

Table 1

Frequencies of the *Times*' and the *Post*'s Coverage Consistent with the Bush Administration's Policies Towards the Tiananmen Incident

Bush's Policies	Coverage *Times*	Coverage *Post*	X^2 Values[a] (df=1)
Overall Policy	96.4%(84)	94.8%(58)	.217
Attitude Towards Deng Xiaoping	0 (7)	40.0% (5)	3.360
Pre-June 4 Policy	75.0% (4)	100% (4)	1.143
Post-June 4 Policy	50.0%(20)	77.8%(18)	3.142
Policy for the Sino-American Relations	50.0% (4)	100% (4)	2.667

[a] X^2 values indicate the differences in the frequencies of the *Times'* and the *Post*'s coverage regarding each policy.

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Changes in Coverage Patterns of Disability Issues in Three Major American Newspapers 1976 - 1991

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A paper submitted for consideration to the Interest Group on Persons with Disabilities of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Annual Convention, Kansas City, MO, August 1993.

Changes in Coverage Patterns of Disability Issues in Three Major American Newspapers 1976 - 1991

This study examined coverage of disability issues in *The New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Chicago Tribune* during a period of major developments in disability rights. Examination of index entries from 1976, 1981, 1986 and 1991 showed an decrease in coverage of traditional stereotypical disability topics and an increase in progressive civil rights-related issues. Only in 1981 was there any appreciable difference in coverage among the papers. The study concludes newspaper coverage changed slowly and unsteadily for the better.

Introduction

During the past two decades, individuals with disabilities have joined other minority groups in demanding the right to participate fully in all aspects of society in the United States. Following the path first traveled by racial minorities, women and others, in the mid-1970s, those with disabilities began working to achieve a society which accommodates all of its citizens, both with and without disabilities.

These efforts have included public action and civil disobedience to protest against perceived inequalities and injustice, quiet work by individuals to improve access and attitudes at the community level and both open and behind-the-scenes pressures applied to lawmakers at the national, state and local levels (Johnson, 1992). Also during this time period, the mass entertainment media began to move beyond the simple stereotypes of disability which were common twenty years ago toward showing a more diverse set of images of those with disabilities (Klobas, 1988).

The period from 1976 to 1991 included several major developments in the movement toward full participation in society by those with disabilities. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which has been compared to "Brown v. Board of Education" in terms of its impact on disability rights (Robinson, 1991), had not yet been effectively implemented in 1976. The Carter Administration's delay in implementing the Act led to civil action by disability rights protesters the following year (Ablon, 1980; Johnson, 1988). The 1980s saw continued protests by the disability rights movement demanding access to housing, jobs, public transportation, attendant care and other aspects of society which many take for granted. By 1991, a much broader piece of national legislation, the Americans with Disabilities Act, had been passed into law and was being implemented.

A question for media researchers that emerges from this period of activity and change for those with disabilities is whether those changes were reflected in news coverage between 1976 and 1991. This study examines one aspect of how three major U.S. newspapers covered those with disabilities and disability-related topics during that time period.

Review of Literature

Until fairly recently, most content studies of newspaper and other media coverage of persons with disabilities and disability issues came from the special education, counseling and rehabilitation literature. A series of studies under the direction of E. Keith Byrd involved counting the numbers of disabled characters in TV shows (Byrd, Byrd & Allen, 1977; Dillon, Byrd & Byrd, 1980; Elliott, 1983), movies (Byrd, 1989; Byrd & Pipes, 1981), literature (Byrd, Williamson & Byrd, 1986), the Bible (Byrd,

1990) and magazines (Byrd, 1979). These and other, more qualitative examinations of media portrayal (de Balcazar, Bradford & Crawford, 1988; Gerbner, Gross, Signorelli & Morgan, 1980; Leonard, 1978), came to a general consensus that the mass media depicted few disabled characters and those who were shown were presented negatively, either as victims or as social deviants.

Biklen (1987) examined newspaper coverage of two major medically-oriented disability stories of the mid-1980s. He found that press coverage of Baby Jane Doe and of the Elizabeth Bouvia right-to-die story to be condescending and paternalistic. Yoshida, Wasilewski and Friedman (1990) found that in 1986 and 1987, traditional disability topics such as government support and institutionalization predominated An examination of disability coverage in twelve newspapers (Keller, et al., 1990) found that disability tended to be covered more in soft, feature-style news stories than in harder, more issue-oriented ones.

Clogston's examinations of major 16 American newspapers in 1989 (Clogston, 1990) and 1990 (Clogston, 1992a) found that disability coverage tended to be about equally divided between traditional topics such as public support, medical aspects of disability and victimization; and progressive issues such as access to public facilities, consumer issues and civil rights. Haller (1992) found that coverage in *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* of the Deaf President Now protest at Gallaudet University in 1988 was less stereotypical than coverage of deaf persons during the previous two years. Haller also noted that in the two years following the protests, coverage of deaf issues continued to be less stereotypical than it had been before the protest.

In an examination of disability coverage in *The New York Times*, Clogston (1992b) reported a trend toward more progressive story topics from 1941 to 1991, particularly during the period from 1976 to 1991.

The present study sought to determine whether this trend was evident in other major American newspapers during that period.

Research Questions

Disability coverage can be divided into two distinct types--traditional and progressive. Traditional models focus on the disabled individual's differences from others in society, presenting the person as defective in a medical or economic way and assuming problems stem from the disability rather than from society. The progressive viewpoints focus more on how society deals with a population which includes those with various disabilities. In the progressive models, the person with a disability is perceived as being handicapped by society's inability to adapt its physical, social and occupational environment to all members of society.

The two general research questions addressed in this study are based on this progressive--traditional dichotomy:

1-Was there a change in disability issues covered (both in terms of number of stories covering progressive and traditional issues and whether the number of individual issues covered changed) by *The New York Times, Los Angeles Times* and *Chicago Tribune* from 1976 to 1991?

2-Did the proportion of progressive to traditional disability issues covered differ among the three newspapers?

Methods

Entries in the newspaper indexes for *The New York Times, Chicago Tribune* and *Los Angeles Times* for four different years, 1976, 1981, 1986 and 1991, were analyzed. These newspapers were chosen because they are indexed and are considered to be prestige newspapers which are looked to by other journalists for exemplary journalism (Merrill & Fisher, 1980; Stempel, 1961). The index categories sampled were chosen with the intent of including those which would commonly considered to be representative of issues concerning physical disability. Issues regarding mental disabilities (eg. mental retardation, mental illness) and learning disabilities (such.as dyslexia) were not included in this study.

Index categories included **Handicapped**, **Blind** and **Deaf Persons**; specific conditions such as **Cerebral Palsy**, **Multiple Sclerosis** and **Spina Bifida**; and names of public figures who either have disabilities or are associated with some aspect of disability (for example, **Ron Kovic**, **Jerry Lewis** and **Stevie Wonder**).

The index entries were sorted into eight traditional and eight progressive categories based on issue topic categories utilized by Clogston (1992a).

TRADITIONAL CATEGORIES

Medical-These stories dealt with medical treatments, procedures etc. which relate to disability. Also included were stories which focused on the physical aspects of disability.

Government Support-These entries involved social services and Medicaid- or Medicare-type programs sponsored and funded by federal, state or local governments.

Private Support-These entries covered non-government support programs such as churches, charities, etc.

Special Education-These included entries on special, separate school programs for those with physical disabilities.

Special Employment-Stories on "Hire the Handicapped" drives and other special employment programs for those with disabilities were covered by this category.

Victimization-Persons with disabilities in these stories were portrayed as victims of crimes.

Special or Separate Programs-This category is similar to the Special Education and Employment categories. It includes separate bus systems, special programs and special performances by or for individuals with disabilities.

Personal-These entries usually consist of a feature piece which told a personal story about an individual with a disability, with the focus on that disability.

PROGRESSIVE CATEGORIES

Access and Awareness-These stories covered efforts to make public facilities accommodating to all users. The category also includes stories about raising public awareness of disability issues.

Discrimination-These entries dealt with the civil rights of those with disabilities.

Independent Living-These entries covered stories about this specific movement, primarily run by those with disabilities, which seeks to facilitate non-institutional living for disabled persons.

Integrated Programs-These stories dealt with participation by both those with and without disabilities in the same activities.

Integrated (Mainstream) Education-These were entries about education of all children in a non-segregated environment.

General Employment-These entries were for stories about employment of persons with disabilities in mainstream jobs.

Consumer Issues-These were stories where products, etc. used by those with disabilities are evaluated, reviewed or discussed, including new technological developments.

Non-Disability Issues-These were entries where the main issue in the story was not related to disability, however, a person with a disability was involved. The disability may or may not have been noted, but it was not the focus of the story.

Findings

A total of 1362 article entries from the three newspapers' indexes were sorted into the 15 categories. *The New York Times* accounted for 602 entries (44 percent). *The Los Angeles Times'* entries totaled 368 (27 percent) and *The Chicago Tribune*'s total was 392 (29 percent). The breakdown by year showed 288 entries in 1976 (21 percent), 337 in 1981 (25 percent), 378 entries in 1986 (28 percent) and 359 entries in 1991 (26 percent).

The first part of the first research question asked whether coverage of traditional or progressive issues increased during the time period. This was examined by comparing the proportion of traditional to progressive entries for each of the four years. Figure One shows that the percentage of progressive stories rose from less than 40 percent in 1976 to more than 56 percent in 1991. Progressive stories rose to nearly 44 percent in 1981, but fell back to 41 percent in 1986.

An explanation for the decrease in progressive story entries in 1986 is revealed when the progressive and traditional categories are broken down by individual issues. Table One shows that entries in the **Medical** category accounted for more than a third of the total entries for the year, and that 54 (or 42 percent) of those stories dealt with quadriplegic Elizabeth Bouvia's legal efforts to allow the state of California to terminate her life. Had those stories not been included, 48 percent of the 1986 entries would have been progressive.

1986 aside, the **Medical** category remained relatively constant, accounting for 13 to 17 percent of the stories. The **Government** and **Private Support** categories fell from a combined total of 24 percent of the stories in 1976, to 12 percent in 1991. The traditional categories of **Special Employment** and **Special Programs** remained fairly constant and **Special Education**, **Victimization**, and **Personal** showed no clear pattern.

In the progressive issue categories, **Access & Awareness** and **Discrimination**, showed a relatively steady increase, rising from a combined 13 percent in 1976 to 34 percent of the entries in 1991. The proportion of stories in the **Integrated Programs** category rose slightly (from 2.5 to 5 percent) and the percentage of **Non-Disability** and **Consumer** stories showed a slight decline. **Independent Living**, **Integrated Programs** and **General Employment** showed no clear pattern.

The second research question asked whether the ratio of traditional to progressive entries differed among the three newspapers.

Figures Two through Four show the proportion of traditional to progressive entries for each newspaper over the four years examined. The figures show that the path from primarily traditional coverage to a majority of progressive entries was not steady in *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times* (Figs. Two and Three). Only *The Chicago Tribune* showed a steady incremental increase in progressive story topics as it moved from less than 27 percent progressive in 1976 to more than 61 percent progressive fifteen years later (Fig. Four).

The number of traditional and progressive entries for each newspaper were compared for each year to determine the degree to which the coverage differed (Table Two) among the newspapers. The *phi* coefficients for each year indicate that only in 1981 were there any appreciable difference in proportion of traditional to progressive stories among the three newspapers.[1] This was because while both *The Los Angeles Times* and *Chicago Tribune* respectively had 40 and 32 percent progressive entries, 57 percent of *The New York Times'* entries were progressive. This high proportion of progressive entries in *The New York Times* for that year was accounted for by a number of stories dealing with access by persons with disabilities in New York State and in the metropolitan New York area.

Discussion

The first research question, which asked whether there was a change in disability issue coverage between 1976 and 1991, was answered affirmatively. The percentage of progressive stories rose from less than 40 percent in 1976 to nearly 57 percent in 1991. The increase was not in steady increments during the years selected, partly because of the preponderance of 1986 entries for stories on the right-to-die case of Elizabeth Bouvia.

The overall increase in percentage of progressive entries was primarily caused by a decrease in Government Support stories and by a striking increase in Access and Awareness and Discrimination entries. Many of the 1991 entries in this category involved

[1] Since the story entries sampled in this study were chosen purposively rather than randomly, use of inferential statistics would be meaningless. However the *phi* statistic was computed for the crosstabulations of newspapers by type of coverage to determine the newspapers' relative degree of association (see Norusis, 1990, pp. B-122, B-123).

coverage of the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. But the three newspapers were providing increasing coverage of these issues in the early- and mid-1980s as evidenced by the fairly steady rise in both the number of entries and percentage of disability stories covered in 1981 and 1986.

The three newspapers did not differ greatly from each other in terms of proportion of traditional to progressive stories. Only in 1981, when *The New York Times* had a much high percentage of progressive entries, was there any appreciable difference between the newspapers studied.

Conclusion

Conclusions drawn from this study are limited by the secondary nature of newspaper indexes as a tool for examination of newspaper coverage. The efficiency of using an index is tempered by the extra layer of editorial decision-making, which tends to separate the data being studied from the actual newspaper story.

Studying only the topic of each story is another limiting factor. Other story aspects such as language referring to disability (both in stories and headlines) and the nature of the portrayal of individuals with disabilities add more dimensions to evaluation of disability coverage.

Despite these drawbacks, the data indicate that during this fifteen year period of change in the community of Americans with disabilities, the focus of disability news coverage in three major newspapers, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Chicago Tribune*, did shift, albeit slowly and not always steadily, from traditional, stereotypical topics to more progessive issues.

Table One

Individual Issue Entries by Year

For All Newspapers

Traditional Categories	1976	1981	1986	1991
MEDICAL	37 13%	57 17%	130# 34%	47 13%
GOVERNMENT SUPPORT	52 18%	36 11%	11 6%	24 7%
PRIVATE SUPPORT	17 6%	20 6%	13 3%	17 5%
SPECIAL EDUCATION	15 5%	5 1%	8 2%	13 4%
SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT	7 2.5%	1 *	3 1%	4 1%
VICTIMIZATION	5 2%	15 4.5%	12 3%	11 3%
SPECIAL PROGRAMS	24 9%	24 7%	29 8%	24 7%
PERSONAL	17 6%	31 9%	16 4%	16 4.5%
TOTAL TRADITIONAL	174	189	222	156

Includes 54 Right-to-Die stories.

Progressive Categories	1976	1981	1986	1991
ACCESS & AWARENESS	29 10%	64 19%	57 15%	97 27%
DISCRIMINATION	9 3%	24 7%	31 8%	25 7%
INDEPENDENT LIVING	4 1%	1 *	1 *	9 2.5%
INTEGRATED PROGS.	7 2.5%	8 2.5%	22 6%	18 5%
INTEGRATED EDU.	6 2%	5 1.5%	2 *	7 2%
GENERAL EMPLOYMENT	8 3%	12 4%	5 1%	8 2%
CONSUMER ISSUES	26 9%	23 7%	20 5%	19 5%
NON-DISABILITY	25 9%	11 4%	18 5%	20 5%
TOTAL PROGRESSIVE	114	148	156	203
TOTALS	288	334	378	359

*Less than one percent. (percentages do not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Table Two

Newspaper by Number of Traditional and

Progressive Index Entries, 1976-1991

1976

	NYT	LAT	CHI		
Traditional	77	22	15	114	
Progressive	105	28	41	174	
	182	50	56	288	*Phi*= .126

1981

	NYT	LAT	CHI		
Traditional	52	66	71	189	
Progressive	69	45	34	148	
	121	111	105	334	*Phi*= .207

1986

	NYT	LAT	CHI		
Traditional	78	76	68	222	
Progressive	64	45	47	156	
	142	121	115	378	*Phi*= .064

1991

	NYT	LAT	CHI		
Traditional	75	36	45	156	
Progressive	82	50	71	203	
	157	86	116	359	*Phi*= .078

Figure One

Percentage of Traditional and Progressive

Stories in All Three Newspapers

1976-1991

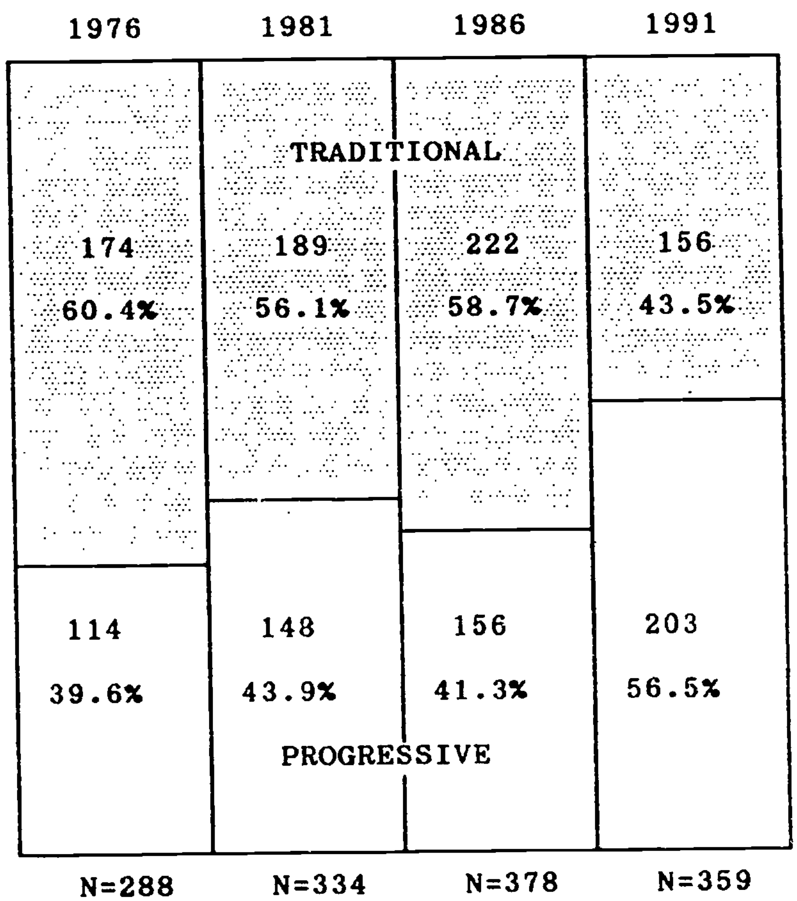


Figure Two

Percentage of Traditional and Progressive

Stories in *The New York Times*

1976-1991

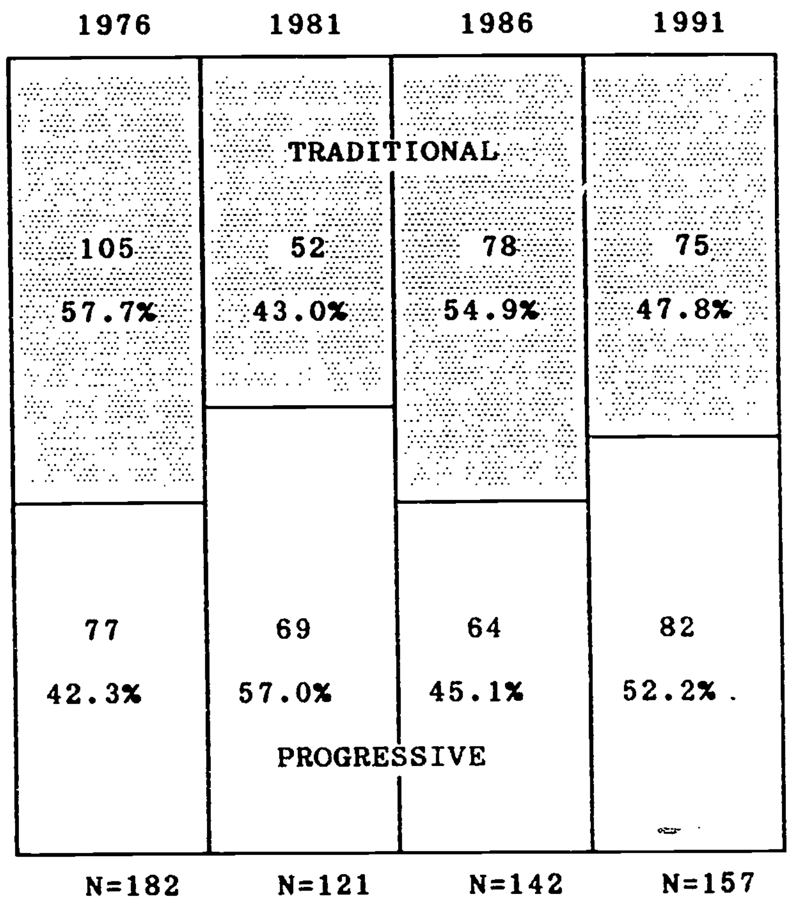


Figure Three

Percentage of Traditional and Progressive

Stories in *The Los Angeles Times*

1976-1991

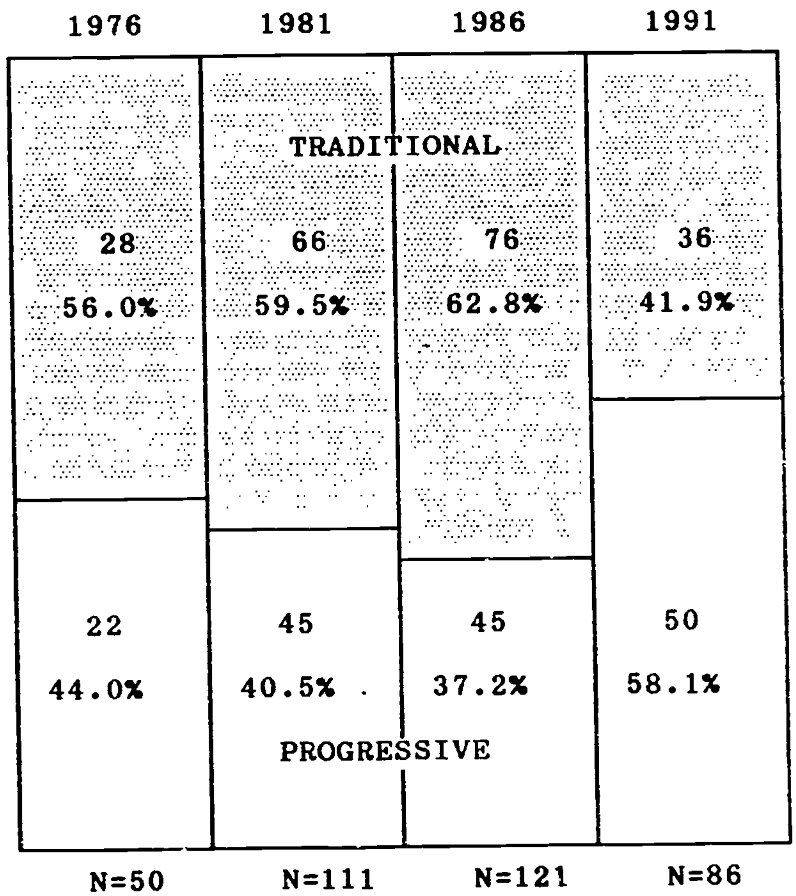
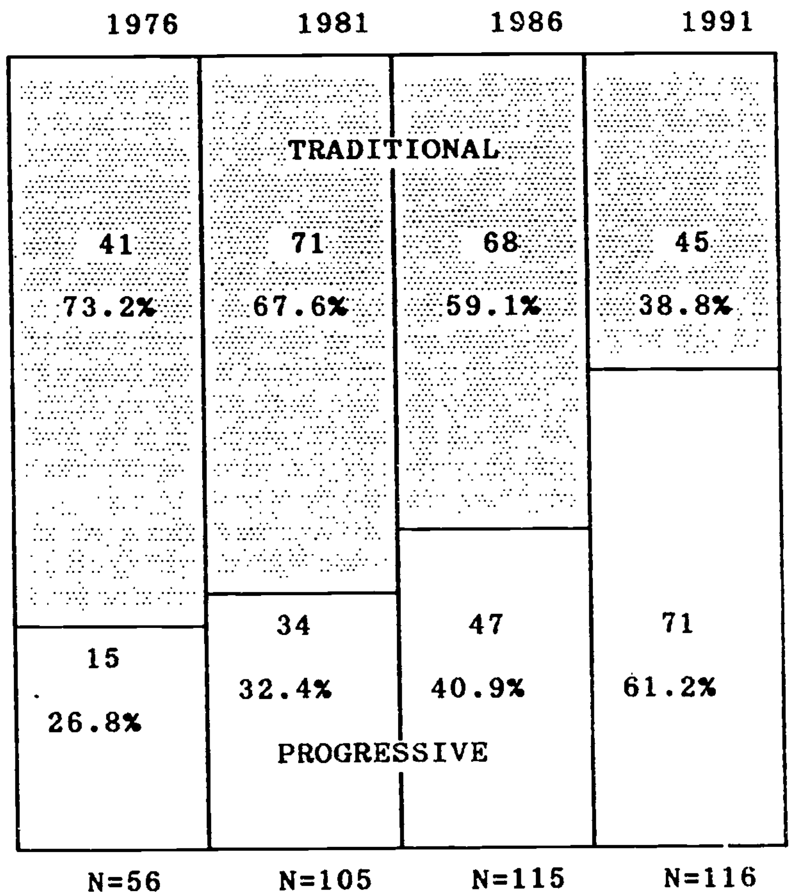


Figure Four

Percentage of Traditional and Progressive

Stories in *The Chicago Tribune*

1976-1991



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MOTHERHOOD AND THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY: FAMILY SUPPORT BENEFITS AND WOMEN'S STATUS IN THE BUSINESS

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INTRODUCTION

For the past several decades, American mothers have been entering the labor force in unprecedented numbers. The number of preschool children with mothers in the labor force has gone from about 6 million in 1970 to about 13.3 million in 1990. The odds that a woman will work outside the home at some time in her life are about 95 out of 100.[1] The Urban Institute estimates that by 1995, two-thirds of America's preschool children will have working mothers. According to government statistics, working parents constitute roughly 37% of the workforce.[2]

Although women's public lives have undergone a revolution, a voluminous body of sociological and psychological research shows that society has done little to help women balance their new careers with their continuing household obligations. Although they now frequently hold down a full-time job outside the home, women continue to shoulder the bulk of household work and receive little additional help from their partners.[3] Additional studies have shown that employers have been slow or resistant to adopt what this paper will refer to as family support policies. Family support policies will be defined as employment benefits designed to minimize the conflict between an employee's personal and professional lives. For the purposes of this paper, these benefits are: parental leave (maternity and paternity, both paid and unpaid); job-sharing; child care

[1] Nancy F. Betz and Louise F. Fitzgerald, *The Career Psychology of Women* (Orlando: Academic Press, 1987), 15.

[2] Dana E. Friedman, "Linking Work-Family Issues to the Bottom Line," Report No. 962 (New York: The Conference Board, 1991), 22.

[3] See Betz; Joseph H. Pleck, *Working Wives/Working Husbands* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1978); and Shelly Coverman, "Women's Work Is Never Done," in *Women: A Feminist Perspective*, Jo Freeman, editor (Mountainview, California: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1989), 356-368.

subsidies; flexible working schedules; compressed work weeks; voluntary part-time positions; and job sharing. Other benefits that assist working parents as well as other employees include flexible spending accounts (which enable employees to have pre-tax money withdrawn from their paychecks to pay for child care); and cafeteria-style benefits (which enable employees to select benefits, enabling them to avoid duplication of benefits also provided to their spouses or partners).

While little comprehensive research has been done on the issues, newspapers appear to lag behind other major businesses in offering family support benefits. Two national surveys regarding newspaper employment benefits completed in the past six years showed few newspapers offered maternity or paternity leaves, child care assistance, flexible work schedules or job sharing.

Newspapers, like many major industries, have in recent years placed a new emphasis on racial and gender diversity. Practically every newspaper organization invests resources to diversify its workforce. These efforts are even more critical because more women than men are now graduating from the nation's journalism schools.[4] Despite these new efforts and concerns, the proportion of women employed by U.S. newspapers has remained stagnant in the past decade. More significantly for this paper, the newspaper business appears to continue to hire women, but in the past decade, apparently has been unable to retain them.[5] Equally striking is women's continued gross

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[4] See Maurine H. Beasley and Kathryn T. Theus, *The New Majority: A Look at what the Preponderance of Women in Journalism Education Means to the Schools and to the Professions* (New York: University Press of America, 1988) and Gerald M. Kosicki and Lee B. Becker, "Annual Census and Analysis of Enrollment and Graduation, *Journalism Educator* 47, (Autumn 1992): 68.

[5] See David Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, Preliminary Report: The American Journalist in the 1990s (New York: The Freedom Forum, 1992): 1^; and Linda Grist Cunningham, Cunningham, Barbara A. Henry and Lee Stinnett (editor). *The Changing Face of*

underrepresentation in the management ranks of the nation's newspapers; women comprise only about 15% of all newspaper managers and executives.[6]

Is women's underrepresentation in the newspaper business and in the industry's management ranks linked to newspapers' mediocre family support policies? Because of the lack of research that has been conducted on the newspaper industry's family support policies, any conclusion is based in part on anecdotal or inferential information. However, it appears that the industry's lackluster record in providing family support policies, coupled with the business' high demands and long hours, does drive women from the business.

OVERVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There is no reason to believe that women interested in newspaper careers are any different from the millions of other women who entered the full-time workforce in the past several decades. Psychologist Kathleen Gerson identified four major structural changes in American society that weakened support for women's domesticity, thereby encouraging women to work outside the home. They are:

1. **Decline of stable marriages.** Between 1924 and 1975, the U.S. divorce rate increased threefold. This jump "encouraged or even required many women to turn away from traditional domestic commitments toward stronger work ties, fuller economic independence and higher work aspirations."[7]

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the Newsroom: A Human Resources Report (Washington, D.C.: American Society of Newspaper Editors, 1989), 28.

[6] Cunningham, 29.

[7] Kathleen Gerson, *Hard Choices: How Women Decide About Work, Career and Motherhood.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 206-207.

2. **Decline of the family wage.** Real disposable income for American workers with three dependents hit an all-time high in 1973, but has fallen steadily since then, after controlling for inflation. The resulting economic squeezes pushed a growing proportion of stably married women into the workplace to bring home earnings on which their children and husbands also depend.[8]
3. **The ambiguous expansion of work opportunities.** Although women generally have been clustered in low-paying, female-dominated, pink-collar positions since the expansion of advanced post-industrial economies, college-educated women more recently have entered historically male dominated occupations in unprecedented numbers. Women's new work aspirations, along with affirmative action initiatives, encouraged or pressured some employers to restructure their companies' career ladders, allowing women to advance out of clerical ranks into managerial and quasi-managerial positions.[9]
4. **The erosion of domestic supports.** With few exceptions, women have been the primary caretakers of children, yet work associated with child-rearing and the private sphere has been systematically devalued. Industrial capitalism promotes the devaluation of child rearing and homemaking by remunerating only work performed outside the home.[10]

While it is probable that women pursuing newspaper careers were influenced by all of these changes, it appears that the ambiguous expansion of work opportunities would be the most salient. While their promotion to the management ranks has been less than impressive, newspapers did hire more

[8] Gerson, 208-209.

[9] Gerson, 210.

[10] Gerson, 211.

women in the 1970s, a decade when women were entering the labor force in record numbers. For example, women comprised 22.4% of all newspaper employees in 1970;[11] 12 years later, that percentage had increased to about one-third.[12] (That percentage, however, has remained unchanged since.)[13]

At the same time women of all professions and job classifications began entering the workforce, they learned they would continue to shoulder primary responsibility for household tasks. In a 1975-76 study, men spent an average of 3 hours, 32 minutes on "family work and child care" daily, while women spent, on average, 6 hours and 8 minutes daily.[14] A year later, a separate study indicated that husbands averaged 5 hours, 7 minutes daily on childcare and family work, while women spent 10 hours, 4 minutes (The discrepancy with the earlier study was attributed to a broader definition of childcare in the 1977 study.) Countless other studies have confirmed these findings.[15]

The difficulties working mothers face are obvious. Psychologists and sociologists have arrived at two variables to describe the problems: role overload and role conflict. Role overload comes into play when women opt for careers, thereby "adding to their lives a new set of roles and role demands without a commensurate decrease in the old ones."[16] Role overload consists of five propositions:

[11] John W.C. Johnstone, Edward J. Slawski and William W. Bowman, *The News People: A Sociological Portrait of American Journalists and Their Work* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 198.

[12] David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, *The American Journalist: A Portrait of U.S. News People and Their Work,* second edition (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press), 161.

[13] Weaver and Wilhoit, 1992, *Ibid.*

[14] Pleck, 42.

[15] See Coverman, Betz and Gerson.

[16] Betz, 204.

- The division of family work is inequitable;
- Traditional sex role ideology primarily determines the division of family work.
- Most wives want their husbands to do more family work.
- Employed wives' role overload has negative consequences for their well-being.
- Husbands are much more psychologically involved in their paid work than in their family role.[17]

The other major variable, role conflict, occurs because of the incompatibility of the demands associated with two or more roles. It is conceptualized as primarily psychological in nature. The pressures role conflict and role overload bring on women's professional careers are obvious. According to Betz, the amount of time devoted to housework and, particularly, child care, seriously limits a woman's ability to pursue a professional career: "Child care, more than any other corporate/dual-career issue, exerts enormous influence on women's career adjustment, satisfaction, productivity and retention."[18]

CAREER/FAMILY CONFLICTS WITHIN THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY

Both men and women in the newspaper business face the same types of family pressures as other professionals do, but more journalists opt not to have children than workers in general. While the proportion of married newspaper employees is about the same as for the total U.S. workforce, journalists are less

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[17] Pleck, 23.

[18] Betz, 229.

likely to have children than the country's total labor force. About 67% of the total U.S. labor force has children at home, while only 60% of journalists do.[19]

For those journalists with families, the pressures are considerable. In a 1991 survey of 1,328 newspaper journalists, nearly half said the cost of a newspaper career is too high to inflict on their children and that they would steer their children in to other careers. Respondents offered the following comments when asked why they responded the way they did: "Stress, stress, stress;" "No family life;" and "Your mother and I used to be married."[20]

Even those without families see the sacrifice: "I plan to get my teaching certificate soon so that I can lead a more normal life," a female copy editor wrote on her ASNE survey. "I'd rather work at a newspaper. But I'd also like to have a family some day and that is rather difficult to do when I can't even get a date. I have to find a balance somewhere." [21]

While images persist of hard-drinking, chain-smoking workaholic journalists married to their jobs, newspaper employees appear to be looking for more balance in their lives. ASNE survey participants were asked to choose their highest personal priority from five choices. A successful marriage and family life were at the top of the list for everyone surveyed and were more important for married newspaper employees:

SUCCESSFUL FAMILY LIFE MOST IMPORTANT[22]

TOTAL surveyed	Married men	Married women

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[19] Cun gham, 32.

[20] Ted Pease, "Newsroom 2000: Not my kid! Journalists leery of industry's future." *Newspaper Research Journal 13* (Winter/Spring 1992): 44-45.

[21] Cunningham, 40.

[22] Cunningham, 52.

Successful family life important	48%	67%	68%

Respondents also were asked: "If you could change one thing in your personal life, what would it be?" Almost one-third responded that they would like more time to spend with their spouse/partner/children, while 43% said they would like more time for personal interests.[23]

It is female newspaper professionals, however, who appear to bear the burden of professional/personal conflicts.

Both the ASNE survey and the 1981 Indiana University survey found that women journalists were less likely to be married or have children than their male colleagues:

Percentage of journalists who are married:[24]

	ASNE survey	IU survey
Men	62%	62%
Women	44	42
TOTAL married	57	57

Only the IU study broke down by gender the proportion of journalists who had children. While 70% of male journalists have children, only 57% of the women do.[25] While it was a purposive study, a 1984 survey of 59 female newspaper managers showed that: 56% were single; 25% had never married; and 71% had no children.[26] One-third of the women's responses said they had

[23] Cunninghman, 35.

[24] Cunnigham, 32; Weaver and Wilhoit,163-164.

[25] Weaver and Wilhoit, *Ibid.*

[26] Ardyth B. Sohn, "Goals and Achievement Orientations of Women Newspaper Managers." *Journalism Quarterly* 61 (Autumn 1984): 603-604.

sacrificed time with their family and/or friends for the job, while 16% said their work had led to delayed, canceled or failed marriages. One-third of the responses indicated that work had led them to delay having children, not have children at all, or to neglect their children.[27]

A separate survey of 364 newspaper managers found that while 87% of the men were married, only about half of the women were.[28]

These numbers indicate that the marital and family status of female journalists, particularly managers, is in line with those of professional women as a whole. A 1989 U.S. Bureau of the Census Report found that among women ages 30-34, 15% of the professional women expected to remain childless, while only 8% of women with a high school diploma planned not to have children.[29] Betz concludes that not only are professional women more often single than other women, they are more likely than male professionals to be single. "While marital status has little bearing on men's career development, it is an important variable influencing the career development of women."[30]

Although a sizable portion of professional women, including female journalists, apparently choose not to marry or have children, the majority either are married, have children or eventually plan to marry and have children. Among married journalists, 84% of their spouses work, according to the ASNE survey,[31] and as already has been stated, a significant number of married journalists have children.

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27 *Ibid.*

28 Ogan, Christine L. "On Their Way to the Top? Men and Women Middle-Level Newspaper Managers. *Newspaper Research Journal* 1, (May 1980), 57.

29 Friedman, 22.

30 Betz, 48.

31 Cunningham, 33.

That is where much of the trouble begins, according to Susan Miller, director of editorial development for the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain:

> Journalism is perhaps harder on women's career development than other professions for a number of reasons. One reason is the hours. Working nights and weekends isn't conducive to normal family life. It's hard enough for a two-career couple to find time for each other and for their children and make satisfactory child care provisions when mommy and daddy are at work. It's that much tougher when mommy (and perhaps daddy as well) works nights and weekends.[32]

As in most dual-career marriages, female newspaper professionals appear to be the ones who postpone career aspirations because of family considerations. A 1988 study of University of Maryland Journalism School graduates found that female journalists were 13 times more likely to interrupt their careers because of family responsibilities, interruptions that appeared to lead to substantial income losses.[33] The ASNE survey found that 28% of female journalists said they will leave the business before the age of 40, compared to only 15% of male journalists.[34]

In a 1971 nationwide survey of 1,313 journalists, the proportion of women in journalism dropped to 15.5% in the 35-to-44 age group. In the total labor force, women in this age group comprised 35.6% of the workforce,[35] which the researchers attributed to women's temporary career interruptions to bear and rear children. The resulting underrepresentation of women in journalism "would

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32 Susan Miller, "What Women -- and their Bosses -- Should Do To Keep Women Climbing Up the Management Ladders," *ASNE Bulletin* 683 (January 1986): 14.

33 Beasley and Theus, 56.

34 Cunningham, 19.

35 Johnstone, 24.

affect the upward mobility of women in news organizations."[36] The Johnstone assertion dovetails with a conclusion Betz drew about women professionals in general: "It is clear that having children decreases a woman's chances of being successful in her career and professional women especially report that parenthood is likely to interfere with their career development." [37]

Not surprisingly, female journalists with children feel the pressures more acutely than married women or single or divorced women with no children, according to a 1987 survey of 821 journalists, including 269 women. One survey respondent, a single mother with a 6-year-old son, wrote:

> Here's a prescription for stress: a crushing workload that has several people in your department staying several hours late and a note in your kindergartner's painstaking and still uneven handwriting -- "Dear Mom, Please come to open house at my school and see my good work." If I had it to do over again, I think I'd go to the open house. One of the problems with people in this business, myself included, is that we tend to let it consume us, forgetting that it is good work and a worthwhile part of our lives, but it is not our lives.[38]

THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY AND FAMILY SUPPORT POLICIES

Little research has been done regarding family support benefits available to newspaper employees. Two national surveys -- one done in 1987 by the American Newspaper Publishers Association and another done in 1990 by the International Newspaper Financial Executives and Newspaper Personnel

[36] Johnstone, 25.

[37] Betz, 203.

[38] Carole Rich, "Shop Talk at Thirty: A close-up look at women journalists," *Editor & Publisher* 120 (September 5, 1987): 56.

Relations Association -- were geared more toward evaluating all newspaper benefits, not just those related to an employee's family. Results to the questions asked regarding family benefits follow:

BENEFITS OFFERED BY RESPONDING NEWSPAPERS

	ANPA (1987)[39]	INFE/NPRA (1990)[40]
Maternity leave	37%	N/A
Paternity leave	4	N/A
Flexible spending accts.	N/A	38%
Cafeteria benefits	31	15
Child care (on-site)	3	9
Flextime	18	N/A
Job-sharing	14	N/A

N/A = not asked.

Comparison between these two surveys and surveys done on U.S. companies in general is difficult because of sampling variations and the difference in survey questions. For example, a 1990 survey of 521 of America's largest companies found that 90% offered some type of alternative scheduling (flextime), 20% offered job-sharing, 7% offered work at home and 33% offered compressed work weeks.[41] These numbers, however, are not representative of all companies because only the largest companies were surveyed and no effort

[39] American Newspaper Publishers Association, "Personnel Information Survey Report" (Reston, VA: American Newspaper Publishers Association, 1988),10-11.

[40] International Newspaper Financial Executives and Newspaper Personnel Relations Association, "INFE/NPRA Survey of Employee Benefits" (Reston, VA: The Newspaper Center, 1990), 4.

[41] James L. Peters, Barbara H. Peters and Frank Caropreso, editors, "Work and Family Policies: The New Strategic Plan," Research Report No. 949 (New York: The Conference Board, 1990), 20.

was made to analyze the non-respondent population.[42] The only media company surveyed, Time Inc. (now Time-Warner), offered six months' maternity leaves as early as 1963. In 1971, it was extended to one year. In 1986, the company began offering the same benefit to fathers.[43]

One of the largest surveys completed to date was done in 1990 by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). It did not survey businesses, but rathe randomly surveyed 4,392 American households that included at least one child under the age of 13. Because it was random, the survey did not differentiate between professional and non-professional workers. More than half of the respondents reported that their employers provided maternity leave, while 10% said their employer provided on-site or near site child care. Slightly more than one-fifth said their employers offered flexible working schedules.[44]

Columbia Journalism Review polled the country's 10 largest newspaper in 1988 for articles about motherhood and journalism. Only three of the newspapers surveyed provided any child care services and none contributed directly to the cost of child care. For example, *USA Today* and *The Washington Post* offered child care referral services, which directed employees to suitable child care in the area.[45] Several metro dailies offer child care services. They include: The Seattle Times, The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, The Courier-

[42] Kathleen Christensen, "Flexible Staffing and Scheduling in U.S. Corporations, Research Bulletin No. 240 (New York: The Conference Board, 1989), 5.

[43] Peters, 23.

[44] Sandra L. Hofferth, April Brayfield, Sharon Deich and Pamela Holcomb. *National Child Care Survey 1990*. (Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute, 1991), pp. 359-375.

[45] Brendan Cooney, "Child Care -- and the care-less press," *Columbia Journalism Review* XXVI, (March-April 1988): 36.

Journal[46] and the St. Petersburg Times.[47] The Seattle Times, St. Petersburg Times, Journal and Constitution and Courier-Journal all have subsidized on-site or near-site day care centers.

The St. Petersburg Times offers the most comprehensive family benefits. Those include: unpaid maternity leaves of up to one year; subsidized day care at a local hospital for sick children; a company-sponsored child care center; and flextime.[48]

Results from the ASNE and University of Maryland surveys, along with another survey of University of Kansas journalism alumni, indicate that female journalists want and feel that they need more help in balancing career and family life. Carolyn Beyrau, deputy features editor at the Charlotte (N.C.) Observer, had this to say when 24 newspaper executives met to discuss the results of the ASNE survey:

> I go home and I wonder how working women -- working parents -- do this. And I don't see a lot of support in my industry for women in that situation. The (ASNE) survey shows that women are making the choice, "If I keep going on up the ladder into management, I have to choose not to spend time with my family." Women also think about having and family, and they wonder where they would find the time. It's really an either/or situation. Either you can succeed and go up the ranks of the newspaper and continue to be well-regarded, or you can scale back to take care of your family.[49]

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46 Cooney, 37.

47 Gene Goltz, "The Family Matters: Newspaper Employees Request Job Flexibility," *presstime* 13, (November 1991): 15.

48 *Ibid.*

49 Cunningham, 90.

In the ASNE survey, newspaper employees were asked about benefits that would influence their decision to leave or remain in the newspaper business. Of those surveyed, 10% said company-provided child care would be a major incentive. But a more-detailed breakout of the child-care question showed that it was the number one choice for men and women who have children under 6 years of age and among employees who plan to start their families within the next five years. That group was 36% of the workforce study sample "and is sending a strong message to newspaper companies about the child care issue."[50]

Of the women surveyed, 25% said company-provided child care was the most important benefit a newspaper could offer if it wanted to lure them away from their current employer.[51] Those findings were confirmed by a 1991 survey of 214 University of Kansas journalism alumni who cited flexible hours and in-house child care as among the benefits newspapers should offer if they want to retain employees.[52]

The 24 newspaper managers whom ASNE invited to discuss the results of its survey drafted a list of recommendations for the nation's newsrooms. Initiatives that would fall into this paper's definition of family support policies dominated those recommendations, including:

- scheduling alternatives, including flextime, compressed work weeks, voluntary part-time positions and job sharing;
- on-site, near-site or subsidized day care.
- parental leaves of between six months and one year.

[50] Cunningham, 53.

[51] Cunningham, 19.

[52] Carole Rich, "Take this job and shove it!" *ASNE Bulletin* 736 (November 1991): 15.

- relaxed nepotism policies so that married journalists could work for the same newspaper.[53]

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[53] Cunningham, 101.

[54] Cunningham, 53.

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[56] Carole Rich, "Take this job and shove it!" *ASNE Bulletin* 736 (November 1991): 15.

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- parental leaves of between six months and one year.
- relaxed nepotism policies so that married journalists could work for the same newspaper.[57]

CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This paper is only a survey of existing research and studies regarding women's status within the newspaper industry and the industry's family support benefits. The most serious deficiency is the lack of research that would allow direct comparison between family benefits offered by U.S. companies in general and newspapers in particular.

While much of the research that has been done touches on the effect family pressures have on prompting women to leave the business, more research should be done to evaluate whether a cause-and-effect relationship does indeed exist.

It appears, however, that enough scientific and anecdotal information exists to conclude that the time and energy demands of a newspaper career, coupled with the industry's low tolerance for personal priorities and pressures and reluctance to adopt benefits that would minimize the professional/family conflict, cause women to end or stymie their newspaper careers prematurely.

Besides the adoption of family support policies, two researchers also recommend that journalism educators give female journalism students planning a newspaper career a more realistic picture of the pressures they will face:

[57] Cunningham, 101.

> The chief problem . . . is preparing women to go beyond entry-level jobs, which are relatively easy to obtain, into fulfilling long-term careers. The study urges educators and employers alike to face the issue of women interrupting their careers to rear children . . . The study concludes that (today's career-oriented women journalism graduates) will be disappointed unless journalism education . . . emphasizes preparing women to compete equally with men in the job market.[58]

[58] Maurine H. Beasley, "Future of newspaper depends on attracting best women students," *ASNE Bulletin* 683 (January 1986): 12.

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FAMILY FEUD:

A CASE STUDY OF JOB STRESS AND COPING MECHANISMS

AMONG NEWSPAPER COPY EDITORS

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FAMILY FEUD:

A CASE STUDY OF STRESS AND COPING MECHANISMS AMONG NEWSPAPER COPY EDITORS

Work-related stress is a phenomenon with wide-ranging effects on health, family relations, even outlook on life. Some occupations are generally recognized as being stressful, such as air traffic controllers, doctors, and police officers. This study examines work-related stress affecting copy editors at a metropolitan newspaper. As guardians of the language and the last line of defense against error in the newspaper, copy editors perform work embodying some of the characteristics most associated with stress. They work under severe time constraints with concomitant demands for speed and accuracy without sacrificing quality. Through observation and interviews, this case study explores whether copy editors feel high stress levels that can lead to job burnout and seeks to discover some of the causes of that stress and to learn how copy editors cope with stress.

Literature review

The editors

Although they labor in anonymity, copy editors are integral to the operation of a newspaper. Those members of the public who have heard of copy editors may be unsure of exactly what they do. And for scholars who study newspapers, the role of the copy editor is often overlooked, in contrast to the recurrent emphasis on reporters and senior editors, meaning that there are few studies that focus solely or even primarily on the role of copy editors at newspapers (B. B. Cook, personal communication, Sept. 15, 1992). Thus, it is no surprise that copy editors are the Rodney Dangerfields of the newsroom, getting no respect (Stein, 1987). Yet, "copy editing is one of the most important and painstaking jobs on a newspaper" (Harriss, Leiter & Johnson, 1992, p. 493) and copy editing is a task newspaper readers regard as crucial (Kirtz, 1986). Newspaper industry analyst John Morton (1990) is one of the few commentators who has acknowledged the role and importance of copy editors, and he sees a danger in their declining status within the newsroom vis-à-vis reporters.

The American Journalist includes profiles of various journalism positions: general-assignment reporter, beat reporter, desk editor and producer and managing editor and news director. Left out are copy editors, even though the authors note that "more than half of the journalists who do reporting regularly have jobs that include other duties, mainly editing" (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1991, p. 69). This concentration on reporting devalues the contribution of those copy editors whose sole responsibility is editing stories written by reporters and writing headlines. Indeed, in a chapter on job conditions and satisfactions, the authors cite editing as a task, not a position. Further, Weaver and Wilhoit's direct references to copy editors all relate to the impact of new technology on their jobs, concluding that "editors, especially the older ones, [are] most likely to complain about decreased quality and increased time needed to do their work" (p. 156). The references are somewhat anachronistic because the point of comparison is paper-and-pencil editing. But as pagination and other tasks take up increasing amounts of an editor's time, technology may still be seen as hurting rather than helping quality.

Job stress

In contrast with studies on copy editing, much research has been done on stress. What, precisely, is stress? Although psychological literature has no agreed upon definition, job stress and burnout include certain necessary elements--anxiety, dread, irritation, annoyance, anger, grief, and depression (Motowildo, Packard & Manning, 1986). Stress also is a psychologically perceived phenomenon in that the same stressors are perceived and internalized differently by different people who are, in turn, affected by stress differently (Fisher, 1984). In a 1983 study of stress among newspaper editors, Giles characterized stress in physiological terms as the release of adrenaline, a rise in blood pressure and energy, and heightened senses. He found that the most stressful components of their jobs involved supervisers and corporate demands. The majority of the editors in Giles' study practiced methods to reduce their vulnerability to stress, which included developing a support system with coworkers whom they trust and to whom they can vent their frustrations. Stress becomes negative when the result is overwhelming feelings of worry. Cook, Banks and Turner (1992) defined the symptoms of burnout as "physical and emotional exhaustion produced by excessive demands on the energy, strength, and resources of the individual" (p. 2). The characteristics ascribed to burnout by Nagy and Nagy (1992) include the feeling of excessive fatigue in concert with a perception of a low rate of success and accomplishment.

Much of the literature on job stress and coping strategies provide insights into how copy editors might interpret and handle stress on the job. A study of nurses found that the symptoms of burnout as cataloged in the Maslach Burnout Inventory occurred among those who had a low communal orientation, which refers to responsiveness to others' needs. (VanYperen, Buunk & Schaufeli, 1992). The Maslach Burnout Inventory is a measure of depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, and personal accomplishment that aims to predict which workers might leave their jobs (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). As with the nurses, a study of stress among teachers found that a supportive environment was highly correlated with feelings of personal accomplishment and that a lack of managerial support was associated with depersonalization (Jackson, Schwab & Schuler, 1986).

In general, job dissatisfaction is highly associated with feelings of job stress. Several studies have examined the issues of stress and low morale among journalists. A recent survey of more than 1,400 journalists found that more than 20 percent were planning to leave journalism within five years due to declining job satisfaction. Relations with management and coworkers were central to journalists' feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1992). A study of job satisfaction among media professionals, found that among the factors that predict satisfaction are whether coworkers are amiable and management is sympathetic. And newspaper journalists ranked seventh in job satisfaction among 10 categories of media professionals (DeFleur, 1992). A Colorado survey found journalists to have less job satisfaction than public relations personnel. Furthermore, journalists were particularly dissatisfied with management's appreciation of individual improvement (Nayman, McKee & Lattimore, 1977). Shaver (1978) found that having good interpersonal relationships with peers contributed to job satisfaction, while company administration and policy contributed to job dissatisfaction. In a similar study of newspaperwomen, factors most related to job satisfaction were opportunity to advance, self-direction/independence, personal interest/fulfillment, good salary, and competent management (Barrett, 1984). In addition, two studies of journalists' job satisfaction as it relates to the size of the news organization found that journalists in large news organizations experience stress and dissatisfaction due to decreased autonomy and bureaucratization of news work (Johnstone, 1976), and that journalists in larger organizations were significantly less satisfied with management's attitude toward editorial workers than those at smaller newspapers (Samuelson, 1962). Other studies also have shown that older workers are more contented and less stressed than younger workers (Graziano & Coulson, 1988). But a majority of journalism students in one study reported that stress helps them perform better (Enders, 1992).

Social support was deemed to be a factor in alleviating job stress; workers possessing a confiding relationship with one another were significantly better able to combat stress and to be less depressed (Fisher, 1984). Similarly, Jayaratne, Himle and Chess (1988) found it was important for workers to perceive that there was support for them and their jobs and that the "absence of a supportive environment and the failure to use existing support systems bodes ill for the worker" (p. 201). But journalists believe that participation in decision-making is an important factor in improving a work environment (Graziano & Coulson, 1988).

In a study of 120 reporters and copy editors from 10 daily newspapers, Cook et al. (1992) noted that the social climate of the work environment is strongly correlated with burnout--stress levels are lower in supportive environments. While reporters demonstrated lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization than copy editors, both agreed that supervisors should be more supportive and offer more feedback. Among the reasons cited were "lower levels of involvement, peer cohesion, supervisor support, task orientation, clarity, physical comfort and higher levels of work pressure" (p. 13). Peer cohesion is defined as "the extent to which employees are friendly and supportive of one another" (p. 10). It was significantly correlated with job burnout, which was assayed using the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the Work Environment Scale (WES). The WES measures the social climate of an environment in 10 areas: involvement, peer cohesion, supervisor support, autonomy, task orientation, work pressure, clarity, control, innovation, and physical comfort (Moos, 1987). Those with higher levels of peer cohesion showed significantly lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and greater personal accomplishment. Among copy editors, changing technologies and increased responsibilities were specifically mentioned. Other findings included inverse relationships between age and emotional exhaustion and between circulation size and personal accomplishment. The study also found that "coworkers may function as a reference group . . . or as an ongoing supervision and consulting resource to celebrate accomplishments and to render advice and solutions" (pp. 10-11).

Burnout is a recent term used to describe "a state of emotional exhaustion caused by excessive psychological and emotional demands made on people helping people" (Jackson et al., 1986, p. 630). Generally it is applied to a stress response seen among those working in human services, such as nurses, teachers, police officers and social workers. One study of parks and recreation employees found a significant relationship between lack of staff support and emotional exhaustion (Rosenthal, Teague, Retish, West & Vessell, 1983). Other aspects of burnout include depersonalization, which is excessive detachment toward people, and feelings of low personal accomplishment, the sense that one's efforts won't make a difference.

Two important aspects of stress are appraisal and coping. How these interact with the fit between the individual and the environment may lead to a greater understanding of the processes involved in stress. Research has found that social support provided by coworkers can buffer the impact of stress and job burnout (Koeske & Koeske, 1989).

Because a communal and supportive peer environment is such a crucial factor in coping with job stress, this atmosphere can be likened to a familial setting. It is not uncommon for workers spending 40 or more hours per week at a job to develop patterns of behavior and feelings similar to those experienced in a family. Patterns of interaction established in families of origin are factors in people's work lives. These patterns developed during a person's upbringing are an often-unacknowledged influence in adulthood that may affect job stress. Work relationships can become intense and coworkers can take on roles akin to family members with one another. Moreover, applying the concept of family-of-origin influences to the work situation can facilitate an understanding of job stresses. In one study, for example, a woman described a stressful relationship with her supervisor that was remarkably similar to her relationship with her father when she was a youngster

(Weinberg & Mauksch, 1991).

A year-long study of a random sample of about 250 Bay Area families found the availability of family resources to be one of several factors that help people handle stress. Other factors are self-confidence, a relaxed disposition, and efforts to deny or get away from the stress-inducing situation (Holahan & Moos, 1986). In addition to feeling loved or accepted, other resources that can help alleviate stress include intellectual and financial security (Cobb, 1976).

Much quantitative research in the field of stress already has been done. Dewe (1989) finds qualitative methods provide new insights into work stress and coping strategies. Open-ended questions about stress addressed by 10 subjects found 63 coping strategies, which included expressing feelings to colleagues, discussing careers with one's spouse, and use of family and spouse to give sense of proportion to problem. Dewe suggests other occupational stress researchers make more use of qualitative methodologies.

Stress in the newsroom

As the foregoing has shown, stress is an important and well-developed area of research, but little work, with the exception of that done by Cook et al. (1992), has focused specifically on stress in the newsroom. Perhaps the most significant research on stress in terms of this paper involves coping mechanisms, such as a communal orientation. A broad look at research on journalists finds that very little has included copy editors in any meaningful way, again excluding the Cook et al. study. Furthermore, besides occasional, anecdotal references in non-scholarly works, such as Talese (1970), we can find no evidence of any substantial qualitative research on copy editors per se.

Therefore, this appears to be a fruitful area of inquiry, and this study seeks to answer the following questions:

- Do copy editors feel stress in their jobs?
- If copy editors feel stress, how does it manifest itself?
- What is are the sources of stress for copy editors?
- How do copy editors cope with stress?

Methodology

This study used a hierarchical case-study approach and inductive analysis. The project involved participation, observation, individual interviews and small-group discussion with copy editors at a chain-owned metropolitan daily newspaper. The newspaper, which we will call the Times, is in a competitive market. As a team of researchers, we sought to determine factors contributing to stress among copy editors and the strategies they employ to deal with the stress. One team member had held various editing positions at the newspaper for 14 years until just before the study began. Another team member had experience in editing academic publications; the third had spent 10 years in television news. Six of the newspaper's 40-some copy editors participated in interviews.

The night copy desk of the newspaper serves as a macro case study and the individual copy editors as micro case studies, allowing for a cross-case analysis, as Patton (1990) suggests. In addition, the proximity of the newspaper and the previous employment at the newspaper of one member of the research team were pragmatic considerations in the choice of method, site and duration of fieldwork, which took place during about a one month period in the fall of 1992. Fieldwork entailed two one- to two-hour periods of observation of the copy editors by each of the investigators; interviews of at least one hour with each of the participants; and collection and review of some documents.

The use of multiple researchers provide a holistic and thorough snapshot of the setting. The differing backgrounds, status, and demographics of the researchers lends a more lucid and comprehensive character to the findings. In addition, the researchers serve to corroborate each other's observations and interpretations with multiple perspectives on the same phenomenon. We set out to explore the general theme of stress among copy editors from a qualitative perspective in response to the study by Cook et al. (1992), which used two psychological surveys and quantitative analysis.

This examination of stress among copy editors evolved from two evenings of observation at the newspaper by each researcher. In addition, individual one-hour interviews with three copy editors were conducted by a lone researcher or pair of researchers, and a one-hour "interactive group interview" (Patton, 1990, p. 345) with three copy editors was conducted by the entire team. We used a combination of informal conversational interview and guided interview techniques (Patton, 1990). In each case the same 10 topics (involvement, peer cohesion, supervisor support, autonomy, task orientation, work pressure, clarity, control, innovation, and physical comfort) derived from the WES used by Cook et al. (1992), were covered with each participant but without the specific wording of the questions being identical. This was done to get as wide a range of responses as possible because of the preliminary nature of this qualitative study. Also, a lack of formal questions was meant to put the participants at ease. Although not a focus group in the usual sense, the group interview was used in much the same way and for many of the same reasons. The interactive interview technique was used because of the short time available for data gathering and analysis. A benefit is that the emphasis on the participants' points of view is greater than in individual interviews. However, one must be careful in trying to tease out individual differences of opinion that a consensus doesn't emerge that obscures those very differences. Finally, the group interview was used because, as Morgan (1988) notes about focus groups, it "excel[s] at uncovering <u>why</u> participants think as they do" (p. 25).

Except for the former employee on the team, none of the researchers had any predispositions about potential findings and had a fresh perspective on the subject. Because of the recent professional relationship of the one researcher with the copy editors, the role assumed by that researcher (and endorsed by the participants) was that of a complete participant. This is supported by Adler and Adler (1987), who recognize a range of membership roles that can include prior participant among those identified as complete-member-researchers. As such, the researcher and the subjects consider one another as "status equals, dedicated to sharing a common set of experiences, feelings, and goals" (p. 67). The other members of the research team were complete observers throughout the study.[1]

Analysis

In an effort to illuminate the factors that contribute to job stress and burnout among copy editors at the Times, the following is a thematic analysis of the editors' relations with management. This focus was chosen because it emerged as the most consistent and universal factor contributing to stress among those copy editors interviewed. Like members of a family, Times copy editors support and protect one another from managers whom they view as incompetent at best and malevolent at worst. These twin themes of familial-like relationships with coworkers and disrespect for management were intimately intertwined and ran throughout our interviews. The feeling was reinforced during our observation and work in the newsroom. However, this strong inter-relationship between the copy editors' family-like cohesion and their relations with management precludes discrete thematic analysis.

All the copy editors at the Times participating in this study or under observation are white and, except as noted, have at least a bachelor's degree. Those interviewed were (using pseudonyms throughout):

- Samantha, who is in her 50s. She has worked at newspapers since she was 19. She has spent almost 20 years years at the Times. She is married, and her children are grown.
- Betty, who has been a copy editor at the Times for six years with a total of seven more years of experience at four other newspapers. She is in her 30s and has a master's degree in journalism. She is married to one of the researchers.
- Chris, who is one of several copy desk chiefs at the Times. He is in his early 40s, is married and has a young boy. He has worked at the Times for more than 10 years but is the only one of the group who has never worked at another daily newspaper.
- Miles, a divorced man in his 50s. He has spent nearly 20 years in the newspaper business, the last 10 at the Times. Years ago he completed the course work for a doctorate in English. He is dating another copy editor at the Times.
- Rob, a copy desk chief at the Times. He is in his mid-30s and has been with the newspaper for several years. Previously he worked at several other daily newspapers, both larger and smaller than the Times.
- Gina, who is in her 30s and has been on the copy desk for a year. She was a reporter at the Times for two years but

quit a few years ago. Although she never went to college, she was a reporter at a Pulitzer Prize-winning big-city daily newspaper for several years. She and Rob were engaged during the study and subsequently married.

The newsroom environment physically illustrates the separation of managers from the copy editors as well as their superiority over them. Like the monied suburbanites who fled the overcrowding of the inner city, the top managers' glass-walled offices surround the perimeter of the large, crowded newsroom where the copy editors sit at clusters of desks. The copy editors' immediate supervisors--who sit in the common area near the copy editors and cannot, therefore, indicate their status through physical distance--demonstrated their authority through their appearance; almost all of them, all white males, wore shirts and ties while only one or two of the male copy editors were similarly attired. Moreover, because the copy editors' immediate supervisors sit in close proximity to them, the copy editors are subconsciously aware that the supervisors are always potentially watching them. Nonetheless, little interaction between supervisors and copy editors takes place. Several participants commented on how little privacy was available in the newsroom. Some copy editors don't even have their own desks; most share a phone.

Perhaps in an attempt to openly, in a passive-aggressive manner, indicate to management that they are dissatisfied or frustrated with their jobs, the copy editors boldly display messages about the nature of their jobs through satirical photocopies and clippings that adorn their computer terminals and the backs of their chairs. One photocopy on several computer terminals reads, "I've Seen Worse," which is a response to management concerns over errors that get in the newspaper because of too little time allowed for thorough editing. Another sign on a terminal reads, "Since I gave up hope I feel much better." These adornments are a sign of camaraderie among fellow workers who perceive themselves to be of like mind about their overall job attitudes.

But some copy editors describe the camaraderie they feel in more intimate ways. Samantha, for example, says she feels as though she is "married" to the other copy editors. She has felt a similar closeness to co-workers at another newspaper: "That's how intimate those relationships are." Gina concurs: "You literally spend about 45 hours a week sitting right next to these people and seeing all their moods and everything." One reporter jocularly but affectionately calls Samantha "Aunt Samantha."

Not only are the relationships among copy editors _like_ a family, but in some cases they _are_ a family. As stated, Betty and one of the researchers met and married while both were copy editors at the _Times_. And Rob and Gina are engaged. But these close-knit relationships are not limited to the copy desk: A father and daughter both work in the newsroom; a daughter whose father has left the _Times_ is a news assistant; and there have been several marriages among reporters and other staff members.

Of course, as with any family, all the relationships are not always friendly. There are occasional disputes. "Maybe we have our little personality tiffs, we have strong personalities and everybody has these little quirks and intolerances, but basically I feel like it is a pretty cohesive group," says Betty. Rob agrees:

> It's like boats in a sea; the tide goes up and down with everything from a joyous buoyant to a sort of ill-will angst, we all seem to seek the same level in a way. . . . [W]e're a pretty tight bunch though, so I guess what I am saying is there is a communal feeling and we all ride along in the same little boat.

Similarly, Chris says:

> The camaraderie among the desk has been one that helps pull people through the daily grind, and, in fact, many people say that it's the people, it's working with the kinds of people that we do on a daily basis, that helps make the job bearable.

Like the others, Chris sees his coworkers as a support group. Because he feels trapped in a career and job he doesn't particularly like, this is very important to Chris. And as with family members everywhere, Chris's coworkers recognize things about him that Chris himself fails to see or would deny. For example, although Chris finds his job bearable, his coworkers and we know him to be one of the most overstressed individuals on the copy desk, if not in the entire newsroom, at least outwardly.

However, Chris says:

> I think there's some stress in my job, but to compare it with a brain surgeon--the stress of a brain surgeon--there's no way I can make a comparison. . . . I suppose workers laying asphalt for the city or a private contractor might feel that there is stress in their jobs, too. [But] I don't feel there's a lot of stress.

Yet, Rob, who sits next to Chris four nights a week and occasionally socializes with him, says Chris "really, really, really gets upset sometimes." In contrast, Rob has an uncharacteristically upbeat outlook among Times copy editors, perhaps because he is trying to climb the management ladder.

Indeed, like members of a tightly knit family, copy editors know who is moody and can sense those moods. Some "kind of get pissed off at the drop of a hat or sort of lose it or get real angry or tense. And that vibe kind of spreads over the desk even if they don't say anything," says Gina. "You can just feel it."

As might be expected, stress is an occupational fact of life on any copy desk. However, there is a somewhat surprising source of that stress at the Times. In a job in which deadlines and accuracy are constant companions, one might think they would lead to stress; if they do, most copy editors at the Times accept those aspects well.

"I would say the stress . . . for me and for most people, is not related to the day-in, day-out dealing with deadlines, getting things done; it's more related to the job satisfaction. When we're happy, generally, there's less stress," Rob says.

Betty, too, comments on Chris's occasional tirades while simultaneously explaining how she deals with job stress:

> Chris has been here longer than I have and he just carries on and he gets so upset. . . . It is not worth getting upset about something I have no control over. You know, I just try to take control of things that I can.

She says she would have thought that the older, more experienced people would have eventually "rolled over" and accepted their lack of control within a corporate newsroom.

Even for copy editors such as Betty, Gina and Samantha, it is that lack of input into larger newsroom questions that is the greatest source of frustration that leads to stress. For some, there is a feeling they can't take pride in their work or their workplace. Others feel their efforts go unrecognized by management. Yet, each of the copy editors displays a commitment to his or her marriage to the Times by continuing to work there despite the hardships and stress.

Miles is particularly at odds with management at the Times. He clings to idealistic notions of what his job and his relationship with management should be, thus he is continually frustrated by what he perceives as ineffective, uncaring managers. Miles even had a "one-on-one" with a senior manager who wanted to know whether the copy editors were contented, but was ultimately frustrated with the result:

> It is a very simple thing; I'm afraid it's almost too simplistic for a lot of people [managers] to even think about, is that we are in a place in the production scheme of a newspaper where we are confronted with a lot of problems. . . . We are at a place at the copy desk where all the pieces either come together or they don't. I'm trying to argue with this supervisor . . . that we are really in the hot seat every night. The art doesn't show up, the story you were supposed to read for [page] two hasn't been written yet, and they get worse and worse. And I said, for that reason there may be more discontent and more pressure. And I tried to argue with this guy that you may hear more beefs from us about the operation because we are at the final point at the assembly line where the parts don't fit. And some parts don't exist. And this went over his head. I simplified it for him . . . but he didn't get it. But, it is very important.

Miles' frustration with management is evident in his everyday work conversation as well. One night Miles commented to Greg (another copy editor) that he felt like drinking beer so he could "get sloshed and write headlines" so as to "give Chuck (a supervisor) a fibrillation." After further joking with Greg about word usage Miles muttered, "Rules about writing headlines are derived from people who don't write headlines," and, "They don't know what they want." Greg concurred, "They only know what they don't want." As a coping mechanism, Greg and Miles joke about these frustrations and their concerns over management's lack of knowledge about the "real world" of the copy editor's job. The banter helps to foster a communal atmosphere among the copy editors. It represents a nearly united front that recognizes management's inadequacies but refuses to bow to them, much like the cartoons and stickers attached to many of the computer terminals.

Miles reiterated this behavior during a group interview, and he argued that a majority of people feel disgruntled with management at the Times, which adds to newsroom stress.

> I'd say 60 or 70 percent . . . are frustrated with the incompetent management and the unreasonable work load, unreasonable requirements . . . multiple rules about headline writing that are constructed by people who don't write headlines. You know, it's like people sitting in academia somewhere telling long-haul truck drivers how to drive trucks. Let's trust the judgment of the people who do the work. I don't think I'm burned out, I think my ambitions are kind of on hold. I think if I felt this place was run by a dynamic leader . . . I could rekindle that, kind of like turning up the burner under a gas stove. . . . I'm in a kind of lifeboat mentality, I think . . . we either bail and row together or we really get screwed. . . . I have no corporate loyalty.

One of Miles' major disappointments concerning upper-level management is its myopia with regard to the paper's operation from the standpoint of the copy editors. He refers to upper managers as "the clowns that run this place," and he regards them as phony and cunning, calling them "Teflon management" and "stealth management." Even Miles' body language during his tirades about management indicate his anger; he leans forward in his chair, back straight, arms gesticulating. There are, nevertheless, a few feedback devices that upper management has instituted in order to keep the copy editors and other lower echelon workers content, but Miles feels as though these devices are merely patronizing attempts to mask upper management's lack of concern with the copy desk. One of these devices is the middle managers' ascertainment of the work attitudes of the lower echelons through both formal and informal individual interviews. According to Miles, this device is ineffective.

> My favorite meeting place to find out what other departments are up to is the smoking room. I hear everybody pissing and moaning about the management. And they're sensitive to it. . . . That same clown I was trying to talk to about my opinions of the place was sensitive. . . . If he wants to keep his position, he must agree with his superiors, because his predecessor once was sent packing with a cardboard box full of stuff into the elevator. . . . I think this person might like to try to fix things and simply is not permitted. I think there are mid-level supervisors who seem impotent, who could fix things to some extent, and they simply are not permitted to. And that's the most bizarre part of management here.

Similarly, Betty's opinions about management's efforts to "get in touch with" the copy editors seem to mirror Miles'. She expresses the same specific disgust with the methods of management at the Times.

> I think that is one of the weakest points here. . . . They do some things every now and then that are kind of superficial, like calling attention in our internal newsletter . . . to point out good leads and good headlines. . . . But basically certain things like that are superficial, I don't think there is a real feeling here that our supervisors really give us general support. . . . There is even a feeling here . . . that we don't think our supervisors even know what they're doing.

This cohesion among copy editors that is fostered by a common dissatisfaction with management is represented in both Gina's and Samantha's comments as well. Samantha claims that loyalty to coworkers is the glue that keeps them all together, saying, "When we can come through (a stressful situation) and sort of laugh at it, the survival rate is pretty good."

Particular ire is reserved for the community page, an effort to devote more space and resources to brief items about people and events that wouldn't ordinarily be printed in a newspaper the size of the Times. Samantha was forthright on this issue:

> There's a big gap between me and management. Part of it is I'm older than they are and I've been in the business longer than they have and my prejudices and background are very traditional in journalism.
>
> Objectivity is our goal and our standards are set. And I think this approach that the [Times] is trying to take and be everybody's friend is just outrageous. I just hate it. . . . The community page . . . I just think it's the worst thing we've ever done--not the worst, but one of the worst. The idea is to have everybody in the community have an interest in something that's on that page. You can't possibly please more than an infinitesimal percentage of the readership in an area this big. And add to that the fact that it is poorly executed, the writing is terrible, it looks like hell, [and] it is riddled with mistakes.
>
> I don't like it at all, and I've made myself known about that.

Only Rob, the younger, up-and-coming copy desk chief, can find a glimmer of hope in management's effort to change the paper to fit its vision. But even in so doing, he recognizes the limitations.

"We tend to be our harshest critics, and there is a lot of legitimate criticism in the newsroom about the way we approach things," Rob says.

> We've done a lot of things in a relatively short amount of time that, in the newsroom, a lot of people don't think really fit the idea of traditional journalism, so they haven't been very well received. And, yet, some of them have been popular. . . .
>
> We have something we call the community page, which consists of a bunch of junk, but really serves a purpose. And from our perspective in the newsroom, it's a place to put all sorts of little news that you get in press releases.
>
> Things like that, though, have been criticized and I would say that in that case the criticism proved wrong, as much as we hate to admit it. . . . I guess I'd say we do a better job than we sometimes give ourselves credit for.

Miles', Gina's, Betty's, and Samantha's opinions of upper-level management converge when discussing management's conception of journalistic standards. They all vehemently agree that the standards of what is considered "newsworthy" at the Times are inferior. Gina echoes Samantha's feelings about the quality of the paper's journalistic standards. Coming from major paper in the Southeast, where she felt that the quality of reportage was of a higher caliber, Gina is particularly disillusioned with the Times.

> I don't think the journalistic standards of this paper are high enough at all, they are too low. . . . I came from what I think is a better paper . . . people were proud of what we were putting out most days. . . . You never feel that feeling here, like, "Wow, we kicked their butt today." . . . We just kind of stumble along day to day filling up the paper with wire news and happy news and Year of the Arts, trying to reach out to the community kind of stuff, rather than exposing corruption. . . . I hate the way he [the editor] never, ever talks about fighting the good fight and

doing the right thing.

All four feel that the paper's management should concentrate less on trying to please the community and more on hard, investigative journalism. Referring to a series of editorials, Miles expresses frustration with the manner in which the series was handled.

> We had to create a name for this bastard child. We had to call it "an investigative editorial," because you can't call it a hard news story. How do you have a hard news story without attribution or without any balance?

The disillusionment with management's conception of journalistic standards elicits feelings of negativity and shame about holding a job at the _Times_ for Miles. "I wish I could take pride in this place," he says.

> I wish I felt real good about walking into a bar and seeing some leggy blonde and telling her, "I work for the [_Times_]." Now people ask me that in social situations I say I work downtown, and if they push it I say, "I work for a newspaper," and if they keep pushing it I say, "Oh, I work for the [_Times_]." I try to get the subject onto skiing or something. We've got a lot of people conned with this stuff. [He points to several front pages tacked up on a bulletin board.] There are a lot of people out there who think this thing is worth something, and that's why we are making money. So, you know, we're screwing them and they're smiling. It's nothing I can be personally proud of.

Betty expresses a similar attitude:

> I was like a lot of people who went in journalism with a sense of idealism . . . about the mission of journalism and dealing with newspaper work, and we're going to change the world, and now I hear so much, they talk about product and the business and it is very much a business and very profit oriented. And I don't feel as proud to be part of it as I once did.

Part of Miles' sense of shame about his job at the _Times_, in addition to the paper's journalistic standards, is that management treats copy editors as though they cannot discern management's obvious managerial techniques. He calls them "phony." Gina argues that the management techniques implemented at the Times seem canned--like they are straight out of "Management 101," and that these techniques don't work with what she sees as the more creative, quirkier types found in a newsroom. Performance evaluations are a particularly stock and dehumanizing management device, according to Gina.

> Our evaluations--what a load of crap. . . . It's a formulaic thing, its something they do because they think it's some good kind of "management tool." . . . They're not listening and I'm not listening either.

Finally, the copy editors are generally taxed by the pressures management places on them. The basic pressures involved in copy editing, such as the strict deadlines, do not inherently "stress" the copy editors. Rather, supervisors' unnecessary pushing results in the greatest feelings of tension, as Miles illustrates.

> The degree of responsibility for accuracy creates pressure and then when some diabolical critter stands behind you and turns up the rheostat just a little bit so that you have to do it about 20 percent faster than is commensurate with accuracy, that tends to make the back of your neck tight. And then when you get some clown supervisor saying, and the clock is also ticking, "You gotta make deadline, now." Well . . . you've got to be some kind of god or goddess not to get a little uptight.

Miles continues:

> It's almost as though they are waiting for the breaking point, how much work can those sons of bitches do before they all go ape. . . . If you accept all this and bring it to focus on individuals like us who do work, then it is maybe easier to see why some of the apparent malcontents are malcontents. I'm not sure they all emerge from the womb with a malcontented gene, you know, its this diabolical,

this intellectual torture chamber that makes them weird.

Samantha conceives of management almost as an overbearing, know-it-all grandfather; in other words, she takes seriously what management says and recognizes its authority, but knows that ultimate authority (in the sense of achieving job success and satisfaction) lies within herself. Samantha's apparently less stressed demeanor is probably the result of this attitude; in addition, she says her survival of cancer and supportive family and home life give her a different perspective.

To further illustrate the gulf between rank-and-file and senior management, Rob tells about a recent lower-level manager who worked closely with the night copy editors. The manager was one of the few who was genuinely well-liked by the copy editors, but he quit the Times after about eight months "in complete and utter disgust" with the lack of support he was getting from upper management. In an informal exit interview the departing editor went to the top editor, who said, "My God, I wish you'd told me this sooner." Rob says the editor who was quitting said: "I shouldn't have to come to you; that would be wrong. My bosses should have told you there was a problem. I can't come to you every time there's a problem." Rob continues the story:

> And then the subject somehow drifted to how many unhappy people there were in the newsroom, and their response--the managing editor and editor's response--was, "You're right; that's a cancer. There's just too many of them out there. I wish they'd all quit."
>
> And he was saying, "No, it's not their problem, it's your problem. Do you really expect an entire roomful of people to quit?" I mean, if there are that many people who want to quit, you cannot say it's just their problem. But that's their attitude.

The problems between management and copy editors are not a recent phenomenon. At a "State of the Paper" breakfast meeting in February 1990 the editor invited the chair of the local Newspaper Guild unit, a reporter at the *Times* named Don, to speak. The meeting was held at an exclusive downtown athletic club near the newspaper's premises and was attended by most, if not all, of the newsroom's managers and more than half of the newsroom employees. After talking for several minutes about the sorry state of labor relations at the *Times*, Don then described "two cultures in the newsroom. One is the management culture which consists largely of transients . . . [the other] is made up of all the employees who have made this community their permanent home." He described cycles of hiring new managers from outside the newspaper but never promoting from within. Each wave of managers tries to put its mark on the newspaper.

> Every couple of years the paper is completely redesigned. Every couple of years management preaches about the need for more newsroom sensitivity to minorities and women, then goes out and hires nothing but white males for all the top management jobs. Every couple of years the deadlines get earlier and top management, which goes home before deadline crunch, complains about the laggards who make us miss deadline without having any idea how hard the lifers work to adjust to each new concession to the production department.
>
> And so a natural cynicism grows among the troops. We know we will outlast these waves of Plan B free agents. We know that for all the edicts and demands they make, we actually care a good deal more about the [*Times*] than they do. We live here. This is not some stepping stone for us. This is our life. . . .
>
> So long as the abiding newsroom culture is considered unfit for the management culture, the schism between them will remain.

Don's comments, a text of which was circulated in the newsroom, provide at least one explanation for the rift between the copy editors and managers.

A magazine article a few months after Don's comments provides additional insight. In addition to replacing all but two of the managers in the newsroom, the editor had made changes in the newspaper's content that brought ridicule from the staff. One of the changes cited by the magazine was the addition of a traffic column in a city known for its wide open spaces not its rush-hour gridlock (Benenson, 1990).

Samantha, Miles, Gina, Chris, Rob, and Betty all possess different conceptualizations about stress on the job, but all agree that unnecessary pressures imposed by management is a central contributory factor to the stress of being a copy editor at the Times. In a sense, all the copy editors accept this situation to an extent because they have, with the possible exception of Gina because of her recent return to the newspaper, illustrated their commitment to their marriage by remaining at the Times for relatively long periods despite the arguments and rough waters. Only time will tell whether any of the copy editors seek a divorce.

As one barb going around the newsroom recently put it: "The Times is a large dysfunctional family in denial."

Discussion

As might have been expected, this study did confirm that copy editors feel stress. Probably this was foreordained because when one sets out looking for stress and burnout in newsrooms, anecdotal evidence alone indicates it will not take long to find it. As the final check before a story appears in the newspaper, copy editors are responsible for writing headlines, assuring the copy is factual, protecting against style, grammatical and spelling errors, and preventing libel. Especially given the time constraints copy editors work under, that combination is likely to produce stress. Even so, our interviews provided ample opportunity for the copy editors to describe their stressful feelings. Thus, the findings of this research add support to the conclusion of Cook et al. (1992).

The strength of any qualitative study is not simply in determining what is occurring but why, which was one of the reasons Dewe recommended more qualitative studies of work-related stress (1989). This study was no exception. The more interesting and somewhat surprising findings are the source of the stress and the coping mechanisms of copy editors at the Times. As several participants pointed out, deadline pressures coupled with a need for extreme accuracy come with the territory for copy editors. However, the finding that the greatest source of stress is the result of the way management runs the Times is interesting but perhaps not surprising in light of the literature. The preliminary nature of our study means more time needs to be invested to assure that the picture presented here is accurate.

Yet, the family theme as coping mechanism that ran through many of the participants' comments is intriguing and is the most important finding. As far as we know, this mechanism for coping and fostering peer cohesion among copy editors has not been uncovered elsewhere. The Holahan and Moos (1986) study is one of the few with which we are familiar that explores the family-as-coping-mechanism issue. But of course that study dealt with real families, not the pseudo family relationships we discovered. Sub-themes related to the family theme also emerged, such as the camaraderie of those on the copy desk, the support-group nature of the relationships, and the importance of peer approval in lieu of positive management feedback. These themes have support in the studies of VanYperen et al. (1992) on communal orientation among nurses, Jackson et al. (1986) on a supportive environment for teachers and Rosenthal et al. (1983) on parks and recreation employees. Further qualitative studies of copy editors may provide elaboration or reveal other themes.

The methodology used in this study had both strengths and weaknesses. One of the strengths was the team approach with both complete observer and complete participant roles represented. The presence of a participant observer among us contributed greatly to the salience of the data. The complete observers noticed elements of the newsroom environment that were part of the participant observer's subconscious, while the participant observer helped provide entree and develop trust as well as corroborate findings gathered by the complete observers. In addition, the participant observer may have helped overcome copy editor fears founded on past experience that frank revelations to scholar-researchers would be revealed to management. Overall, the differing perspectives of the researchers were an asset to the study.

Another important methodological finding was that the greatest revelations and understanding grew out of the small-group discussion. This was partly because the participants were carefully selected so they would be comfortable with one another and also because they had strong opinions and relished sharing them. Also, we felt that the group dynamics kept the participants from misleading us, as Chris may have tried to do, albeit unconsciously. In future research, we believe more use should be made of small-group discussions in conjunction with individual interviews and observation. In settings with a limited number of participants, as with the Times copy desk, a single focus group can involve a relatively large percentage of the total population under study, therefore several small-group interviews would probably provide greater depth. Although the presence of other copy editors at a small-group discussion may obfuscate disagreements within the group, because there were only three copy editors present and they all felt comfortable with one another, the pressure to agree probably was not overwhelming. Indeed, the participants sometimes heatedly disagreed with each other. Nevertheless, the potential persuasibility of participants must be considered when interpreting the data from small-group discussions.

Still another insight gained during this study was the paradox of trying to study burnout among people who are at least coping with their situations. This study did not attempt to contact people who had left the newspaper business (because of burnout or otherwise). Indeed, studies that use mailed questionnaires may be fatally flawed, another reason to make more use of qualitative studies. While working in newsrooms we have seen a number of such mailed surveys; typically they will get passed around the newsroom until someone with time to kill fills them out. Alternatively, a senior editor looks for a compliant staff member to handle them. In either case, it seems unlikely that the most burned-out workers would complete such paperwork. Without interviewing former journalists or when using mailed surveys, the samples may be biased to under-report job stress and burnout, so the problem actually may be worse than either we or the Cook et al. (1992) study found. Future studies should locate people who left editing positions and examine correlations between copy-editor turnover and stress and burnout among workers. Additionally, because of the dearth of literature on copy editors, efforts should be made to discover proprietary or unpublished research conducted within the newspaper industry.

Future studies of journalists writ large would do well to consider the notion that copy editors and reporters experience intrinsically different stress factors. Several factors inherent in copy editors' jobs at the Times probably account for some of their feelings of workplace stress in addition to those mentioned above. A cross-profession study of reporters and copy editors that compares stress levels between the two jobs may yield interesting findings. Stress and burnout among copy editors at the *Times* may be greater than among copy editors at newspapers without competition. The city is one of the few in the United States with competing papers, and the copy editors seem to share a general feeling that the journalistic standards at the *Times* are substandard to those at the competing newspaper. Several of the copy editors expressed shame and dissatisfaction because they work for the "substandard" paper. Perhaps journalistic standards would carry less weight as a stress factor if the copy editors had no competition with which to compare themselves. Similarly, stress levels may be significantly different at smaller or larger papers or at those with a more established management than the *Times* has had.

Although a case study such as this cannot be generalized to a larger population, it is nonetheless interesting to note how often comments by Samantha, Chris, Rob, Gina, Betty, and Miles seem to support observations made in much of the literature. Samantha, as seen, expresses a general ability to cope with workplace stress because she is easy-going, relaxed, and she continually reaffirms her perspective on her job by juxtaposing it against other facets of her life, including her family. Miles, in contrast, is single. He is contemplative and brooding, and is so disgruntled he may never be satisfied with management or his job. Future researchers might want to incorporate personality profiles into an analysis of workplace stress.

Personality characteristics must always be considered as an element that may contribute to or alleviate stress. Clearly, peer cohesion plays so similar a coping role that, at least among some of these copy editors, they feel as if their co-workers are part of their family. One implication of this is that newspaper management may usefully promote family-like peer cohesion to develop to help workers cope with job stress. This may involve looking at groups of workers as a family unit, knowing that what affects one member of the "family" affects others. Otherwise, the newspaper industry may have to deal with more "dysfunctional" families like the Times.

Epilogue

As stated in the main part of this paper, each of the copy editors who participated in this project was given a draft of this report. This was done to solicit challenges to any of our insights and to allow them to make any other comments they saw fit. Also, we felt it was important from an ethical standpoint to let them know how we interpreted their words and actions. We believe this is an important consideration because none of these participants could not have given us truly informed consent at the outset of this study. Only one of the editors responded in writing; she challenged two of our statements about her. Upon reflection, these statements, which were of a minor nature, were changed. This did not in any way alter our major conclusions. Two other participants called one of the investigators with comments; a fourth gave a face-to-face evaluation. The thrust of these comments was twofold. One, the participants said we had fairly captured the workaday world of copy editors at the Times. Two, there was general anxiety that their candor, as revealed in this report, would prompt retaliation from management. For example, Samantha said:

> I think this a very good report. It's probably hard to make generalized statements, extrapolated from comments from a group of quirky individuals, but mostly the generalizations seem valid. It's important to read the paper very carefully, though, to understand the differences among the individuals. I believe you captured the personalities of each of the six of us. One request: Keep this anonymous and out of the hands of any managers.

And Miles said: "Well, if [a manager] sees it, I may be in trouble, but so what. As [a friend] said, 'They all think we're assholes anyway.' I won't go back on anything. Our arrangement was I'd talk and you'd listen."

As a result of these concerns, we have altered some of the descriptions of the participants and the newspaper to make positive identification more difficult. But this in no way changes our conclusions. Indeed, if anything, the similarity of thinking among the respondents strengthens our notion of cohesion among the copy editors as a means of coping with stress.

Endnotes

1. The multiple-researcher approach has the added benefit of providing a check on the face validity and synchronic reliability of the analysis. Additionally, diversity of method, such as that between this qualitative study and the quantitative survey by Cook et al. (1992), is a useful check on validity (Kirk & Miller, 1986). A third validity check is the use of a variety of data sources, such as interview, observation and documents. All these tools are part of the "triangulation" process (Patton, 1990, p. 187). This study also uses the additional validation tool of gathering feedback from the participants on the faithfulness of the analysis.

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Communication Theory & Methodology Division

Press Coverage of Interest Groups: News Values As Determinants

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Abstract

This study compared news releases of thirty-two interest groups and press coverage of those interest groups. Materials that were content-analyzed came from the LEXIS/NEXIS information service. It was assumed that there exist factors inside and outside media organizations that affect media content, and this study was interested in the factors outside media organizations. Among numerous extra-media sources of influences, it focused on the interest groups that are supposed to influence press coverage of the issues of their concerns.

The first hypothesis assumed that interest groups that use certain news values in their news releases more than other groups would have more press coverage than others. News values of "impact," "prominence," "conflict," "unusualness" and "currency" were examined. The second hypothesis predicted that interest groups with more financial resources would have more press coverage.

The study did not find support for the first hypothesis; the second hypothesis was supported. Reasons for failure to support the first hypothesis and support of the second hypothesis were discussed, and their implications for democratic pluralism were brought out.

Introduction

There may exist several levels of analysis in communications research, (Shoemaker and Reese, 1991, p.54) and the present study is concerned with the extra-media influences[1] level of analysis. Among numerous extra-media sources of influence, interest groups[2] are the subject of investigation in this study. It examines how interest groups influence the media coverage of the issues of their concern. This study assumes that interest groups carefully prepare their own print materials by encoding their issues for certain news values so that journalists who read those materials can be influenced by them in the process of covering the interest groups' "interests" in the news.

Related Studies

In a 1977 review of the literature on news values, Singletary (1977) found that "timeliness," "proximity," "consequence," "prominence," "human interest" and "conflict" seemed to be the generally agreed upon determinants of news. In a survey of 489 journalists, Burgoon, Burgoon and Atkin (1982) found that "consequence," "interest," "timeliness," "proximity" and "prominence" were listed most often as news values by journalists.

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[1] The extra-media influences may be defined as formal or informal influences exerted by institutions or organizations other than the media institutions themselves (e.g., the government, interest groups, public relations firms, particular group of audiences, advertisers, and so forth) upon the news gathering and news production processes.
[2] Truman's (1971) widely used definition of interest group is "any group that, on the basis of one or more shared attitudes, makes certain claims upon other groups in the society for the establishment, maintenance or enhancement of forms of behavior that are implied by the shared attitudes." Berry (1984) defines interest group as "an organized body of individuals who share some goals and who try to influence public policy (p.5)."

There has been a series of studies about news values which used hypothetical Q-sorts to discover how those responsible for the news would choose among sets of stories that exemplify particular news values.

Ward (1967) identified high "impact" stories and "conflict" stories as preferred by ten city editors. Baldii and Ward (1980) identified three news values: (1) "significance:" including "impact" and "magnitude;" (2) "normality:" including "oddity," "conflict" and "normal;" and (3) "prominence:" including "known-principals." They found that "conflict," "impact" and "known-principal" stories were preferred by the editors queried.

Atwood (1970) found that news people preferred more stories with "prominence" than did their subscribers and were perceived by their subscribers as preferring these types of stories. Clyde and Buckalew (1969) found that top-level editors stressed "timeliness" while lower-level editors stressed "conflict" and "known-principal" news values. However, there was strong consensus among their editors for "conflict," "proximity" and "timeliness" as news values. Culbertson (1983) found that traditional journalists identified "timeliness" and "proximity" as important; interpretive ("impact") news was important for the nontraditional journalists. Buckalew (1969-70) found that television editors in smaller markets selected more stories with "proximity" -- a local orientation -- while larger market editors chose more "timely" stories.

These research studies attempted to identify editors' or journalists' preferences for news values in a hypothetical situation. But whether the preferred news values are evident in the journalists' news pages or broadcasts is a different question entirely.

Stempel (1963) looked at actual news use to support the concept of news values. He examined national news in 25 large-circulation dailies with factor analysis which suggested six news values: "suspense-conflict" (similar to "conflict"), "public affairs," "human interest" (including "prominence"), "timeliness, "positiveness" (the "good" news) and "political controversy."

Bridges (1989) analyzed the front pages of a composite week of 101 daily newspapers published in the United States, in order to determine news value preferences for newspapers. She identified "timeliness" as most important in front-page news, followed by "prominence" and then "proximity," and diluted both the perception that "conflict" news is the mainstay of the press and the more lofty perception that "impact" in news can be a rationale for press privileges.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis I

The more an interest group presents an issue in terms of five news values, the greater press coverage of that group.

In order to complete the first hypothesis, the five news values need to be cited and explained in detail. These news values (impact, prominence, conflict, unusualness and currency) are mentioned in many news writing textbooks (Itule, 1987; Mencher, 1991; Missouri Group, 1980; Porter and Ferris, 1988; Rivers, 1984). There are some other news values in the text books, but those have been excluded from this study for the following reasons. "Timeliness" has been excluded from the study because it showed very low intercoder reliability in the pilot study; "emotion" and "human interest" have been excluded from the list of news values because they look too subjective; "(cultural) proximity" is mostly concerned with international news; and "sex" overlaps with "prominence."

Five News Values

(1) **Impact/Consequence**: News reporting textbooks define "impact" as events that are likely to affect many people: how many readers will it interest or affect?; and how many persons does the event affect and how seriously does it affect them? It is about significance, importance, the kinds of information that interest people or that journalists decide people need to know to be informed.

(2) **Prominence**: Journalism textbooks define "prominence" as events involving well-known people or institutions. Some happenings simply are more newsworthy when well-known people are involved.

(3) **Conflict**: "Conflict" is defined in news reporting textbooks as events that reflect clashes between people or institutions. "Conflict" -- whether it involves people, governmental bodies or sports teams -- often is considered newsworthy.

(4) **Unusualness**: Unusual events are those deviating sharply from the expected and the experiences of everyday life. The unique, the unusual, the surprising and the rare make news.

(5) **Currency**: Events and situations that are being talked about are current ones. For example, the poor have always been with us, and remain so. In the early 1960s President Kennedy called attention to their plight, and then President Johnson declared a "war

on poverty." Newspapers responded by covering health and welfare agencies and by going into poor areas of their cities in search of news.

Hypothesis II

The greater the economic resources of an interest group, the greater the press coverage of that group.

The success of an interest group in getting more media attention depends on resources it has. The economic resources are a key barometer of any organization for the power and scope of its activities. Richer organization can have larger membership, larger staffs, and produce more publications.

Procedures and Method

The interest groups that the present study has examined are among the political action committees (PACs)[3] in Zuckerman's (1990) Almanac of Federal PACs[4]. The book has six categories under which PACs are grouped: Business PACs, Labor Union PACs, Trade Association PACs, Special Interest Group PACs, Leadership PACs, and Ideological PACs.

Measure of Independent Variables

The main body of data that this study has analyzed came from NEXIS, which is Mead Data Central's comprehensive news, research, and business information retrieval system. The information

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3 Alexander (1990) defines a PAC as a political arm organized by a corporation, labor union, trade association, professional, agrarian, ideological or issue group to support candidates for elective office.

4 It includes political action committees which contributed $50,000 or more to candidates who were seeking election in 1988 to the U.S. House of Representatives or the U.S. Senate.

available in NEXIS database is organized into libraries. A library contains related materials for a given area of research. Libraries are made up of files -- separately searchable groups of related documents. The library named NEXIS is the most appropriate for this study because it is about general and business information stories from newspapers, magazines, wire services and newsletters.

The file named PR NEWSWIRE in the NEXIS library was examined to see how many news releases from each of the PACs are stored. The PR NEWSWIRE delivers full-text, *unedited* news releases as written by the originators.

Among the PACs that have at least five news releases in the PR NEWSWIRE file of the NEXIS library on a certain day, eight PACs from each category were randomly selected to be included in this study. There was no PAC in the categories of Leadership PACs and Ideological PACs that has five or more news releases in the PR NEWSWIRE file. So, a total of thirty-two PACs[5] were randomly selected from the remaining four categories[6]. (8 x 4 = 32: eight PACs from each of the four categories).

From each of these thirty-two PACs that have five or more news releases in the PR NEWSWIRE file of the NEXIS library, five news releases were randomly selected to receive content analysis. So, a total of 160 news releases were content-analyzed (5 x 32 = 160). There were two special interest group PACs that have only four news releases available in the PR NEWSWIRE file: the National

[5] See the List of 32 PACs in Appendix.

[6] Business PACs, Labor Union PACs, Trade Association PACs and Special Interest Group PACs.

Abortion Rights Action League, and the National Right to Work Committee. Letters were sent out to these organizations requesting news releases, and both of them responded to this request with a couple of news releases not in the PR NEWSWIRE file.

Pilot test: In the present study, the unit of analysis is a whole news release rather than a paragraph or a sentence of a news release. Using the definitions for news values in the previous section, two coders (a doctoral student in the Department of Journalism and the author himself) independently coded sixteen news releases[7] (10% of the main data). Every news release was evaluated on five seven-point scales of news values. The seven-point scale ranges from 1 through 7. One is almost like zero, but it is difficult to conceive of a news release having zero "impact," for instance. So, 1 means that there is *very little* such news value (e.g., "impact") in a given news release; 2 means that a story has *a little* news value of "impact"; 3 means that a news release *somewhat* demonstrates "impact"; 4 means that a story *moderately* exhibits "impact"; 5 means that a story is *considerably* presented with the news value of "impact"; 6 means that a news release is *nearly fully* presented in the news value of "impact"; and 7 means that a story is *fully* presented in the news value of "impact." The maximum points a coder can give to one news release are thirty five (5 X 7 = 35) when it is fully presented in five different news values; and the minimum points are five (5 X 1 = 5). The result of the pilot test shows

[7] But the sixteen news releases for this pilot study were from interest groups that were not included in this study.

acceptable intercoder reliability coefficients[8] (Pearson correlation coefficient) between coders ranging from .6996 to .8526. The main body of data (i.e., 160 news releases) has been coded by the author himself in exactly the same way employed in the pilot test.

For the test of the second hypothesis, the expenditures spent by each organization during 1987-1988 have been obtained from the Almanac of Federal PACs to represent budget amount for each interest group, which has been compared with the amount of press coverage.

Measure of Dependent Variable

In order to develop a measure of news coverage -- which is the dependent variable of both the first and second hypotheses -- news stories *about* each of interest groups have been also searched in NEXIS database. So, news stories at this stage of analysis have not received the content analysis for the degree of news-values encoded, but instead, have been identified with the number of stories about each interest group in the NEXIS library.

Under the library named NEXIS, there are hundreds of files. The lists of periodicals[9] available in each of these files show that the MAJPAP (abbreviation for the "major newspaper" which includes combined file of seventeen major newspapers) file alone includes

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8 Pearson Correlation Coefficient Between Two Coders

Impact	Prominence	Conflict	Unusualness	Currency.
7081**	.6996**	.8108**	.7814**	.8526**

** - Significance Level .01

9 This information is available in a file called GUIDE, which does have information on the availability and proper usage of segments.

major daily newspapers or their abstracts.[10] Thus, this study has counted the number of news stories about organizations in the MAJPAP file of the NEXIS library.

Since NEXIS is a computerized database, there can be numerous ways to find out news stories about organizations. Each of the stories selected by any search command could be proofread to make sure it is about the organization, but in practice it is impossible because there are thousands of stories about 32 organizations.

Four command languages were linked with the OR connector as below in order to find the number of stories about each of 32 organizations in the MAJPAP file of the NEXIS library:

> **(*ORGANIZATION NAME*[11] W/25 *ORGANIZATION NAME*) OR HEADLINE (*ORGANIZATION NAME*) OR LEAD (*ORGANIZATION NAME*) OR ABSTRACT (*ORGANIZATION NAME*)**

The first segment of search command requests NEXIS to find documents in which *ORGANIZATION NAME* occurs in the headline; the second segment tells NEXIS to find documents in which *ORGANIZATION NAME* occurs twice within 25 word interval in the text; the third segment tells NEXIS to find documents in which *ORGANIZATION NAME* occurs in its lead paragraph; and the last segment tells NEXIS to find documents in which *ORGANIZATION NAME* occurs in its abstract segment. But since each of these four

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10 Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly Abstracts, Atlanta Journal and Constitution, The Boston Globe, Chicago Tribune, The Christian Science Monitor, The Hartford Courant, The Houston Chronicle, Los Angeles Times, Minneapolis Star Tribune, The New York Times, Newsday, San Francisco Chronicle, The Seattle Times, USA Today, Wall Street Journal Abstracts, The Washington Post, Washington Times.

11 *ORGANIZATION NAME* was replaceded with the name of each of 32 organizations.

searches has the possibility of error (i.e., could miss right one), all of them were combined into one.

Results

News Values in All News Releases

In order to see the comparative frequencies of the five news values that appear in the news releases, the five news values have been rank-ordered according to the aggregate score from the content analysis for news values regardless of interest group identification.

Rank-order of the news value scores in the news releases

News Values	News Value Score[12]
Prominence	519 (26.7%)
Impact	428 (22%)
Conflict	380 (19.6%)
Unusualness	251 (12.9%)
Currency	364 (18.8%)
Total	1,942 points (100%)

Test of the First Hypothesis

The first hypothesis predicts more press coverage of interest groups whose press releases have received higher news value scores from the content analysis.

Interest groups have been rank-ordered according to the aggregate news value score from the content analysis of the random sample of five news releases from each group (Table I). The interest groups have been rank-ordered according to the number of news

[12] This news value score was obtained from the the content analysis of the whole 160 news releases of the total 32 organizations. The author content-analyzed each news release using the definitions for five news values in the preceeding section, each news value being coded on seven-point scale ranging from 1 to 7. Therefore, the news value of "prominence," for example, was coded a total of 519 points in 160 news releases.

stories about each interest group in NEXIS (Table III)[13]. The similarity of this ranking to the news value ranking has been tested with the statistical method known as the Spearman rank-difference correlation method.[14] (See Table IV.)

All Categories

Result of the analysis for all categories fails to support the hypothesis. The Spearman Rho of .1493 between the number of news stories about all 32 organizations in four categories and the total news value score obtained from the content analysis of the organizations' news releases is not statistically significant.

But the Spearman Rho of .4194 between the number of news stories about all 32 organizations and the news value of "currency" is statistically significant at the level of .008. That is, the organizations with news releases high in the news value of "currency" have received more press coverage. Although the rest of the four news values do not respectively show statistically significant relationships with the number of news stories, their significance levels are varied; that is, one has higher significance level (news value of "impact") whereas some others have lower ones than the significance level of the total news value score.

Individual Categories

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13 This number of news stories serves as a dependent variable of both of the hypotheses in this study.

14 Guilford and Fruchter (1978) say that Spearman's rank-difference method is a convenient procedure especially when samples are small. They mention that it can be applied as a quick substitute when the number of pairs is less than 30. They also argue that although there is no good estimate of the standard error, there is good reason to believe that its sampling stability is almost as good as for the Pearson correlation of the same size. It can therefore be used as an estimate of Pearson correlation.

When 32 interest groups have been divided into four categories and the interest groups in each category have received the analysis respectively, none of these four categories supports the first hypothesis. That is, the Spearman Rho's between the number of news stories about organizations in each of the four categories (i.e., Business, Labor Union, Trade Association and Special Interest Group PACs) and the total news value scores of those organizations are not statistically significant. The Spearman Rho's of Business PACs and Labor Union PACs are even "minus" (-.0238 and -.0359 respectively) although such figures are not statistically significant.

The significance levels of individual news value scores are varied although none of them does show statistically significant relationship with the number of news stories.

It is also found that each of the four PAC categories has a "favorite" news value. That is, the news value of "prominence" recorded the highest correlation coefficient for Business PACs although that figure is not statistically significant; the news value of "currency" recorded the highest correlation coefficient for Labor Union PACs; the news value of "unusualness" recorded the highest correlation coefficient for Trade Association PACs; and the news value of "unusualness" recorded the highest correlation coefficient for Special Interest Group PACs.

Test of the Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis predicts a positive relationship between the economic resources of interest group and press coverage of the group.

Interest groups have been rank-ordered according to the budget amount of each group (Table II), and according to the number of news stories about the groups in NEXIS (Table III). The similarity of the both rankings has been tested with the Spearman rank-difference correlation method. (See Table V.)

All Categories

When all 32 interest group PACs have been examined regardless of the four categories to which they belong, the first hypothesis is supported with the data obtained from this study. The Spearman Rho of .3317 between number of news stories about organizations and the budget amount of organization is statistically significant at a level of .032.

Individual Categories

However, when 32 interest groups have been divided into four categories and the interest groups in each category respectively have received analysis, the result is not simple. The Spearman Rho of .6190 between the number of news stories about Labor Union PACs in NEXIS and the budget amount of those organizations is statistically significant at the level of .051. Also, the Spearman Rho of .9286 between the number of news stories about Trade Association PACs and budget amount of those PACs is statistically significant at the level of .001. But such relationships for Business PACs and for Special Interest Group PACs are not statistically significant.

Conclusion

News Values and Press Coverage

The first hypothesis which predicted a relationship between aggregate news value score and press coverage, was not supported with the data obtained from this study. But when the organizations were divided into four categories of PACs, it was found that individual news values had different Spearman rank-order correlations with the number of news stories (from the total news value score) although the hypothesis was not supported in that case, either. One news value (the news value of "currency" in All Categories of PACs) had a statistically significant Spearman rank-order correlation with the number of news stories. This may indicate that it is necessary to build up a hypothesis which gives five news values different weights; that is, individual news values may have different amount of contribution to press coverage of interest group.

It was also found that each PAC category had a different "favorite" news value. That might indicate that in order to receive media attention interest groups in different categories of PACs need to work out different strategies in terms of the use of news values when preparing news releases.

The fact that the particular one among the five news values had a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable may also indicate that the list of news values used in this study left out some important ones.

Another speculation about the failure to support the first hypothesis is that the number of news stories might not be the best measure of coverage. If the news stories had also received the content analysis for news values, there might have been similarities between news releases and news stories in terms of news values. Number of news stories may not always reflect the degree of attention the press pays to an interest group.

"Prominence" was the most frequently found news value in 160 news releases. There has been much criticism and research on news media which seem to favor higher-ranking news sources. For instance, terming news making process the "peopling of the press," Sigal (1986) argues that what is news seems to depend on who the sources for the news are, which in turn depends on how reporters gather news. He maintains that the range of reporters' activity is limited by beats so that they are identified as convenient targets for potential sources wishing to disseminate information to the press, and through it, to other audiences. He says that by convention, reporters choose authoritative sources over other potential sources, and they cope with uncertainty by continuing to rely on authoritative sources.

In relation to the context of this study, which concerns the extra-media influence on news organizations, Sigal mentions that the quantity and quality of divergent opinion contained in the news depend on the presence of well-organized and well-positioned oppositions in and out of government, accessible to the press and articulate in stating their views. Berkowitz (1987) similarly says that sources who best understand the needs of the TV newsmaking process[15] stand the best chance of influencing the news agenda.

Economic Resources and Press Coverage

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[15] Berkowitz finds that TV and newspapers do not differ meaningfully in their reliance on government officials and executives as sources for news information.

The second hypothesis which predicted a positive relationship between the economic resources of interest groups and press coverage of the groups, was supported with the data obtained from this study.[16]

Failure to support the first hypothesis at the same time there was support of the second hypothesis indicates that the economic resources of the interest groups would result in more visible and immediate outcome to press coverage of those organizations than the news values. It might not be fair to compare economic resources of interest groups and news values reflected in their news releases at the same time because these two sets of variables may have intrinsically different natures.

Sampling from Computer Database

The reason the hypotheses were not fully supported might be that there is no absolute way to perfectly operationalize the dependent variable in this study. The dependent variable in this study is the number of news stories about organizations in NEXIS computer database, and there can be a number of search commands which search for documents in the computer database.

Institution as Unit of Analysis in Communication Research

In the test of the two hypotheses, interest groups were treated in two ways: they were tested as a whole in All Categories of PACs; and they were divided into four separate categories (Business PACs, Labor Union PACs, Trade Association PACs and

16 But when the organizations were divided into four categories, the result of the analysis became complex; that is, some categories supported the second hypothesis whereas some others did not. But overall, three (All Categories, Labor Union PACs and Trade Association PACs) out of five categories supported the second hypothesis.

Special Interest Group PACs) to receive statistical analysis. It became more apparent in the test of the second hypothesis[17] than in the test of the first hypothesis that it was necessary for interest groups to be divided into sub-categories (i.e., four PAC categories).

As for the newspapers, however, this study treated individual newspapers as a whole (The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times, for instance, being treated as the same) without considering individual differences. Gandy (1982) suggests for agenda setting study that institutions need to be classified into categories based on size, geographical location, and characteristics in ideological terms along a continuum from liberal to conservative. In the news value studies too, such differentiation among media institutions -- the differentiation must also be done between print and electronic media -- might render different patterns and varying degrees of extra-media influences.

Implications for Pluralism

Lang and Lang (1981) mention that the media do not operate in total autonomy from the political system, and so media coverage must be viewed in relation to political developments in which the press itself is one of the movers.

Support of the second hypothesis may serve as a good reason to oppose modern democratic pluralism which is represented by interest group politics. If richer and well-organized interest groups have more chance of access to the press, the interest of their members may become more and more guaranteed publicity and the

[17] In the test of the second hypothesis, interest groups in All Categories did satisfy the hypothesis, but when the groups were divided into categories, only half of them (Labor Union PACs and Trade Association PACs) satisfied the hypothesis.

people in poorer and less-organized groups may have difficulty in telling their positions in public. Wolff (1965, p. 45) says that "the territory of American politics is like a plateau: on the plateau are all the interest groups which are legitimate; in deep valley all around lie the outsiders, the fringe groups." In this context, Dahl (1982, p. 166) might argue that the media institutions in pluralistic democracy are conservative because they "stabilize political inequalities."

But disapproval of the first hypothesis seems to give proponents of pluralism a sigh of relief. Although the press appeared to be influenced by the economic resources of interest groups to cover, the mechanism by which the press operates (or is influenced by) is still unclear and complex. Media content generates significant complexity in terms of time, number of participants, nature of participants, nature of issues, and so forth. News gathering and production process might be much more complex than the assumptions of this study. News values (examined in this study as well as many others excluded in this study) should not be the only factor which influences news selection. There might be factors other than news values which could make journalists pay attention to certain news releases. (e.g., deadline pressure and personal interest of journalist)

But this should not discourage future news-value studies. News values are one important factor by which media institutions operate. Instead of totally giving up this line of research, researchers should attempt to revise and update the list of news values for which post-industrial press stories are encoded. Gans

(1979) mentions that news values are hard to define because they are little more than a "para-ideology," an aggregate of only partly thought-out values. He says that these values also change over time and, on a few issues, are flexible.

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Table I Rank-order of the interest groups by the score of news values

Interest Group	Score[18]
National Right to Life Committee	102
National Abortion Rights Action League	97
Sierra Club	93
Association of Flight Attendants	75
Veterans of Foreign Wars	74
American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees	73
Merck & Co., Inc.	72
Health Insurance Association of America	71
National Association of Home Builders	69
National Council of Senior Citizens	68
National Right to Work Committee	68
National Fisheries Institute	66
Communications Workers of America	65
Baxter International Inc.	63
Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers Int'l Union	63
United Food and Commercial Workers Int'l Union	62
National Education Association	60
Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers Union	60
National Rifle Association	59
National Committee to Preserve Social Security	54
Exxon Corporation	51
American Meat Institute	50
National Automobile Dealers Association	48
CMS Energy Corp.	48
American Trucking Associations	46
Phillips Petroleum Company	46
WPP Group Plc.	45
Public Securities Association	44
American Gas Association	42
Household International, Inc.	41
United Transportation Union	38
Torchmark Corporation	29

Mean Score: 60.69 Standard Deviation: 16.91

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[18] For example, the score of 102 at the top of the Table I was obtained from the content analysis of the five news releases that were randomly selected from all of the news releases of the National Right to Life Committee available in Nexis. The content analysis was conducted using the Coding Instructions for the five news values.

Table II
Rank order of the interest groups by the budget amount

Interest Group	Budget
National Rifle Association	$4,672,341
National Committee to Preserve Social Security	4,013,264
National Education Association	3,617,328
Communications Workers of America	2,002,039
National Right to Life Committee	1,908,305
United Transportation Union	1,860,993
United Food and Commercial Workers Int'l Union	1,749,238
National Association of Home Builders	1,720,241
National Automobile Dealers Association	1,700,731
Veterans of Foreign Wars	832,370
National Abortion Rights Action League	644,015
National Council of Senior Citizens	484,902
Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers Union	352,915
Phillips Petroleum Company	342,146
American Trucking Associations	341,663
Sierra Club	299,891
National Right to Work Committee	273,944
Household International, Inc.	240,743
American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees	230,789
Torchmark Corporation	227,304
Exxon Corporation	206,444
Health Insurance Association of America	203,772
American Meat Institute	141,170
Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers Int'l Union	140,599
Merck & Co., Inc.	112,076
CMS Energy Corp.	88,505
American Gas Association	77,508
Public Securities Association	75,888
National Fisheries Institute	73,758
Association of Flight Attendants	71,124
Baxter International Inc.	68,325
WPP Group Plc.	56,333

Mean Score: 900,470 Standard Deviation: 1,234,980

Table III
Number of news stories in MAJPAP file of NEXIS

Interest Group	# of stories
Exxon Corporation	2064
Sierra Club	1745
National Rifle Association	679
Phillips Petroleum Company	608
Communications Workers of America	376
National Association of Home Builders	328
Veterans of Foreign Wars	276
National Abortion Rights Action League	261
National Education Association	259
American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees	233
Baxter International Inc.	177
National Right to Life Committee	166
United Transportation Union	151
Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers Union	150
Household International, Inc.	145
Torchmark Corporation	122
CMS Energy Corp.	119
National Automobile Dealers Association	96
WPP Group Plc.	87
Merck & Co., Inc.	80
American Trucking Associations	75
Health Insurance Association of America	65
Association of Flight Attendants	58
American Gas Association	39
Public Securities Association	36
National Council of Senior Citizens	32
National Right to Work Committee	30
American Meat Institute	28
Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers Int'l Union	27
National Fisheries Institute	26
United Food and Commercial Workers Int'l Union	24
National Committee to Preserve Social Security	18

Mean Score: 268.12 Standard Deviation: 459.61

Table IV

SPEARMAN RANK-ORDER CORRELATION COEFFICIENT BETWEEN NEWS VALUES AND NUMBER OF NEWS STORIES

All Categories (Business, Labor Union, Trade Association & Special Interest Group PACs)

Impact	Prominence	Conflict	Unusualness	Currency	Total
.0083	.2612	-.2551	.2005	.4194	.1493
N(32)	N(32)	N(32)	N(32)	N(32)	N(32)
SIG.482	SIG.074	SIG.079	SIG.136	SIG.008	SIG.207

Business PACs

Impact	Prominence	Conflict	Unusualness	Currency	Total
-.0120	.4940	-.4832	-.4971	-.2410	-.0238
N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)
SIG.489	SIG.107	SIG.113	SIG.105	SIG.283	SIG.478

Labor Union PACs

Impact	Prominence	Conflict	Unusualness	Currency	Total
.2440	.1317	-.5629	-.1964	.3374	-.0359
N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)
SIG.280	SIG.378	SIG.073	SIG.321	SIG.207	SIG.466

Trade Association PACs

Impact	Prominence	Conflict	Unusualness	Currency	Total
-.1667	-.2036	-.0476	.5774	.2455	.1429
N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)
SIG.347	SIG.314	SIG.455	SIG.067	SIG.279	SIG.368

Special Interest Group PACs

Impact	Prominence	Conflict	Unusualness	Currency	Total
.4788	-.2210	-.2874	.5491	.5476	.3713
N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)	N(8)
SIG.115	SIG.299	SIG.245	SIG.079	SIG.080	SIG.183

Table V

SPEARMAN RANK-ORDER CORRELATION COEFFICIENT BETWEEN BUDGET AND NUMBER OF NEWS STORIES IN PAC CATEGORIES

All categories	Business	Labor	Trade	Special
.3317	.4762	.6190	.9286	.0476
N (32)	N (8)	N (8)	N (8)	N (8)
SIG.032	SIG.116	SIG.051	SIG.001	SIG.455

APPENDIX

List of Political Action Committees

Business political action committees

Baxter International Inc.

CMS Energy Corp.

Exxon Corporation

Household International, Inc.

Merck & Co., Inc.

Phillips Petroleum Company

Torchmark Corporation

WPP Group Plc. (United Kingdom)

Labor Union political action committees

Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers Union

American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees

Association of Flight Attendants

Communication Workers of America

National Education Association

Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers International Union

United Food and Commercial Workers International Union

United Transportation Union

Trade Association political action committees

American Gas Association

American Meat Institute

American Trucking Associations

Health Insurance Association of America

National Association of Home Builders of the U.S.

National Automobile Dealers Association

National Fisheries Institute

Public Securities Association

Special Interest Group political action committees

Sierra Club

National Council of Senior Citizens

National Committee to Preserve Social Security And Medicare

Veterans of Foreign Wars

National Rifle Association

National Abortion Rights Action League

National Right to Work Committee

National Right to Life Committee

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Lead, Follow or Stop the Presses: The Future of Daily Newspapers

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ABSTRACT

Just 20 years ago, few faithful readers of daily newspapers could imagine doing without their major source of news. But electronic news outlets, direct-mail publications, phone book pages and independent publishers have changed the way media consumers use newspapers. Major newspapers have shut down in droves over the past 15 years. This study suggests that the key to newspapers' future survival is change. Change for some may mean changing *back* to the basics: that is, crisp writing and coverage of relevant topics. For others, change means effectively using technology and perhaps even altering traditional formats. This could be as simple as juggling sections or as complex as incorporating electronic delivery systems.

Experts who discuss the future of newspapers do agree on one thing: Newspapers cannot stay as they are and hope to survive (and thrive) in a world in which electronic sound and motion dominate the attentions of media consumers.

INTRODUCTION

"Paperless newspaper" sounds like an oxymoron, but that term may be a key one in the newspaper industry's future. The idea of a pocket-sized electronic newspaper – one that someone might pull out every hour or so to check on stock reports or headlines – does not seem like such an outrageous idea as it did 15 or 20 years ago (Booker, 1992; Fidler, 1992; Fisher, 1992). But the issue of what newspapers of the future will look like and what type of information they will provide has less to do with the available technology and more to do with economics, competition and the needs of the readers.

Many of those involved in the industry would say they expect to see an electronic newspaper – perhaps as a hand-held device or a computer modem or as some form of audiotex (via telephone) widely used within 10 years. But few, at least now, say they expect the electronic version to replace the current version anytime soon. A discussion about the future is more likely to concentrate on improving the newspaper in its current physical state.

Even with the increasing competition for advertising from local television, cable television, shoppers, independent publications, magazines, radio and department store fliers, newspapers clearly dominated the information sector until the late 1970s. Some newspaper analysts point to a slow economy as one of the main reasons so many newspapers have failed since then (Garneau, 1990; Garneau, 1992). News consumers are on a tight budget are more likely, it seems, to cut the newspaper subscription than to throw out the television set.

The financial collapse of the *Washington Star* in August 1981 triggered what may be considered one of the most dismal eras ever in the United States newspaper industry (Bagdikian, 1987). The *Star*, nearly 140 years old and with a circulation of a third of a million, was only the first of many newspaper elders that would succumb to the pressures of severe advertising competition and a lackluster 1980s economy. The future, from a 1993 viewpoint, is no more certain: Any newspaper barely sloughing along now seems unlikely to be around 10 or 20 years from now.

So, why did American newspapers that had survived the Civil War, the Great Depression and 30 years of television start dropping out of existence during the 1980s? The best indicator, as this study will show, is that imperfect gauge known as "the needs of the readers." The needs of newspaper readers have changed, as have the lifestyles of those readers. Electronic forms of newspapers have been around awhile: Some newspapers and other media started experimenting with teletext or videotex in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Hynds 1980; Bittner, 1986).

Versatility and redefinition may provide the answers as to how newspapers can survive and gain new readers in a world dominated by electronic motion and color. The focus should be on the effective use of technology – in particular, the inspiration to try something new while avoiding a gamble with company funds – and the sincere effort to meet the needs of readers. Newspapers have always stood out as the only media able to provide detailed information every day. But the survival of the media may depend on innovations in the display of news and sensitivity to the type of information readers crave. The willingness to change – and remain flexible – could mark the difference between a newspaper with declining profits and one with a healthy future.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to make some predictions, based on the opinions of a panel of experts, about the future of newspapers. The participants in this study participated in an anonymous discussion about the future physical look and content of newspapers and pinpointed some problems the newspaper industry is likely to face. These newspaper industry experts evaluated one another's responses, allowing for a compilation of opinions. They also offered solutions to some of the problems they predicted. This study was designed to garner much of the existing information about newspaper technology and to offer – through the consensus of experts – some idea of how professionals and educators can plan for the future. Industry experts, after all, do seem to agree on one thing: Survival in the media industry, as always, depends on innovation and the willingness to change.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Plugged In and On-Line

Ted Turner – the broadcasting tycoon who launched the Cable News Network – announced triumphantly in 1981 that newspapers would be out of business in 10 years ("Ted Turner's," 1992). The chairman of Turner Broadcasting System Inc. was, fortunately for the newspaper industry, incorrect in his generalization. He later admitted (Consoli, 1988) that he may have spoken too soon. But the industry, choked by competition and a slow economy, suffered throughout the decade.

Perhaps to readers or anyone outside the newspaper industry, the technological changes that have occurred since the early 1970s are not so obvious. Bittner (1986) noted that despite financial woes, political debates, world wars and social destruction, the newspaper "remains essentially the same type of medium that it was centuries ago" (p. 22). Indeed, the basic format of newspapers is remarkably the same as in colonial days. For that matter, the way that news is revealed – through personal interviews, research and eye-witness accounts – has changed little. For newspapers, the key technological changes involve the methods through which news is gathered and the transformation of news events into a printed product.

Tape recorders, telephones, copiers and facsimile machines have all played roles in the transformation of news gathering. From hot type to cold, offset type to flexography printing, the pressroom, too, has undergone major changes. Garneau (1986) reviewed some of the advances of the early 1980s now commonplace in many newsrooms: transmission of stories from portable computers, the use of a color scanner, pagination (electronic page composition), flexography – a keyless type of printing used in other industries for years as a cheaper printing method that brings out vibrant colors – the use of low-rub inks and electronic insertion systems.

Computers are widely used, even in the smallest of newspaper offices, for composing and editing stories, manipulating graphics and designing pages. Actual news gathering, too, often relies on computer databases. Four universities, including the University of Missouri, Indiana

University, the University of North Carolina and Syracuse University, house formal programs designed to assist journalists with accessing electronic records (Whiteside, 1991, p. 2pc). With a modem and a personal computer, reporters can access electronic services like Lexis/Nexis, Vu/Text, DataTimes and Dialog, as well as public records and research journals. The basics of reporting remain the same, but through the speed of electronics, reporters can put together complex stories quickly.

Electronic Information Services

Newspapers have dabbled in some form of electronic information services ever since the early 1970s. Teletext was first used in Great Britain and later established as a prototype unit at Bonneville International Corporation's KSL-TV in Salt Lake City (Bittner, 1986, p. 291). This one-way system sends newspaper "pages" over television signal frequencies or cable lines. Readers/viewers can then use a decoder to select or browse through the pages on a television screen or monitor.

Industry optimists thought they were looking into the industry's electronic future with the emergence of videotex in the United States in the late 1970s. Videotex systems function as two-way information systems through a video display terminal or television set connected to a central computer via cable wires, telephone wires or computer modems. DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach (1989) noted that videotex acts as an interactive system that allows users to send and receive data. The monitor is connected through the wires or modem to a mainframe computer, through which users may request a variety of information. Through videotex, which some have called the "electronic newspaper," users have access to the most current information on such newspaper items as the front-page headlines, sports scores, stock market reports and weather charts. One of the earliest videotex services in the United States, the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*'s StarText, has been on-line since 1981 and is a profit-making venture that provides news, stocks, classified ads, encyclopedia information, sports, travel data and electronic mail ("StarText," 1992).

As DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach (1989) pointed out, Knight-Ridder, Times Mirror and other information companies spent a considerable amount of money setting up videotex services. The service has not been profitable for most, however, as the cost of buying the special receiver discouraged some potential users. H&R Block's CompuServe, one of the few successful videotex services, uses home personal computers, equipped with modems, for transmission.

Why has videotex not lived up to its overhyped potential? Some analysts say the early systems did not allow readers enough interaction in determining the news (Underwood, 1992). Another plague: The newspaper industry has lost court efforts to keep the Regional Bell Operating Companies (Baby Bells) out of the electronic information business – a new form of direct competition with newspapers ("Bells Ready," 1991; Fisher, 1991a; Fisher, 1991c; Fitzgerald, 1987; "Judge Reluctantly," 1991; Radolf, 1989; Smith, 1989). Ever since the formation of the seven regional phone companies following the 1982 breakup of AT&T, those "Baby Bells" have sought to offer electronic information services, one of the markets forbidden to them. They eventually gained permission to enter the business on a limited basis. Newspapers, naturally, were shaken by the prospect of yet another competitor, and the American Newspaper Publishers Association has fought through Congress the Bells' attempts to gain entry (Fisher, 1991a; Fisher, 1991b; Fitzgerald, 1990b; Radolf, 1989). The Yellow Pages Publishers Association, on the hand, fears the headstart on talking yellow pages that newspapers seem to have grasped (Fitzgerald, 1991a).

Audiotex – voice information services – is enjoying a renaissance among newspapers. Audiotex is referred to by many different names, including data retrieval, electronic publishing, telephone information, talking newspapers, electronic information and computerized information (Fitzgerald, 1990a). A typical system operates under one of two methods of access: a touch-tone telephone or a personal computer equipped with a modem (Smith, 1991). Most services use the telephone, allowing users to access recorded (regularly updated) information about sports, headlines, auto repair, stocks, pet care, horoscopes, television shows, music and many other areas. Most also include taped commercials promoting the newspapers. Some newspapers experimented with audiotex in the 1970s and 1980s but abandoned the idea after failing to make a profit (Fitzgerald, 1990b).

Slowly, newspapers again turned to audiotex in hopes that the old technology would help them keep up with the demand for instant news. The *Tulsa* (Okla.) *World* became one of the new pioneers in August 1986 with its introduction of an interactive system called CityLine. The system was developed by Brite Voice Systems Inc. and marketed by Mycro-Tek Inc., both of Wichita, Kansas. In the newspaper office, the Brite equipment consists of a personal computer with specialized software that can enter voice input onto a disk (Smith, 1991). The system receives news updates from the Associated Press and satellite-delivered recordings from Brite. The local staff members generate updates on local news. Brite's system may be out of reach for smaller newspapers. The minimum equipment investment is $40,000, but equipment can cost upward to $200,000, with operating costs running from $76,000 to $175,000 a year (Smith, 1991, p. 12TC).

Only 42 newspapers offered audiotex three years ago; that number increased to 450 by February 1991 (Fitzgerald, 1992, p. 16). The managing director of Audiotex Group placed the figure at 1,200 in 1992 and predicted that some 2,000 dailies, weeklies and free community papers would offer the service by the middle of 1993 (Fitzgerald). The *San Diego Union* and the *San Diego Tribune* use audiotex to run personal ads. That use alone is gaining a lot of attention and may be the most consistent money-maker. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* offers a similar service. Voice classified ads, which allow readers to get more information about a printed advertisement by calling a phone number, generate profits (Fitzgerald, 1990b). *The Wall Street Journal*'s Persian Gulf War news line generated 95 cents a minute and offered headline updates, features and direct reports ("Operator," 1991).

An expert in the electronic directory market service sees voice classifieds as the beginning of a new technological trend in newspapers: the Personal Newspaper (Conniff, 1993). Michael Conniff sees newspapers venturing more into electronics as a means to reach specific groups of readers with the information that they want – be it sports, business news or lifestyles features.

Conniff noted that Knight-Ridder Inc. and the Tribune Company are already experimenting with such technology. Audiotex and the facsimile machine are key to the future of the Personal Newspaper, he says, in that both give newspapers the necessary equipment to update the news that readers want.

Technically, anyone with a computer, a modem and the proper software can become a publisher in the electronic information business. Computer bulletin boards and electronic newsletters are quite common and, in recent years, have complicated the legal issues involved in print journalism.

The *USA Today* Approach

Perhaps the most obvious physical change in the looks of printed newspapers came with the emergence of the Gannett Company's national newspaper, *USA Today*, which first appeared on September 15, 1982. Unlike any other newspaper, *USA Today* attracted readers with its vibrant colors, short, crisp articles and lengthy special sections. The newspaper prompted imitations throughout the country, and some still say that this style, as opposed to the lengthy articles of a magazine style, will control the future of the industry (Bittner, 1986, p. 52). The color aspect alone was not the newspaper's uniqueness. But the quality of *USA Today*'s spot color and four-color reproduction pressured everyone else into doing a better job. The facts were – and are -- that readers like color.

Even The Gray Lady, the *New York Times*, gave in and added color to several Sunday sections in 1990. The $300 million printing facility of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, allows that newspaper the capability of vibrant color printing. The *Los Angeles Times* is known for its quality color reproduction. Improvements in photo reproduction, press systems (keyless inking, on-line video monitoring, six-page-wide presses), platemaking, paper quality and ink mixtures promise even better color reproduction over the next decade (Garneau, 1991).

A number of newspapers took on *USA Today*'s popular "section" idea, an expansion of *The New York Times* format that tailors groups of articles toward the special interests –

entertainment, business, sports, farming – of their readers. Many larger papers also tailor a special section of the newspaper for distribution in a certain region of their circulation area. Computer-based distribution systems, designed to tailor sections of a newspaper for certain parts of a city, have been in use for quite some time, and now satellites and microwave transmission systems aid in the international production and distribution of larger newspapers (Bittner, 1986, p. 46).

Newspapers also use sectionals inserts – in sports, food, business and entertainment usually – to appeal to certain groups in their audience. The *Chicago Tribune* illustrated the latest trend – targeting the younger reader – with its recent launching of KidNews, a colorful section aimed at 9- to 13-year-old readers.

Knight-Ridder's 25/43 project, referring to the ages of the post-World War II "baby boomers," experiments with formats that appeal to that particular readership. The company's Boca Raton, Fla. *News* was redesigned in 1990 as a prototype to attract younger readers. Based on the results of 30 focus groups, the paper incorporated shorter stories (with no jumps), indexing and front-page news briefs. The paper also developed seven daily feature tabloids focusing on such special interests as business and parenting. Some of the overall new features include shorter stories, key words or phrases, more graphs and more use of color. In similar fashion, some Gannett papers are aiming special sections, with titles like "Prime Time Plus," "50 Something" and "Vintage," at older readers (Pollack, 1992, p. 7).

Ralph Langer, former president of the Associated Press Managing Editors, told an audience at the group's 1991 convention that newspapers need to work harder to meet the needs of a variety of readers. Newspapers, he said, should diversify information "while our relative resources are on an Ultra Slim-Fast diet" (Barnes, 1991/1992, p. 3). Langer said newspapers need to find out what people value and want to know about.

David Lawrence Jr., publisher of the *Miami Herald* and former president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, agreed that newspapers need to be relevant to the needs of the 1990s societal trends. In particular, he said, newspapers should be open to the issues of a changing readership. Readers are better-educated and living more diverse lifestyles than ever before, he said. Newspapers should seek more diversity in the news and seek more input from readers, he said (Fitzgerald, 1991).

The Gannett Company's attempts to meet the future needs of consumers involve News 2000, a long-term program aimed at bringing the editors and reporters closer to the people who read the papers. The project, being implemented at all Gannett-owned newspapers, emphasizes "community" in the construction of an editorially sound paper. The program is structured to improve editorial content through 10 key areas and encourages a balance of news, with a focus on the topics of interest to particular communities. Gannett papers are using focus groups, community forums, readership studies and surveys to plan their futures.

Cox Newspapers formed Cox New Ventures Group in 1992 to pursue new ways of presenting the news. Some Cox papers, including the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, are already involved in facsimile delivery of information. The paper also started publishing an Olympics Games newsletter in 1992.

Such programs are only part of what appears to be a trend for all newspapers to become what has made *USA Today* so successful: the people's newspaper. An emphasis on reader-generated stories, lifestyle features, graphics, shorter stories and larger body type represents the transformation of the 1970s ivory tower newspaper into a community publication.

Susan Miller, Scripps Howard's vice-president/editorial, said a reader-driven newspaper is a reflection of the idea that service to consumers is the wave of the future and possibly the industry's salvation (Underwood, 1992). Newspapers might accomplish this by offering a "core" section and added-on, color-coded additional sections focusing on whatever news areas particular subscribers request (Gibson, Gholdston & Porter, 1990). By this method, readers might be reached through demographic – not geographic – zoning.

Lloyd Schermer, former chairman of the American Newspaper Publishers Association (Stein, 1991a), said newspapers need to focus on matching editorial content to readers' interests and use information services and special events to reach readers. Newspapers must reinvent themselves, he said, or "lose control of our future" (p. 13).

Perhaps Frank McCulloch, a veteran of 50 years in the news business who retired as managing editor of the *San Francisco Examiner*, summed this trend up when he encouraged newspapers to give readers what they want – "hamburgers and a Coke" rather than "quiche and Evian water" (Stein, 1991b) Pleasing the public and publishing a quality newspaper is a tough but possible task, he said.

<u>Paperless Newspapers</u>

"Paperless" is the buzzword that has been whispered in newsrooms for some 20 years. Business analysts have predicted for some time that the "paperless" business office would someday replace the familiar one and influence scores of industries. Frank Bennack, president and chief executive officer of the Hearst Corporation, did not use the term "paperless" but suggested that newspapers must be reactive to changes in the market and society.

> Now, as we all know, television has had an impact but cannot and will not replace newspapers. Television forced us to confront the necessity of change ... to reshape and revitalize the industry. There's no reason we cannot continue to occupy the premier role in society if we can accept that things change (Gersh, 1989, p. 24).

Knight-Ridder Inc., one of the early backers of videotex, is now investing time and money in the belief that newspapers will become paperless products. Knight-Ridder's Roger Fidler told *Editor & Publisher* he believes newspapers cannot survive in their current state and predicts that prototypes of a new electronic medium, designed to replace the printing press, will be on the market by 1995 (Fidler, 1992; Markoff, 1992).

Fidler and Knight-Ridder Inc. colleagues (Markoff) experimented with an electronic newspaper, Viewtron, in the late 1970s. But Fidler's latest prototype, developed independent of the company, is a notebook-sized, pen-based computer. Fidler's advancements rely on flat-panel computer systems, which are currently priced out of reach of most consumers. Fidler foresees an interactive electronic newspaper that will allow readers to tap into an advertisement to contact the advertiser, to call up a sports page from the menu or to change the size of the type.

Fidler is director of Knight-Ridder's Information Design Lab in Boulder, Colorado, which opened in 1992 and works on prototypes, assessing new technologies and the effects on the newspaper industry (Rosenberg, 1992). One of the devices Fidler and the others are studying is Apple Computer's Newton, a pocket-sized computer device with a flat-panel display. A special pen allows the user to interact with the device, which may be an appropriate delivery vehicle for an electronic newspaper (Booker, 1992). Apple Computer, meanwhile, made plans to open a research and development lab adjacent to the Knight-Ridder lab ("K-R," 1993). Both companies seem to be gambling on the day that newspapers will be multimedia devices available on portable, touch-sensitive, flat-panel displays (Underwood, 1992).

In the late 1980s, scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology developed their own version of an electronic newspaper, a computer system that actually scanned on-line databases of newspapers, wire services, magazines, television broadcasts and other services in search of items aimed at a specific person's interests (Katz, 1990). Now, MIT's Media Laboratory is researching the creation of "The Daily Me," a paper tailored to an individual's interests that may be available in such forms as a personal computer screen, a PC printout, a TV screen or an audio outlet (Fisher, 1992).

Some electronic systems offer a blend of videotex and an electronic newspaper. At Stanford University, MediaLink, an experimental news service that can be channeled through the university's computer network, offers viewers moving pictures and sound to accompany news stories. The system utilizes a type of Apple Computer software, "QuickTime," and the videos can be backed up and replayed or printed (Driscoll, 1992). The system, as Scott Kirk, manager of the typesetting shop and one of the main forces behind the system, pointed out, offers "the benefits of having the written word and also adding the visuals, (sound) and animation you get from television" (p. 19). The service operates rather slowly and was not designed to replace *The Stanford Daily*, which is still published.

Doug Campeljohn of Apple predicted that the publication of a daily interactive electronic newspaper would be possible in the near future (Driscoll, 1992) but added that he didn't see the new technologies replacing newspapers that soon.

Broc Sears, assistant managing editor/design for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, (1992) predicted that interactive television and newspapers would mix to create a comprehensive information service. He noted that he based his predictions on several assumptions, including the larger role of advertising in newspapers' existence and the inclusion of interactive promotional spots (perfume samples, glimpses into an upcoming movie).

Scott Whiteside, vice president of strategic planning and advanced systems for the Baltimore *Sun*, said (Kerwin, 1992) newspapers should focus on the electronic delivery of local news as a supplement to the newspaper.

> It is important for newspapers to develop skills and procedures for packaging information for electronic delivery. Regardless of how it is displayed once it is delivered ... digital television, display telephone ... newspapers need to do something (p. 28).

The Pulitzer Publishing Co.'s planning group, Pulitzer/2000, was created to examine and put into use new forms of technology. Pulitzer launched a videotex project, Post-Link, recently. Ralph Martin, vice president/division manager, Metro Division, Thomson Newspapers Corp., (Consoli, 1991) told executives at the 1991 American Newspaper Publishers Association Technical Conference that newspapers must be "ruthless" in deciding on which technologies they want to spend their money and should be open to changes.

Clearly, even if the technology changes, newspapers still have the responsibility of filling in the news gaps around the other media. Joseph W. Ostrow, executive vice president and worldwide media director for Foote, Cone & Belding Communications Inc., said recently that "if newspapers grasp the inherent values of the changed technology," (Rockmore, 1992, p. 112) he believed they could become more important than ever. Ostrow predicted that newspapers would put more emphasis on services and less on news coverage. That could mean, he noted, packaging a newspaper for a specific readership.

> Newspapers have put themselves in a box; they need to recognize they are more than printers of newsprint. They should open their eyes to what they are. They are the birth-to-death database of a community and they must learn to use that to help agencies and marketers accomplish their goals (p. 112).

Some see newsletters emerging as small, easy-to-produce newspapers of the future. Newsletters (Griffiths, 1993) can focus on precisely defined audiences and offer them the information they crave on specific topics. Facsimile machines offer newspapers another way to reach their readers. *The New York Times* sends news summaries outside the mainland United States. The six- to eight-page version appears in five English-language editions: for Hawaii, Japan, the Caribbean, cruise ships and international readers. *USA Today* offers a sports fax sheet. Atlanta's Fax Interactive Inc., in collaboration with the *AtlantaJournal & Constitution*, offers a stock portfolio fax.

The Old-Fashioned Way

Not everyone sees the electronic newspaper replacing the traditional one. John Naisbitt told the journal that "it is pointless to try to recapture readers who get their news from television" (Rockmore, 1992, p. 28). Naisbitt said newspapers should concentrate more "on being important than on being popular" (p. 28) because "a flat screen will never replace newspapers" (p. 30).

Likewise, not everyone believes that newspaper journalists should be dreaming about an electronic entity saving the industry when old-fashioned techniques might do the job. Doris Walsh, *American Demographics* magazine publisher, predicted (Fitzgerald, 1989) that newspapers of the 1990s would need to work harder to understand and reach readers because of the change in demographics. In addition, she said, newspapers should seek a diversity in newsroom staffs, with the addition of older people, teenagers and minorities.

In 1990, the American Newspaper Publishers Association's "A-Team" studied three successful newspapers to determine the things newspapers needed to be doing for survival. Their results included: matching customer needs, cultivating staff loyalty, using information vehicles, exhibiting, fair reporting, covering local news and not backing away from the type of stories people like to talk about.

The chairman of the Roper Organization Inc., Burns W. Roper, predicted newspapers' future growth in providing more analysis and entertainment (Underwood, 1992). Roper, who wasn't convinced that a paperless newspaper would become a reality anytime soon, said newspapers would function mainly as deliverers of fashion, health, entertainment and ads.

> Newspaper journalists should also take heart from the fact that virtually none of those who gaze into the future are predicting the near-term demise of the newspaper-on-print. Technology, so far, has been unable to match the efficient way the eye can scan the newspaper page or the way a newspaper can be folded up and carried around – or the way it can be read while breakfasting over coffee and bagels on a Sunday morning" (Underwood, 1992, p. 27).

Uzal Martz Jr. (1990), president and publisher of the *Pottsville* (Pennsylvania) *Republican* told an audience at an international conference on telecommunications that, "By 2001 electronic delivery of news and advertising messages will be a widespread reality," and he added that, "There will continue to be printed newspapers" (p. 146).

Change in the media industry – as in other industries – often serves as the catalyst for change in the members of that industry. Some predicted the demise of radio broadcasting with the arrival of television. The rise of cable television, some have said, could put an end to local broadcasts. But as one industry analyst noted, change rarely means obliteration.

> It is important to remember that no form of communication – starting with newspapers and continuing through magazines, radio, television, direct mail, matchbook covers, billboards and what have you – has ever been destroyed by the emergence of new kinds of media. Existing businesses have had to change in response to new forms of competition, but they have always done this well enough to stay alive (Morton, 1991, p. 46).

In September 1992, Ed Turner (no relation to Ted), the executive vice president of CNN, predicted that 24-hour news networks like CNN would be created in nations throughout Western

Europe and Japan (Logan, 1992). "We are no longer a 9-to-5 society," he said, "and people want to have access to the news when they want it" (p. C4). The implication: Newspapers, in their current state, can't compete with CNN.

Hynds, in making predictions for 1980s newspaper industry trends, warned (1980) that newspapers must be adaptable to any possibilities, "if breakthroughs in technology dictate that the mainstream package itself be delivered by electronic rather than traditional means" (p. 282). That reality may have seemed far off in a decade when word processors were just beginning to penetrate newsrooms. But in the past 10 years, technology has changed the way journalists – and their consumers – view reality.

John Diebold, a newspaper consultant, told those attending the American Society of Newspaper Editors convention ("Predicting," 1988) that "the greatest danger for newspaper management lies in standing still" (p. 108). Diebold said he expected new media to complement – not replace – the existing paper form.

METHOD

Allen (1978) described the social science methodology of the Delphi Technique as a tool used by policymakers to forecast and make plans for the future. Forecasters, he noted, often rely on the opinions of experts but find themselves perplexed when those experts disagree on an issue. The Delphi Technique, as Allen explained, offers a systematic method to "reduce the uncertainty to unity" (p. 119).

The Rand Corporation in California (Allen) developed the Delphi in the 1960s as a way to eliminate the influences of personal interaction among the members of a group. In the first practical use of Delphi, researchers collected the advice of seven experts to develop an industrial target system for nuclear weapons. The Delphi, Allen noted, operates under three distinct characteristics: anonymous responses, controlled feedback and statistical group response. Perhaps most important, with the Delphi, the results are reported anonymously to each member, with an allowance for feedback on each issue in the questionnaire.

Of course, no one can be certain of future events – particularly of an industry's future – and thus, in this study, the Delphi method does not promise to reveal what daily newspapers will be like in the distant future. However, the experts in this study conducted their anonymous discussion based on their experience in the newspaper industry and th 'r knowledge of technology potential and economic conditions. The result of this Delphi represents, as Allen emphasized, "a communication climate most conducive for rational and objective thought" (p. 121).

Selection of Subjects

Delphi methodology does not require random sampling of subjects. Allen suggested a panel of 10 to 30 and emphasized that panelists be experts in the topic: The main point is that they "have information to share, are motivated to work on the problem, and the time to complete the tasks involved with the procedure" (p. 123). The panelists for this study were selected based on their experience in professional newspaper work, their research about newspapers and/or their participation in national newspaper groups such as the American Society of Newspaper Publishers or the Associated Press Managing Editors. Most of the participants have commented publicly – either at conferences or through industry trade journals – about the future of newspapers. Computer database searches of industry trade journals, journalism faculty listings, trade magazines and newspapers led to the development of a list of 43 potential panelists. The potential participants were asked, via letter, whether they wished to participate in the study.

The idea was to assemble a panel of people with a variety of experiences in newspapers: editors of various sized newspapers; publishers; professors; consultants; analysts; and news services executives. For this study, 19 experts agreed to participate in three rounds of surveys about the future of newspapers. One person participated in the first round only. The other 18 completed all three rounds.

Research Instrument

This study used three rounds of questionnaires as the research instruments for the Delphi Technique. The first and third rounds consisted of open-ended questions designed to garner a variety of opinions from the panelists, while the second round sought an evaluation and ranking of the responses of the first round.

Round I provided panelists' varied views on the physical look and content of future newspapers and their opinions as to the problems newspapers will encounter in meeting the needs of consumers. On the question of problems newspapers will face, panelists were asked to list five. The panelists were asked to list three to five physical and content changes, as well as an explanation of why these might occur and what effects they might have on readers. The panelists were asked to avoid ranking any of their responses in Round I.

Round II used a five-point semantic differential scale to allow panelists to note which physical and content characteristics newspapers were "most likely" and "least likely" to acquire in the future. Panelists did the same with the problems and were also asked to rank the top five problems, with "1" representing the most significant.

In Round III, panelists were asked to suggest possible solutions to seven problems that made Round II's top five lists either as a result of the rankings or the scales. Open-ended questions were used to encourage free responses.

A personally addressed cover letter accompanied each questionnaire in each of the three rounds. The Round I covered letter elaborated on the introductory letter, including an explanation of the purpose of the study, the need for the study, the promise of anonymity among respondents during the study, the purpose of Round I, the response deadline, the address and phone number of the researcher and a statement of appreciation. For Rounds II and III, the cover letters included a statement of appreciation for the participant's prior response, the purpose of the round, the response deadline, the address and phone numbers of the researcher. In Round III, participants were also asked to submit a short biography/resume to allow for proper credit.

Definitions

"Experts" were chosen based on their experience in the industry and, in most cases, based on their public comments about the state of the industry and newspapers' future. The "physical look" of the newspaper was a reference as to whether the newspaper of the future would continue to be printed on newsprint, recycled paper (and if so, whether as a broadsheet or a tabloid) or take other forms, such as electronic. This also referred to the use of color, graphics, photographs and design techniques. The "content" referred to special sections to attract certain groups of readers, such as teenage readers, retired professionals, etc. A "problem" was defined as any situation, environment or dilemma that could threaten the stability of the newspaper industry.

RESULTS

Round I

The 19 panelists listed 95 answers when asked about the most important problems the newspaper industry will encounter in the future. Similar answers were consolidated into a master list of 44 for use in Round II. The panelists listed 67 predictions about the physical look of future newspapers. Similar answers were consolidated into a master list of 23. They made 74 predictions, consolidated into a list of 38 for use in Round II, about the content of future newspapers.

Round II

Seventeen panelists completed the questionnaire for this round. Panelists were told to mark closer to "unlikely" if they did not consider a particular issue a "problem" or if they disagreed with a given presumption or perception.

For statistical purposes, the blank closest to "likely" was scored a five, with the others scored in descending order to one for the blank closest to "unlikely." *(See Tables I, II and III.)*

Problems

Table I lists the problems (as identified in Round I) in descending order from "likely" (5.00) to "unlikely" (1.00). When the means of two or more problems are tied, the problem with the lowest standard deviation will be listed first.

TABLE I

RATINGS OF LIKELIHOOD OF OCCURRENCE OF PREDICTED PROBLEMS FOR THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY

Problem	Mean	SD
Demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers.	4.706	.470
The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers.	4.412	.870
The challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily.	4.354	.931
Trying to win back readers other than middle class 18-to-49 year-olds.	4.235	.752
Competition from other activities for people's time.	4.235	1.091
Increased competition from electronic delivery systems.	4.118	1.054
Learning to access and make sense of the enormous amount of information stored on computer databases.	4.176	.883
The necessity of mid-career training for journalists.	4.059	1.088
Elitism of the press corps.	3.941	.899
Disappearance of retail advertising as an economic base.	3.882	.857

TABLE I (Continued)

Problem	Mean	SD
The poor image of the industry.	3.882	1.166
Increasing illiteracy in the United States.	3.824	.809
Plummeting subscriptions.	3.824	.883
The education of future journalists.	3.813	1.276
Competition with television and radio.	3.765	.903
The rising age of readership.	3.765	.970
Pricing the newspaper competitively with other news sources.	3.765	1.033
Lack of research and development.	3.765	1.480
The rising cost of newsprint, production and distribution.	3.706	.920
Changing psychographic characteristics of newspaper employees.	3.647	.996
Changing psychographic characteristics of news sources.	3.647	1.057
The need to overhaul management structure of newspaper organizations.	3.647	1.115
The pressures of time to put out a quality product.	3.588	1.121
Staying abreast of issues important to people's daily lives.	3.588	1.228
Increasing illiteracy in the United States.	3.412	1.064
Lack of experimentation.	3.412	1.326
The intrusion of business-office concerns into the leadership of news and editorial departments.	3.412	1.417
Connecting local readers to national and international problems.	3.412	1.460
Low salaries of newspaper employees.	3.412	1.583

TABLE I (Continued)

Problem	Mean	SD
The need to learn how to use technology in a way that will interest advertisers.	3.471	1.007
Lack of innovative use of technology and customer service in the circulation department.	3.353	1.169
Environmental concerns.	3.294	1.047
Inability to reorganize to become guidebooks to the future.	3.294	1.312
Confusing writing styles.	3.294	1.359
Finding the right mix of content.	3.188	1.167
The struggle over the two main competing philosophies: USA Today versus newsmagazine approach.	3.154	1.144
Newspapers' slow acceptance of change.	3.118	1.317
Further consolidation of media industries.	2.941	1.298
Increasing homogenization of newspapers.	2.882	1.409
Providing local news.	2.706	1.404
Financial burdens of purchasing new equipment.	2.647	1.272
Increasing legal restraint and restricted access to gathering information.	2.588	1.121
The ongoing discussions of what constitutes the best format.	2.333	1.345
Competition from international organizations.	2.059	.899

Physical changes

Table II lists the physical changes (as predicted in Round I) in descending order from "likely" (5.00) to "unlikely" (1.00).

TABLE II

RATINGS OF LIKELIHOOD OF OCCURRENCE

OF PREDICTED PHYSICAL CHANGES

IN FUTURE NEWSPAPERS

Physical change	Mean	SD
The supplementation of the regular newspaper with specialized publications/ sections.	4.500	3.588
More departmentalization of the news.	4.412	.795
More layering of information.	4.353	.786
More forms of availability of newspaper information made available.	4.294	.920
More color.	4.235	.970
More interactive advertising.	4.176	.883
More efforts to attract targeted advertising.	4.118	.781
More frequent use of magazine-quality graphics.	4.000	.935
More readable/legible typefaces for headlines and text.	3.882	1.269
Variety as the key to format.	3.875	1.204
Expanded personals advertising sections.	3.824	1.131
More photographs.	3.706	1.047

TABLE II (Continued)

Physical change	Mean	SD
Continuing pressure on format decisions (in general) by a variety of issues.	3.647	.702
The appearance of an electronic newspaper.	3.588	1.417
Shorter stories.	3.412	.795
Cutbacks in the number of pages produced.	3.294	1.047
Special delivery of business sections as updated, color facsimile pages.	3.176	1.237
Increased use of better newsprint stock for better reproduction.	3.118	1.111
More use of text to convey the messages of graphics/photos.	3.000	1.265
A handier, smaller size and format.	2.706	1.448
Experimentation with typography.	2.647	1.579
Less emphasis on the organization and look of sections created specifically to attract advertisements.	2.125	1.147
Newspapers may appear on plastic, foldable, pliable screens.	2.059	1.298

Content changes

Table III lists the content changes (as predicted in Round I) in descending order from "likely" (5.00) to "unlikely" (1.00). When the means of two ore more problems are tied, the problem with the lowest standard deviation will be listed first.

TABLE III

RATINGS OF LIKELIHOOD OF OCCURRENCE

OF PREDICTED CONTENT CHANGES

IN FUTURE NEWSPAPERS

Content change	Mean	SD
More advertising geared toward older readers.	4.706	.588
More local news and features.	4.647	.606
More coverage of lifestyle issues.	4.529	.514
More special sections aimed at older readers.	4.529	.800
Easier access to further details for stories.	4.529	.800
Better backgrounding and context in stories to connect the news to the reader.	4.294	.686
More reader involvement in content.	4.294	.985
More content concerned with the interests of specific ethnic groups.	4.235	1.033
More variety in the content of stories, art.	4.176	.883
More explanatory writing.	4.176	.883
More special sections dealing with issues geared to younger readers.	4.176	1.286
More informative graphics	4.118	.697
More relevant business news.	4.118	.781
More in-depth reporting of many specialty areas.	4.118	.928
Greater attention to "communities of interest."	4.059	.827
More women's news.	4.059	1.029

TABLE III (Continued)

Content change	Mean	SD
More formation of story ideas based on demographic information identified through marketing research.	3.824	.951
Writing that is more simple, clear and direct on editorial pages.	3.824	1.131
More "for-the-record" information in great detail.	3.824	1.185
More self-promotion.	3.765	.970
More entertainment news.	3.765	1.033
More lists, listings and hard data relevant to readers' daily lives.	3.765	1.033
Growth of a coverage of a multicultural society.	3.765	1.251
Coverage of issues that matter more to readers than to advertisers.	3.750	1.390
More feature-oriented stories.	3.706	.849
A better job of anticipating change.	3.706	.920
More efforts to bring global news to a local level.	3.706	1.213
Less emphasis on events (traditional meetings, political actions) and more on trends and situations.	3.588	.870
More coverage of world events – defined from a business perspective.	3.588	1.121
A general increase in the quality of writing.	3.529	1.231
Reallocation of the front page to fit the demographics of the community.	3.471	1.007
More articles dealing with religious and ethical issues.	3.412	1.064

TABLE III (Continued)

Content change	Mean	SD
A return to community leadership and responsibility in editorial commentary.	3.412	1.228
Fewer "fluff" pieces.	3.353	1.057
Rebirth of the rewrite desk.	3.176	1.286
Less energy devoted to coverage of national and international news.	2.625	1.258
Erasure of the line between "news and "entertainment."	2.412	1.176
Fewer special sections on events already widely covered on television.	2.412	1.417

Round III

Round III was designed to ask the panelists for possible solutions to those problems which made the top five listing as a result of the panelists' rankings or the total points the problems accumulated on the semantic differential scales.

The problems, as ranked by the panelists, were scored on a basis of five points for each first-place ranking, four points for each second-place ranking, three points for each third-place ranking, two points for each second-place ranking and one point for each fifth-place ranking. Problems were also scored based on the total points of the semantic differential scales. For example, a problem that generated 12 marks in the space nearest "likely" (five points each) and five marks in the next descending blank (four points each), score 80 points. Problems that made one or both of these rankings were used to generate the questionnaire used in Round III. The results of these two methods of ranking are listed in Table IV below. The listings are in the same order as they appeared on the Round III questionnaire. If a particular problem did not make the top five ranking in one of the categories, it is so indicated by dashes. *(See Table IV.)*

TABLE IV

TOP FIVE RANKINGS OF PREDICTED PROBLEMS

(BY TOTAL POINTS AND BY SCALES)

Problem	By Points	By Scales
Demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers.	1 (38)	1 (80)
The challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily.	2 (19)	3 (74)
Increasing illiteracy in the United States.	5 (12)	--
The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers.	--	2 (75)
The poor image of the industry.	3 (tie) 14	--
Elitism of the press corps.	--	4 (tie) 72
Competition from other activities for people's time.	3 (tie) 14	4 (tie) 72
Trying to win back readers other than middle-class 18-to-49 year olds	--	4 (tie) 72

Solutions to the problems

The panelists were asked to provide possible solutions to each of the eight problems listed in Table IV. Seventeen of the 18 panelists returned the Round III questionnaires. The most commonly mentioned solutions are offered below.

Problem A: *Demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers*.

Solutions: Newspapers must do much more hiring – and promotion – of non-white minority group members to change newsroom sensibilities and decisions. Seven people suggested that newsrooms needed to diversify staffs. One commented that, "That problem results from overwhelmingly white executives, editors and journalists creating a product for an audience which is much more diverse." Four people noted the importance of research and investment in research methods to break down the demographics of the readership area. Newspapers "must be willing to invest in some sophisticated research methods to cope with this problem," one said.

Problem B: *The challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily.*

Solutions: Newspapers must be willing to focus more intensely on local news and, in particular, make news reports more relevant/useful to the public. Nine people referred to local news, specifically news that is relevant and useful to the community. "The only approach which is not self-defeating is to make news reports more relevant to the serious and difficult problems with which the public must cope," one person wrote. Another suggested that newspapers "must be willing to focus more intensely on local news, with an emphasis on names and faces."

Four people suggested format changes – more use of "user-friendly" techniques of secondary headlines, summaries, pull-outs and quote-outs, news summaries, the dividing of long stories into shorter ones.

Five people suggested design changes involving more attractive layout, more photos, better graphics, better typographic styles, more color, attention-grabbing headlines. "The use of images has replaced the use of words in our culture," one wrote. "The use of color photographs and illustrations must become total."

Problem C: *Increasing illiteracy in the United States.*

Solutions: The solutions were quite varied on this problem Two people suggested that journalists make the newspaper a part of daily life in schools, civic clubs, church groups, etc. and underwrite literacy programs through community programs. "Newspapers should be carried in to civic clubs, classrooms, union shops, school, church and civic groups and used as part of a program to involve the community in reading the paper," one person said.

Two others suggested financial support of literary programs.

Two others suggested a news coverage approach: Promote and help improve public education through proper coverage (school boards, information about reading levels of students, etc.).

Two noted that newspapers should support learn-to-read programs at all levels, especially in the early grades.

Two mentioned the importance of supporting Newspapers in Education programs. "Newspapers can help educators and parents win the battle against illiteracy by improving and expanding – in some cases, starting – Newspapers in Education programs," one suggested. "Newspapers can be used to help teach almost anything from the pre-school years on up."

Problem D: *The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers.*

Solutions: Two people suggested the use of special pages, features, writing.

Seek ideas from demographic studies, teen magazines and the young people themselves (perhaps through advisory groups) on how to apply the newspaper directly to younger readers. Produce material that addresses their interest, needs and desires. Four people suggested this approach.

Three people specifically mentioned support of the Newspaper in Education program.

Problem E: *The poor image of the industry.*

Solutions: We need to become more civilized in our actions (less arrogant, less brash), be less sensational in our reporting and writing. Three people noted this solution. "The cockiness and brashness can undo the good that thousands of working news people bring to their readers each news cycle," one said. "Assertiveness can be there without being offensive."

Two others suggested that newspapers need to get the newsroom staff out in front of the community.

Six people mentioned the basics: Improve the quality and thoroughness of our efforts. Return to the basics: good, timely, well-written, well-balanced relevant stories.

Problem F: *Elitism of the press corps.*

Solutions: We need to be more willing to correct our mistakes (self-regulation). We should also listen when people call or write us. Three people said this.

Editors and reporters should make efforts to reach the community through visits to civic groups, church groups, classrooms, etc. or involvement in Little League or other activities. This may include eating lunch with business executives, teachers, accountants, doctors, etc., instead of other reporters. Three people mentioned this type of interaction with the public. One said, "Newspapers should not have company cafeterias; they only abet reporters eating lunch with other reporters, during which they massage each other's biases."

Do away with that "self-appointed expert" role and reduce arrogance. Newspapers are special only as long as they serve the needs of the public. Two people said newspapers should be less arrogant. "Greed, fame and huge egos sometimes are the undoing of the press corps, not to mention instant analyses or contestant carping without offering any concrete solutions to problems," one wrote.

Problem G: *Competition from other activities for people's time.*

Solutions: We should concentrate on the quality of writing, photography, layout, reporting, etc. and make the paper itself more compelling. Four people mentioned changing content or design of newspapers. "I do not think the *USA Today* strategy of covering everything in 10 inches of copy or less is the way to successfully complete for people's time," one wrote.

Be more serious and reliable about people's central concerns, which does not mean a lack of entertainment. Make the news relevant.

Four people noted that the news should be relevant to the people in a community. "A more compelling paper will earn and retain its share of individuals' time," one said.

The key, again, is to make the newspaper a part of daily life. Find out what it takes to be vital in readers' lives.

Three people suggested that the newspaper must be a vital part of the community. "They might encourage readers to look at the paper while traveling on a plane, train or bus, while waiting on someone, while waiting for the movie or show to begin, or while having a refreshment break," one person said. "They might encourage them to read it with or to their young children; but the key is still giving them something they want and cannot get elsewhere."

Get into the electronic news business – through audiotex, on-line databases, teleconferencing, electronic newsletters, interactive media. Aim for user-friendly in-home use. Three people suggested this.

Problem H: *Trying to win back readers other than middle-class 18-to-49 year olds*.

Solutions: Make the newspaper a part of everyone's daily life. Produce a newspaper that readers will see has something to offer them. Promote it.

Three people suggested this.

Use more relevant content. Three people suggested content changes.

Use research to reach former readers and potential readers with a focus on finding out what people want to read in the paper. Three people said newspapers should research these groups. "Older readers probably want more information about health issues, retirement economics, and similar matters, but the way to find out for sure is to ask them," one person wrote.

Conclusions/Discussion

Is the oldest form of media too antiquated to compete in what has become an electronic world? No one should expect newspapers, which have been a part of America since colonial days, to disappear any time soon. But the key to newspapers' survival is the same as for any industry in a similar situation: change. The experts in this study agree that newspapers cannot continue as they are and expect to gain new readers and entice advertisers.

The 1980s represented one of the worst decades ever in the history of the American newspaper industry. Weakened by a slow economy and wounded by tough competition, some of the country's oldest newspapers folded under the pressure. Those that survived scrambled to find new ways to attract subscribers and hang on to advertisers. Just in recent years, many have latched onto electronic news services and are using relatively old technology (audiotex) to offer a supplemental news source to their communities. services and are using relatively old technology (audiotex) to offer a supplemental news source to their communities.

Some say that such surface use of technology is not enough, and that if newspapers are going to prosper in the future, they must become more devoted to a real change – even to a change that does not involve newsprint. Those who are actively involved with the prototypes of computer newspapers (such as Knight-Ridder's Roger Fidler) see this as the true future of newspapers. Computer newspapers, some say, will not just be a supplement to printed newspapers: They will be *the* newspapers of the future.

Despite such talk, indications are that most people involved in the newspaper industry believe that future is too far away to contemplate. They concentrate, instead, on doing a better job at doing the things that newspapers are known for: providing more in-depth coverage of news events; providing for-the-record information such as birth announcements, obituaries and stock indexes; offering piercing commentaries on current events; using entertainment to break up the hard news of the day, etc. To those journalists attempting to do their current jobs better, technology is definitely a part of the everyday routine (word processing, pagination, color processing) but is not an imminent threat to the way newspapers reach the public.

Based on the suggestions of physical change that this panel made, the newspapers of the future will:

• Be a smaller size or format – perhaps a tabloid or magazine size.

• Continue to use better graphics, more photos and more color.

• Use more departmentalization, indexes, pointers and summaries for easier and quicker reading.

• Supplement the daily publication with facsimile sheets or electronic (via phone or computer) updates.

In this round, four people specifically mentioned the appearance of an electronic (computer) newspaper.

When discussing content changes, the panelists again emphasized the need for targeted special sections, geared mainly certain demographic groups such as older readers, teen readers, female readers and business executives. They also emphasized again the need for more local news ("relevant" to the audience) and suggested that readers need to be more involved in the selection of content. The general improvement of writing was also an issue, as panelists mentioned the need for quality writing, explanatory writing, simple and direct writing and better backgrounding writing.

Based on the suggestions of content change that this panel made, the newspapers of the future will:

- Gear more special sections and advertising toward older readers.
- Aim more special sections at younger readers.
- Offer more thorough coverage of local issues.
- Report more on lifestyle issues.
- Get the readers more involved in the selection of content.
- Offer readers more ways to receive content: i.e., audiotex, computer modems.
- Use better backgrounding to connect the news to readers.

The three methods of scoring provided some definite consensus on the types of problems that these panelists see as concerns for the newspapers industry. Some other problems were also rated highly but did not make these lists. Panelists expressed concern about such problems as the further consolidation of media industries (and, in particular, the monopolization of editorial content); staying abreast of issues important to people's daily lives; and learning to access the enormous amount of information contained on computer databases.

Also interesting to note are the problems that most panelists did not see developing or did not agree with the implications of: competition from international organizations, increasing homogenization of newspapers (loss of local and community identity), the problems of what constitutes the best format (broadsheet, tabloid, etc.) – these did not appear as important concerns to the majority of the panelists.

The most interesting information derived from the predictions about physical changes involve the idea of a computer newspaper. the panelists, as a group, did not reach a definite consensus as to whether such a newspaper would appear in the future. On the semantic scale, six marked "likely;" four marked the next closest space; three noted the middle space; two marked the space second from "unlikely;" two marked "unlikely." But the panelists, as a group, defeated the idea of the "complete replacement" of the paper version by an electronic version: 13 marked "unlikely" or the space next to the "unlikely" space.

The other physical changes the panelists see as least unlikely included: less emphasis on sections created specifically to attract advertisements; newspapers appearing on plastic, foldable, pliable screens; more use to texts to convey the messages of graphics/photos; experimentation with typography; and a handier size and format. The latter suggestion could be considered borderline; answers were fairly evenly distributed.

Most of the content changes were rated as likely; none of the scores were low enough to stand out. However, those the panelists considered least likely included: fewer special sections on events already widely covered on television; erasure of the line between "news" and "entertainment;" and less energy devoted to coverage of national and international news.

In Round III, panelists were asked to identify possible solutions to eight of the problems that made the top five in either the rankings scale or the total points scale. Most of the panelists listed more than one solution to each problem. Solutions were considered separately for inclusion into a master list. Solutions that were similar were consolidated. Thirteen separate solutions were listed to the problem of "demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers." The solution most frequently discussed was mentioned by seven panelists. All seven specifically said that newsrooms must do more hiring – and promotion – of non-white minority group members within the newsroom. Diversify the staff, they suggested, to meet the needs of a diversified audience. The next most frequently mentioned solution was the use of research to break down the demographics of a community. Four people suggested this and noted the importance of using special sections and departmentalization of the paper to meet the needs of specific groups of people.

Ten separate solutions were listed to the problem of "the challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily." The most frequently mentioned solution was: focus on local news and make news reports more relevant to the public. Nine people referred to this. Local news, they agreed, continues to be the core of community newspapers. Five people suggested that layout changes (design, photos, graphics, typographics) would aid in solving this problem. The next most frequently mentioned solution was listed by four people. They referred to making newspapers more "user-friendly" with summaries, pull-outs, secondary headlines and other format changes.

The panelists listed 14 different ideas for how the newspaper industry can help solve the problem of illiteracy. No single solution dominated on this question, although the overall consensus suggested that newspapers work with other groups – through the community – and support editorially the efforts of literacy programs and public education.

On the problem of "the lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers," the panelists offered 11 separate solutions. The most commonly mentioned were: seek ideas from research (four people) and support the Newspapers in Education program (three people). Most panelists agreed that newspapers should make a special effort to include content that appeals to younger readers. However, one person did suggest that newspapers should not concentrate so much effort on reaching this particular age group. Two others said newspapers should avoid "gimmicks" and involve the newspaper more in the community.

"The poor image of the industry" attracted 16 different solutions, as panelists attempted to reach a consensus on a problem that plagues nearly all journalists in every type of media. The most mentioned solutions were: improve quality and thoroughness and return to the basics of good writing (six people) and be less arrogant and brash (three people). The solutions did seem to center on a theme of making the newspaper a bigger part of the community, paying more attention to what readers want and raising standards of ethical behavior and accuracy.

Eight different solutions were suggested for the problem of "elitism of the press corps." No real consensus was reached on this problem, but three people noted that newspapers should be more willing to correct mistakes and listen to people who call or write. Three people also said that editors and reporters should make more efforts to get involved in the community and get to know members of the community.

For "competition from other activities for people's time" eight separate solutions were also mentioned. Four people specifically noted that newspapers should concentrate on the quality of the newspaper -- making the paper itself more compelling. Four people also noted that the content of the paper should be relevant and more reliable about people's concerns. Three people said the key is to make the newspaper a part of daily life. Three other people said newspapers should get involved in the electronic news business.

For solutions to "trying to win back readers other than middle-class 18-to-49 year olds," the panelists listed 16 solutions. Most of the panelists listed similar solutions as to the other problems; some listed their responses as "same as above" or "same as answer to" one of the other problems. The most consensus on these solutions came on three problems, with three people mentioning each of these solutions: make the newspaper part of everyone's daily life; use more relevant content; use research to reach former readers and potential readers by finding out what they want in the paper.

Recommendations

For the first time in their history, newspapers are -- right now -- at a sort of crossroads in their history. Until the 1980s, newspapers seemed to have a firm grip on their place as an important source of news and entertainment. That changed, quite dramatically, with the start-up of the Cable News Network and the popularity of other types of advertising outlets. No one in this study suggested that newspapers will disappear anytime soon. But newspapers cannot expect to survive without expecting to change.

The most obvious form of change involves technology. Newspapers that are not already experimenting with some type of electronic news delivery should get involved in as soon as feasible. They should, as experts have cautioned, be wary of buying without research and of buying, for example, an expensive audiotex system that will be outdated in a few years. On the other hand, they can and should be using the more obvious forms of technology to improve the look of newspapers. Excellent graphic programs are available for individual newspapers' use, and detailed graphics are also available through the Associated Press and other services. This study and others have indicated that readers want more graphics and photographs.

Newspaper executives have heard before that they should be emphasizing local news and, especially, local people, and the experts in this study agree on that suggestion. A newspaper that spends too much time and space on national and international events, on photographs and stories about issues less relevant to its immediate community is a newspaper doomed to lose readership. Trying to compete directly with other media does not seem to be the answer. As one panelist pointed out, "One reason that readers are turning to radio and television for their news and entertainment is because it's there in a handy, understandable format. Newspapers are trying to be something they aren't."

The vital newspaper of the future will be one that makes itself an important part of the community by making itself an important part of each individual reader's life. Certainly, newspapers would have a difficult time trying to contain the content desired by each person in a community, but that's where research comes in -- find out what a particular community wants in the paper. The idea, as one panelist said, is to make the newspaper the "public journal" that it was designed to be. Another panelist seemed to sum it up: "Newspaper people sometimes argue about whether a particular newspaper is a writer's newspaper or an editor's newspaper when the question should really be, "Is the newspaper a reader's newspaper?"

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APPENDIX

Panelists

• Jennifer Allen is president, publisher and editor of *The Ironton* (Ohio) *Tribune* and a second-term member of the board of the Associated Press Managing Editor's association. She is the chairwoman of the national APME Small Newspapers Committee.

• Ben Bagdikian is professor emeritus in the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California in Berkeley, and author of five books, including The Media Monopoly, now in its third edition.

• Cathleen Black is president and chief executive officer of the Newspaper Association of America, which was formed in 1992 after the merger of other newspaper associations. She is the former publisher of *USA Today*.

• Diane Borden, a former newspaper journalist and Gannett Company executive, is a doctoral student at the University of Washington and an adjunct instructor at Mount Vernon College.

• Phil Currie is vice president/news for the Gannett Company. He chaired the Newspaper Division sessions that led to the development of News 2000, the company's program to prepare newspapers for the future.

• Martin "Red" L. Gibson is professor of journalism and head of the News and Public Affairs Reporting division in the Department of Journalism at the University of Texas in Austin.

• Robert Haiman is president of The Poynter Institute for Media Studies, an educational institution for journalists, in St. Petersburg. He is the former executive editor of the *St. Petersburg Times*.

• Ernest C. Hynds is head of the department of journalism at the University of Georgia and author of American Newspapers in the 1980s and two other books. His primary teaching and research areas include contemporary newspapers and magazines.

• Bill Kovach is curator of The Nieman Foundation at Harvard University, former editor of the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* and former Washington bureau chief of *The New York Times*.

• Ralph Langer is executive editor of *The Dallas Morning News* and former president of the Associated Press Managing Editors.

• David Lipman is chairman of the Pulitzer Publishing Company's long-range planning group, Pulitzer/2000, and former managing editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. He is the author of seven biographies of sports stars.

• Maxwell E. McCombs is Jesse H. Jones Centennial Chair in communication in the Department of Journalism at the University of Texas in Austin. He is the former director of the American Newspaper Publisher Association New Research Center.

• Patricia G. McNeely is associate dean of the College of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. She has worked in numerous positions for newspapers, including *The Washington Post*.

• Alan R. Miller is retired as emeritus professor of journalism/mass communications from the University of Maine in Orono. He is a media consultant with a specialty in newspaper management.

• Dale Peskin is assistant managing editor of *The Detroit News*.

• David Scott is vice president of the Cox Corporation's Newspaper Division.

• Patsy Watkins is head of the Department of Journalism at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

• Nancy Woodhull is president of Nancy Woodhull & Associates, a media consultation firm based in Pittsford, New York, and Washington, D.C. Woodhull was a founding editor of *USA Today*.

• Jean Gaddy Wilson is a professor of journalism at the University of Missouri in Columbia and executive director of New Directions for News, a national think tank for newspaper editors and publishers.

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Top Faculty Paper

INTERNATIONAL NEWS IN SIX AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS: LAST LOOK AT A BIPOLAR WORLD?

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INTRODUCTION

Research concerned with international news content in American media traditionally looks at the coverage sent out by the wire services or offered by major television networks and elite newspapers.[1] While such a focus may be justified by certain types of research designs, exclusive focus on those outlets may lead to inaccurate assumptions about American international news coverage as a whole. Audience members have no ready access to wire copy and not everyone in America has ready access to the New York Times. Editors at papers across the country choose copy from the wires and may also use the international stories the Times generates, but their judgments of what makes international news may be different and it is those judgments which affect what is available to average readers. Thus, this study looked at international news content available to newspaper audiences beyond the markets of the prestige press. In addition, it tested generally accepted theoretical propositions which suggest that U.S. economic and cultural ties abroad predict which nations appear in U.S. media coverage of international events.

A content analysis design provided a systematic assessment of the nature of international news content of six mid-sized, dominant market papers[2] for 1988. The papers chosen for the study were: the Birmingham News, the Atlanta Constitution, the Des Moines Register, the Omaha World-Herald, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, and the Portland Oregonian (see table 1). To insure the most complete assessment of the newspapers' coverage, the study looked not only at international news stories carrying datelines from abroad, but also those that had been generated by paper staff, localized or otherwise "domesticated."[3] Because the year selected for study proved the last before the collapse of the communist regimes of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the content analysis inadvertently captured in time the last year of American coverage of international affairs under the traditional bi-polar geopolitical structure.

The study tested several of Hester's propositions about the influence of economic and cultural factors on international information flows.[4] Those propositions have generally been accepted to suggest that nations with political, economic, and cultural connections with the United States are more likely than other to be covered.

Additionally, it tested the Nordenstreng and Varis proposition that international news flows may not be homogenous as a national level as is commonly assumed.[5] Research on international news flow has traditionally looked at nations as homogeneous units, overlooking the inner structures of societies. While that may be a valid premise in some cases, Nordenstreng and Varis suggest it overlooks the fact of ongoing international economic integration. Since the United States is not among the countries where international news is exclusively the province of national media, the study investigated the possibility that within the United States regional differences in international economic and cultural connections might affect international news interests which might be reflected in regional media. To operationalize that premise, the study surveyed international news content in newspapers located in three distinct areas of the United States -- the Pacific Northwest, the Midwest, and the Southeast. Hence, the choice of those particular papers.

News flow "theories" literature suggests the among the extrinsic factors that shape news flows are power relations, economic connections and cultural affinities.[6] Since power relations are a national-level variable, they would not be expected to vary from region to region and would be expected to remain constant across the papers in the study. Since the economic and cultural variables might be expected to vary from region to region across the United States -- reflecting differing economic and cultural connections with the rest of the world -- they wer the factors chosen as the focus of the study.

Though the interest American audiences have in international news is a matter of debate, research suggests that, in the past, news professionals and researchers alike have underestimated that interest.[7] It might be expected, that in an age of growing economic and cultural globalization American readers would have an increased need for and interest in news of issues and events abroad.[8] News executives of the papers involved in the study cited growing interest in international news among their readers, particularly those with business interests abroad.[9] How those needs for international news are met should be a subject of concern for news researchers and professionals alike.

LITERATURE REVIEW

For nearly 50 years, media scholars have investigated the forces that shape how nations report on each other. Many of these news flow studies look at the elite press, comparing media in several nations.[10] Of those studies which look at content in U.S. papers, most studies tend to look either at elite papers and television networks or at copy available over wire services.[11] Several have looked at small papers in conjunction with one of the former, but only rarely have studies looked at the papers with state or metropolitan circulations where a large audience turns for international news.[12] International news content on American television has been studied extensively and the findings suggest homogeneity.[13] That is not surprising nor at odds with the regional focus of this study, if one considers that the national networks compete in a national market.

As suggested earlier, most of the studies undertaken to date would appear to assume a homogeneous, national-level, news character.[14] Studies that do look at regional papers do not look at regional variables as a possible explanation of differences in how the papers handle international news. The only study that deliberately looks at regional papers in more than one country nonetheless does not tackle more than one paper in each of the three countries it considers.[15]

The design of the study was based on Ahern's typology of factors used to explain news flow patterns as intrinsic or extrinsic.[16] Under that system, intrinsic factors are those that have to do with the item-specific characteristics of the story or event itself. Thus, intrinsic characteristics would be concerned with issues like topic and other characterics inherent in nature of the story. Extrinsic factors, on the other hand, are characteristics of the news environment rather than of the story.

Some researchers have chosen to distinguish the types of variables as being either "context-" or "event-oriented,"[17] but Ahern's approach was preferred for several reasons. First, the focus of the intrinsic and event-oriented labels is different. The inherent qualities of the coverage itself are at issue in this research, not the objectifiable facts of the covered events.[18] Second, context-oriented and extrinsic are not interchangeable labels for the external variables. Ahern's categorization of extrinsic variables includes gatekeeper socialization, media constraints, and event context -- which includes issues such as national status, political and geographical proximity, and cultural affinity.

Ahern's analysis looked at the seminal works by Galtung and Ruge, Ostgaard, and Hester, but predates more recent studies by Shoemaker, Chang, and others.[19] Nonetheless, it would be applicable to those later studies and would begin to suggest that there may be an additional distinction which will have to be made between newsworthiness and news flow research. The research by Shoemaker and her associates -- particularly the exploration of the "deviant" characteristics of individual events which make them salient to news audiences -- adds an additional dimension to the research which is distinct even from the works which look at inherent characteristics of coverage but do not explain the mechanisms of salience.

Hester's propositions for predicting news flow were chosen as the basis of this research for several reasons.[20] First, they are much more clearly articulated and more simply stated than many of the alternatives. Additionally, his factors are more nearly extrinsic -- power relations, economic connections, cultural ties -- than those of others and thus lend themselves to the use of extra media data. Those factors he cites which are intrinsic -- such as event magnitude or unexpectedness -- by their very nature should not vary across the sample.

In response to a common flaw in early news flow research -- a sole focus on coverage characteristics which are dependent variables -- Rosengren suggested the use of both intra- and extra-media data, a suggestion that has been implemented with greater and lesser success by a number of subsequent studies.[21] The danger with the use of solely intra-media data -- comparing information from one medium with information compiled from other media -- is its inherent tautology. The use of extra-media data improves the study's concurrent validity, as long as the extra-media data are not from indexes of events which were themselves compiled from newspaper coverage.[22] The danger of extra-media data lies with the construct validity of the measures that are chosen.

Analyzing data from the American component of the UNESCO study, Ahern found that, among extrinsic variables, GNP, trade, and political relations exerted the most powerful influence on coverage. Trade was second in importance after GNP, followed closely by political relations. Together the three variables accounted for 59 percent of the variance in foreign coverage.[23]

Rosengren and Rikardsson found a relationship between trade and foreign news coverage in their study of Mideast news in Swedish press.[24] However, in an analysis of data dealing with American newspapers, Lacy, Chang and Lau found no relationship between trade and coverage.[25] Some difference in findings might be expected, however, as the result of the way in which the trade variable was operationalized. The Swedish study looked at trade figures, while the American study used coastal location as a proxy for trade.[26]

Many studies assume the validity of cultural affinity as a predictor of news coverage, but few test it and those that do get mixed results. One study of Canadian papers looked at cultural affinity and language, comparing international news content in French and English papers.[27] The study found that newspapers "displayed remarkable cultural affinities toward their readers' respective cultural homelands."[28] The difficulty with such studies is that they are not easily replicable when applied to other countries which do not have bi-lingual or multi-lingual press.

Lacy, Chang and Lau found that the percentage of foreign born population in a city "had no relationship to foreign news coverage," suggesting that foreign language papers fill that need instead of large dailies.[29] The research did not compare levels of coverage of different countries with foreign-born population figures, but simply compared aggregates of total foreign-born with total foreign coverage levels.[30]

A study looking at six nations' coverage of the Chinese student demonstrations of 1989 expected to find that cultural affinity would alter the character rather than the volume of coverage, but did not find support for the premise that cultural affinity would result in positive news coverage. A study of international news coverage in five American dailies in 1986 found that news of culturally distant countries needed more intrinsic news value to make it into the American papers.[31]

Geography, the physical distance between countries, is a factor in television coverage, but not as important an issue in analyzing newspaper coverage.[32] Placed in context, this might well be explained by the economic and logistical differences in the way in which television and newspaper operations cover international news. Television tends to locate fewer news bureaus abroad and shuttle its teams to and from news hot spots on several continents, while newspapers and wire services locate one or more bureaus on a continent and shuttle correspondents to and from countries in that region.[33]

Research suggests that international news may tend toward conflict and violence, though findings suggest that there may be differences between the violence components of different types of international news stories. Lacy, Chang and Lau found that the level of conflict in coverage of international stories was related to the paper's level of dependence upon wire stories.[34] This finding is easily explainable with reference to the different roles played by wire and staff correspondents.[35] It also makes sense when it is taken into account that the international news stories carried on the wires tend as a rule to be harder news than domestic stories.[36]

A 1991 study of international content in American papers in 1986, which controlled for a number of intrinsic variables including violence, did not find that conflict explained more variance than other variables. In fact it found that the contribution of conflict was not significant.[37]

How international news stories are identified, and therefore selected or not selected for study, varies greatly. Some studies, for instance, define international news as only those stories which originate outside the country or run under an international dateline.[38] Others look at only non-domestic stories but distinguish between foreign and international stories -- the latter being those stories which actively involve the home country.[39] While it is important to make the distinction between stories that involve relations between the home country and those that do not, the dichotomy is too simple for a study that seeks to identify characteristics of international news coverage at a regional or local level.

Hester's 1971 piece looking at news from developed and developing countries included in its sample anything with a foreign dateline as well as stories on foreign topics and news about international agencies. As the findings were reported, however, the stories which focused on the United States as an actor did not record the other country involved.[40]

The multi-national UNESCO study classified pertinent stories into three categories, which were then aggregated and reported in that form. Their original categories included foreign news abroad, home news abroad, and foreign news at home.[41] At the extreme, Larson and Hardy classified as international news any story that mentioned the name of another country,[42] and another research team excluded anything that even mentioned the home country.[43] Shoemaker and her research associates, for instance, chose only news stories about international events and ruled out anything which mentioned the United States.[44]

The simplest approach was that adopted by Yu for his 1950s study of Chinese news in four Chicago papers. He found it necessary to look both at stories with international datelines and those about international topics that originated in the United States.[45] His methodology also noted whether the focus of the story was centered on the home country or not. The result was distinctly different play for the two story types -- the stories with a United States focus did better.[46]

The possibility of a difference in news play by category is not surprising to one familiar with the newsroom at work. Such familiarity would suggest that an additional distinction might be made which would separate out international stories with a national focus or a local-regional one. If economic and cultural factors do affect international news content, those effects might well show up in the form of "domesticated" stories. Studies looking only at foreign reporting may legitimately overlook international news running under a domestic byline, but studies of international news content that omit them miss the stories on international affairs that come out of places like Washington and New York -- from government, international and private sector sources. They also miss the newspaper editor's favorite -- "localized" stories. Thus, this study s' ply went one step further, identifying an additional category of domesticated news.

Research confirms that a nation's eliteness and political relations with the United States are important factors in explaining its presence in the American media's coverage of international news.[47] Because extrinsic variables such as eliteness, political relations and gatekeeper socialization would be the same for each state covered by the papers, similarities are to be expected in the treatment of international news subjects across the sample. Economic and cultural ties, however, could be expected to vary from state to state.

Findings from a nation-wide survey of newspaper editors suggest that newspaper editors across the country report a similar pattern of criteria for foreign news selection.[48] Those criteria include recognition of the importance of U.S. involvement in a story.[49]

The newspapers dealt with by this study fall at the first level of the original umbrella model of newspaper competition -- large metropolitan daily papers with regional coverage.[50] As Lacy suggests, however, they fall in the second level when the model is adapted t' include national circulation papers such as the New York Times and USA Today.[51] Rosse suggests that content interests shift newspaper readers among the layers of the umbrella model.[52] This study is based on the assumption -- confirmed in conversations with the publishers -- that the news executives of these papers position themselves in their markets and differentiate their products by providing an adequate offering of international news not available in smaller papers.[53] Thus, audience members with an interest in international news would be more likely to look at papers at this level than they would at papers below them.

Several of these papers have one or two of their own correspondents, but for the most part rely on outside wire or chain sources for their international coverage.[54] Unlike the small papers included in other studies,[55] these papers are not expected to rely on a single wire source for news. They are big enough to have the resources to draw on a number of wire and supplemental news services for international news content. Certainly, the executives of the newspapers consider provision of international news as one of the characteristics that distinguishes their papers from others in their markets -- not only because they are best positioned to do so, but also because their readers seek it.[56]

Dating from Stempel's 1952 findings, researchers dealing with newspaper content have had access to methodological grounds for unbiased content samples[57] -- constructed-week selection of an efficiently sized sample. Following up on Stempel's findings in 1992, Riffe, Aust and Lacy confirmed the importance of constructed-week sampling where generalizability is the goal of the research.[58] Convenience sampling of consecutive days of coverage was not found to be representative of longer periods of time. Additionally, the 1992 study found that one constructed week of coverage was as efficient as a sample of four constructed weeks. Extending those findings, the researchers lent support to Stempel's conclusion and suggested that two constructed weeks would allow reliable estimate of a year's coverage.[59]

The research set out to address three broad questions: What is the character of international news content in the mid-sized dominant market American newspaper? Does the character of the international news content in those papers vary from region to region? Do international news flow theories explain such differences, if they exist?

Thus, the research set out to address four research questions:

1) What is the nature of the international news content in mid-sized dominant market newspapers?

2) Are there distinct categories of domesticated international news, which receive different types of treatment?

3) Do a region's international economic and cultural connections influence the character of international news content in the newspaper which serves that area?

METHOD

The study's dual research purpose was reflected its design, which heeded Rosengren's call for collection of both intra-media and extra-media data.[60] First, the study collected intra-media data to describe international news content available to readers of mid-sized dominant market newspapers. Second, it compared that intra-media data with extra-media variables to explore what if any regional differences there were in international news content in the U.S. newspapers. The sample was defined as mid-sized dominant market newspapers[61] in pairs of adjoining states: Alabama and Georgia; Iowa and Nebraska; and, Washington and Oregon. The papers chosen were: the Birmingham News, the Atlanta Constitution, the Des Moines Register, the Omaha World-Herald, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, and the Portland Oregonian.

The study looked at coverage for 1988 because it was the latest complete year for which newspaper and government statistics were available when the study began. The content analysis focused on 14 issues of each of the six newspapers -- the newspapers selected for two randomly-selected constructed weeks.[62] The unit of analysis was defined as any story -- with an international dateline, domestic dateline, or in some cases, no dateline -- that dealt with events or issues in another country. All stories in each paper were reviewed and all stories that dealt with another country were selected. In all, 1,850 stories were identified by the sample.

A coding instrument was developed using coding categories tested by previous research and compatible with those used by much of the news flow research. The coding instrument was subjected to pretesting by three independent coders. Next, the primary coder, one of the initial independent coders, and a replacement coder tested the final instrument.[63] At the completion of the coding process, 30 stories were randomly recoded by the primary coder. The overall reliability coefficient for the recoding of 13 categories was 92.4 percent.[64] Reliability tests were also done for the individual coding categories using Scott's pi and coefficients of reliability. The strongest reliability figures were those for story origin, story source and story type. The categories with weaker reliability were prominence and geographic focus.[65]

While a number of studies point out the need for use of extra-media data, fewer have actually developed and tested them. Thus, the component of the study dealing with extra-media data is far more exploratory than that which measured the intra-media data. Complicating the issue is the need for uniform data for each of the states or standard metropolitan areas at issue in the study. An exhaustive review of federal and state documents available through a government depository collection suggested that export figures should be available for individual states broken down by country. The information was eventually obtained directly from the Foreign Trade Division of the Bureau of the Census. That information took the form of the dollar value of merchandise each state exported for 1988 in aggregate and broken down by country of destination. The same information was obtained for the top ten countries for U.S. exports. The listings for the country as a whole and for each state were then arranged in descending order by volume.

The most logical cultural indicator available was the U.S. census figures of foreign-born residents of each metropolitan statistical area. As with the economic figures, the overall immigrant population for the area was noted and the percentage of the total for each recognizable group of immigrants was recorded.

Cross-tabulation tables allowed the use of the Chi-square statistic to analyze the relationships of the variables -- addressing whether differences in coverage could be explained by chance. The lowest acceptable significance level for such tests was set at the $p < .05$ level before a relationship was accepted.[66] In at least one case, however, the lack of significance also became as meaningful.[67]

The second research question sought to determine whether there were distinct categories of domesticated international news which receive different types of treatment in the study's six newspapers. In essence, it sought to identify the nature of the papers' coverage and identify if there were differences in how different type of coverage was presented. Again, the use of cross-tabulation tables allowed the use of chi-square statistics.

The third question addressed whether the character of the international news coverage varied from region to region across the study, and whether such variation could be explained by differing regional international economic and cultural connections. For comparison purposes, ranked lists of coverage, export and immigration figures are appended to the study. Research results themselves suggested that complicated statistics were unnecessary. T-tests, correlations, frequencies, means, cross tabulations, and proportions offered the tools necessary to produce an analysis of the results.

FINDINGS

This section reviews the research findings as they address the study's specific research questions outlined at the end of the literature review.

1) What is the nature of the international news content in mid-sized dominant market newspapers?

The obvious conclusion from the study's findings is that the newspapers' coverage in 1988 fit many of the traditional stereotypes. It was heavily political and crisis-oriented (see table 2). The countries and regions which got significant amounts of coverage -- the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and Israel and the Mideast -- got coverage across topic categories. Countries and regions which got little coverage tended to get only coverage in the most common categories -- war and defense, diplomacy, domestic politics, and crime. The study findings do suggest, however, that the stereotype of international news as necessarily violent was not borne out for these papers (see table 3).

Additionally, while all of the papers relied heavily on wire copy from the Associated Press, the total area of coverage from three other sources -- the New York Times News Service, the Los Angeles Times-Washington Post Service, and the papers' own staff -- was greater than that from AP and only a bit less than the copy from AP and the mixed wire sources combined (see table 4). It is noteworthy that by 1988 copy from United Press International had all but disappeared from their pages.

It is also noteworthy that the papers followed the traditional habit of relegating many international stories to short news briefs; those brief stories were more likely to deal with the coups, earthquakes, and crimes than were the longer stories. The longer stories were the stories from the supplemental services and the newspaper and chain sources (see table 5), and they were generally less violent (see table 4).

The content coding process itself highlighted the fact that in several instances most or all of the six papers ran the same short stories in the briefs -- notably, one about a crash in Turkey and another about an accident in a stadium in Nepal -- suggesting that the stories came across the wire only in an abbreviated form and no additional information was available to the editors.

If anything can be concluded from the individual newspapers' handling of the news, it is that each paper has a decidedly idiosyncratic way of handling the news, which strongly suggests the hands of individual news executives, whether editors or publishers. Certainly comparisons of the coverage by the two Newhouse papers -- the Birmingham News and the Oregonian -- did not suggest that chain ownership was in any way a factor in international news usage. Oregon gave a great deal of coverage to issues and countries across the board, while the Birmingham News's coverage was noticeably different -- concentrating on news of diplomacy, crime, and accidents. Notably, the News carried more news briefs about royalty than the other papers.

Additionally, though the two papers with the largest circulations gave the most space to coverage, large circulation was no guarantee of coverage. The News and World-Herald both gave much more coverage to international news than the Register even though their circulation figures were lower.

2) Are there distinct categories of domesticated international news, which receive different types of treatment?

The study findings do suggest that there are distinct categories of international news coverage, and that the stories with the "domesticated" angles got quantitatively better coverage than the straight international stories (see table 6). Cross tabulations analyzing the angle of the story by type suggest a significant correlation between the two. Stories with a local angle were more likely to be feature stories or analyses -- stories more likely to provide readers with depth and insight beyond facts (see table 7). The significance levels of the chi-square statistics generated from the cross-tabulation analysis support the conclusions that the relationship between the variables is not due to chance and that there is a correlation between story type and story angle.

The finding that the average mean length of the stories increases when it is more domesticated suggests that when editors and reporters find a "local" angle they allocate space to cover the story (see table 6). That is an important finding if one accepts the assumption that longer stories are more useful to readers than short briefs.

Nearly 36 percent of the international stories identified in sample fell into the domesticated news categories (see table 7). And, more striking, those stories accounted for 45.9 percent of space given to all of the international news in the study -- 38.1 percent for domesticated national news and 7.7 percent for domesticated local news (see table 8). Those findings are even more telling when one considers the variation in topic focus by angle, since the local angle stories focus to a large extent on international economics and cultural issues, veering away from the standard topics such as politics, diplomacy and crime.

These findings are important, especially since many studies of international news coverage in American media deliberately select only those stories that carry international datelines and exclude stories that carry any mention of U.S. interests. Additionally, the domesticated stories get better play -- better placement, bigger headlines, and more art work, a finding that should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the operation of a newspaper newsroom. It is standard practice for editors to give better play to stories written by their own staff, it is that staff which brings the story home (see table 8).

Thus, the study findings strongly suggest that studies which identify as international news only those stories that run with an international dateline deliberately exclude an important component of the international news product available to American newspapers audiences. That is a serious omission if one argues that editors give better play to the stories they feel will be of the most interest to their readers. Certainly the bulk of the international copy in the newspapers may be international wire stories, with little or no explicit or immediate impact for the papers' readers, but less space is allocated to that type of copy than to stories with domesticated angles.

3) Do a region's international economic and cultural connections influence the character of international news content in the newspaper which serves that area?

If export relationships and the breakdown of the states' immigrant populations are accepted as suitable initial attempts to operationalize the newspaper markets' economic and cultural ties with other nations, then the findings suggest that coverage pays little heed to these relationships. Simply glancing at the various lists of coverage levels, export figures and immigration suggests that there is no connection between the variables (see appendices 1, 2, and 3). And that conclusion is borne out by the results of Pearson Product Moment Correlations comparing coverage of the 15 most prominent countries on all three lists (see table 9).[68]

While the results of the Pearson correlations suggested some positive and some negative relationships between the coverage levels and the extra media variables, only the negative correlation between the Omaha World-Herald's coverage and Nebraska exports is even worth noting.

The correlation coefficients are so small for all of the relationships, that when they are squared to arrive at coefficients of determination, all of the relationships are seen to be negligible at best. The shared variation ranges from 15 percent reported for the negative relationship between the World-Herald's coverage and Nebraska's export figures to no shared variance between the Seattle Post-Intelligencer's coverage and that city's foreign-born population statistics.[69] In short, even where tenuous relationships were found between two variables, little variance is shared by the two sets of data.

Put in context of the larger question -- whether export relationships or immigrant communities influence the newspapers' coverage, the findings suggest that there is no relationship between the extra media variables and international news coverage patterns.

Since these findings compared only the coverage, export and immigration figures only for the 15 countries which appeared most regularly on any of the three lists, one can only suggest were it possible to run correlations comparing all of the countries the results would suggest even weaker relationships or much more negative correlations. When the sample correlations on the combined figures for the six papers are considered, the relationships are positive but the shared variance was again minute.

The relationships were tested with t-tests, which also failed to support the premise that economic and cultural connections with other countries are related to the papers' coverage of those countries (see table 10). The purpose of the t-tests was to assess the difference between the levels of coverage given to countries with high and low trade relationships, and coverage given to countries with high and low representation in the cities' foreign-born population.[70]

T-tests are used to test whether differences between two groups' scores on a common characteristic are significant enough to suggest that the two groups are in reality different or appear different only as the result of chance occurrence. For the present study, coverage was measured by story count for the high and low country groups, total square inches measures for coverage of high and low country groups, and finally the percentage of the papers' newshole given to coverage of the high and low country groups.[71] To be considered significant, the score for the t-test needed to be greater than a standardized critical minimum score[72] at a probability level of $p < .05$. None of the analyses could meet that test.

The t-test that came closest to finding a difference analyzed the relationships between coverage and trade involvement. It should be noted, however, that the t-test was run using information about countries with which the states had trade relationships. It does not recognize the countries with high coverage levels that often received minute or non-existent exports from the states in the sample -- countries such as South Africa, Israel, and Nicaragua (see appendix 2). As a result, an additional t-test looked at the differences in trade and population percentages between countries receiving high and low levels of coverage.

The lack of coverage sensitivity to export relationships figures occurs in spite of the striking similarities across the six states in their prominent export relationships with Canada and Japan (see appendix 2). Certainly, the amount of coverage given to Japan -- 66 stories -- and Canada -- 28 stories -- does not suggest that the editors are paying particular attention to either. Neither do the overall findings bear a relationship to the country's export figures -- also dominated by trade with Canada and Japan.

Rather, all six papers concentrated their coverage on Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the Mideast, Western Europe, Central American and East Asia, in that order (see table 11). While Great Britain, Japan and South Korea do appear among the top export destinations, the relative weights of the coverage they received bears no resemblance to the volume of coverage given the Soviet Union or Israel, which are not notable export destinations (see appendix 2). The distribution of coverage would suggest for these newspapers -- individually and as a group -- that national-level politics and focus on conflict were probably the overriding factors in the editors' coverage allocation decisions.

These findings are in keeping with the results of Chang's survey of American newspaper editors, which suggested that their primary concerns centered on coverage of U.S. interests and involvements abroad and threats to world peace.[73] The results of the survey also suggested that economic factors -- operationalized as U.S. trade relations and a country's level of economic development -- were of little importance in the editors' news selection decisions.[74]

This is not the first study of American newspaper content to suggest that economic and cultural factors may not be strong predictors of coverage patterns,[75] but as the literature review noted, other studies done in Canada and Scandinavia have suggested such links.[76] Alternative explanations suggest themselves -- one methodological and the other theoretical. The methodological explanation is that adequate operationalization of the extrinsic variables in the American context has yet to be found, though under the circumstances it is hard to imagine how else that operationalization might be done.

The theoretical explanation lies in the nature of the geopolitical standings of the countries whose media systems were studied by the various research projects, and with dependency theories of international communication patterns.[77] Canada and the Scandinavian countries -- the subjects of the studies which found economic and cultural influences on coverage[78] -- would fall on the Northern end of the North-South continuum generally adopted to chart global information dependencies. However, northern or not, they have historically been more dependent on global powers and more interdependent with other countries than the United States.

While the reality of U.S. independence from the rest of the world may be fading, one might suggest that the editors of the newspapers in this sample either do not perceive that fact or do not think that their readers do. As a result then, at least in 1988, they focused not on stories about their neighbors and trading partners, but rather on news of crisis and turmoil in remote parts of the world.

The notion that the U.S. media is not sensitive to the global interdependence is hardly novel. But it suggests the need to reevaluate the theoretical propositions that underlay this research. In particular, the ramifications of the findings suggest that Hester's propositions are either normative or apply only to what he identified as "low-order" nations. Hester hypothesized that information flow would be greater from "high-order" nations to "low-order" nations than it would be in the other direction. While he noted directional differences in flow, but he also suggested that the news entering the "high-order" nations would be predictable based on their political, economic, and cultural connections abroad. This study's findings suggest that to the extent those propositions hold, it may be for nations positioned differently in the global system than the United States.[79]

Taken with similar results from other research,[80] the findings of this study suggest that Hester's propositions need to be rethought and, at the very least, condition statements are needed to bolster their predictive ability. Perhaps analysis of content following the breakup of the Eastern Bloc will offer a chance to sort out which, if any, of the other factors cited by both Hester and Galtung and Ruge might explain the papers' coverage patterns.[81] When only Great Britain of all the Group of Seven nations received more than 5 percent of the coverage in the sample, it becomes difficult to suggest that the wealth of nations, or their eliteness, played much of a role in news coverage by the sample papers. Among Hester's extrinsic variables, that leaves issues of power, but the alternative is that there may be other more powerful predictors.

The findings also offer no support for the premise that there are regional similarities in the states' export and immigration profiles that will result in noticeable regional coverage differences. While the figures do suggest that there are some regional similarities in export and immigration -- particularly in export figures -- the lack of support for any coverage sensitivity to economic and immigration figures makes it impossible to suggest that those regional characteristics would have any impact on coverage. The coverage figures for the individual states are more similar across the six states than they are between the pairs of states (see appendix 3).

While this alone does not invalidate Nordenstreng's original suggestion that the nation state may not be the optimal level at which to look at news flow patterns,[82] the study's other findings do suggest that, at least in the American context. For these newspapers, national-level variables such as geopolitical relationships and U.S. concerns in conflicts abroad are the dominant factors influencing news flow. If, as this study suggests, theoretical propositions concerning news flows are system-specific, then the possibility exists that in other geopolitical settings regional factors may come into play. The fact that Canadian studies have found cultural influences on coverage that this study and at least one other do not[83] suggests that the premise should be tested on a larger regional level for North America.

CONCLUSION

The goal of the study was to analyze and describe international news content in six mid-sized, dominant market American newspapers in 1988. In the process, it set out to test theoretical propositions about the influence of economic and cultural variables on news flow patterns evident in those papers.

The descriptive portion of the study offers some valuable insights into the six papers' coverage allocations. The study results supported theoretical propositions it did not set out to test. It suggests that intrinsic factors may be far more important than extrinsic ones and that among the extrinsic factors the most powerful would appear to be U.S. geopolitical interests abroad. But the lack of support for those propositions it tested -- that economic and cultural ties are important factors in news selection -- are also valuable. Taken together they suggest the need to reevaluate commonly held assumptions governing news flow research and offer direction for future research.

The obvious conclusion from the study's descriptive findings is that the newspapers' coverage in 1988 fit many of the traditional stereotypes of American international news coverage, though it defied others. It was heavily political and crisis-oriented. The Eastern Bloc and the Mideast received the most notable attention. Coverage focused on traditional categories like war and defense, diplomacy, domestic politics, and crime. Contrary to earlier studies, however, the bulk of the coverage did not focus on violence. At the paper level, coverage was idiosyncratic. While one paper ran frequent stories about royalty, another avoided the subject altogether. While one paper emphasized stories about natural disaster, another de-emphasized it.

Countries and regions which got significant amounts of coverage got coverage across topic categories. Countries and regions which got little coverage tended to get only coverage in the most common categories. Additionally, while all six papers relied heavily on wire copy from the Associated Press, the total area of coverage from three other sources -- the New York Times News Service, the Los Angeles Times-Washington Post Service, and the papers' own staff -- was greater than that from AP. It is noteworthy that by 1988 copy from United Press International had all but disappeared from their pages.

The study found little evidence to suggest that economic and cultural ties were important factors in governing how these six papers covered international news. The findings do not rule out the presence of such factors in the editors' decision-making process. In fact, the findings certainly do suggest that editors take advantage of the opportunity to give better play to stories with a local angle. Additionally, anecdotal evidence from the content analysis suggests that there certainly were stories prompted by local ties abroad. Overwhelmingly, however, the content analysis suggests that those stories are rare. Instead, the distribution of coverage in the sample suggests that national-level politics and focus on conflict were probably the overriding factors in the editors' coverage allocation decisions.

Hester's theoretical propositions[84] may be more of a normative construct than a predictive one, at least as they are applied to these six American papers. For while Hester placed political interests at the top of the hierarchy of factors governing information flow, economic and cultural ties had little impact on the results. Taken with similar results from other research,[85] the findings of this study suggest that Hester's propositions need to be rethought and, at the very least, condition statements are needed to bolster their predictive ability.

The findings do not suggest regional differentiation in U.S. international news coverage at less than national level. While this alone does not invalidate Nordenstreng's suggestion that the nation state may not be the optimal level at which to look at news flow patterns,[86] the study's other findings do suggest that, at least in the American context. For these newspapers, national-level variables such as geopolitical relationships and U.S. concerns in conflicts abroad are the dominant factors influencing news flow. If, however, as this study suggests, theoretical propositions concerning news flows are system-specific, then the possibility exists that in other geopolitical settings regional factors may come into play. The fact that Canadian studies have found cultural influences on coverage that this study and at least one other do not find[87] suggests that the premise need not be tested on a larger regional level for North America.

Further analysis of the findings in regard to U.S. interests and involvements in 1988 would be warranted, particularly to the extent that they appear to be in keeping with the results of Chang's survey of American newspaper editors. Those editors indicated that their primary concerns centered on coverage of U.S. interests and involvements abroad, threats to world peace, and perceived reader interests.[88]

An extension of the research design might compare the characteristics of coverage common to these papers with coverage offered by the elite newspapers, particularly the New York Times. The implications of the descriptive portion of this study suggest that while these papers rely on Times coverage to supplement their own, a comparison of two types of content might find notable differences in approach to international content choices. Were that the case, the commonly held view that the Times is a guiding force in American news coverage might not be supported with regard to non-elite newspapers.

While economic and cultural variables appeared to have little if any impact on coverage choices made by editors at the six newspapers included in the sample, geopolitical factors dominated those decisions. By their very nature, those findings take on additional significance when they are placed in context of the geopolitical events that have occurred since 1988.

In choosing 1988 for the sample year, the study inadvertently selected the last year of the old bi-polar world order. All of the earlier news flow studies had been conducted within that bi-polar context. That it should then have found that U.S. geopolitical concerns were seemingly the overriding force behind the newspaper editors' coverage decisions suggests that there is now a need for new studies that will assess how international news coverage has been changed by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc. The results raise a question about what effect shifting power structures will have on coverage. What the results of such projects may be for papers' international news content only future studies can answer, but this study provide a benchmark against which those changes can be assessed.

In a more practical vein, while the present study may not have found ties between coverage and economic and cultural ties, that does not necessarily diminish their power as normative constructs. It might well be suggested that the publishers of the sample papers and their editors have divergent views of the news product they offer to their readers. The six newspapers' traditional definitions of international news fail to reflect the publishers' own recognition of a demand among their readers for international news related to their regional interests. Either there is a communication failure within the papers themselves, or perhaps sometime after 1988 the papers revolutionized their international content.

It is distinctly possible that current studies might find that the character of the papers' coverage has changed. Nineteen eighty-eight was the last profitable year before the impact of the national recession hit the newspaper industry.[89] The weak economy forced the industry to economize and rethink its position in the media marketplace. How those changes will tell on coverage must also be an matter of interest. Since foreign coverage has traditionally been cut during tight periods, the question arises how newspapers will reconcile their need to cut costs with the growing recognition of the need to provide relevant news to ethnically diverse communities with growing business interests abroad.[90]

The study's failure to find regional differentiation in how these newspapers covered international news indicates that future studies would benefit from a population sampling method that would provide an element of generalizability beyond the samples themselves. Stratification or systematic sampling by circulation, ownership, or market size might begin to offer broader insights into how the large, but non-elite, newspapers cover international news.

The telling failure of economic and cultural variables to explain coverage pattern argues for more research directed toward the study of the intrinsic variables -- particularly those that relate to the newsworthiness elements of the events covered by the individual international stories themselves. While Gans, Shoemaker and others have begun efforts in that direction, there is scope for more, particularly replication studies.[91]

In itself, the idiosyncratic nature of the papers' coverage suggests the merit of continued efforts to explore the role the editors themselves play in the news selection process. It is easier to study the content of the papers than to undertake communicator studies. A wealth of research exists in this area dealing with news in general, dating back to early studies like Breed's look at newsroom functioning,[92] but more effort needs to be taken to apply those findings to international news research. Particularly, researchers doing content studies need to pay more particular attention to the influence of the different levels of the international news gathering processes on content. Insight in that direction comes from two directions -- Rosenblum's seminal work which looks specifically at foreign correspondents working for American media and studies like that by Shoemaker and Reese, which looks at the influences of process on media news content generally at a number of levels.[93]

The finding that frequently covered countries got coverage across topic categories underlines Rosenblum's explanations of how the location of news bureaus and allocation of news resources affects correspondent output.[94] While scholars have noted the connection,[95] efforts could be made to explore the forces that shape international news staffing and resource allocation decisions by the executives of newspapers, news services and newspaper chains.

In a practical vein, this research suggests the very real need for changes in how newspaper content research is approached, particularly with regard to how the prominence of news play is assessed. Once standard measures for evaluating news play no longer hold as new technologies revolutionize newspaper graphics. An index which takes into account only story copy, headline size, placement and use of art, is inadequate to deal with informational graphics which may supplement or even supplant traditional stories.

NOTES

1. David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, "Foreign News Coverage in Two U.S. Wires Services," Journal of Communication 31 (Spring 1981): 55-63; Weaver and Wilhoit, "Foreign News Coverage in Two U.S. Wires Services: An Update," Journal of Communication 33 (Spring 1983): 132-148; Pamela Shoemaker, Tsan-Kuo Chang, and Nancy Brendlinger, "Deviance as a Predictor of Newsworthiness: Coverage of International Events in the U.S. Media," in Communication Yearbook 10, ed. Margaret L. McLaughlin, 348-365 (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1987); Tsan-Kuo Chang, Pamela Shoemaker and Nancy Brendlinger. "Determinants of International News Coverage in the U.S. Media," Communication Research 14 (1987): 396-414.

2. All six papers appear on the Editor and Publisher lists of the 100 largest newspapers in the United States, but are mid-sized when compared to the large national circulation papers.

3. While the origin of the rubric "domesticated" international news is unclear, the author first heard it used by during an address by CNN Special Project Producer Alec Miran to the International Communication Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication at its annual meeting in Minneapolis in August, 1990.

4. Al Hester, "Theoretical Considerations in Predicting Volume and Direction of International Information Flow," Gazette 19 (1973): 239-247.

5. Kaarle Nordenstreng and Tapio Varis, "The Nonhomogeneity of the National State and the International Flow of Communication," in Communications Technology and Social Policy, ed. George Gerbner, Larry P. Gross and William H. Melody (York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973), 393.

6. Hester, "Theoretical Considerations," 240-241.

7. Mort Rosenblum, Coups and Earthquakes: Reporting the World to America (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), 8-9.

8. Christine Ogan and Bonnie J. Brownlee, From Parochialism to Globalism: International Perspectives on Journalism Education. Bloomington, Ind.: International Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, 1986.

9. Jay Smith, publisher of Atlanta Constitution, phone interview by author, May 26, 1992; Fred Stickel, publisher, Portland Oregonian, phone interview by author, May 26, 1992; Charles C. Edwards, publisher, Des Moines Register. Phone interview by author, May 28, 1992; Mike Finney, executive editor, Omaha World Herald, phone interview by author, May 28, 1992.

10. Annabelle Sreverny-Mohammadi with Kaarle Nordenstreng, Robert Stevenson and Frank Ugboajah, eds. Foreign News in the Media: International Reporting in 29 Countries, (Paris: UNESCO, 1981).

11. Weaver and Wilhoit, "Foreign News Coverage in Two U.S. Wires Services,"; Weaver and Wilhoit, "Foreign News Coverage in Two U.S. Wires Services: An Update,"; Shoemaker, Chang, and Brendlinger, "Deviance as a Predictor of Newsworthiness"; Chang, Shoemaker and Brendlinger, "Determinants of International News,".

12. Ralph D. Casey and Thomas H. Copeland Jr, "Use of Foreign News By 19 Minnesota Dailies," Journalism Quarterly 35 (1958): 87-89; Jim A. Hart, "The Flow of International News Into Ohio," Journalism Quarterly 38 (Autumn 1961): 541-543; Stephen Lacy, Tsan-Kuo Chang and Tuen-Yu Lau, "The Impact of Allocation Decisions and Market Factors on Foreign News Coverage," Newspaper Research Journal 10 (Spring 1989): 23-32.

13. Al Hester, "Five Years of Foreign News on U.S. Television Evening Newscasts," Gazette 24 (1978): 86-95; James Larson and Andy Hardy, "International Affairs Coverage on Network Television News: A Study of News Flow," Gazette 23 (1977): 241-256; Daniel Riffe and Donald Shaw, "Rivals in Consonance: The Case of Television Network News," paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Memphis, 1985.

14. Lacy, Chang and Lau, "The Impact of Allocation Decisions."

15. Philip Gaunt, Choosing the News: The Profit Factor in News Selection, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990).

16. Ahern, "Determinants of Foreign Coverage in U.S. Newspapers," in Foreign News and the New World Information Order, ed. Robert L. Stevenson and Donald Lewis Shaw. (Ames: The Iowa State University Press, 1984): 220-223

17. Chang, Shoemaker and Brendlinger, "Determinants of International News Coverage," 400.

18. An alternative approach to news flow research could be developed which would distinguish between the objectifiable facts of events, their portrayal and the coverage they receive in different media systems, but it would entail semantic analysis and research methodologies outside the purview of the study at hand.

19. Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge. "The Structure of Foreign News," Journal of Peace Research 1 (1965): 64-91; Oystein Sande, "The Perception of Foreign News," Journal of Peace Research 8 (1971): 221-237; Hester, "Theoretical Considerations;" Shoemaker, Chang, and Brendlinger, "Deviance as a Predictor;" Pamela Shoemaker, Nancy Brendlinger, Lucig H. Danielian, and Tsan-Kuo Chang, "Testing a Theoretical Model of Newsworthiness: Coverage of International Events in the U.S. Media," paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Montreal, 1987; Chang, Shoemaker and Brendlinger, "Determinants of International News."

20. Hester, "Theoretical Considerations."

21. Karl Rosengren, "International News: Intra and Extra Media Data," Acta Sociologica 13 (1970): 96-109; Karl Rosengren, "International News: Methods, Data and Theory," Journal of Peace Research 9 (1974): 145-156; Lacy, Chang and Lau, "Impact of Allocation Decisions and Market Factors on Foreign News Coverage," Newspaper Research Journal 10 (Spring 1989): 23-32; Chang, Shoemaker and Brendlinger, "Determinants of International News Coverage."

22. Stephen J. Andriole and Gerald W. Hopple, "The Rise and Fall of Event Data: From Basic Research to Applied Use in the U.S. Department of Defence," International Interactions 10 (1984): 293-4.

23. Ahern, "Determinants," 231.

24. Karl E. Rosengren and Gunnel Rikardsson, "Middle East News in Sweden," Gazette 20 (1974): 99-116.

25. Lacy, Chang and Lau, "Impact of Allocation Decisions," 28.

26. Ibid.

27. Herbert G. Kariel and Lynn A. Rosenvall, "Cultural Affinity Displayed in Canadian Daily Newspapers," Journalism Quarterly 60 (1983): 431-436.

28. Ibid., 435.

29. Lacy, Chang, and Lau, "Impact of Allocation Decisions," 31.

30. Ibid., 27-28.

31. Ali N. Mohamed, "Determinants of International News Reporting in the U.S." paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Boston, 1991.

32. Kariel and Rosenvall, "Factors," 510; Chang, Shoemaker, Brendlinger, "Determinants," 411.

33. Rosenblum, Coups and Earthquakes, 136-137.

34. Lacy, Chang and Lau, "Impact of Allocation Decisions," 27.

35. Rosenblum, Coups and Earthquakes, passim.

36. John B. Adams, "A Qualitative Analysis of Domestic and Foreign News on the AP TA Wire," Gazette 10 (1964): 285-295.

37. Mohamed, "Determinants of International News."

38. Al Hester, "Five Years of Foreign News On U.S. Television Evening Newscasts," Gazette 24 (1978): 86-95; Shoemaker, Chang, and Brendlinger, "Deviance as a Predictor of Newsworthiness"; Shoemaker, Danielian, and Brendlinger, "Deviant Acts."

39. Adnar Almaney, "International and Foreign Affairs on Network Television News," Journal of Broadcasting 14 (1970): 499-509; K. Kawatake, "A Week of TV News -- A Comparative Study of TV News in Eight Countries," Studies of Broadcasting 18 (1982): 51-68.

40. Al Hester, "An Analysis of News Flow From Developed and Developing Nations," Gazette 27 (1971): 29-43.

41. Sreverny-Mohammadi with Nordenstreng, Stevenson and Ugboajah, eds. Foreign News in the Media: 14.

42. Larson and Hardy, "International Affairs Coverage," 241.

43. Shoemaker, Chang, and Brendlinger, "Deviance as a Predictor of Newsworthiness"; Chang, Shoemaker and Brendlinger, "Determinants of International News Coverage."

44. Ibid.

45. Frederick T.C. Yu, "The Treatment of China in Four Chicago Daily Newspapers." Ph.D. disseratation, University of Iowa, 1951.

46. Ibid., 215.

47. James W. Markham, "Foreign News in the United States and South American Press," Public Opinion Quarterly 25 (1961): 255, 257; Weaver and Wilhoit, "Foreign News Coverage in Two U.S. Wires Services: An Update," 139-140.

48. Tsan-Kuo Chang and Jae-Won Lee, "Factors Affecting Gatekeepers' Selection of Foreign News: A National Survey of Newspaper Editors," paper presented to the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Minneapolis, August 1990: 14-15, 17.

49. Ibid., 11.

50. Bruce M. Owen, Economics and Freedom of Expression (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Publishing, 1975): 51.

51. Stephen R. Lacy, "The Effects of Ownership and Competition of Daily Newspaper Content," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1986): 14.

52. Lacy, "The Effects of Ownership," 77, citing: James N. Rosse, "An Economist's Description of the Media Industry," Proceedings of the Symposium on Media Concentration, Vol. 1. (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Competition, Federal Trade Commission, 1978).

53. Jay Smith, publisher of Atlanta Constitution, phone interview by author, May 26, 1992; Fred Stickel, publisher, Portland Oregonian, phone interview by author, May 26, 1992.
Edwards, Charles C., publisher, Des Moines Register, phone interview by author, May 28, 1992; Mike Finney, executive editor, Omaha World Herald, phone interview by author, May 28, 1992.

54. Phone interviews with publishers.

55. Weaver and Wilhoit, "Foreign News Coverage."

56. Phone interviews with paper executives.

57. Guido Stempel, "Sample Size for Classifying Subject Matter in Dailies," Journalism Quarterly 29 (1952): 333-334.

58. Daniel Riffe, Charles F. Aust, and Stephen R. Lacy. "The Effectiveness of Random, Consecutive Day and Constructive Week Sampling in Newspaper Content Analysis," Journalism Quarterly (in press).

59. Ibid., 8.

60. Karl E. Rosengren, "International News: Intra and Extra Media Data," Acta Sociologica 13 (1970): 96-109.

61. All of the newspapers appear on the Editor & Publisher International Yearbook's list of the 100 largest daily newspapers in the country -- ranked by circulation, but are described as mid-sized since they are not ranked in the top ten.

62. Robert L. Jones and Roy E. Carter Jr. "Some Procedures for Estimating 'News Hole' in Content Analysis," Public Opinion Quarterly 23 (Fall 1959): 402-403.

63. In the second round of coding, the independent coders analyzed forty-four stories for a total of 484 coding decisions. Their coefficients of reliability with the primary coder were 94.2 percent and 91.7 percent. Where reliability equals the number of decisions on which the coders agree multiplied times two, divided by the addition of the number of coding decisions made by each coder. Ole Holsti, Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley publishing, 1969), cited in Roger D. Wimmer and Joseph Dominick, Mass Media Research: An Introduction (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1983): 183.

64. Klaus Krippendorf, Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1980): 139.

65. Scott's pi and coefficients of reliability, respectively, for each category were as follows: section type, .86 and .93; topic country, .85 and .86; prominence .74 and .8; art type .89 and .96; source .95 and .96; topic .87 and .9; violence .9 and .96; geographic focus, .7 and .86; angle, .89 and .93; story type, .92 and .96; and, story origin, .98 and .86. Agreement was complete for the categories paper number, date and story location.

66. At a probability of $p < .05$ it would be no more than five chances in 100 that the study results could have occurred by chance.

67. The cross-tabulation looking at the individual papers use of copy involving subjects that dealt with man-made violence suggested had significance levels that suggested there was no real difference in their use of such content.

68. The Pearson correlation tests the degree of correlation between variables representing two distinct characteristics of the sample. While the test does not imply causation, it does measure whether two variables are co-related -- the extent to which they vary together. The possible results of the test range from a correlation coefficient of +1.0 for a strong positive correlation to a coefficient of -1.0 for a strong negative correlation. A finding of zero suggests no relationship between the two variables. Once the correlation coefficient is arrived at, it can then be squared to arrive at the coefficient of determination, which indicates how much of the variation in the data can be explained by the relationship between the two variables.

69. Ibid.

70. For each state, a lists were developed of the fourteen countries that were the largest export relationships and the twelve countries with largest representations in the cities' foreign-born populations. Those lists were then divided in half to arrive at the high- and low-level groups.

71. Newshole is the percentage of space a paper gives to non-advertising copy. The newshole figures for this study were arrived at by multiplying the square inches of each newspaper's page by the number of pages in newspaper issues represented in the study, and finally, that figure was multiplied by the newshole percentage for 1988 provide by executives of each paper.

72. The critical value for these test was 2.571.

73. Tsan-Kuo Chang and Jae-Won Lee, "Factors Affecting Gatekeepers' Selection of Foreign News: A National Survey of Newspaper Editors." Paper presented to the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Minneapolis, August 1990.

74. Ibid., 12.

75. Stephen Lacy, Tsan-Kuo Chang and Tuen-Yu Lau, "The Impact of Allocation Decisions and Market Factors on Foreign News Coverage," Newspaper Research Journal 10 (Spring 1989): 23-32.

76. Herbert G. Kariel and Lynn A. Rosenvall, "Cultural Affinity Displayed in Canadian Daily Newspapers," Journalism Quarterly 60 (Autumn 1983): 431-436; Herbert G. Kariel and Lynn A. Rosenvall, "Factors Influencing International News Flow," Journalism Quarterly 61 (Autumn 84): 509-516, 666; Karl E. Rosengren and Gunnel Rikardsson, "Middle East News in Sweden," Gazette 20 (1974): 99-116.

77. Colin Legum and John Cornwell, A Free And Balanced Flow: Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on International Flow of News (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1978).

78. Kariel and Rosenvall, "Cultural Affinity;" Kariel and Rosenvall, "Factors Influencing International News Flow," Rosengren and Rikardsson, "Middle East News."

79. Al Hester, "Theoretical Considerations in Predicting Volume and Direction of International Information Flow," Gazette 19 (1973): 245.

80. Herbert G. Kariel and Lynn A. Rosenvall, "Cultural Affinity Displayed in Canadian Daily Newspapers," Journalism Quarterly 60 (Autumn 1983): 431-436; Herbert G. Kariel and Lynn A. Rosenvall, "Factors Influencing International News Flow," Journalism Quarterly 61 (Autumn 84): 509-516, 666; and, Lacy, Chang and Lau, "Impact of Allocation Decisions," 23-32.

81. Hester, "Theoretical Considerations;" and, Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge, "The Structure of Foreign News," Journal of Peace Research 1 (1965): 64-91.

82. Kaarle Nordenstreng and Tapio Varis, "The Nonhomogeneity of the National State and the International Flow of Communication," in Communications Technology and Social Policy, eds. George Gerbner, Larry P. Gross and William H. Melody, 393-412. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973).

83. Lacy, Change and Lau, "Impact of Allocation Decisions;" and, Chang and Lee, "Factors Affecting Gatekeepers' Selection of Foreign News."

84. Al Hester, "Theoretical Considerations in Predicting Volume and Direction of International Information Flow," Gazette 19 (1973): 239-247.

85. Herbert G. Kariel and Lynn A. Rosenvall, "Cultural Affinity Displayed in Canadian Daily Newspapers," Journalism Quarterly 60 (Autumn 1983): 431-436; Herbert G. Kariel and Lynn A. Rosenvall, "Factors Influencing International News Flow," Journalism Quarterly 61 (Autumn 84): 509-516, 666; and, Lacy, Chang and Lau, "Impact of Allocation Decisions," 23-32.

86. Kaarle Nordenstreng and Tapio Varis, "The Nonhomogeneity of the National State and the International Flow of Communication," in Communications Technology and Social Policy, eds. George Gerbner, Larry P. Gross and William H. Melody, 393-412. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973).

87. Lacy, Change and Lau, "Impact of Allocation Decisions;" and, Chang and Lee, "Factors Affecting Gatekeepers' Selection of Foreign News."

88. Tsan-Kuo Chang and Jae-Won Lee, "Factors Affecting Gatekeepers' Selection of Foreign News: A National Survey of Newspaper Editors." Paper presented to the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Minneapolis, August 1990.

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90. Corporate brochures outlining both Knight-Ridder's 25/43 Project and Gannett's News 2000, both suggest that their papers should be more sensitive both to the needs of ethnically diverse communities in their markets and to their audiences needs for information in the world beyond those markets.

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93. Mort Rosenblum, Coups and Earthquakes: Reporting the World for America (New York: Harper & Row, 1981); Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese, Mediating the Message (New York: Longman, 1991).

94. Mort Rosenblum, Coups and Earthquakes, passim.

95. John Lent, "Foreign News in the American Media," Journal of Communication 27 (1977): 46-51; William A. Hachten, World News Prism: Changing Media, Clashing Ideologies (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1987).

TABLES

TABLE 1 -- NEWSPAPERS, 1988[1]

The Birmingham News (eS):
170,327 (e); 172-807 (Ms); 206,297 (S)
Ownership: Newhouse Newspapers
News Services: Associate Press, Knight News Service, Newhouse News Service, Independent News Service

Atlanta Constitution (m-mon to fri)
Journal and Constitution (S):
284,015 (m); 517,689 (mSat); 651,828 (S)
Ownership: Cox Enterprises
News Services, Associated Press, Cox, United Press International, Dow Jones, Los Angeles Times-Washington Post, New York Times, Knight Ridder

The Des Moines Register (Ms):
209,765 (m); 353,105 (S)
Ownership: Gannett Newspapers
News Services: Associated Press, Dow Jones, Los Angeles Times-Washington Post, Knight News-Tribune Wire, New York Times

Omaha World-Herald (m; e-mon to fri; S):
121,985 (m); 97,232 (e); 210,347 (m-sat); 284,142 (S)
Ownership: Omaha World-Herald Company
News Services: Associated Press, United Press International, Los Angeles Times-Washington Post, Knight News-Tribune Wire, New York Times

The (Portland) Oregonian (all day m-friday; m-Sat; S):
310,446 (d); 305,032 (m-Sat); 413,318 (S)
Ownership: Newhouse Newspapers
News Services: Associate Press, Chicago Daily News, Los Angeles Times-Washington Post, New York Times

The Seattle Post Intelligencer (m)
The Seattle Times/Post Intelligencer (S)
203,560 (m); 178,153 (m-Sat); 503,495 (S)
Ownership: Hearst Newspapers
News Services: Associated Press, United Press International, New York Times, Hearst Newspapers, Reuters

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[1]Editor & Publisher International Yearbook 1990, gathered from the newspapers in 1989.

TABLE 2

COVERAGE (IN SQUARE INCHES), BY STORY TOPIC

Topic	Area	Mean Story Area	% of Total	Stories
Total Coverage	35,282.9	19.0	100.0	1850
War/ Defense	5,528.2	18.6	15.6	296
Diplomacy	6,365.0	22.5	18.0	282
Domestic politics	4,961.0	17.4	14.0	284
Economics1[1]	535.5	16.2	1.5	33
Economics2	2,334.2	21.0	6.6	111
Agriculture	326.8	23.3	.9	14
Crime/ Judicial	3,392.8	14.5	9.6	233
Natural disaster	1,068.0	18.1	3.0	59
Accidents	1,140.9	13.7	3.2	83
Sports	804.2	15.4	2.2	52
Recreation	2,195.3	30.0	6.2	73
Culture/ Religion	1,745.9	19.1	4.9	91
Science/ Technology	471.4	17.4	1.3	27

TABLE 2--Continued

COVERAGE (IN SQUARE INCHES), BY STORY TOPIC

Topic	Area	Mean Story Area	% of total	Stories
Education	194.0	24.2	.5	8
Natural resources	111.5	18.5	.3	6
Media coverage	484.7	26.7	1.3	18
Health/ Medicine	304.6	12.6	.8	24
Royalty	414.3	15.9	1.1	26
WW II	276.3	18.4	.7	15
Human rights	416.4	21.9	1.1	19
Other	2,211.9	23.0	6.2	96

TABLE 3

VIOLENCE OF COVERAGE, BY STORY TYPE

Count Row Pct Col Pct Tot Pct	Type Hard	Soft	Analysis	Editorial	Total
Violence No	1,123 82.8 71.4 60.7	128 9.4 94.8 6.9	80 5.9 72.7 4.3	26 1.9 78.8 1.4	1,357 73.4
Yes	449 91.1 28.6 24.3	7 1.4 5.2 .4	30 6.1 27.3 1.6	7 1.4 21.2 .4	493 26.6
Total	1,572 85.0	135 7.3	110 5.9	33 1.8	1,850 100.0

Chi Square=35.282, d.f.=3, $p < .05$

TABLE 4

SOURCE OF INTERNATIONAL STORIES, BY VIOLENCE

Count Row Pct Col Pct Total Pct	Violence No	 Yes	Row Total
AP	536 70.6 39.5 29.0	223 29.4 45.2 12.1	759 41.0
UPI	48 85.7 3.5 2.6	8 14.3 1.6 .4	56 3.0
NYT	111 83.5 8.2 6.0	22 16.5 4.5 1.2	133 7.2
LAT/WP	70 64.2 5.2 3.8	39 35.8 7.9 2.1	109 5.9
Group	37 84.1 2.7 2.0	7 15.9 1.4 .4	44 2.4
Paper Staff	171 86.4 12.6 9.2	27 13.6 5.5 1.5	198 10.7
Mixed	216 66.9 16.1 11.8	108 33.1 21.9 5.8	326 17.6
Column Total	1357 73.4	493 26.6	1850 100.0

TABLE 4--Continued

SOURCE OF INTERNATIONAL STORIES, BY VIOLENCE

Count Row Pct Col Pct Total Pct	Violence No	Yes	Row Total
Other	101 68.7 7.4 5.5	46 31.3 9.3 2.5	147 7.9
None	65 83.3 4.8 3.5	13 16.7 2.6 .7	78 4.2
Column Total	1357 73.4	493 26.6	1850 100.0

Chi Square=51.22572, d.f.=8, p < .05

TABLE 5

COVERAGE (IN SQUARE INCHES), BY STORY SOURCE

Source	Area	Mean	% of total	Stories
Total Coverage	3,5282.9	19.0	100.0	1,850
AP	11,326.7	14.9	32.1	759
UPI	784.4	14.0	2.2	56
NYT	3,193.0	24.0	9.0	133
LAT/WP	3,228.6	29.6	9.1	109
Group	1,411.2	32.0	3.9	44
Paper	6,825.0	34.4	19.3	198
Mixed	3,553.2	10.8	10.0	326
Other	4,447.0	30.2	12.6	147
None	533.8	6.8	1.5	78

TABLE 6

COVERAGE (IN SQUARE INCHES), BY ANGLE

Angle	Area	Mean	% of total	Stories
Total coverage	35,282.9	19.0	17.2	1,850
Straight	19,083.8	16.0	54.0	1,187
Domest. National	13,470.7	23.5	38.1	572
Domest. Local	2,728.4	29.9	7.7	91

TABLE 7

STORY ANGLE, BY STORY TYPE

Count Row pct Col pct Tot pct	Story Type Hard	Soft	Analysis	Editorial	Row Total
Angle Straight	1,065 89.7 67.7 57.6	74 6.2 54.8 4.0	35 3.0 32.7 1.9	12 1.0 36.4 .6	1,187 64.2
Domes. National	455 79.5 28.9 24.6	33 5.8 24.4 1.8	64 11.2 58.2 3.5	20 3.5 60.6 1.1	572 30.9
Domes. Local	52 57.1 3.3 2.8	28 30.8 20.7 1.5	10 11.0 9.1 .5	1 1.1 3.0 .1	91 4.9
Column Total	1,572 85.0	135 7.3	110 5.9	33 1.8	1,850 100.0

Chi Square=146.69633, d.f.=6, p = < .05

TABLE 8

SOURCE OF INTERNATIONAL STORIES, BY ANGLE

Count Row Pct Col Pct Total Pct	Angle Straight	Domest. National	Domest. Local	Row Total
AP	546 71.9 46.0 29.5	208 27.4 36.4 11.2	5 5.5 .7 .3	759 41.0
UPI	42 75.0 3.5 2.3	13 23.2 2.3 .7	1 1.8 1.1 .1	56 3.0
NYT	83 62.4 7.0 4.5	50 37.6 8.7 2.7		133 7.2
LAT/WP	59 54.1 5.0 3.2	50 45.9 8.7 2.7		109 5.9
Reuters	18 69.2 1.5 1.0	8 30.8 1.4 .4		26 1.4
Column Total	1187 64.2	572 30.9	91 4.9	1850 100.0

TABLE 8--Continued

SOURCE OF INTERNATIONAL STORIES, BY ANGLE

Count Row Pct Col Pct Total Pct	Angle Straight	Domest. National	Domest. Local	Row Total
Group	16 136.4 1.3 .9	28 63.6 4.9 1.5		78 4.2
Paper Staff	57 28.8 4.8 3.1	67 33.8 11.7 3.6	74 37.4 81.3 4.0	198 10.7
Mixed	241 73.9 20.3 13.0	84 25.8 14.7 4.5	1 .3 1.1 .1	326 17.6
Other	70 57.9 5.9 3.8	47 38.8 8.2 2.5	4 3.3 4.4 .2	121 6.5
None	55 70.5 4.6 3.0	17 21.8 3.0 .9	6 7.7 6.6 .3	78 4.2
Column Total	1187 64.2	572 30.9	91 4.9	1850 100.0

Chi Square=581.50936, d.f.=18, $p < .05$

TABLE 9

CORRELATIONS OF COVERAGE WITH EXPORT AND IMMIGRATION DATA

	Correlation Coefficient	Coefficient of Determination
Atlanta Constitution		
Export and Coverage	-.04	.1 %
Immigration and Coverage	-.04	.1 %
Birmingham News		
Export and Coverage	.19	3.0 %
Immigration and Coverage	.07	.4 %
Des Moines Register		
Export and Coverage	-.2	4.0 %
Immigration and Coverage	.1	1.0 %
Omaha World Herald		
Export and Coverage	-.39	15.0 %
Immigration and Coverage	.07	.4 %
Portland Oregonian		
Export and Coverage	-.04	.1 %
Immigration and Coverage	.1	1.0 %
Seattle Post-Intelligencer		
Export and Coverage	.09	.8 %
Immigration and Coverage	.005	.0 %
Whole Sample		
Export and Coverage	.08	.6 %
Immigration and Coverage	.08	.6 %

TABLE 10

TESTS OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COVERAGE, EXPORT, AND POPULATION MEANS

Coverage means

	High export	Low export	t Value	2-tail prob.
Story count	40.8	25.6	2.07	.094
Square inches	827.1	476.5	1.54	.184
% of newshole	.50	.38	.55	.606

N=6

	High level population	Low level population	t Value	2-tail prob.
Story count	53.5	50.5	.20	.846
Square inches	1,049.7	1,118.9	-.18	.865
% of newshole	.66	.60	.26	.808

N=6

	High Coverage	Low Coverage	t Value	2-tail prob.
% of Exports	20.3	16.3	.39	.709
% of Foreign born	13.9	10.0	1.54	.185

N=6

For these tests the critical value of t at $p < .05$ was 2.571.

TABLE 11

COVERAGE (IN SQUARE INCHES), BY ORIGIN

Origin	Area	Mean	% of area	Stories
Total Coverage	35,282.9	19.0	100.0	1,850
Central America	3,012.3	18.5	8.5	162
North America	867.4	14.4	2.4	60
South America	785.7	14.4	2.2	54
Central Europe	247.5	22.5	.7	11
Eastern Europe	6,202.0	20.6	17.5	300
Northern Europe	370.2	13.7	1.0	27
Southern Europe	496.4	11.2	1.4	44
Western Europe	4,350.5	26.8	12.3	20
Central Africa	448.1	22.4	1.2	20
East Africa	285.3	25.9	.8	11
Northern Africa	429.8	17.5	1.2	24
Southern Africa	1,169.8	13.9	3.3	84
West Africa	311.7	44.5	.8	7
Mideast	5,563.9	20.7	15.7	268
Central Asia	505.9	13.3	1.4	38
East Asia	2,449.6	20.5	6.9	119
Southeast Asia	817.5	23.3	2.3	35
Asian Subcont.	1,379.0	12.8	3.9	107
Pacific Islands	1,163.5	17.6	3.2	66
More than one	4,350.5	26.8	2.3	162
Other	55.4	18.4	.01	3

APPENDIX 1 -- COUNTRY COVERAGE FIGURES

Whole Sample

	Area	% of Area	Stories	% of Stories
Total	35,282.9	100.0	1,850	100.0
USSR	5,297.1	15.0	225	12.1
ISRAEL	2,261.8	6.4	112	6.0
UNITED KINGDOM	1,469.7	4.1	97	5.2
JAPAN	1,464.6	4.1	67	3.6
SOUTH AFRICA	891.1	2.5	65	3.5
PHILLIPINNES	951.2	2.6	46	2.4
NICARAGUA	752.4	2.1	41	2.2
PANAMA	783.1	2.2	38	2.0
CHINA	477.6	1.3	37	.2
SOUTH KOREA	670.3	1.8	34	1.8
ITALY	449.2	1.2	33	1.7
LEBANON	431.6	1.2	32	1.7
W. GERMANY	585.9	1.[illegible]	30	1.6
FRANCE	440.9	1.2	28	1.5
CANADA	422.3	1.1	28	1.5
MEXICO	362.3	1.0	28	1.5
IRAN	687.5	1.9	26	1.4
INDIA	350.3	.9	25	1.3
POLAND	429.7	1.2	24	1.2
SWEDEN	349.9	.9	19	1.0
AFGHANISTAN	207.5	.5	19	1.0
VIETNAM	426.6	1.2	16	.8
MORE THAN ONE	7,602.7	21.5	339	18.3

Atlanta Constitution

	Area	% of Area	Stories	% of Stories
Total	6,738.9	100.0	313	100.0
USSR	868.6	12.8	34	10.8
ISRAEL	507.2	7.5	20	6.3
UNITED KINGDOM	314.1	4.6	15	4.7
SOUTH AFRICA	236.3	3.5	15	4.7
JAPAN	325.0	4.8	13	4.1
PHILLIPINNES	171.1	2.5	9	2.8
NICARAGUA	172.0	2.5	8	2.5
PANAMA	124.5	1.8	7	2.2
FRANCE	80.6	.2	7	2.2
ITALY	125.1	1.8	6	1.9
LEBANON	92.7	1.3	6	1.9
IRAN	99.6	1.4	5	1.5
CANADA	82.0	1.2	5	1.5
SOUTH KOREA	165.2	2.4	5	1.5
W. GERMANY	107.4	1.5	4	1.2
POLAND	57.2	.8	4	1.2
MEXICO	51.6	.7	4	1.2
SWEDEN	112.3	1.6	3	.9
INDIA	39.4	.5	3	.9
VIETNAM	63.0	.9	2	.3
AFGHANISTAN	28.7	.0	2	.3
CHINA	3.5	.0	1	.0
MORE THAN ONE	1,406.3	20.8	59	18.7

Birmingham News

	Area	% of Area	Stories	% of Stories
Total	5,193.7	100.0	310	100.0
USSR	636.2	12.2	31	10.0
UNITED KINGDOM	350.8	6.7	21	6.7
ISRAEL	326.2	6.2	16	5.1
PANAMA	274 3	5.2	11	3.5
PHILLIPINNES	157.1	3.2	9	2.9
SOUTH KOREA	73.6	1.4	9	2.9
JAPAN	325.0	6.2	8	2.5
CANADA	86.3	1.6	7	2.2
MEXICO	82.3	1.5	7	2.2
W. GERMANY	75.6	1.4	6	1.9
CHINA	69.6	1.3	6	1.9
NICARAGUA	73.1	1.4	5	1.6
SOUTH AFRICA	54.5	1.0	5	1.6
INDIA	73.1	1.4	4	1.2
LEBANON	64.2	1.2	4	1.2
ITALY	33.5	.6	4	1.2
SWEDEN	30.4	.5	4	1.2
VIETNAM	45.2	.8	2	.6
IRAN	21.6	.4	2	.6
POLAND	29.7	.5	1	.3
AFGHANISTAN	16.5	.3	1	.3
FRANCE	5.0	.0	1	.0
MORE THAN ONE	1,149.4	22.1	58	18.7

Des Moines Register

	Area	% of Area	Stories	% of Stories
Total	3,589.0	100.0	251	100.0
USSR	434.1	12.0	23	9.1
ISRAEL	226.8	6.3	14	5.5
UNITED KINGDOM	122.1	3.4	13	5.1
SOUTH AFRICA	141.9	3.9	10	3.9
LEBANON	86.5	2.4	7	2.7
FRANCE	51.8	1.4	7	2.7
CHINA	50.9	1.4	7	2.7
INDIA	36.5	1.0	7	2.7
SOUTH KOREA	101.0	2.8	6	2.3
PHILLIPINNES	86.4	2.4	6	2.3
JAPAN	138.0	3.8	5	1.9
W. GERMANY	114.4	3.1	5	1.9
NICARAGUA	76.1	2.1	5	1.9
POLAND	44.4	1.2	5	1.9
ITALY	35.8	.9	4	1.5
SWEDEN	29.4	.8	3	1.1
MEXICO	27.0	.7	3	1.1
AFGHANISTAN	26.2	.7	3	1.1
PANAMA	24.0	.6	2	.7
CANADA	11.0	.3	2	.7
VIETNAM	10.0	.2	1	.3
IRAN	00.0	.0	0	.0
MORE THAN ONE	948.9	26.4	52	20.7

Omaha World-Herald

	Area	% of Area	Stories	% of Stories
Total	5,061.7	100.0	292	100.0
USSR	940.5	18.5	45	15.4
ISRAEL	322.0	6.3	17	5.8
SOUTH AFRICA	157.5	3.1	13	4.4
CHINA	199.5	3.9	10	3.4
UNITED KINGDOM	158.9	3.1	10	3.4
JAPAN	189.4	3.7	9	3.0
PANAMA	95.2	1.8	8	2.7
FRANCE	151.2	2.9	7	2.3
NICARAGUA	106.3	2.1	7	2.3
PHILLIPINES	74.8	1.5	7	2.3
ITALY	50.8	1.0	7	2.3
W. GERMANY	78.2	1.5	6	2.0
SOUTH KOREA	117.1	2.3	5	1.7
MEXICO	67.4	1.3	5	1.7
IRAN	21.6	.4	5	1.7
POLAND	69.1	1.3	4	1.3
INDIA	46.9	.9	4	1.3
LEBANON	31.5	.6	4	1.3
AFGHANISTAN	31.1	.6	4	1.3
VIETNAM	134.0	2.6	3	1.0
CANADA	41.5	.8	3	1.0
SWEDEN	0.0	.0	0	0.0
MORE THAN ONE	1,080.5	21.3	51	17.4

Portland Oregonian

	Area	% of Area	Stories	% of Stories
Total	8,986.6	100.0	389	100.0
USSR	1,418.3	15.7	52	13.3
ISRAEL	575.3	6.4	26	6.6
UNITED KINGDOM	277.0	3.0	20	5.1
JAPAN	388.1	4.3	16	4.1
SOUTH AFRICA	157.0	1.7	11	2.8
PHILLIPINES	342.7	3.8	9	2.3
ITALY	161.9	1.8	8	2.0
IRAN	161.6	1.8	7	1.7
POLAND	154.1	1.7	7	1.7
NICARAGUA	106.3	1.1	7	1.7
PANAMA	182.0	2.0	5	1.2
INDIA	124.7	1.3	5	1.2
SWEDEN	120.4	1.3	5	1.2
SOUTH KOREA	106.3	1.1	5	1.2
MEXICO	95.4	1.0	5	1.2
CANADA	90.5	1.0	5	1.2
LEBANON	72.7	.8	5	1.2
CHINA	57.9	.6	5	1.2
FRANCE	79.7	.8	3	1.2
W. GERMANY	22.5	.2	3	.7
AFGHANISTAN	10.7	.1	3	.7
VIETNAM	15.9	.1	2	.5
MORE THAN ONE	1,963.9	21.8	83	21.3

Seattle Post-Intelligencer

	Area	% of Area	Stories	% of Stories
Total	5,713.0	100.0	295	100.0
USSR	999.4	17.4	40	13.5
ISRAEL	304.3	5.3	19	6.4
UNITED KINGDOM	246.8	4.3	18	6.1
JAPAN	376.2	6.5	16	5.4
SOUTH AFRICA	143.9	2.5	11	3.7
NICARAGUA	151.5	2.6	9	3.0
CHINA	96.2	1.6	8	2.7
IRAN	113.9	1.9	7	2.3
W. GERMANY	187.8	3.2	6	2.0
VIETNAM	158.5	2.7	6	2.0
PHILLIPINES	119.1	2.0	6	2.0
CANADA	111.0	1.9	6	2.0
AFGHANISTAN	94.3	1.6	6	2.0
LEBANON	84.0	1.4	6	2.0
PANAMA	83.1	1.4	5	1.6
SOUTH KOREA	107.1	1.8	4	1.3
SWEDEN	57.4	1.0	4	1.3
ITALY	42.1	.7	4	1.3
MEXICO	38.6	.6	4	1.3
POLAND	75.2	1.3	3	1.0
FRANCE	72.6	1.2	3	1.0
INDIA	29.7	.5	2	.6
MORE THAN ONE	1,053.7	18.4	36	9.1

APPENDIX 2 -- EXPORT FIGURES

U.S. Exports -- 1988[2]

Top Ten Countries of Destination
{value in millions of dollars}

	Total	% of total
Total	261.276	
Top Ten	166.317	
CANADA	51.954	19.9
JAPAN	29.645	11.3
MEXICO	17.880	6.8
UNITED KINGDOM	16.144	4.8
FRANCE	8.903	3.4
SOUTH KOREA	8.795	3.4
NETHERLANDS	8.363	3.2
AUSTRALIA	6.487	2.5
ITALY	5.584	2.1
OTHER COUNTRIES	94.959	36.4

[2]Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census, Exports by Region of Origin.

Exports of Merchandise--1988[3]

STATE: ALABAMA

Top Twenty Countries of Destination Totals for State
[value in thousands of dollars]

Country of Destination	Total Value	%
Total	2867348.7	100.0
JAPAN	566912.8	19.7
CANADA	471550.8	16.4
NETHERLANDS	161884.2	5.6
W.GERMANY	150262.2	5.2
UNITED KINGDOM	150035.5	5.2
MEXICO	114216.1	3.9
CHINA (TAIWAN)	111634.6	3.8
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF	98485.8	3.4
BELGIUM	85483.6	2.9
ITALY	83077.5	2.8
FRANCE	68649.2	2.3
CHINA (MAINLAND)	56262.5	1.9
AUSTRALIA	47012.3	1.6
SWITZERLAND	45265.7	1.5
VENEZUELA	35562.9	1.2
SINGAPORE	34657.6	1.2
SWEDEN	30875.8	1.0
HONG KONG	27565.8	.9
SPAIN	27181.9	.9
BRAZIL	23959.8	.8

[3]U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Foreign Trade Division, "U.S. Exports by State Region of Origin 1988" Data for Alabama, Georgia, Iowa, Nebraska, Oregon, and Washington.

STATE: GEORGIA

Top Twenty Countries of Destination Totals for State
[value in thousands of dollars]

Country of Destination	Total Value	%
Total	4889448.7	100.0
CANADA	647477.5	13.2
JAPAN	532192.8	10.8
UNITED KINGDOM	310493.2	6.3
W. GERMANY	225609.1	4.6
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF	169378.7	3.4
NETHERLANDS	169300.7	3.4
MEXICO	157208.4	3.8
CHINA (TAIWAN)	149361.0	3.2
BELGIUM	149098.7	3.0
HONG KONG	149054.8	3.0
FRANCE	131388.1	2.6
SAUDI ARABIA	131228.0	2.6
ITALY	124253.0	2.5
VENEZUELA	107628.6	2.2
SPAIN	85824.9	1.7
AUSTRALIA	84041.7	1.7
COSTA RICA	83970.4	1.7
TURKEY	75770.0	1.5
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA	65776.1	1.3
FINLAND	59774.6	1.0

STATE: IOWA

Top Twenty Countries of Destination Totals for State
[value in thousands of dollars]

Country of Destination	Total Value	%
Total	2164724.0	100.0
CANADA	747640.9	34.5
JAPAN	375209.8	17.3
UNITED KINGDOM	107020.8	4.9
MEXICO	93773.1	4.3
FRANCE	85548.4	3.9
W. GERMANY	75188.4	3.4
NETHERLANDS	75173.3	3.4
AUSTRALIA	63031.4	2.9
ITALY	47960.8	2.2
BELGIUM	40440.4	1.8
HONG KONG	32709.6	1.5
CHINA (TAIWAN)	32603.0	1.5
SPAIN	28719.8	1.3
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF	27938.9	1.2
SINGAPORE	26285.8	1.2
CHINA (MAINLAND)	24871.8	1.1
VENEZUELA	23453.5	1.0
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA	16606.0	.7
TURKEY	15447.5	.7
SAUDI ARABIA	15364.7	.7

STATE: NEBRASKA

Top Twenty Countries of Destination Totals for State
[value in thousands of dollars]

Country of Destination	Total Value	%
TOTAL	916421.6	100.0
JAPAN	195978.9	21.3
CANADA	185817.9	20.2
SAUDI ARABIA	95286.1	10.3
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF	60332.2	6.5
MEXICO	52274.8	5.7
CHINA (TAIWAN)	41995.8	4.5
FRANCE	35409.2	3.8
UNITED KINGDOM	29679.7	3.2
W. GERMANY	26876.4	2.9
ALGERIA	18939.3	2.0
IRELAND	14909.0	1.6
SINGAPORE	14502.8	1.5
BELGIUM	12234.5	1.3
NETHERLANDS	11700.8	1.2
VENEZUELA	9672.7	1.0
ITALY	8929.8	.9
AUSTRALIA	8825.2	.9
INDIA	8370.5	.9
SPAIN	7805.5	.8
HONG KONG	6403.5	.6

STATE: OREGON

Top Twenty Countries of Destination Totals for State
[value in thousands of dollars]

Country of Destination	Total Value	%
TOTAL	4522818.3	100.0
JAPAN	1293622.0	28.6
CANADA	617146.4	13.6
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF	341593.1	7.5
CHINA (TAIWAN)	211222.6	4.6
EGYPT	200271.7	4.4
UNITED KINGDOM	198573.2	4.3
W. GERMANY	152952.4	3.3
CHINA (MAINLAND)	149800.9	3.3
AUSTRALIA	134638.5	2.9
PAKISTAN	115261.6	2.5
SINGAPORE	103998.0	2.2
ITALY	102230.6	2.2
FRANCE	82146.6	1.8
PHILIPPINES	78556.4	1.7
INDIA	59176.7	1.3
NETHERLANDS	57343.5	1.2
HONG KONG	43415.4	.9
SWEDEN	37345.5	.8
BELGIUM	34659.6	.7
SPAIN	32584.2	.7

STATE: WASHINGTON

Top Twenty Countries of Destination Totals for State
[value in thousands of dollars]

Country of Destination	Total Value	%
TOTAL	17865011.6	100.0
JAPAN	4818334.0	26.9
CANADA	2426283.0	13.5
UNITED KINGDOM	1554847.0	8.7
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF	1450989.0	8.1
W. GERMANY	862854.0	4.8
CHINA (TAIWAN)	764033.8	4.2
AUSTRALIA	652010.2	3.6
CHINA (MAINLAND)	637946.3	3.5
BRAZIL	542993.5	3.0
FRANCE	508610.4	2.8
NETHERLANDS	391210.5	2.1
INDIA	334818.7	1.8
SPAIN	311019.3	1.7
EGYPT	279480.9	1.5
SINGAPORE	215827.0	1.2
HONG KONG	198280.3	1.1
ISRAEL-inc GAZA & WESTBANK	168491.3	.9
BELGIUM	140341.2	.7
BAHRAIN	137741.8	.7
MAURITIUS	131055.1	.7

APPENDIX 3 -- IMMIGRATION FIGURES[4]

[4].U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1980 Census of Population (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office): Bureau of the Census, Vol. 1 -- Part 2 Alabama, Part 12 Georgia, Part 17 Iowa, Part 29 Nebraska, Part 39 Oregon, and Part 49 Washington: Table 195.

ALABAMA

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm.
Birmingham	284,413	8,044	
GERMANY		860	10.6
UNITED KINGDOM		683	8.4
CANADA		443	5.5
VIETNAM		281	3.4
ITALY		273	3.3
USSR		271	3.3
INDIA		252	3.1
IRAN		221	2.7
FRANCE		219	2.7
GREECE		213	2.6
JAPAN		195	2.4
KOREA		167	2.0
CHINA		147	1.8
PHILLIPPINES		144	1.7
CUBA		133	1.6
POLAND		133	1.6
ISRAEL		112	1.3
LEBANON		89	1.1
NETHERLANDS		81	1.0

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm.
State	3,893,800	39,002	
GERMANY		6,443	16.5
UNITED KINGDOM		2,873	7.3
CANADA		2,292	7.4
KOREA		1,436	3.6
JAPAN		1,200	3.0
VIETNAM		1,107	2.8
INDIA		1,010	2.5
IRAN		990	2.5
FRANCE		895	2.2
PHILLIPPINES		823	2.1
USSR		780	1.9
GREECE		574	1.4
ITALY		554	1.4
CUBA		514	1.3
CHINA		467	1.1
POLAND		424	1.0

GEORGIA

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm
Atlanta	425,022	46,207	
GERMANY		4,392	9.5
UNITED KINGDOM		3,898	8.4
CANADA		3,191	6.9
CUBA		2,613	5.6
KOREA		2,340	5.0
INDIA		1,533	3.3
JAPAN		1,180	2.5
VIETNAM		1,165	2.5
USSR		1,044	2.2
IRAN		922	1.9
CHINA		910	1.9
MEXICO		891	1.9
GREECE		877	1.8
PHILLIPPINES		770	1.6
FRANCE		753	1.6
JAMAICA		648	1.4
COLOMBIA		627	1.3
THAILAND		465	1.0

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm.
State	5,463,105	91,480	
GERMANY		13,589	14.8
UNITED KINGDOM		6,935	7.5
CANADA		5,319	5.8
KOREA		5,117	5.5
CUBA		3,431	3.7
JAPAN		2,926	3.1
INDIA		2,438	2.6
VIETNAM		2,126	2.3
PHILLIPPINES		1,997	2.1
USSR		1,848	2.0
CHINA		1,569	1.7
FRANCE		1,542	1.6
MEXICO		1,452	1.5
GREECE		1,305	1.4
ITALY		1,285	1.4
IRAN		1,274	1.3
JAMAICA		1,095	1.1
POLAND		1,084	1.1

IOWA

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm.
Des Moines	191,003	7,884	
VIETNAM		777	9.8
ITALY		525	6.6
CANADA		516	6.5
UNITED KINGDOM		493	6.2
GERMANY		450	5.7
USSR		296	3.7
MEXICO		296	3.7
KOREA		276	3.5
INDIA		204	2.5
LATVIA		153	1.9
POLAND		113	1.4
SWEDEN		99	1.2
DENMARK		92	1.1
NORWAY		88	1.1
NETHERLANDS		80	1.0

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm.
State	2,913,808	47,659	
GERMANY		6,541	13.7
CANADA		3,930	8.2
UNITED KINGDOM		2,850	5.9
MEXICO		2,725	5.7
VIETNAM		2,173	4.5
KOREA		1,801	3.7
USSR		1,662	3.4
NETHERLANDS		1,654	3.4
DENMARK		1,174	2.4
ITALY		1,143	2.3
INDIA		1,044	2.1
GREECE		951	1.9
SWEDEN		882	1.8
NORWAY		870	1.8
JAPAN		793	1.6
CZECHOSLOVAKIA		752	1.5
PHILLIPPINES		745	1.5
POLAND		574	1.2
FRANCE		512	1.0

NEBRASKA

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm
Omaha	314,255	16,015	
GERMANY		2,132	13.3
MEXICO		1,377	8.5
UNITED KINGDOM		1,207	7.5
ITALY		880	5.4
CANADA		770	4.8
USSR		754	4.7
KOREA		685	4.2
POLAND		597	3.7
PHILLIPPINES		484	3.0
CZECHOSLOVAKIA		472	2.9
JAPAN		436	2.7
LITHUANIA		411	2.5
VIETNAM		337	2.1
DENMARK		325	2.0
INDIA		281	1.7
YUGOSLAVIA		224	1.3
GREECE		194	1.2
SWEDEN		197	1.2
FRANCE		167	1.0
LATVIA		163	1.0

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm.
State	1,569,825	31,001	
GERMANY		4,665	15.0
MEXICO		2,618	8.4
USSR		1,996	6.4
UNITED KINGDOM		1,882	6.0
CANADA		1,672	5.3
VIETNAM		1,133	3.6
KOREA		1,024	3.3
ITALY		992	3.1
CZECHOSLOVAKIA		842	2.7
JAPAN		755	2.4
DENMARK		749	2.4
POLAND		740	2.3
PHILLIPPINES		721	2.3
LATVIA		605	1.9
SWEDEN		581	1.8
INDIA		574	1.8
NETHERLANDS		446	1.4
IRAN		438	1.4
GREECE		351	1.1

OREGON

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm
Portland	366,383	63,572	
CANADA		10,641	16.7
GERMANY		4,938	7.7
UNITED KINGDOM		4,798	7.5
VIETNAM		4,227	6.6
KOREA		3,117	4.9
MEXICO		2,250	3.5
PHILLIPPINES		2,084	3.2
CHINA		1,765	2.7
USSR		1,674	2.6
JAPAN		1,565	2.4
ITALY		1,182	1.8
NETHERLANDS		1,070	1.6
IRAN		955	1.5
SWEDEN		886	1.3
NORWAY		859	1.3
GREECE		808	1.2

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm.
State	2,633,105	107,805	
CANADA		18,971	17.5
MEXICO		8,796	8.1
GERMANY		8,699	8.0
UNITED KINGDOM		8,156	7.5
VIETNAM		5,306	4.9
KOREA		4,235	3.9
PHILLIPPINES		2,753	2.5
CHINA		2,718	2.5
JAPAN		2,645	2.4
USSR		2,507	2.3
NETHERLANDS		1,988	1.8
SWEDEN		1,594	1.4
NORWAY		1,468	1.3
ISRAEL		1,386	1.2

WASHINGTON

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm
Seattle	493,846	119,258	
CANADA		21,953	18.4
PHILLIPPINES		10,053	8.4
UNITED KINGDOM		9,806	8.2
GERMANY		7,088	5.9
NORWAY		5,383	4.5
KOREA		5,191	4.3
JAPAN		5,048	4.2
CHINA		4,770	3.9
VIETNAM		4,582	3.8
SWEDEN		2,434	2.0
NETHERLANDS		1,764	1.4
USSR		1,743	1.4
ITALY		1,664	1.3
MEXICO		1,633	1.3
HONG KONG		1,431	1.1
IRAN		1,347	1.1

	Total	Imm. pop.	% of imm.
Washington	4,132,156	239,060	
CANADA		46,818	19.5
GERMANY		19,609	8.2
UNITED KINGDOM		17,230	7.2
MEXICO		16,414	6.8
PHILLIPPINES		15,726	6.5
KOREA		11,389	4.7
JAPAN		9,274	3.8
VIETNAM		8,449	3.5
NORWAY		8,092	3.3
CHINA		5,948	2.4
SWEDEN		4,512	1.8
NETHERLANDS		4,145	1.7
USSR		3,393	1.4
ITALY		3,354	1.4

1. Economic1 represents domestic economic issues, economics2 representes international economic issues.

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The People's Friend: A Content Analytic Study of How a Newspaper Functions for Its Readership

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Abstract

This content analytic study explored three rhetorical functions of The People's Friend, a black newspaper published in Wichita, Kansas, from 1894-1895. These functions included: 1) engendering racial pride, 2) education, and 3) politicization. Results indicated that this paper emphasized praise and recognition of the city's black citizens, but de-emphasized challenging societal norms. The People's Friend endorsed the Republican party and consistently encouraged its readers to participate in, rather than challenge, the local and state political process.

Abstract

The lack of access to the white press fostered a proliferation of black newspapers during the decades that followed the end of the Civil War. In particular, 1880-1915 are significant years to study the role of black newspapers because of white supremacy in the South, lynching, Jim Crow laws, and the migration of black colonies to the plains states. As black Americans struggled to establish themselves as part of mainstream society, many of these newspapers functioned to engender racial pride, educate the black community, and promote political action.

This content analytic study explored the rhetorical functions of The People's Friend, a four-page weekly newspaper published in Wichita, Kansas, from 1894-1895. All extant copies of the newspaper were analyzed--18 issues dated from May 24 to Sept. 28, 1894. Articles were assigned to three general categories: 1) engendering racial pride, 2) education, and 3) politicization, that were divided into a total of 12 subcategories.

The results indicated that this newspaper emphasized praise and recognition of Wichita's black citizens. The de-emphasis of the educational function, which frequently challenged societal norms, suggested that The People's Friend was a conservative newspaper. The paper endorsed the Republican party and consistently encouraged its readers to participate in, rather than challenge, the local and state political process.

Introduction

The Wichita Eagle and the Wichita Beacon, two daily mainstream newspapers in Wichita, Kansas, were more than 20 years old in 1894.1 The People's Friend, a weekly newspaper, ran its first issue that year, but for a different target audience--the black citizens of Wichita.2 This paper will examine the functions of The People's Friend which served as a voice for early Wichita's black residents.3

Background

Black Americans in Early Wichita

A black man named Buckner accompanied James Mead, one of the founding fathers of Wichita, on a hunting expedition to the fork of the Big and Little Arkansas rivers. This was the site of the city, which began as a tiny trading town on the Kansas prairie in the 1860s.4 Black men, who were members of the cattle drive crews, moved cattle between Kansas and Texas in the 1870s.5 Some of their families settled in Wichita.6 By 1874, one black businessman had opened a blacksmith shop.7

While records indicate that there were attempts to integrate blacks into Wichita society in the late 1870s, the Exoduster migrations of 1879 raised concerns about the number of blacks who settled in Wichita. Even though race relations were better in Wichita than further south, prejudicial feelings became overt when a healthy group of black migrants were quarantined by the city as a "precaution" against spreading disease.8

An 1895 census listed the black population of Wichita as 1,307, which was six percent of the total population.9 The black Wichitans were organized and wielded some voting power.10 The first black constable was elected in October 1894, amidst a furor of controversy.11

In the 1890s, the residential areas of blacks and whites were segregated. The geographic boundaries of Wichita's black community were clearly drawn and "concentrated along Main and Water Streets, north of Central, in the area surrounding and the west of the County Courthouse."12 Cut off from general society, a thriving black-owned business district developed that catered to black customers.13

For the most part, blacks were mentioned in the Beacon and the Eagle only when they were involved in crime.14 Because the names of accused minorities were rarely recorded, one can conclude those individuals were viewed by the general press as insignificant. Also, newspapers cautioned white citizens to avoid certain areas of Wichita after dark.15 Historically this has been the typical way the mainstream press handles the news and concerns of the black American population in our country. Established American newspapers have overlooked black people or viewed them in a condescending manner.16

The Black Press

These conditions helped to foster the birth of the black press as a viable voice for the minority. A black newspaper is defined as one owned and managed by blacks, targeted for black readership, and which serves as a voice for blacks.17 Since the conception of the first documented black publication, Freedom's Journal which was published by Samuel Cornish and John Russwurm in 1827, black newspapers have filled a communication gap for black people and advocated the cause of the black race.18 Sherman Briscoe believes that black newspapers have promoted self-esteem and fostered a group identity for a historically degraded people.19 In addition, these newspapers have provoked thought, conveyed information, and recorded the social history of black Americans.20

According to Georgetta Campbell, 1880-1915 are significant years to study the black condition and the role of black newspapers.21 After nearly a century of slavery, blacks citizens were struggling to establish themselves as a part of mainstream society. White supremacy reigned in the South and lynching had increased. There was a "back-to-Africa" movement and black colonies were settling the Plains states.22 Blacks were well aware that laws had been passed to subjugate and fragment them. So, with little access to white papers, black newspapers played an important function during this time.23 In fact, Armistead Pride wrote that the publication of black newspapers nationwide was prolific from the 1880s to the early 1900s, though the survival rate for many was short-lived.24 Records indicate that more than 50 black newspapers were published in Kansas during those years, but for more than 30 of them the life span was 2 years or less.25

Functions of the Black Press

Lauren Kessler has classified black newspapers -- along with feminist, immigrant and socialist publications -- as part of the American dissident press.26 According to Kessler, the dissident press promotes a cause overlooked by the culture, politics, or lifestyle of the dominant American press. In her descriptive study, Kessler focused on several fringe groups that had been denied access to the conventional media.27 She found similarities in the way they were treated by the mainstream press. Rather than addressing the group's underlying issues or goals that were viewed as unacceptable to mainstream society, the press reported events; ridiculed or stereotyped individuals; or totally excluded the group from media coverage. This insensitive treatment necessitated the formation of a dissident press who could define and communicate its ideas to the public in an effort to promote social or political change.28

Kessler named three primary functions of the black newspapers in their attempt to fill the communication gap: 1) engendering racial pride, 2) education, and 3) politicization.29 The black press engendered racial pride for a people who, because of skin color, were viewed as second-class citizens. Black newspapers reported accomplishments of black people, named participants in activities and censored black crime and behavior.30 By keeping its audience informed, the black press performed an educational function.31 It may have even served as a tutor for those who were denied a formal education. Black newspaper editors wrote about unjust conditions endured by blacks. Black newspapers served a political function in an attempt to inspire and mobilize their readers to fight the battles of equality. All three functions combined to inform, unify, and persuade black people to seek social change. These functions, Kessler asserted, apply to black newspapers, whether the defunct Freedom's Journal or The Chicago Defender, which is published today.32

Content Analytic Studies

Content analysis is a systematic and objective methodology frequently used by researchers to identify and examine mass-mediated and public messages in newspapers.33 Researchers have used content analysis as a method to examine black papers. Kenneth D. Nordin employed a systematic analysis of the content to identify the primary concerns and function of Freedom's Journal.34 Klassen and Johnson did a qualitative content analytic study of the Blade of Parsons, Kansas, a contemporary paper of The People's Friend, to identify its activist concerns.35 Content analysis was used by T. Ella Strother to identify six distinct phases in the Chicago Defender's race advocacy function.36

The People's Friend

Little has been written about the black-owned Wichita newspapers during late 1800s. There were at least six black newspapers published in Wichita during the 1890s, including The People's Friend, from 1894-1895.37 After ceasing publication in Wichita in 1895, the paper was revived and published in Topeka, the state capitol, from 1896-1898.38 William Jeltz, the editor and publisher, established the paper as a voice for the black community of Wichita because there was no "colored paper in Wichita. You never hear any news of colored people unless you hear some one [sic] raping, stealing or fighting. Subscribe and hear some good of our people."39 The office was located at 150 N. Main, in the heart of the black community of Wichita. Subscriptions were $1.50 per year and five cents for a single copy.

The People's Friend was a four-page weekly, that was initially distributed on Thursdays. After one month of publication, the distribution day was changed to Friday. The Friend was similar to most black newspapers of that time. The six-column pages had small print that was difficult to read. Editorial copy included excerpts from other newspapers and news about the comings and goings of local residents. There were frequent entries from other newspapers. Because news access for most black newspapers was limited, editors relied on copy from white dailies and other black newspapers.40 After six weeks, the paper settled into a relatively predictable format: page one included news about some local events and political activities; page two focused on short, multiple articles about state, national and international news; page three usually dealt with national and political issues--in particular, railroad and coal miners' strikes, the tariff tax controversy and congressional meetings; and page four primarily listed the local social news.

The question for this research was whether The People's Friend, a black newspaper published in Wichita in 1894, conformed to the objectives identified by Kessler for the black press.

Methodology

The research method chosen was content analysis because it enables one to systematically and objectively examine mass-mediated messages. The texts for analysis were 18 issues of The People's Friend, dated from May 24 to Sept. 28, 1894. These are the only existing copies of the newspaper. They were available on microfilm in the Ablah Library of Wichita State University. The June 7 issue was missing and was not part of the unit. The papers were photocopied for analysis.

The first task was to contextualize Kessler's three functions of the black newspaper. Kessler did not provide specific criteria for the three functions. Hence, a theoretical connection was necessary. Charles J. Stewart, Craig Allen Smith, and Robert E. Denton, Jr. developed a model to explain the role that persuasion plays in a social movement.41 This pragmatic approach identified how persuasion is used to foster, develop, and sustain a movement for change. Stewart et al. constructed a schema that included both general and specific purposes designed to affect perceptions.42 These five functions were: 1) transforming perceptions of history by altering perceptions of the past, present and future; 2) altering perceptions of society by changing perceptions of the opposition as well as self-perceptions; 3) prescribing courses of action, such as what must be done, who must do it, and how must it be done; 4) mobilizing for action, which includes organizing and uniting people, gaining support from opinion leaders and putting pressure on the opposition; and 5) sustaining the social movement by justifying setbacks and delays, maintaining viability and visibility of the movement.

Since the rhetorical functions were not limited to a progression of stages, the model can be useful in identifying functions across entire movements, partial movements, or campaigns within movements. By using this model, it was possible to distinguish the functions identified by Kessler for a content analysis of The People's Friend.

Using the lens of the persuasive model of Stewart et al., engendering racial pride was defined as the attempts made by the newspaper to alter the self-perceptions of people in the movement. In particular, references and stories about the achievements of individuals and groups that recognized specific abilities, character, and accomplishments underscored the self-identity and value of black people. Endorsements and wishes for success, as well as general appeals to racial pride cultivated the dignity of a people rebuffed by society. Identification of behavior that was not sanctioned by the group, such as crime and improper conduct, was also a part of this function. For this study, the three subcategories of engendering racial pride included: 1) recognition of achievements, such as musical, oratorical, athletic, economic, academic, military, and general achievement; 2) appeals and endorsements; and 3) the censorship of inappropriate behavior and black crime.

The persuasive model of Stewart et al. gave particular insight in operationalizing the educational function category. One might argue that most articles potentially could fit under this category if the criterion was based on the promotion of intellectual development. This model defined the educational role as one that transforms perceptions of history. Included in this function was altering perceptions of the past, present, and future so that the target audience will recognize that history was written by the power elite to support the status quo. This function also provided an alternative interpretation of events--a different reality that re-aligns "the haves and have nots." It is the most radical function because it challenges the established norms of society. The educational function category was divided into five subcategories: 1) refutation of racial inferiority, 2) discrimination/racial tension (which included lynching), 3) economic and employment conditions, 4) explanation of issues, and 5) an "other" category that included such topics as political advancement, hope of change, and the exploration of problems/solutions.

The final category was the politicization of black newspapers. This function was characterized by an advocacy for involvement to bring about change, as well as an integration into the political system. Points four and five of the persuasion model, prescribing courses of action and mobilizing for action, helped to define the political function. Under this category, one can identify ways the black newspapers explained what needed to be done, how it should be done and who needed to do it. The papers also made efforts to solicit support for the cause and attacked the opposition. There were four subcategories under the political function: 1) Endorsements of Republican candidates/party and other political parties/candidates, 2) derision of the opposition, 3) appeals for general or specific action as well as support of the paper as a voice for the black race, and 4) reports of action taken.

The second stage of the study was to analyze the content of the newspapers. Each page of the 18 newspapers was read. Advertisements and ads for businesses in the editorial copy were not analyzed. Articles that covered in-depth contemporary issues such as the tariff tax, the railroad strike, and the weekly log of congressional meetings--many of those on page three, were not counted unless they pertained specifically to people in the black race. One might argue that those articles played a persuasive role, particularly the ones that dealt with issues endorsed or rejected by the Republican party. But one could also view them as providing general information and broadening the world view of the readers.

The analysis of the newspaper content was divided into three steps. First, during a cursory reading of each issue, the articles were assigned to four general categories (the three functions and an "other" group). Then the papers were read a second time and the relevant articles that reflected one of the three functions were marked with colored highlighters. At times, there were articles that served more than one rhetorical function. In those cases, the dominate theme of the article was determined by the researcher and then the article was assigned accordingly. Finally, the articles were read a third time and assigned to specific subcategories.

Results

All three of the functions were identifiable in each issue of the newspaper, though the frequency varied from week to week. The dominant function for these issues of The People's Friend was engendering racial pride. This category had a total of 185 entries and averaged 10.3 references per issue. The political function had 147 entries and averaged 8.1 per issue, while 91 entries were counted in the educational function category, with a mean of 5.1 [see Chart 1].

The highest number of entries in engendering racial pride was the subcategory of achievements [See Chart 2]. This subcategory was 74 percent of the total entries in that category. The most frequent acknowledgement was related to employment, such as:

> The Colored Fire Department at present composed of Messrs. Shults and Thurman is proving a decided success. They say the Whites treat them with the same courtesy they do their own. The FRIEND wishes them success, and hopes soon to see another man added to their number.43

The second most frequent recognition of achievement was the general category, which was a conglomeration of accolades that included well-pruned gardens in the community and the ladies "who have reached a degree of perfection in their culinary art."44 There were also personalized messages, such as: "Mr. Perry Allen has been serving on the jury for several weeks. The boys say Perry is loaded for bears. How is it Perry?"45 There were a total of 35 entries for censorship of black crime and behavior, which ranged from excessive absence by members of the militia46 to assault and battery.47 There were frequent admonishments to readers to pay for subscriptions. "All persons who have failed to pay, their names will be erased from our books and their paper stopped."48

In the political function category, 46 percent of the entries were political endorsements [see Chart 4]. There was an average of 3.7 references per issue. All but three of 67 references were for the Republican party or Republican candidates. On a related note, the subcategory of derision of the opposition--a kind of "negative campaigning"--was 19 percent of the total. The opposition was viewed primarily as the Populists and the Democrats. "We have been convinced that Populism and Democracy are the worst enemies we have to contend with."49 Most of the appeals were for working together in unity:

> Colored men be party men but avoid factions. Enter into no conspiracy to stop the purpose of a good race organization of which some are jealous. If you cannot lead, be content to follow and this way let the race advance.50

This may indicate that political endorsements were seen as a means to an end. "It is hoped the [Republican National] Convention will have the courage and convictions to express itself clearly upon the 'Wrongs of the American Negro.'"51

Discrimination and lynching accounted for 41 percent of the educational function issues [See Chart 3]. Both dealt with injustices that were done to black people because of their skin color. Lynching, by itself, was 14 percent of the total, while other citations of discrimination were 27 percent of the total. Ida B. Wells, well-known advocate against lynching at this time, spoke in the Wichita area:

> Miss Ida B. Wells, who has been giving lectures abroad on Southern Outrages will speek [sic] at Winfield, Kans., Sept. 23rd. Rev. L. M. Copeland of this City will deliver the welcome address and introduce our distinguished guest on this occasion. No person should fail to hear her. She stands today the peer of our race, the good people of Winfield are well blessed in securing her service.52

The other noteworthy subcategory, 16 percent, was the refutation of racial inferiority, exemplified by:

> The unchangeable record of history proves that, in so short a time as a quarter of a century --one generation --the Negro is to day [sic] confidently asserting his ability to stand alone, and moreover backing his talk with indisputable evidence.53

When the total number of entries of the three categories were plotted on a graph [See Graph 1], several general observations can be made. First, though the number of entries was inconsistent from week to week, engendering racial pride appeared to be the dominant function, while the political function played a secondary role. Though present in every newspaper, the educational role never had the most number of entries in a particular issue. In fact, it had the fewest number of references in 10 out of 18 issues. Second, when the graph of the overall categories was reviewed, there seemed to be a general decrease in the first category (engendering racial pride function), while there was a general increase in the third one (political function). This may indicate that The People's Friend had a more conservative bent since the educational function is the most radical of the three.

Conclusion

The dominance of the first category could be attributed to the fact that William Jeltz, publisher and editor The People's Friend, stated that there was no other black newspaper in Wichita.54 This paper was able to bring deserved recognition and praise to people who were overlooked by the mainstream papers such as the Eagle and Beacon.

The use of the political function could be due to Jeltz's statement about the purpose of the paper. "In politics we are Republicans, and shall expect from that party such support as our work merits."55 This would explain why there were so many endorsements for the Republican party. Starting on June 14, each issue carried an endorsement of the Republican ticket on the front page. Also, this was an election year. The Republican party was viewed as the outlet for social change:

> We say to every colored voter, stand true to the republican [sic] party; fight your own battles in its line, press your claims there; ask for what you want and make a fight for it and the reward will come.56

Jeltz's editorial stance may not have been popular with the majority of black voters. The support for the Republican party by black people was beginning to change because of disillusionment.57 One plausible reason for the general decrease of the cheerleading function and an increasing emphasis of the political function could be the political stance of the paper and the time of year that is was published. Because of the paper's endorsement of the established political process, this evidence of support for conservative principles could explain the de-emphasis of the educational function.

One point that must be underscored is the use of names in the newspaper. Even when individuals were not specifically acknowledged for achievement, the use of titles and mentioning their names must have done much to foster the self-esteem for people in the black community of Wichita. The social activities of people in the community were not counted as part of engendering racial pride, but just the mention of those events signified that those named had value. Names were also cited when censoring inappropriate behavior. Rather than describing someone as "darkie" or a "mulatto," people were referred to by their names. "Miss Lulu Mattox had a warrant sworn out for a girl named Bessie, who stayed with her. While Lulu was working, Bessie stole her clothes and skipped out for parts unknown."58

This content analytic study had several weaknesses. An intercoder reliability test would help to mitigate the possibility of a subjective interpretation when coding articles for the primary functions. Because the available issues only covered 18 weeks, one cannot clearly establish trends for the three functions. Thus, the results are more descriptive rather than comparative. There needs to be more exploration through comparison with other contemporary newspapers to determine the far-reaching implications of the interpretation of the results.

While this paper conformed to three functions of the black dissident press identified by Kessler, there is one important aspect that Kessler overlooked in her description of a black newspaper's functions. The black press also served as a social history of the race.59 The reports of neighborhood activities, births, deaths, church gatherings, and personal notes served as a social history of a race that has been neglected and overlooked. This is an area that should be considered for further research.

The persuasion model of Stewart et al. was a helpful tool in studying this newspaper. It might have been more helpful to use the schema as the sole basis for the content categories, rather than using it to operationalize Kessler's functions. For that reason, another area for further research would be to use that model as the basis to more thoroughly analyze this newspaper, as well as others that were published in Wichita in the 1890s, and to compare their rhetorical functions.

The history of black Wichitans has been hidden. Studying the rhetorical role of their newspapers could give much insight and cultivate a pride in their past, present, and future.

Chart 1

Frequency and Means of Content Functions

for "The People's Friend"

Category	Total	Mean per issue
Engendering Racial Pride	185	10.3
Education	91	5.1
Political	147	8.1

Chart 2

Frequency, Percentages and Means of Engendering

Racial Pride Function Category for "The People's Friend"

Date	Achievements	Appeals/ Endorsements	Censorship	Total
May 24	7	4	5	16
May 31	14	1	1	16
June 7	(Not Available)			
June 14	4	2	4	10
June 22	16	1	5	22
June 29	8	1	1	10
July 6	12	1	0	13
July 13	5	1	2	8
July 20	11	0	0	11
July 27	5	0	1	6
Aug. 3	12	0	8	20
Aug. 10	4	1	3	8
Aug. 17	5	0	0	5
Aug. 24	9	0	1	10
Aug. 31	10	1	1	12
Sept. 7	3	0	0	3
Sept. 14	5	1	0	6
Sept. 21	2	0	1	3
Sept. 28	4	0	2	6
Total	136	14	35	185
% of Total	74%	7%	29%	100%
Mean per issue	7.5	.8	1.9	10.3

Chart 3

Frequency, Percentages and Means of

Educational Function Category for "The People's Friend"

Date	Refute Inferiority	Discrimination/ Lynching	Economic	Issues	Other	Total
May 24	1	2	1	1	0	5
May 31	1	3	2	0	0	6
June 7	(Not Available)					
June 14	0	2	1	0	0	3
June 22	2	4	0	0	3	9
June 29	1	1	0	0	3	5
July 6	1	0	0	0	1	2
July 13	0	1	0	1	2	4
July 20	1	1	1	0	3	6
July 27	3	1	0	2	1	7
Aug. 3	1	2	2	0	0	5
Aug. 10	2	3	0	0	0	6
Aug. 17	0	2	0	1	0	3
Aug. 24	0	3	1	2	0	6
Aug. 31	0	2	1	1	2	6
Sept. 7	0	4	0	2	0	6
Sept. 14	0	2	2	1	0	5
Sept. 21	1	2	0	0	0	3
Sept. 28	1	2	0	0	1	4
Total	15	37	11	12	16	91
% of total	16%	41%	12%	13%	18%	100%
Mean per issue	.8	2.1	.6	.7	.9	5.1

Chart 4

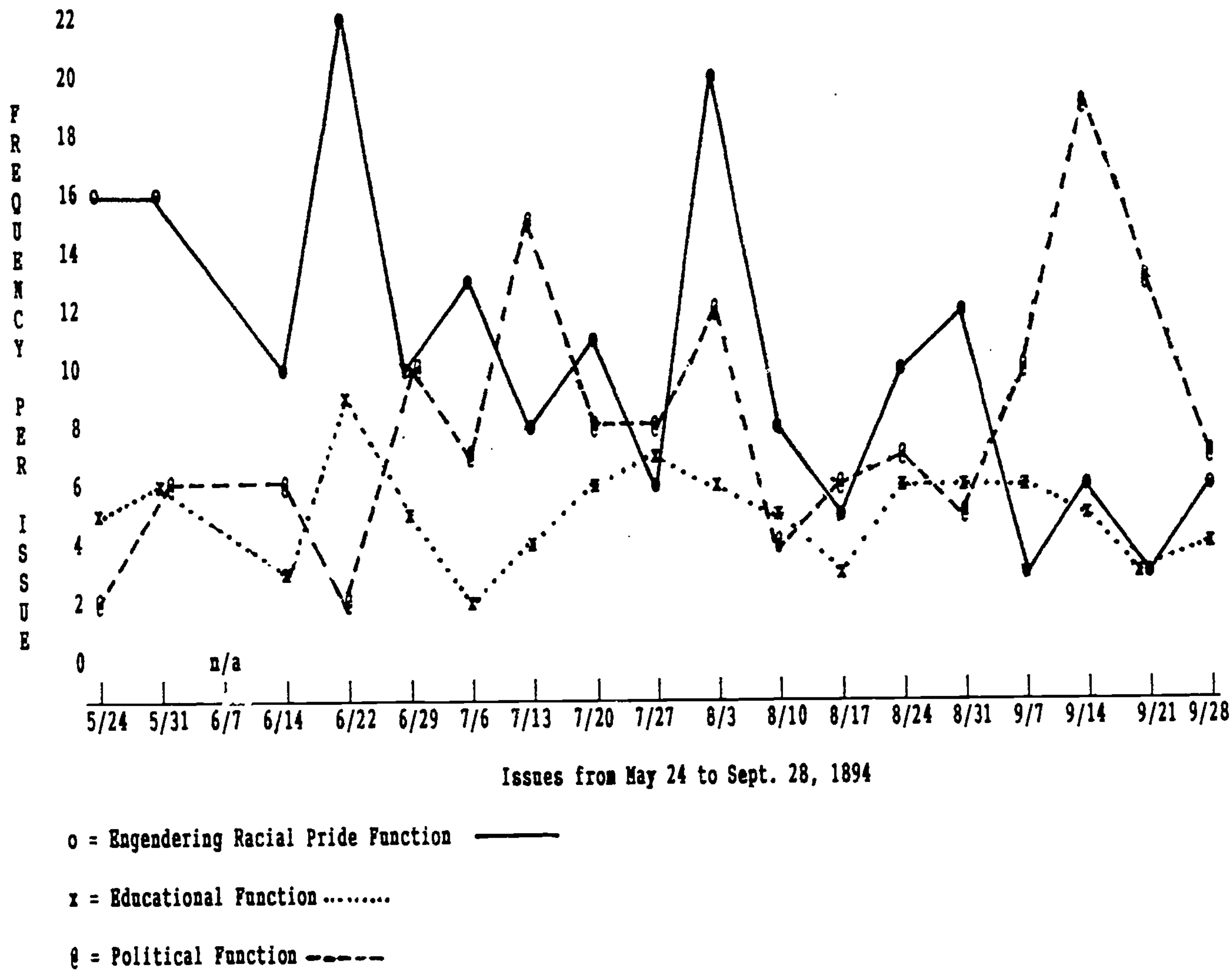
Frequency, Percentages and Means of

Political Function Category for "The People's Friend"

Date	Political Endorsements	Derision of Opposition	Appeals	Action	Total
May 24	0	0	2	0	2
May 31	4	2	0	0	6
June 7	(Not Available)				
June 14	3	0	2	1	6
June 22	1	0	0	1	2
June 29	1	1	5	3	10
July 6	2	1	2	2	7
July 13	6	5	4	0	15
July 20	4	0	2	2	8
July 27	3	2	2	1	8
Aug. 3	8	1	2	1	12
Aug. 10	2	1	0	1	4
Aug. 17	3	1	1	1	6
Aug. 24	4	1	2	0	7
Aug. 31	4	0	1	0	5
Sept. 7	5	4	1	0	10
Sept. 14	6	6	4	3	19
Sept. 21	8	3	1	1	13
Sept. 28	3	2	1	1	7
Total	67	30	32	18	147
% of Total	46%	20%	20%	12%	100%
Mean per issue	3.7	1.7	1.8	1	8.1

Graph 1

Comparison of Frequencies for Three Function Categories of "The People's Friend"



Endnotes

1. H. Craig Miner, Wichita: The Magic City, (Wichita, KS: Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum Association, 1988), pp. 19, 35.

2. In order to provide continuity throughout this paper, the term "black" is used to include references to African American, Afro-American, Negro and colored. I chose to follow the precedent of a respected historian, Roland Wolseley, in The Black Press, U.S.A., (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University, 1990), p. 8.

3. The People's Friend is preserved on microfilm at the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka, as well as other libraries.

4. H. Craig Miner, Wichita: The Early Years, 1865-80, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), p. 7.

5. Ibid., p. 78.

6. Ibid., p. 100.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., pp. 164-165.

9. Miner (1988), p. 96.

10. Ibid., p. 47.

11. Ibid., p. 96.

12. Ibid., p. 97.

13. Ibid., pp. 97-98.

14. Miner (1982), pp. 100-102.

15. Miner (1988), p. 97.

16. Wolseley, op. cit., p. 6; Armistead S. Pride, "The Negro Newspaper in the United States," Gazette, 2,3, (1956), p. 144; Lauren Kessler, The Dissident Press: Alternative Journalism in American History, (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1984), pp. 21-23; Jannette L. Dates, "Print News," in Jannette L. Dates and William Barlow, ed., Split Image: African Americans in the Mass Media, (Washington, D.C.: Howard University, 1990), pp. 343-344.

17. Wolseley, op. cit., pp. 3-5.

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22. Charlotte G. O'Kelly, "Black Newspapers and the Black Protest Movement: Their Historical Relationship, 1827-1945," Phylon, 43,1 (Spring, 1982), p. 1.

23. Campbell, op. cit., p. 3.

24. Pride (1951), op. cit., p. 180.

25. Campbell, op. cit., pp. 75-99.

26. Kessler, op. cit., pp. 15-20.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid., pp. 23-26.

30. T. Ella Strother, "The Black Image in the Chicago 'Defender,' 1905-1975," Journalism History, 4,4 (Winter, 1977-78), p. 96.

31. Kessler, op. cit., p. 25.

32. Ibid.

33. Lawrence R. Frey, Carl H. Botan, Paul G. Friedman and Gary L. Kreps, Investigating Communication: An Introduction to Research Methods, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1991), p. 212.

34. Kenneth D. Nordin, "In Search of Black Unity: An Interpretation of the Content and Function of Freedom's Journal," Journalism History, 4,4 (Winter 1977-78), pp. 123-128.

35. Teresa C. Klassen and Owen V. Johnson, "Sharpening of the Blade: Black Consciousness in Kansas, 1892-97," Journalism Quarterly, 63,2 (1986), pp. 305-310.

36. Strother, op. cit., pp. 137-147, 156.

37. Campbell, op. cit., pp. 96-99.

38. Ibid., pp. 93, 98.

39. The People's Friend, May 24, 1894, p. 1.

40. Emma Lou Thornbrough, "American Negro Newspapers, 1880-1914," Business History Review, 40 (1966), pp. 485-486.

41. Charles Stewart, Craig Allen Smith, & Robert E. Denton Jr., Persuasion and Social Movements, (Prospect Heights, Ill: Waveland Press, 1984), pp. 73-84.

42. Ibid, p. 75.

43. The People's Friend, May 31, 1894, p. 4.

44. The People's Friend, June 22, 1894, pp. 2,4.

45. The People's Friend, June 29, 1894, p. 4.

46. The People's Friend, Aug. 3, 1894, p. 4.

47. The People's Friend, May 24, 1894, p. 1.

48. The People's Friend, June 22, 1894, p. 4.

49. The People's Friend, July 13, 1894, p. 1.

50. The People's Friend, July 20, 1894, p. 1.

51. The People's Friend, June 29, 1894, p. 4.

52. The People's Friend, Sept. 14, 1894, p. 1.

53. The People's Friend, Aug. 10, 1894, p. 1.

54. The People's Friend, May 24, 1894, p. 1.

55. The People's Friend, May 31, 1894, p. 4.

56. The People's Friend, June 29, 1894, p. 1.

57. Campbell, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

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The Influence of Public Ownership on Publisher Autonomy

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Presented to the Media Management and Economics Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication annual convention in Kansas City, MO, August 14, 1993.

Abstract

The Influence of Public Ownership on Publisher Autonomy

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This study uses self-reports of managerial autonomy from newspaper publishers in order to compare the level of autonomy granted to publishers of newspapers owned by publicly and privately held newspaper chains. A hypothesis was proposed which asserts that publishers of newspapers owned by publicly held chains would have less autonomy than publishers of newspapers owned by privately held chains. The rationale for this hypothesis is the idea that excessive emphasis on profit maximization in publicly owned groups encourages standardization and heavy top-down control of newspaper management so parent companies can closely monitor their individual newspapers' spending. The evidence generated by this study supports this hypothesis, suggesting that publishers of newspapers owned by publicly held chains have significantly less autonomy in the day-to-day management of their newspapers than publishers of newspapers owned by privately held chains.

The Influence of Public Ownership on Publisher Autonomy

One of the most widely documented changes in the newspaper industry over the past several decades has been the steady concentration of newspaper ownership by media chains. Chain ownership of newspapers has more than doubled since 1960, when nearly 70 percent of all U.S. daily newspapers were independently owned (Busterna, 1988). Today, only one quarter of all dailies are independently owned (NNA, 1992). This sharp increase in chain ownership has been dubbed the "corporatization" of American journalism (Kwitny, 1990), and has prompted critics of chain ownership to argue that newspaper companies are tightening control beyond a reasonable level in order to maximize profits. Inherent in this charge is the assumption that chains demand a certain level of conformity from their subsidiary newspapers and the people who manage them. In other words, decisions made at the top regarding the values of the corporation as a whole are mandated to the individual newspapers through various forms of control and standardization.

Because the publisher serves as a direct link from the chain to the newspaper, an in-depth analysis of the publisher-chain relationship is useful to help us understand how chains operate and how the values held by a parent company impact the day-to-day management of community newspapers. Publishers of chain-owned newspapers face the difficult challenge of trying to satisfy their employer (the parent company), while also serving their communities (readers) and keeping their employees happy and productive. The extent to which a publisher is allowed to operate autonomously greatly impacts his ability to satisfy each of these constituencies.

While there are exceptions, most previous studies of chain ownership have failed to distinguish among the chains in their analysis, suggesting that future studies should begin to classify the chains into smaller, more homogeneous groups so that more meaningful analysis can be done. This study investigates the issue of public versus private ownership in order to determine if publicly owned newspapers chains are managed more tightly than privately owned newspaper chains. Specifically, this study compares the level of publisher autonomy in place at newspapers owned by publicly and privately held chains.

Literature Review

Engel (1970) defines work-related autonomy as the freedom to conduct work in accordance with one's professional training. In this study, publisher autonomy is defined as the freedom to make decisions and allocate resources without corporate approval. According to this definition, complete autonomy would exist in a situation where a publisher is the sole owner of a newspaper and is not required to seek approval from another entity prior to making decisions or allocating resources. This level of autonomy was more common in the newspaper industry when the majority of newspapers were independently owned.

Publishers of chain-owned newspapers, by definition, can never have complete autonomy because they do not own the newspapers they manage. However, the amount of autonomy they are granted by the chains that employ them can vary a great deal. Publishers with a high level of autonomy have the power to manage most like independent owner/publishers, while those with low levels of autonomy are more likely to serve as figureheads, managing according to chain-prescribed formulas.

Previous studies on the effects of chain ownership on newspaper management have found evidence which suggests that newspaper chains place a higher emphasis on maximizing profits than independently owned papers (Busterna, 1989). Chain-owned newspapers have also been found to charge higher rates for advertising than independently owned papers (Blankenburg, 1983, and Ferguson, 1983).

Research findings disagree, however, on the effects of chain ownership on the management of the news-editorial product. Studies have compared chain- versus independently-owned newspapers on a variety of variables assessing editorial quality, and have yielded mixed results (Drew and Wilhoit, 1976; Grotta, 1971; Lacy, Fico and Simon, 1989; Litman and Bridges, 1986). In their work investigating the effect of chain ownership on newspaper management goals, Demers and Wackman (1988) were unable to find evidence that showed chains are less concerned with quality than independently owned newspapers.

One possible reason previous studies of chain ownership have yielded inconsistent results is because the chains themselves vary enormously in size and management style. By most definitions, a newspaper chain can range from a privately owned, two-newspaper company, to a publicly owned, diversified media conglomerate. There are currently 133 newspaper chains in existence (NNA, 1992), and the wide disparity in the size and ownership of these groups makes it difficult to find common denominators among all chain-owned newspapers.

One of the most obvious distinctions between types of newspaper chains is public versus private ownership. In publicly owned firms, shares of stock are issued and traded on stock exchanges. This type of ownership increases a company's financial resources by spreading the risk among many owners (Fama and Jensen, 1983). In those companies that are publicly owned, executives may receive bonuses in the form of stock, and their compensation may be based at least in part on the stock's performance (Solomon, 1977). Thus, they have a strong, personal incentive to maximize the profitability of the firm.

Public stock ownership in the major newspapers chains is often blamed for forcing chains to adopt a short-term outlook in generating profits. In addition to satisfying a board of directors, publicly owned chains must pass the scrutiny of stock analysts. An article in Washington Journalism Review claims that "probably more than any other factor, people in the business attribute the urge for ever higher profits to the recent phenomenon of public stock ownership in the major chains" (Kwitny, 1990).

Shifts in power structure have been documented in organizations after being acquired by large, publicly owned companies. In his study on the impact of outside ownership on the book publishing industry, Powell (1982) documented an increase in the power of individuals in revenue-generating departments and a decrease in the power of individuals in non-revenue-generating departments. For example, editors no longer had the power to sign a book and then tell their publishing house to sell it. Instead, publicity departments and subsidiary rights directors had to be consulted before a book was purchased and in some cases had a formal vote in the decision-making process. This is consistent with Pfeffer's (1974) research on decision-making within a large university which found that the power of a department is a function of the amount of resources it contributes to the organization.

Powell's study also found that as publishing houses became integrated into complex corporate structures, communications lines grew longer and the organizational hierarchy became steeper. Editors spent more time involved in the business side of publishing: negotiating deals and consulting with lawyers, corporate managers and marketing and subsidiary rights directors.

A few studies of chain ownership of newspapers have made a distinction between public versus private ownership in their analysis. For example, Meyer (1983) found that publishers of newspapers owned by privately held groups are more likely to be similar to publishers of independently owned, non-chain newspapers than they are to publishers of publicly owned newspapers.

Studies have not found differences in news quality at publicly and privately owned newspapers, however. Lacy (1990) found no significant difference in news quality between chain newspapers that are privately owned and publicly owned, and Meyer and Wearden (1984) found no differences between the evaluation criteria of news employees at publicly owned and privately owned chain newspapers.

Hypothesis

Building on Meyer's finding that publishers of newspapers owned by privately held groups are more likely to be similar to publishers of independently owned newspapers than they are to publishers of publicly owned newspapers, and conventional wisdom which holds that public ownership of newspaper companies leads to a greater emphasis on profits, a hypothesis was formed to test the relationship between type of chain ownership and autonomy. Specifically, are chains that are publicly owned more likely to interfere with the publisher's freedom to run the newspaper?

Hypothesis: Publishers employed by publicly held newspaper chains have less autonomy than publishers employed by privately held newspaper groups.

Method

A mail survey was developed in order to assess the level of managerial autonomy in place for publishers employed by a sample of publicly owned and a privately owned newspaper chains. The five largest publicly owned and privately owned chains in the U.S., based on total circulation, were selected for analysis. The groups were determined based on circulation figures provided by the Newspaper Association of America's 1991 Facts About Newspapers. While privately held chains own approximately 50 percent of all daily newspapers in the U.S., and publicly held chains own just 24 percent, the percentage of total readership they represent is roughly equal. In 1990, privately owned groups controlled 41 percent of all U.S. daily newspaper circulation, while publicly held groups controlled 42 percent. Independently owned newspapers accounted for the remaining 17 percent (ASNE, 1990).

The publicly owned chains in the sample included Gannett Company, Knight-Ridder, Times Mirror Company, Thomson Newspapers, and The New York Times Company[1]. The privately owned chains in the sample included Newhouse Newspapers, Cox Enterprises, Hearst Newspapers, Media News Group, and Donrey Media Group.

Because the central research question was concerned with investigating managerial control imposed on publishers by out-of-town parent companies, newspapers located in the same city as the home office of the parent company were excluded from the sample, as were newspapers that were part of a joint operating agreement or where the group had less than a 50 percent interest in the newspaper.

With the exception of the Gannett, Thomson, and Donrey Media groups, all of the chains in the sample had 25 or fewer newspapers that fit the criteria for inclusion. Therefore, a systematic sample was generated for the Gannett, Thomson and Donrey Media chains, based on readership, in order to reduce their final sample to 25 newspapers per group. Once this was accomplished, the final sample

[1]While Dow Jones & Co. is technically the fourth largest publicly owned newspaper group in terms of total circulation, it was not used in this study because more than three-quarters of its circulation is derived from the Wall Street Journal, which is not typical of a local, community-oriented daily newspaper.

consisted of 104 newspapers owned by publicly held groups and 79 newspapers owned by privately held groups.

Each of the surveys was coded prior to mailing to indicate which chain owned the newspaper. This pre-coding also made it possible to determine if the newspaper was owned by a publicly or privately held chain. A representative from each of the newspapers included in the sample was contacted by telephone to verify the publisher's name and correct mailing address. One week prior to mailing the survey, a letter was sent to all of the publishers explaining the purpose of the survey and asking for their participation. The surveys were mailed with cover letters, and a self-addressed, stamped return envelope was included to facilitate response. Additionally, the publishers were offered the opportunity to receive a copy of the survey results at no charge in exchange for their participation. Three weeks after the first mailing of the survey, a second mailing was sent to all non-respondents, along with another cover letter and self-addressed, stamped envelope.

The survey itself was six pages in length and addressed issues of autonomy by asking the publishers to indicate the frequency and type of communication they have with their home offices, the types of actions they have the authority to carry out without first obtaining corporate approval, their opinion on the relationship between publisher autonomy and meeting profit goals, and other demographic questions.

For this study, "publisher" was defined a the chief executive officer of the newspaper who is in residence, and who oversees both the news and business functions of the newspaper. "Autonomy" was defined as the freedom to make decisions and allocate resources without corporate approval. An autonomy quotient was computed for each publisher by counting the number of hypothetical actions out of a list of 13 a publisher indicated he or she had the authority to carry out without first obtaining corporate permission. Those actions were as follows:

Hire an additional executive-level employee
Fire an executive-level employee
Increase the size of the news-editorial staff
Increase the size of the advertising staff
Purchase new computers for one department
Attend a week-long management seminar out-of-town
Subscribe to an additional wire service
Add or delete sections to the newspaper
Purchase a new printing press
Commission a readership survey
Make a donation of $1,000 to a local charity
Open an out-of-town news and/or advertising bureau

Autonomy quotients were computed for the publishers of both publicly and privately owned chains by averaging the individual publishers' responses. Once autonomy quotients were generated for public and private ownership overall, a t-test was performed to compare autonomy levels in these two types of ownership situations and to test the central research hypothesis.

Results

Out of 183 surveys mailed, 102 were returned after the first mailing, and 28 were returned after the second mailing, yielding a final response rate of 71 percent. Sixty-nine surveys were received from publishers in publicly owned chains and 60 surveys were received from publishers in privately owned chains. Response rates from the individual groups ranged from 56 percent to 100 percent. Twenty-one publishers sent letters requesting a copy of the survey results.

The results of the survey show strong support for the central hypothesis, indicating that publishers of newspapers owned by publicly held groups have significantly less autonomy overall than publishers of newspapers owned by privately held groups ($p=.0479$). Additionally, the survey results indicate that publishers of newspapers owned by publicly held chains have a higher percentage of their salaries tied to profit performance ($p=.000$), rank providing income for their owners as a higher priority ($p=.001$), are more likely to be required to submit operating plans to their home offices ($p=.000$), and have been in the newspaper business for a shorter period of time than publishers of newspapers owned by privately held chains.

Autonomy

Publishers responding to the survey overall indicate they have the autonomy to carry out an average of eight of the 13 hypothetical actions without first seeking approval from their home office. Publishers of newspapers owned by privately held groups report having the authority to carry out 8.5 of the 13 actions, while publishers of newspapers owned by publicly held groups report having the authority to carry out 7.5 actions, a 13 percent difference.

As would be expected, circulation size of the newspaper correlates highly with the autonomy level of the publisher, although it is not the sole influencing factor. An analysis of variance of autonomy level and circulation size yields a significant interaction effect (p=.421) between the two variables, suggesting that the effect of circulation on autonomy appears to be the same among the groups. As Table 1 shows, as a newspaper's circulation increases, there is a corresponding increase in the number of tasks a publisher can perform without seeking approval from the home office. Nevertheless, there does appear to be a difference in the level of autonomy granted to publishers of newspapers owned by publicly held and privately held groups, although that difference is not as strong among newspapers with a circulation of more than 100,000.

Table 1 about here

Among the actions listed on the survey, publishers of newspapers owned by privately held chains are more likely to have the authority to carry out certain types of actions without first seeking approval from their home offices. As Table 2 indicates, a greater percentage of publishers in privately held chains than in publicly held chains report having the authority to hire an additional executive-level employee, fire an executive-level employee, increase the size of the news staff, increase the size of the advertising staff, subscribe to an additional wire service, add or delete sections to the newspaper, and commission a readership survey.

A greater percentage of publishers of newspapers owned by publicly held groups, however, have the authority to donate $1,000 to a local charity. There is no significant difference in the responses from the two groups for having the authority to purchase new computers for one department, purchase new office furniture for one department, attend a week-long seminar out-of-town, purchase a new printing press, or open an out-of-town news and/or advertising bureau. Additionally, there is no significant difference in the level of expenditures publishers can make without first obtaining corporate approval. Publishers of newspapers owned by privately owned chains report having the authority to spend an average of $15,173 without approval, while publishers of newspapers owned by publicly owned groups report having the authority to spend an average of $13,708.

Table 2 about here

The results of the survey show there is no significant difference between the two groups in terms of how often the publishers talk with someone from their home office on the telephone, nor in the number of times they are visited by someone from their home office. However, publishers of newspapers owned by publicly held chains report they travel to their home offices slightly more often than publishers of newspapers owned by privately held chains.

<u>Ownership and profit performance</u>

While the majority of all publishers responding to the survey (82%) report agreeing with the statement, "As long as profit quotas are being met, a publisher has complete autonomy over how his/her newspaper is run," a significantly larger percentage of publishers of newspapers in privately held groups agree with this statement than do publishers of newspapers in publicly held groups (93% versus 74%, p=.003).

A greater majority of publishers employed by publicly held chains indicate their total annual compensation is tied to profit performance. Additionally, publishers in publicly owned chains are more likely to have a larger percentage of their total compensation tied to profit performance than are publishers employed by privately owned chains (26% versus 17%, p=.000).

When asked to rate on a scale of one to seven how important the goal of providing income to the owners or stockholders of the parent company is to the management of their chain, publishers employed by publicly held chains ranked this priority nearly a full point higher than publishers employed by privately held chains. Publishers in publicly held chains rank providing income for the stockholders of the company an average of 6.3 out of 7 in importance, while publishers in privately held chains rank providing income for the owners of the company an average of 5.6 out of 7, a significantly lower score (p=.001).

Publicly owned newspaper chains appear to require more formal planning than privately owned chains as well. Nearly all of the publishers from publicly owned chains (97%) report they must submit formal operating plans to their home office regularly, while only two-thirds of the publishers from privately owned chains indicate they must do so. Similarly, publishers from publicly owned chains rank "planning for the long-range" as a higher priority on a scale of one to seven than publishers from privately owned chains (5.7 vs. 4.8, p=.000).

There is no significant difference between the two types of ownership in the ranking of "maintaining current profits," "increasing profits," or "maintaining current market share" on a scale of one to seven.

Experience and background

Publishers employed by privately held chains have been in the newspaper business an average of three and a half years longer than publishers employed by publicly held chains (28 years vs. 24.5 years, p=.029), and have spent more time working for their current groups (17 years vs. 13 years, p=.022). They also tend to be slightly older than publishers employed by publicly owned chains. The average age of publishers responding to the survey from publicly owned chains is 48, while the average age of publishers from privately owned chains is 51 (p=.029). There is no significant difference between the two types of ownership in the number of years the respondents have served as publisher of the newspaper they currently oversee, except in newspapers with circulation greater than 100,000. In these papers, publishers employed by privately held groups have been in their current positions for an average of eight years, while publishers in publicly owned groups have been in their positions an average of 3.6 years (p=.011).

There is no significant difference between the two types of ownership in the number of clubs or boards the publishers indicate they serve on. Publishers employed by publicly owned chains are members of an average of 6.5 clubs and serve on an average of 5 boards, while publishers employed by privately owned chains are members of an average of 7.6 clubs and serve on an average of 5.3 boards.

Discussion and Summary

This study uses self-reports of managerial autonomy from newspaper publishers in order to compare the level of autonomy granted to publishers of newspapers owned by publicly and privately held newspaper chains. A hypothesis was proposed which asserts that publishers of newspapers owned by publicly held chains would have less autonomy than publishers of newspapers owned by privately held chains. The rationale for this hypothesis is the idea that an excessive emphasis on profit maximization in publicly owned groups encourages standardization and heavy top-down control of newspaper management so parent companies can closely monitor their individual newspapers' spending. The evidence generated by this study supports this hypothesis, suggesting that publishers of newspapers owned by publicly held companies have significantly less autonomy in the day-to-day management of their newspapers than publishers of newspapers owned by privately held companies. Publishers working for privately held newspaper chains appear to have more autonomy to carry out true managerial functions: hiring and firing of employees, and spending money on improvements to the newspaper.

While previous studies have found that chain-owned and corporate-managed newspapers place a greater emphasis on profits than owner-managed, locally controlled newspapers, these findings suggest this emphasis on profit maximization and standardization is most apparent in those chains that are publicly owned. Not only do publishers of newspapers owned by publicly held groups have less autonomy than publishers of newspapers owned by privately held groups, they have a higher percentage of their salaries tied to profit performance and they consider providing income for their owners a higher priority than their counterparts at newspapers owned by privately held chains.

This study does not find any difference, however, between public versus private ownership of newspaper chains and publishers' concern for quality in their newspapers. While no independent measurement of quality was made in this analysis, publishers from both types of ownership ranked the goal of "publishing newspapers of high quality" roughly the same in importance. Furthermore, this study found that a greater percentage of publishers employed by publicly held chains have news-editorial experience than publishers employed by privately held chains. Thus, there is no support for the argument that an excessive emphasis on profit maximization leads to a decrease in quality of the news product. Instead, it is possible that a lack of concern for quality is a value judgment made at the corporate level, and is not related to whether the group is publicly or privately owned.

The unusual finding that a greater percentage of publishers in privately owned chains than in publicly owned chains agree that as long as profit quotas are being met a publisher has complete autonomy over how his/her newspaper is run, suggests that standardization and control at publicly owned newspapers is not in place solely to maximize profits. It is possible that public ownership may lead to an increase in standardization in all areas of management in order to simplify the parent company's managerial responsibilities. It is much easier to have one rule in place at all subsidiary newspapers than it is to have different procedures in place at each of the newspapers a chain owns. Privately owned chains appear to be less rigid in dictating the day-to-day management of their individual newspapers as long as certain goals (such as profits) are being achieved.

The results of this analysis strongly suggest that future studies of chain ownership should investigate smaller, more homogeneous sub-groups in order to document more consistent patterns of management in chain-owned newspapers. One such breakdown of chain ownership is public versus private ownership, as this study has investigated. Other breakdowns worth pursuing include size of the chain, size of the newspapers owned by the chain, and regional versus national distribution of the newspapers owned by the chain.

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Table 1.

Mean number of actions publisher can carry out without seeking approval from home office
(out of 13 hypothetical actions)

Circulation size	Overall	Publicly owned	Privately owned
Under 25,000	6.6	5.9	7.0
25,001-50,000	7.3	6.4	8.5
50,001-100,000	9.3	8.6	10.0
more than 100,000	10.0	9.4	10.5

Table 2.

Hypothetical actions and %of publishers who report having the authority to carry them out without seeking approval from home office

	Publicly owned	Privately owned
Hire an additional executive-level employee	42%	69%*
Fire an executive-level employee	52%	80%*
Increase the size of the news-editorial staff	59%	79%*
Increase the size of the advertising staff	64%	80%*
Purchase new computers for one department	43%	39%
Purchase new office furniture for one department	65%	64%
Attend a week-long management seminar out-of-town	83%	80%
Subscribe to an additional wire service	68%	79%*
Add or delete sections to the newspaper	73%	95%*
Purchase a new printing press	0%	0%
Commission a readership survey	56%	69%*
Make a donation of $1,000 to a local charity	92%	74%*
Open an out-of-town news and/or advertising bureau	52%	48%

* Difference is significant at $p<.05$

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Coverage of Africa By the African-American Press: Perceptions of African-American Newspaper Editors

by

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A paper presented to the Minorities and Communication Division at the 1993 AEJMC Convention, Kansas City, MO.

This study investigated the reporting of African events and issues in African-American newspapers.

Media coverage of Africa and the Third World by U.S. news organizations is often described as scanty, crisis-oriented and usually negative. Such coverage led to a call for and debate over the New World Information Order which would ensure that news about developing nations are covered adequately and fairly. For instance, such coverage would emphasize the positive aspects of the development process in developing nations, rather than focus only on problem. It would cover the evolution of progress, rather than focus on timely events. It would also feature everyday people, not just prominent individuals[1].

Review of the Literature

A review of the literature shows that various news factors or criteria influence the selection of foreign news items for local publication. Galtung and Ruge[2] stated that universal news values, such as impact or size of an event, unusualness, and cultural similarity of the event with the audience, help determine whether an event is seen as news. They also pointed out that Western nations typically have four news values: eliteness of nations, conflict, prominence, and personal affinity with the event. Their study showed that the more distant a nation is from an event, the more likely it is that elite people's actions will be covered. They also stated that the more distant the nation, the more negative the reported event. According to them, "positive things that happen in the underdog countries will go under-reported and this will promote an image of these countries as being unable to govern themselves, and as inherently inferior to the topdog countries."[3] Cultural relevance has also been found to be a factor that determines the amount and type of coverage one country receives in another country's press. Nam[4] highlighted cultural relevance by stating that countries involved in the same event would report the actions taken by one another. Hester[5] suggested that cultural affinities and economic association between countries are determinants of foreign news coverage.

Findings from Peterson's 1979 study of reporters' and editors' news choices support some of Galtung's and Ruge's conclusions. According to Peterson, events that were unambiguous, unexpected or timely were more likely to be ranked by reporters as newsworthy[6]. She also stated that items that were greater in scope, involved elite people or nations, or were negative, were rated as more newsworthy by reporters.

Some studies[7] have shown that elite nations get more coverage than non-elite nations and that economic factors such as a nation's gross national product, or the amount of trade between two nations explain why certain nations receive more coverage than others.

Chang, Shoemaker and Brendlinger[8] found that relevance of an event to the United States, and whether the event broke U.S. norms determined whether the foreign event would be covered or not. Ahern[9] found that an increase in a country's gross national product, trade and political relations with the United States tends to lead to more coverage of that country in elite U.S. newspapers.

Studies[10] also show that other factors, such as market and organizational characteristics of the newspapers as well as editors' personal background and experience, affect editors' perception of foreign news criteria.

Editors are called media gatekeepers because they are prominent among those deciding what goes in or is left out in a news presentation. Perceived interest of readers in the event plays a major role in editors' news selection process. Many U.S. media gatekeepers think their audiences are not interested in foreign news, especially news from what they see as little-known countries. According to former foreign correspondent John M. Hamilton, "There is something of an unwritten rule among journalists that local news is news and foreign news is foreign; that people want plenty of the former and will tolerate only small doses of the latter."[11]

Another reason for the scant mention and treatment of Africa in the U.S. media is that very few American media organizations have staff permanently assigned to that continent. Most media organizations, therefore, rely on the wire services for news from Africa. The wire services have a preference for crises-oriented stories. Wilhoit and Weaver[12] found that while the Associated Press and United Press International had increased their coverage of the developing countries, many of those stories involved conflict.

Segal thinks that development news or feature news about African nations is seldom reported because of "a belief among American editors that their publics are not interested in feature stories from Africa unless there is a `cute' note to them; an animal touch or some other quaintness."[13] This generalization must exclude African-Americans in that LaBrie and Zima found that a majority (66 percent) of African-Americans saw the role of the black press as that of "informing the black community about itself, its environment and its heritage."[14] Bodie[15] also found that black-owned newspapers helped fill information gaps and bolster racial pride for African-Americans. Compared to the white media's coverage of Africa, Bodie found that African-American newspapers had lower incidences of crisis reporting. According to him, they concentrated more on news about economic development, internal administration, cultural change and exchange of visits between American and African leaders[16]. Bodie concluded that the overall story content of African American newspapers "reflected an apparent desire to achieve balance rather than highlight bad news."[17]

It is therefore assumed that news from and about Africa is of interest to African-Americans, given their efforts and desire to establish links and bonds of understanding with their countries of cultural origin.

Research Questions and Major Hypothesis

This research was, therefore, designed to determine the news selection process of African-American newspaper editors in terms of news about Africa. Specifically, it addresses two research questions: 1) How do they decide which African news to publish? 2) What influences their decisions about the quantity and quality of coverage?

This study hypothesizes that editors' perception of a foreign news event has a direct and significant impact on the ways they process (that is, organize, classify and use) the news stories they receive daily.

Method

To test this hypothesis, a two-page questionnaire was mailed to 186 editors of African-American newspapers in 1991 and 1992. The list of editors was compiled from the newspapers listed in the 1991 Editor and Publisher International Year Book because at the time this study was designed in 1991, a complete listing of all African-American newspapers in the United States was not available.

The questionnaire listed 23 items adapted from the studies cited earlier. To ascertain what personal, organizational and social factors significantly influence the editors' decisions on quantity and quality of coverage, questions were asked about the editors': (1) personal interest in African news; (2) foreign travel, including travel to Africa; (3) years of working experience (as a journalist and as an editor); (4) number of news wire services their newspapers subscribe to; (5) number of pages they publish; (6) space devoted to foreign and African news; (7) frequency of publication; (8) racial makeup of their circulation areas; and (9) their papers' commitment to educating the public about the heritage of African-Americans.

The editors were also asked to rate the importance of each of the following 12 factors in their selection of African news for their newspapers: (1) physical distance of event from the United States; (2) U.S. involvement in the event; (3) cultural relevance to United States; (4) U.S. trade relations with the country in which the event occurs; (5) readers' interest in the event;

(6) timeliness of the event; (7) threat of the event to the United States; (8) threat of the event to world peace; (9) human interest of the event; (10) economic development of the country in which the event occurs; (11) military strength of country; and (12) loss of lives and property.

The questionnaire included questions that asked for responses on five-point scales ranging from extremely interested to not at all interested, very much committed to not at all committed, and very important to not at all important.

One hundred and eighty-six questionnaires were mailed in November 1991. Each had a cover letter and a self-addressed, stamped return envelope. Forty were returned as undeliverable. Thus, the study had an effective sample of 146 editors. A second wave of mailing was sent January 1992; a third in February. Of the 146 possible respondents, 75 returned completed questionnaires, for a 51 percent response rate. Thirty-nine questionnaires were returned in the first wave; 10 in the second; and 26 in the third mailing.

__Editor and Newspaper Profiles__

Of the 75 respondents, 56 had been in journalism for more than 10 years. Thirty-nine had spent more than a decade as editors. The newspapers are overwhelmingly weeklies (64), two are dailies, three are biweeklies, three come out twice a week, two are published three times a week while one is a monthly. Thirty-four of the newspapers subscribe to a wire service; nine to two services, and one to three services.

Sixteen of the 75 newspapers publish fewer than 12 pages an issue, 32 of them 16 pages, while 27 newspapers have more than 20 pages. About 50 percent (37) of the newspapers devote less than one page per issue to foreign and African news. Twelve percent (9) of the newspapers devote more than two pages to foreign and African news. Twelve of the 75 newspapers circulate in cities where African-Americans make up more than 50 percent of the population. Thirty-one newspapers serve cities where African-Americans are 26 percent to 50 percent of the population. Twenty-six papers are published in cities with 10 percent to 25 percent African-American population, while six newspapers circulate in cities where African-Americans make up less than 10 percent of the population.

While 56 of the respondents have travelled outside the United States, 16 have been to Africa. When asked of their personal interest in African news, 51 percent (38) of the respondents said they were extremely interested, and another 41 percent (31) said they were interested. Only two respondents said they were indifferent, and four said they were somewhat interested.

On their newspapers' commitment to educating the public about the heritage of African Americans, 68 percent (51) of the respondents said they perceived their newspapers were very much committed, and another 28 percent (21) said their papers were committed. One respondent, respectively, indicated not at all committed, somewhat committed, and cannot tell.

Table 1 presents the mean rating for each of the 12 news factors and the percent of editors indicating that they identify the factor as being very important in their selection of African news. The editors considered loss of lives and property very important in their selection of African news (mean = 4.36), followed by timeliness (mean = 4.32), readers' interest (mean = 4.26), human interest (mean = 4.22), and U.S. involvement (mean = 4.06). In fact, about five in 10 editors indicated loss of lives and property (52%) and readers' interest (52%) to be very important. Almost five in 10 editors regarded timeliness and human interest as very important. Also, slightly more than three in 10 editors (30.7%) rated U.S. involvement highly.

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

The editors tend not to consider physical distance from the United States to be a factor in their African news selection (mean = 2.46). In fact, only 5.3% of the editors indicated physical distance to be very important. Only 6.7% of the editors indicated military strength of country to be very important, while 17.3% rated threat of event to United States highly.

Four factors - - loss of lives and property, timeliness, readers' interest, and human interest - - averaged a rating above four. They also had relatively small standard deviations. This means the editors generally agreed that the four factors were very important.

Pearson correlation coefficients for questions referring to the editors' background, their newspaper characteristics and the 12 factors in news selection were calculated to discover the relationship between these variables. Eight of those correlations were significant (i.e., $p<.05$).

The longer the respondents have been journalists, the higher they rated the importance of economic development of a country in their news selection process ($p=.016$). Respondent's years as editor had a negative correlation with threat of the event to United States. It means that the longer the respondents have been editors, the lower they rated the importance of threat of the event to U.S. as a news factor ($p=.027$). On the other hand, respondent's years as editor significantly correlates positively with U.S. involvement in the event ($p=.032$). The longer the respondents have been editors, the higher they rated the importance of U.S. involvement in the event in their news selection process.

The space given to African and foreign news correlates positively with readers' interest in the event ($p=.036$). The more space their papers devoted to foreign and African news, the higher the editors rated the importance of readers' interest.

Respondent's interest in African news significantly correlates positively with human interest ($p=.020$) and cultural relevance of event to United States ($p=.012$). It means that the more personal interest the editors have in African news, the higher they rated the importance of human interest and cultural relevance of event to United States in their news selection.

Respondent's newspaper commitment to an African-American heritage education had a negative correlation with threat of event to United States. It means that the more their papers are committed to educating the public about the heritage of African

Americans, the lower the editors rated the importance of threat of event to United States in their news selection process (p=.032). On the other hand, respondent's newspaper commitment to an African American heritage education significantly correlates positively with U.S. involvement in the event (p=.005). It means that the more commitment their papers showed in educating the public about the heritage of African Americans, the higher the editors rated the importance of United States involvement in the event in their news selection process. In other words, they wish to show the link, the multi-cultural bond, with being American and having an African ethnicity.

<u>Discussion and Implications</u>

African-American editors' perceptions of news from and about Africa influence how they use the news. The editors perceive foreign news just like other Western editors. Their perceptions appear to hinge on individual and organizational factors such as personal interest in African news, years of working experience, wire service subscription, space devoted to African and foreign news, and their papers' commitment to educating the public about the heritage of African-Americans. All these reflect habits of American perception. To the extent organizational and individual factors influence the editors' perceptions, the study validates the findings of Lacy[18], and Weaver and Wilhoit[19].

The importance of professionalism is indicated by the fact that the more experienced journalists in the sample think the U.S. media should carry more news about Africa's economic progress. This seems to strengthen the multi-cultural bond of being American and having an African ethnicity. It is, however, not for the sake of Africa per se.

This study also highlights the role information and education play in international and inter-racial relations. While editors whose newspapers showed more commitment to educating the public about the heritage of African-Americans downplayed the importance of threat of an event to the United States in their news selection process, they, at the same time, thought that U.S. involvement in an event warranted adequate coverage. In other words, the editors are saying that international and inter-racial understanding can be improved by more reporting.

This study's findings have some implications for journalists working for black-oriented newspapers. The space devoted to African news needs to be increased to match the high degrees of personal interest in African events and commitment to educating the public about the heritage of African-Americans.

On another level, interest in Africa seems to be relatively inelastic. While Masmoudi and other proponents of the New World Information Order wanted more coverage for the sake of developing countries, African-American editors seemed to want more for their sakes and those of other African-Americans.

So, despite an increase in interest, awareness and sophistication of African-related reporting in African-American newspapers, black editors are nonetheless American by orienting news from and about Africa primarily from the African-Americans' aims, while the New World Information Order sought to report Third World news as a right of the countries themselves. It seems the gatekeeping practices of African-American newspaper editors are basically similar to those of other Western editors. They are distinct, however, in subject matter of reporting.

Table 1

Importance of factors in editors' selection of African news

News Factor	Mean Rating*	SD	% indicating very important	N
Loss of lives and property	4.36	.84	52.0	75
Timeliness	4.32	.73	45.3	75
Readers' interest	4.26	1.00	52.0	75
Human interest	4.22	.87	42.7	75
U.S. involvement	4.06	.82	30.7	75
Cultural relevance to United States	3.98	1.03	30.7	75
Economic development of country	3.98	1.13	38.7	75
Threat of event to world peace	3.97	1.12	37.3	75
U.S. trade relations	3.45	1.21	18.7	75
Threat of event to United States	3.38	1.25	17.3	75
Military strength of country	2.82	1.23	6.7	75
Physical distance from United States	2.46	1.29	5.3	75

* The mean rating was based on a five-point scale, with 1 representing "not at all important" and 5 "very important."

1.For example, see M. Masmoudi, "The New World Information Order," Journal of Communication, 21: 172 - 179 (1979).

2.J. Galtung and M. H. Ruge, "The Structure of Foreign News," Journal of Peace Research, 2: 64 - 91 (1965).

3.Ibid., p. 82.

4.S. Nam, "The Flow of International News Into Korea," Gazette, 16: 14 - 26 (1970).

5.Al Hester, "An Analysis of News Flow From Developed and Developing Nations," Gazette, 17: 29 - 43 (1971).

6.Sophia Peterson, "Foreign News Gatekeepers and Criteria of Newsworthiness," Journalism Quarterly, 56: 124 (1979).

7.For an example, see Herbert Kariel and Lynn Rosenvall, "Factors Influencing International News Flow," Journalism Quarterly, 61: 509 - 516 (1984).

8.T. K. Chang, P. J. Shoemaker, and N. Brendlinger, "Determinants of International News Coverage in the U.S. Media," Communication Research, 14: 396 - 414 (1987).

9.Thomas J. Ahern, "Determinants of Foreign Coverage in U.S. Newspaper," in Robert L. Stevenson and Donald L. Shaw, eds. Foreign News and the New World Information Order, (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1984), pp. 217 - 236.

10.For examples, see S. S. Lacy, "The Effects of Intracity Competition On Daily Newspaper Content," Journalism Quarterly, 64: 281 - 290 (1987).

11.John M. Hamilton, "The News of the World is Right Here On Main Street," Quill, 73: 14 (1985).

12.Cleveland Wilhoit and David Weaver, "Foreign News Coverage In Two U.S. Wire Services: An Update," Journal of Communication, 33: 132 - 148 (1983).

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16.Ibid., p. 123.

17.Ibid., p. 129.

18.Lacy, <u>op.cit.</u>

19.Weaver and Wilhoit, <u>op.cit.</u>

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Color's Influence on the
Content and Origin of Newsphotos
by Cindy M. Brown

Introduction

Fifteen years ago "black-and-white and read all over" described most newspapers in the United States. Today even *The* ("old gray lady") *New York Times* has begun publishing color on Sunday inside section fronts.[1] Most newspapers across the country made the move from reproducing black-and-white to reproducing color before *The Times*. Most that didn't will be making the switch soon.[2]

This paper focuses on how the switch to color has affected the content and origin of newspaper photographs.

The Context of the Study

The technology needed to reproduce quality color photographs on a daily basis has been available since the 1950s.[3] But most newspaper publishers were content to watch television break ground in color use.

While color revolutionized the television industry in the 1960s, newspapers -- because of their local nature -- didn't feel the heat of direct color competition until the early 1980s when *USA Today* began to invade local markets.

At many papers today black-and-white photographs are considered second-class. Numerous newspapers around the country use black-and-white photos only on inside pages. "There is a real feeling that if (a photograph) is not in color, it might as well not exist," Sandra Elsert, *San Jose Mercury News* senior picture editor, told *Editor & Publisher* in 1988.[4]

Concern that the traditional "fly-on-the-wall" approach to photojournalism had given way to a posed studio-like approach and that the push for color had been a major influence in moving photojournalism in that direction was expressed in an *Editor & Publisher* article published in 1988.[5]

A similar sentiment was expressed by Larry Nighswander, illustrations editor of *National Geographic World* magazine. "Newspapers venture in color has resulted in us trying to over-control our subjects. We need to forget what kind of film is in the camera and get back to capturing what is happening in our community."[6]

At a Society of Newspaper Design summer camp, Bill Ostendorf, director of photography at the *Providence Journal,* told participants "The switch to color photography almost always results in weaker photos. Photographers start worrying more about lighting and exposure. Editors start picking pictures for color rather than content."[7]

Many photo editors and photojournalists alike are still concerned about the possible distortion of the traditional aim of photojournalism the move from black-and-white to color may have caused. The evidence presented in this paper should be useful to photojournalists, editors, publishers, newspaper readers and journalism educators.

Editors presented with evidence of the effects of color use may want to make an effort to guard against results they consider distortions of the aim of photojournalism when making assignments, editing film or choosing whether to run a black-and-white or color photograph. Photographers presented with the same evidence can decide if the effects of color have been positive or negative and may wish to make efforts to overcome any effects they consider negative.

Some Differences Between Black-and-White and Color

The obvious difference between black-and-white and color photographs is hue. This is the difference that attracts readers and the reason most newspapers have switched from black-and-white to color. The effect of hue is summed up in the "color for color's sake" argument. This is really two separate but related ideas. The first idea, which I will call "the gratuitous use of color" idea, is that some newspapers are choosing color photos on the basis of colors in the photographs not the content of those photos.[8] The second idea, which I will call "the we paid for it" idea, is that newspaper publishers want to see color photos on the front of their papers no matter the content because they think color sells and because they have invested a lot of money in the technology needed to reproduce it well.[9]

Another difference between color and black-and-white photographs is the sensitivity of the film. Color film is sensitive to different colors of light: black-and-white is not.

This sensitivity means that shifts in color balance occur when photographs are taken in the wrong color of light.[10]

In addition, the technology of photographic reproduction is different for black-and-white and color photography. Extra time to make color separations is needed when color photographs are reproduced. Color photographs must be taken two to three hours prior to deadline, whereas black-and-white photos can be ready in about half an hour.[11]

Literature Review

Little research about the content of color photographs in newspapers has been published. However, several related areas have been studied. These studies fall into four major categories: 1) reader preference for color; 2) the number of papers using color; 3) the use of color as a competitive tool, and 4) the content and origin of color newspaper photographs.

1) Reader Preference for Color

Studies indicate that readers like to see color in their paper. In a study published in 1976 conducted by J.W. Click and Guido H. Stempel III, readers rated front pages with four-color halftones significantly higher than pages with black-and-white photographs.[12] A national survey conducted in 1986 for the Newspaper Advertising Bureau showed that 74 percent of U.S. adults wanted to see color in their daily newspaper.[13] A 1988 survey sponsored by the same group found that 29 percent of those surveyed said color in their papers was "very" or "somewhat" important to them.[14]

In a study conducted in 1985 by Sandra H. Utt and Steve Pasternack, 90 percent of the subjects viewing slides of newspaper pages rated color photographs as attractive. In the same study, 72 percent of those subjects rated use of large photos as attractive.[15]

Even though readers profess a preference for color, a recent Poynter Institute eye-track study conducted by Mario Garcia and Peggie Stark showed color does not automatically draw more viewers to a photograph. The study showed in certain content categories -- news and sports -- color photos are "processed"[16] more than black-and-white photos. In other categories, feature for example, color and black-and-white photos are "processed" at an equal rate.[17]

When looking at photos that changed from color to black-and-white between prototypes studied, Garcia and Stark found the typical reader "processed" 78 percent of the photos published in black-and-white and 81 percent of those same photos when published in color. They also found that equal sizes of black-and-white and color photographs drew similar amounts of attention from viewers.[18]

2) The Number of Papers Using Color

Studies show a growing number of papers are using color photographs at least on an occasional basis. A 1979 study conducted by The Poynter Institute showed 12 percent of North American papers were using some color.[19] In a 1983 survey conducted by Utt and Pasternack, 35 percent of the 78 papers responding reported regular use of process color[20] on their front pages. An additional 28 percent reported occasional use of color on Page 1.[21] Another Poynter study conducted in 1983 showed 53 percent of North American papers used some color.[22] A content analysis of newspapers that were published in November of 1984 conducted by Keith Kenney and Stephen Lacy showed that 32 percent of the 114 papers studied used front-page color regularly and 59 percent used it occasionally.[23]

A survey conducted by Garcia and Stark for the eye-track study mentioned earlier showed that 83 percent of the editors, art directors and designers responding worked for papers where they would be increasing color use in the next five years.[24]

A survey of newspaper advertising and production executives conducted by the American Newspaper Publishers association in August of 1990 showed 97 percent of North American newspapers were using color at least once a week and 86 percent were using it daily.[25]

3) The Use of Color as a Competitive Tool

Several studies have dealt with the use of color as a competitive tool. The Kenney and Lacy survey mentioned above found that as competition increases between papers, the percentage of front pages devoted to color increases.[26] This finding reinforces findings of a content analysis study conducted by David H. Weaver and L.E. Mullins. Weaver and Mullins analyzed newspapers published in competitive markets during the last six months of 1972 and the first six months of 1973. They found a tendency for "trailing" papers to use more color photographs than "leading" papers.[27]

Also related to the competitive use of color are findings from the survey of 78 papers conducted by Utt and Pasternack mentioned earlier. They found that 95 percent of the editors surveyed thought a "good looking" paper could be a factor in a competitive environment.[28] And in another study conducted by Utt and Pasternack, this one a content analysis of papers with circulations over 100,000, newspapers "trailers" were found to use more modern devices than leading newspapers. (Included in their list of modern graphic devices were color photographs.)[29]

4) Content and Origin of Color Photographs

The previous study most directly related to this one is a content analysis completed in 1988, in which I compared front-page photographs published in *The* (Bloomington) *Herald-Telephone*[30] during six weeks of 1984 (before the use of color) with those published in 1988 (after the use of color). I found a substantial increase in the percentage of feature photographs (from 23 percent in 1984 to 45 percent in 1988) and a substantial decrease in the percentage of news photos (from 30 percent in 1984 to 22 percent in 1988).[31] I also found a slight shift away from wire photo use (from seven percent in 1984 to four percent in 1988.)[32]

<u>**Hypotheses**</u>

The broad question this paper attempts to answer is: **Has the use of color affected newspaper photographs and if so, how?**

Based on my own experience, interviews with photo editors and photojournalists,[33] and the pilot study mentioned above, my specific hypotheses are as follows:

1) Fewer news photos and more feature photos appear on newspaper front pages after a newspaper switches to color.

This hypothesis is based on the idea that the extra time needed to reproduce color results in papers using fewer breaking news photographs and more feature photographs when reproducing color on the front page of their papers. It was supported in the pilot study of front page photographs at *The Herald Times*.

2) Fewer wire photos and more staff-produced photos are published on front pages after color use.

A shift away from wire photos on front pages after a switch to color seemed likely at the time of this study because the quality of wire service color was not as high as that of staff-produced color. Also, although the Associated Press was shooting all photos on color film, very few papers (only those paying extra for Laserphoto II) were receiving more than a small number of color wire photos.[34] The pilot study discussed above showed slight support for this hypothesis, but *The Herald-Telephone*, because of its emphasis on local news, was not the best paper upon which to test this hypothesis.

3) Afternoon newspapers will show a greater shift to feature and staff-produced photos (see hypotheses 1 and 2) than morning papers.

This hypothesis is based on the idea that extra time needed to reproduce color photos affects afternoon papers more than morning papers because of the early deadlines at afternoon papers. *The Herald-Telephone* was an afternoon paper and results from the study of photos in it may have shown a more pronounced effect than morning papers because of time constraints.

4) Newspapers using color on a frequent basis[35] will show a greater shift to feature and staff-produced photos (see hypotheses 1 and 2) than those using it occasionally.

This hypothesis is based on the idea that papers that are not pressured into using color on the front page frequently will have more latitude in choosing black-and-white photos (when they are the most newsworthy photos,) than papers that have a mandate to use color almost everyday. This is related to the "we paid paid for it" part of the "color for color's sake" argument. *The Herald-Times* used front-page color on all but one day of the six weeks studied. Results from the study of photos in it may have been more pronounced than results from papers where color is used occasionally.

5) When black-and-white photos from papers where color is available are compared with the color photos used, a higher percentage will be news photos and a lower percentage feature photos.

This hypothesis is based on the idea that after a paper has moved to color, it will be choosing to use black-and-white photos for their newsworthiness, whereas color photos will be used in both news and feature situations. A black-and-white feature will have to be especially strong to make it onto the front page after the move to color -- unless color is not available on the page that day.

6) When black-and-white photos from papers where color is available are compared with color photos used in those same papers, a higher percentage of color photos will be staff-produced photos.

This hypothesis is based on the idea that since the quality of wire color is not as high as staff-produced color and wire color is not as readily available as staff-produced color, more color photos will be staff-produced.

Methodology

To answer the research question posed in this study I analyzed front-page photographs in 10 newspapers. Front-page photos from one month in 1989 were compared with photos from the same month in 1983.[36]

The ten papers analyzed were chosen after I sent surveys to picture editors at 100 newspapers to find out about color use at their papers.[37] I chose my sample of ten papers after I received responses from the surveys. The hypotheses I was testing led me to choose purposive sampling because I needed the same number of morning as afternoon papers and the same number of papers using color occasionally as those using it frequently.

Two of the ten papers chosen were still using black-and-white photos exclusively for front-page photographs in 1989. One of these was a morning paper and one was an afternoon paper. These two papers served as controls for the study. They were included in an effort to rule out confounding variables so effects found in the other eight papers could be more confidently attributed to color use.

The other eight papers studied were papers that started using front-page color photographs after 1983. Of these eight, four were morning and four were afternoon papers; four were using color occasionally and four were using it frequently.

All front-page photographs other than mugshots were coded according to subject matter, origin[38] and whether they were color or black-and-white. The subject matter was coded into 14 categories: armed conflict; accidents/ disasters; social, political and religious conflict; scheduled news; news portraits; features; feature portraits; sports features; sports action; sports portraits; business; business portraits; business still-life and news still-life,[39] and then collapsed as follows: spot news = accidents/disasters + social, political and religious conflict; general news = scheduled news + news portraits + news still-life; features = features + feature portraits; sports = sports action + sports features + sports portraits; business = business + business portraits + business still-life.

I coded all photos myself, then asked someone to read the subject-matter category definitions and recode two months worth of photographs so I could figure intercoder reliability data. Since little judgment was necessary in coding origin, I only figured intercoder reliability for subject-matter. The raw percentage of agreement for the subject matter in the collapsed categories was 87.0 percent. The percentage of agreement after adjusting for the probability of random agreement, using Scott's Pi was 81.8 percent.[40]

Findings

I coded 402 photographs from 1983 (before any of the papers I looked at began to use color) and 380 photographs from 1989 (after eight of the ten papers I looked at began to use color). Following are findings as related to each of the hypotheses set forth earlier in this paper.

1) Fewer news photos and more feature photos appear on newspaper front pages after a newspaper switches to color.

The data from this study show the content of photos changes after the use of color, but not as simply as suggested in this hypothesis.

Looking at the collapsed categories, data in this study show a decrease in the use of spot news photos and an increase in the use of both general news and feature photos after a paper switches to color. (See graphs 1 and 2.)

At the color papers included in this study use of spot news photos deceased 16.2 percent from 1983 (before the use of color) to 1989 (after the use of color). During this same time interval black-and-white papers use of spot news photos increased 3.5 percent.

Color papers, however, used 11.9 percent more general news photos in 1989 than 1983. While black-and-white papers used only 0.8 percent more general news photos over the same time period.

From 1983 to 1989 use of feature photos in papers that had switched to color increased 4.3 percent. During the same time period use of features decreased 5.6 percent at black-and-white papers.[41]

These findings show that rather than moving from the news to the feature category as hypothesized, the largest move in photo use at color papers was from the spot news to the general news category with a smaller percentage moving from spot news to feature. The move from spot news to general news and features is in line with the thinking that color photos require more time than black-and-white photos to process and get into the paper. General news photos and most feature photos can be planned in advance whereas spot news photos must be shot on the spur of the moment. At the color papers studied, editors chose to go with pre-planned general news photos more than the feature photos to replace spot news photos when the paper didn't have time to get spot news color processed and into the paper.

2) Fewer wire photos and more staff-produced photos are published on front pages after color use.

This study offers strong support for this hypothesis. (See graphs 3 and 4.)

Use of staff-produced photos in black-and-white papers remained almost constant from 1983 to 1989 while use of staff-produced photos in color papers increased 22.5 percent.

3) Afternoon newspapers will show a greater shift to feature and staff-produced photos (see hypotheses 1 and 2) than morning papers.

Both shifts hypothesized are supported by data from this study. (See graphs 5-8.)

The greater shift to feature photos at afternoon papers can be seen by comparing graphs 5 and 6. Data in the collapsed content categories show use of feature photos in color afternoon papers increased 8.3 percent from 1983 to 1989, whereas feature use actually decreased 0.5 percent in color morning papers during the same time.

The greater shift to local photographs at afternoon papers can be seen by comparing graphs 7 and 8. Use of staff-produced photos increased 26.8 percent from 1983 to 1989 in color afternoon papers, whereas in color morning papers their use only increased 17.1 percent.

4) Newspapers using color frequently[42] will show a greater shift to feature and staff-produced photos (see hypotheses 1-2) than those using color occasionally.

Both shifts hypothesized are supported by data from this study. (See graphs 9-12.)

The greater shift to feature photos at papers using color frequently can be seen by comparing graphs 9 and 10. Data in the collapsed content categories show use of feature photos at papers using color frequently increased 11.6 from 1983 to 1989, whereas feature use actually decreased 3.5 percent at papers using color occasionally.

The greater shift to local photographs at papers using color frequently can be seen by comparing graphs 11 and 12. In papers that published front-page color photos frequently use of staff-produced photos increased 30.0 percent from 1983 to 1989. While in papers that used color only occasionally the use of staff-produced photos increased about half that much -- 14.2 percent -- during the same time frame.

5) When black-and-white photos from papers where color is available are compared with the color photos used, a higher percentage will be news photos and a lower percentage feature photos.

The data in this study support this hypothesis. (See graph 13.)

Looking at the condensed categories, 33.1 percent of the black-and-white photographs used at papers where color was available were spot news photos, whereas only 20.6 percent of the color photos used were spot news photos. In addition, 43.0 percent of the black-and-white photos were general news, whereas only 36.4

percent of the color photos used were general news. More than twice the percentage of color photos fell into the feature category than black-and-white photos.

6) When black-and-white photos from papers where color is available are compared with color photos used in those same papers, a higher percentage of color photos will be staff-produced photos.

The data in this study strongly support this hypothesis. (See graph 14.)

Of the black-and-white photos used in papers where color was available, 60.1 percent were staff-produced, whereas 88.3 percent of the color photos in those same papers were staff-produced.

Conclusions

The rush to publish color photographs in newspapers has justifiably led journalists to question the effect the use of color has had on the content of photographs published in newspapers. In an article written for the *Columbia Journalism Review* in 1983, Mary Ellen Schoonmaker, an editor at *The Record* in Bergen County, New Jersey, questioned the move to color. "Is color leading newspapers down the path to ever-softer journalism? What happens to news in a color paper?"[43]

Data from this study show the move from reproducing black-and-white photographs only to reproducing color photos along with black-and-white photos led some papers (afternoon papers and those using color frequently) down the path to "ever softer" journalism. Even those papers that did not take the "softer" path (from publishing spot news to publishing features) used a different type of news photo after color.

At the eight color papers included in this study, fewer spot news photos were published on Page 1 after the use of color. Some color papers filled this gap with general news photos. Morning papers and papers using color occasionally seemed to have an advantage keeping content news-oriented, whereas afternoon papers and papers using color frequently filled the spot news gap with features. The heavier burden of time constraints on afternoon papers, because of the shorter time frame within which to obtain daily photos, is the likely reason afternoon papers showed a greater tendency to rely on front page features after the shift to color.

The "we paid for it" part of the "color for color's sake" argument seems to explain the shift in photo use at papers where color use was frequent. Editors at papers using color frequently probably felt pressure to use color whenever possible. Given a choice between a local color feature and a wire service black-and-white news photo, they likely opted for the black-and-white photo only in circumstances where the news value of that photo clearly overrode the mandate to use color.[44]

Photo staffs at the eight papers that made the switch to color had to work harder than ever.[45] After color they produced a significantly larger percentage of Page 1 photos than they did before the move to color. This effect was more pronounced at the afternoon papers studied than at the morning papers and more pronounced at papers using color frequently than those using color occasionally. The most obvious explanations for the shift to staff-produced photos after the move to color is that wire service color (at least at the time of this study) was technically not as good as locally produced color and also not as readily available as local color.

Data from this study may not accurately reflect the effects of color use at newspapers generally. Influences other than those studied may have effected the outcome of the study. Possible conflicting influences include the sophistication of the editors making decisions at the papers, the skill levels of the photographers and general trends over time within the newspaper industry.

Perhaps the coming age of electronic photojournalism will make deadline color concerns a moot point. Already the wire services' move to digital delivery has speeded up the transmission process and made more color wirephotos available on deadline.

But at many newspapers color is still a fighting word. News content in color photos is worth fighting for.

The effect of color use on newspaper photographs deserves further study. Additional study into the effects of color use under developing technological constraints would give photo editors, photographers and journalism educators even more information upon which to base decisions about its use.

Endnotes

1. On June 13, 1993, *The New York Times* published a four-color graphic on the cover of the book section.

2. Rosalind C. Truitt, "Color: Exploiting the New Technology," *Presstime*, Dec. 1990, 22.

3. Thelma Anderson, "The Coming of Color," *Editor & Publisher*, 29 Sept. 1990, 2c.

4. Mark Fitzgerald, "Pretty As A Picture," *Editor & Publisher* color pullout, 5 Nov. 1988, 16c.

5. Mark Fitzgerald, "Pretty As A Picture," *Editor & Publisher* color pullout, 5 Nov. 1988, 16c.

6. Ted Daniels, "Newspaper Photos Need a Reality Check, Designer Says," *The Louisville Chronicles*, Society of Newspaper Design Workshop, 1988.

7. "Color Camp Session Sampler," *Editor & Publisher*, 26 September 1992, 18c.

8. An example of this would be a photograph of child dressed in red shorts and a yellow shirt flying a green kite published with a story about a seafood festival.

9. Cindy M. Brown, "How the Use of Color Affects the Content of Newspaper Photographs," ERIC Document ED 308 525, Aug. 1989., 9.

10. Ibid., 9.

11. Ibid., 9. The amount of additional time needed to reproduce color is being reduced by new technologies. With the continued advancement in digital photography this additional time will likely be reduced to next-to-nothing. However, the newspapers included in this study were not using advanced electronic photographic technologies, so the additional time need to make color separations was a factor likely to influence color usage.

12. Ratings for the four-color pages were higher on 19 of 20 scales studied, including pleasant-unpleasant, fair-unfair, modern-old-fashioned and exciting-dull. J.W. Click and Guido Stempel III, "Reader Response to Front Pages with Four-Color Halftones," *Journalism Quarterly*, 53 (1976):737-38.

13. That figure was 90 percent for the 18- to 24-year-old segment of the market. Thelma Anderson, "Readers Think Color Is Important," *Editor & Publisher* color pullout, 28 Sept. 1987, 4c.

14. Debra Gersh, "Readers Want More Color," *Editor & Publisher* color pullout, 24 Sept. 1988, 2c.

15. Sandra H. Utt and Steve Pasternack, "Subject Perception of Newspaper Characteristics Based on Front Page Design," *Newspaper Research Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 1, (Fall 1986):32.

16. "Processed" in this study was defined as a reader looking at a photo long enough for an individual element of information to be acquired.

17. Mario Garcia and Peggie Stark, <u>Eyes On the News</u>, (St. Petersburg, Florida: Poynter Institute for Media Studies, 1991): 51.

18. Ibid., 53.

19. Rosalind C. Truitt, "Color: Exploiting the New Technology," *Presstime*, Dec. 1990, 22.

20. Process color is a term used to describe four-color reproduction.

21. Sandra U. Utt and Steve Pasternack, "Front Pages of U.S. Daily Newspapers," *Journalism Quarterly*, 61 (1984):882.

22. Rosalind C. Truitt, "Color: Exploiting the New Technology," *Presstime*, Dec. 1990, 22.

23. Keith Kenney and Stephen Lacy, "Economic Forces Behind Newspapers Increasing Use of Color and Graphics," *Newspaper Journalism Review*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (Spring 1987):37.

24. Mario Garcia and Peggie Stark, <u>Eyes on the News</u>, (St. Petersburg, Florida: Poynter Institute for Media Studies, 1991): 10.

25. Rosalind C. Truitt, "Color: Exploiting the New Technology," *Presstime*, Dec. 1990, 22.

26. Keith Kenney and Stephen Lacy, "Economic Forces Behind Newspapers' Increasing Use of Color and Graphics," *Newspaper Research Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (Spring 1987):37.

27. David H. Weaver and L.E. Mullins, "Content and Format Characteristics of Competing Daily Newspapers," *Journalism Quarterly*, 52 (1975):264.

28. Sandra Utt and Steve Pasternack, "Front Pages of U.S. Daily Newspapers, " *Journalism Quarterly*, 61 (1984):883.

29. Sandra Utt and Steve Pasternack, "Use of Graphic Devices in a Competitive Situation: A Case Study of 10 Cities," *Newspaper Research Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1, (Fall 1985):11.

30. Now *The Herald-Times*.

31. Cindy M. Brown, "How the Use of Color Affects the Content of Newspaper Photographs," ERIC Document ED 308 525, Aug. 1989.

32. Ibid., 16-17.

33. For the pilot study for this paper (the ERIC document mentioned above,) I spoke with four staff photographers and five graphics/photo editors from newspapers in Indiana and asked them if they thought the use of color had affected the content of news photographs. Those who said yes were asked to describe those effects.

34. The number of color wirephotos available to papers has increased since The Associated Press began delivering photos via Photostream to Leafdesks.

35. Papers publishing more than 60 percent of their front-page photos in color were considered "frequent" users.

36. I had planned to code photographs from February (1983 and 1989) for all newspapers. I ran into problems getting microfilm copies of some papers from 1983 and then problems getting the recent issues of the same papers from 1989. I found that some papers do not keep back issues for more than one month - and since part of what I was coding was whether photos were color or black-and-white, I needed actual printed copies of the papers. I ended up coding some papers from February, some from August and some from October. If I analyzed photos from October 1983 for a particular paper, then I analyzed photos from October in 1989 for that paper.

37. See Appendix A for a list of the ten papers studied and a breakdown of their characteristics. See Appendix B for survey results.

38. Origin refers to whether the photos were staff photos, wire photos or file photos.

39. Definitions of each subject-matter category are published in Appendix C.

40. The percentage of agreement for the 14 subject-matter categories as first defined was 65 percent.

I felt this was too low, so I reworded my definitions to more precisely convey the way I decided to categorize photos. I then asked someone else to recode two months of photographs to see if the reworded explanations would lead to a higher percentage of agreement.

The second coder coded two months of photographs (69 total). The raw percentage of agreement between our codings was 78.3 percent. The percentage of agreement after adjusting for the probability of random agreement, using Scott's Pi, was 72.3 percent.

Several of the photographs that were coded into different categories by myself and the second colder fell into the same collapsed categories, i.e. -- I coded a photo as a scheduled news photo, but the second coder coded it as a news portrait -- both fell into the collapsed category of general news. So I also figured intercoder reliability data for the subject matter in the collapsed categories. Since the collapsed categories are the categories used in this report, the reliability figures cited in the text of the paper are those for the collapsed categories.

41. The Chi-Square statistic showed the changes from 1983 to 1989 at color papers would have occured by chance less than 1 time in 1000. The changes from 1983 to 1989 at black-and-white papers would have occured about 9 times out of 10. Since the sample from which the papers was chosen was not a random sample, the Chi-Square statistic is reported merely for comparison -- not to claim that results can be generalized to a larger population.

42. Papers publishing more than 60 percent of their front-page photos in color were considered "frequent" users.

43. Mary Ellen Schoonmaker, "The Color Craze," *Columbia Journalism Review*, Mar./Apr. 1983, 36.

44. Several photo editors interviewed for the pilot study stated they tried to avoid the "color for color's sake" pitfall.

45. Some might claim that the photographers merely had to shift their energy from producing photos for other parts of the paper to producing more photos for Page 1. I, however, doubt that many papers seriously reduced the photos used in other sections of the paper. A more likely scenario is that these papers were actually using color on the inside section fronts - creating more work for photographers in all sections of the paper.

Appendix A

CHARACTERISTICS OF PAPERS STUDIED

City Newspaper	month coded	publication cycle	type of color film	number of color years	perce photo
Salt Lake City, Utah Desseret News	Aug.	afternoon	both	5 years	23 perc occasi
Passaic, New Jersey North Jersey Herald & News	Feb.	morning	negative	0.4 years	95 perc daily
St. Cloud, Minnesota St. Cloud Times	Feb.	afternoon	both	6 years	73 per daily
Grand Forks, North Dakota Grand Forks Herald	Feb.	morning	both	2 years	21 per occasi
Alexandria, Louisiana Alexandria Daily Town Talk	Feb.	morning	transparency	3 years	70 per daily
Redding, California The Record Searchlight	Aug.	afternoon	transparency	2.5 years	40 per occas
Columbus, Indiana Columbus Republic	Oct.	afternoon	transparency	5 years	69 pe daily
Orangeburg, South Carolina Orangeburg Times & Democrat	Aug.	morning	transparency	2 years	12 pe occas
Pittsburg, Pennsylvania Pittsburg Press	Aug.	afternoon	Black-and-White only		
Layfayette, Indiana Layfayette	Feb.	morning	Black-and-White only		

6

Appendix B

Survey Results

Survey postcards were mailed in Februry 1989 to 100 papers selected randomly from a list of the top 1000 circulation daily papers in the U.S. Seventy responses were received.

Using Front-Page Color	No Front-Page Color
87.1% (N=61)	13.0% (N=9)

Average Number of Years of Color Use: 7.4

Papers Using Color 5 years or less: 61% (N=36)

Average Number of Days Last Week Color Was Used: 3.8

Negative Color	Both	Transparency Color
23.7% (N=14)	15.3% (N=9)	61.0% (N=36)

Percentage of Assignments Shot on Color Film		
Less than 50%	50–74%	75–100%
71.2% (N=42)	16.9% (N=10)	11.9% (N=7)

Publication Cycle		
Morning	Afternoon	All Day
32.9% (N=23)	52.0% (N=37)	14.3% (N=10)

Appendix C

Content Categories -

(All photos, both stand-alone and those accompanying stories could be coded into any category depending upon the content of the photos.)

Armed Conflict - Photos of and directly related to armed conflict including those showing military operations, guerrilla warfare or police action, aftermath of armed conflict (showing survivors of armed conflict), crime scene photos, SWAT teams storming buildings etc.*

Accidents/Disasters - Photos of and directly related to accidents and disasters - including natural and man-made disasters, environmental tragedies, weather extremes (harsh aspects of the weather such as storms, tornadoes, floods, blizzards or droughts,) rescue operations and immediate responses to remedy disaster situations.

Social, Religious and Political Conflict - Photos of and directly related to social, religious and political conflict including riots, marches, strikes, demonstrations and other social and political conflicts.

Scheduled News - Photos of newsworthy events for which advance planning is possible, such as funerals, press conferences, scientific news and court proceedings.

News Portraits - Portraits of people in news stories. (Those used larger than mugshots.) Emphasis is on the **person**, not the situation.

Features - Photos of "found" situations with strong human interest - fresh views of the common place. Also photos that accompany a light feature story. (Stand-alone features are often weather-related although weather photos that showed harsh aspects of the weather such as storms, tornadoes, floods, blizzards or droughts were coded in the accident/disaster category.) In addition to light weather photos, included in the feature category are photos of holiday celebrations, fairs and festivals, lottery winners, etc. (This category excludes features that are sports related.)

Feature Portraits - Portraits of people mentioned in light feature stories. Emphasis is on the **person**, not the situation.

Sports Features - A feature picture that is sports related - non-action sports photograph.

Sports Action - A photo that portrays participation in a game or sports event.

Sports News Portraits - Portraits of sports figures in the news. Emphasis is on the person, not the situation.

Business - Photos of business-related subjects such as stock market traders, factory scenes, business-related construction and advertising shoots.

Business Portraits - Portraits of business people mentioned in business stories. Emphasis is on the **person**, not the situation.

Business Still-Life - Landscapes, architectural shots and inanimate graphic images that related to business stories.

News **Still-Life** - Landscapes, architectural shots and inanimate graphic images that relate to news stories.

* The first three categories are modeled after ones used in a content analysis of photographs conducted by James Fosdick in 1966. James Fosdick, "Picture Content and Source in Four Daily Newspapers," *Journalism Quarterly*, Vol. 1 (1969,) p. 369.

Condensed Content Categories

When analyzing the data, I looked at the categories as defined above and then condensed the data from these 14 categories into the five categories below.

Spot News - Armed Conflict + Accidents and Disasters + Social, Religious and Political Conflict

General News - Scheduled News + News Portraits + News Still-Life

Feature - Feature + Feature Portrait

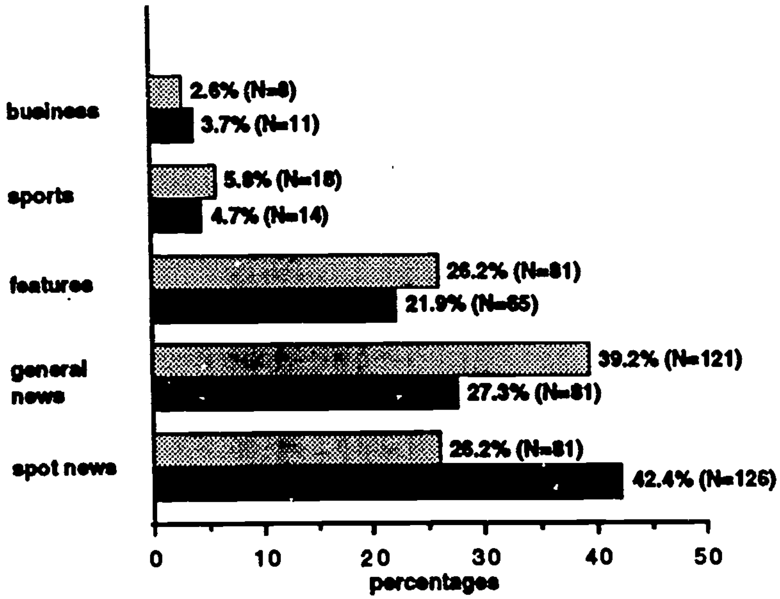
Sports - Sports Action + Sports Portrait

Business - Business + Business Portrait + Business Still-Life

Content* of Front-Page Photos

Graph #1

Color Papers



number of missing observations: 3

After Color – 1989 (Total N=309)

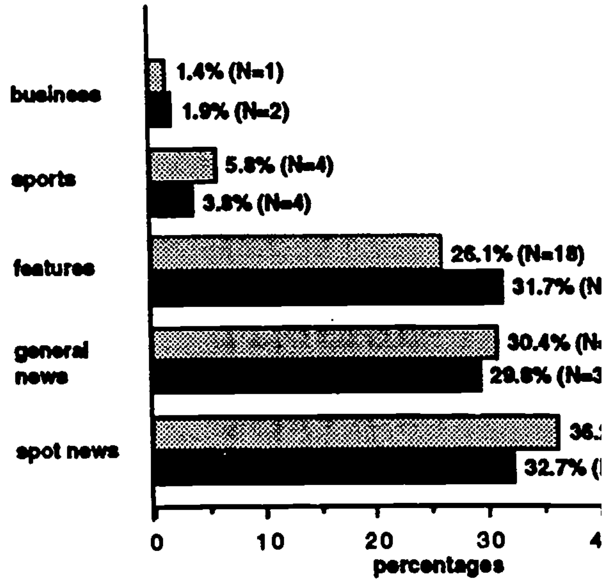
No Color -- 1983 (Total N=296)

Chi-Square=20.20, df=4, p<.001

* Content as coded in condensed subject-matter categories.

Graph #2

Black-and-White Papers



number of missing observations: 1

No Color – 1989 (Total N=69)

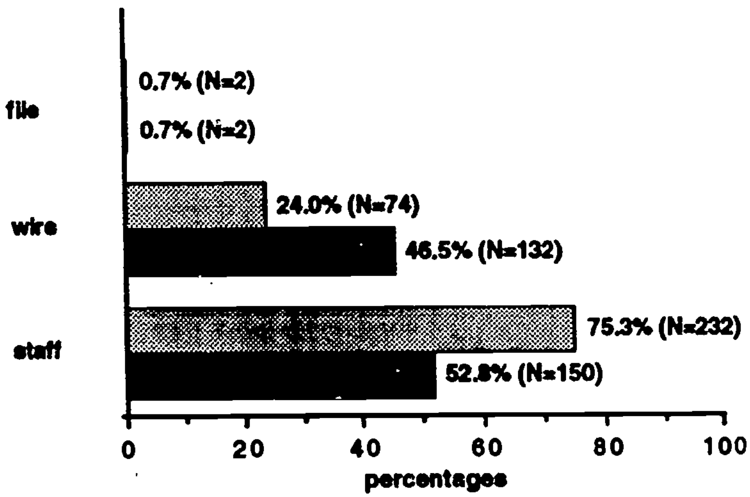
No Color – 1983 (Total N=104)

Chi-Square=1.00, df=4, p=.91

Origin of Front-Page Photos

Graph #3

Color Papers



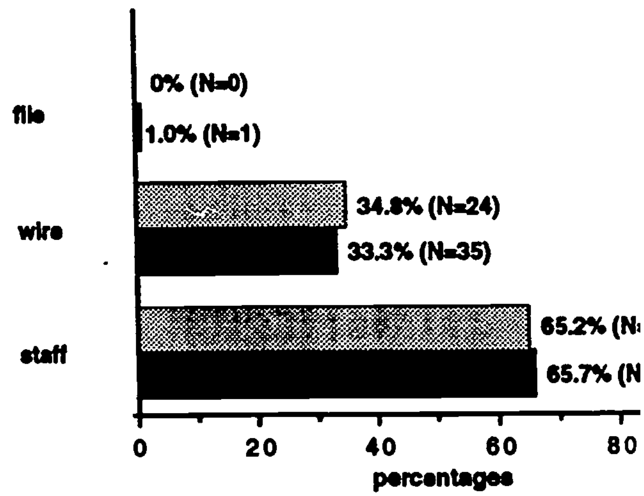
number of missing observations:16

- After Color -- 1989 (Total N=308)
- No Color -- 1983 (Total N=284)

Chi-Square=34.35, df=2, p<.00001

Graph #4

Black-and-White Papers



number of missing observations: 1

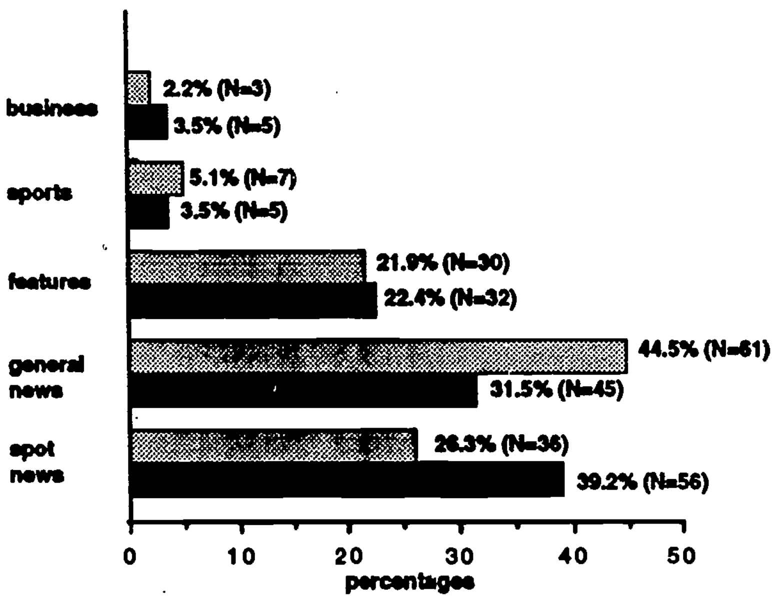
- No Color -- 1989 (Total N=69)
- No Color -- 1983 (Total N=105)

Chi-Square=.68, df=2, p=.71

Content* of Front-Page Photos

Graph #5

Morning Color Papers



number of missing observations: 0

After Color -- 1989 (Total N=137)

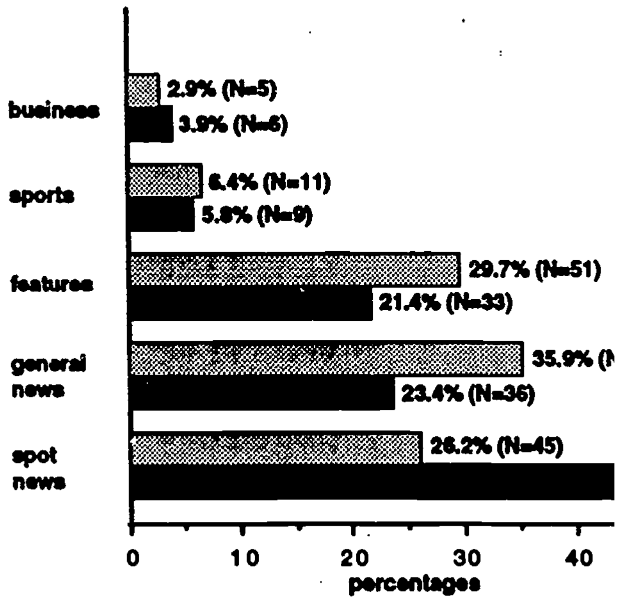
No Color -- 1983 (Total N=143)

Chi-Square=7.54, df=4, p=.11

* Content as coded in condensed subject-matter categories.

Graph #6

Afternoon Color Papers



number of missing observations: 3

After Color -- 1989 (Total N=172)

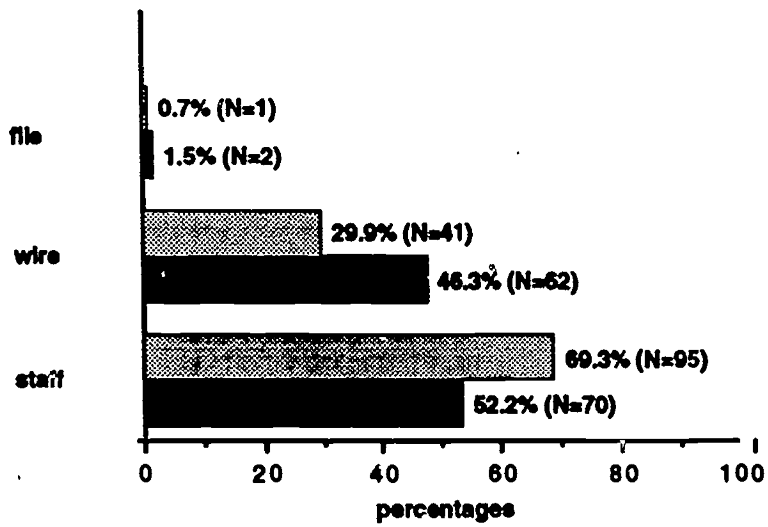
No Color -- 1983 (Total N=154)

Chi-Square=14.63, df=4, p<.01

Origin of Front-Page Photos

Graph #7

Morning Color Papers



number of missing observations: 0

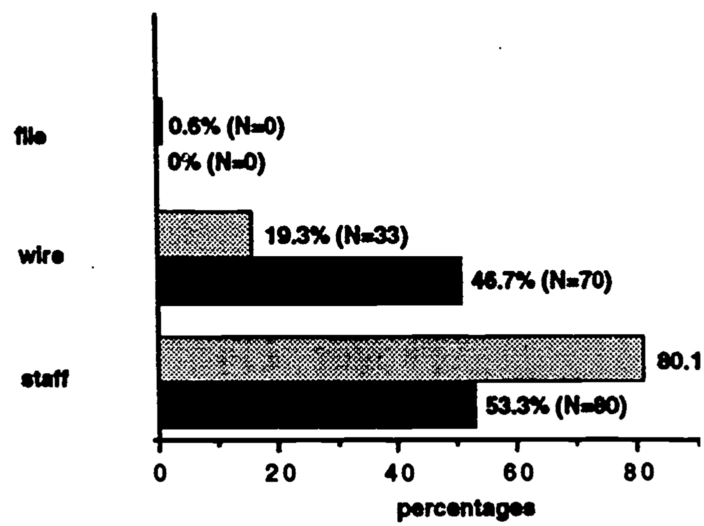
After Color -- 1989 (Total N=137)

No Color -- 1983 (Total N=134)

Chi-Square=8.37, df=2, p<.05

Graph #8

Afternoon Color Papers



number of missing observations: 16

After Color -- 1989 (Total N=171)

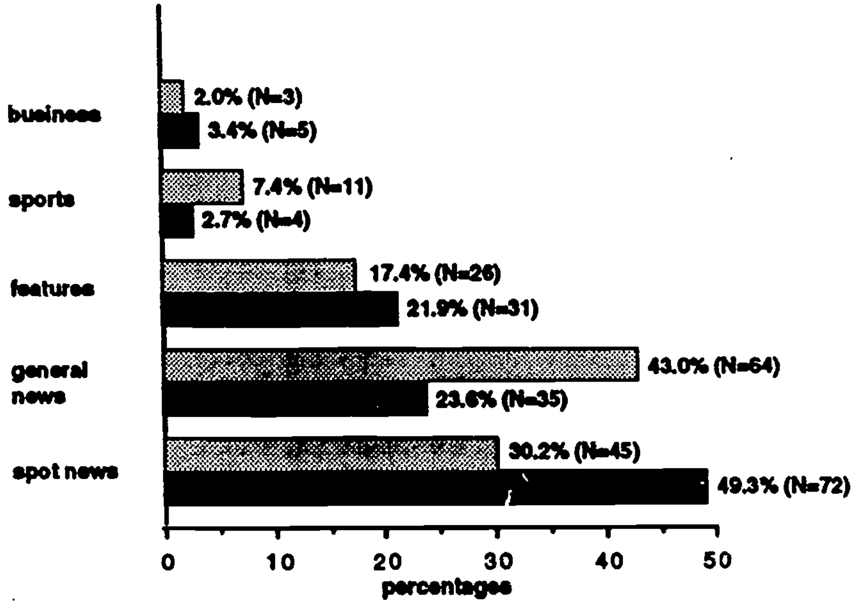
No Color -- 1983 (Total N=150)

Chi-Square=28.01, df=2, p<.00001

Content* of Front-Page Photos

Graph #9

Occasional Color [1]



number of missing observations: 0

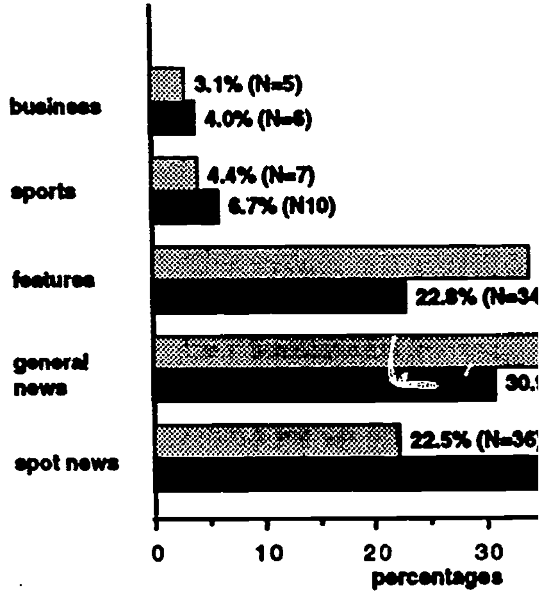
After Color – 1989 (Total N=149)

No Color – 1983 (Total N=148)

Chi-Square=19.34, df=4, p<.001

Graph #10

Frequent Color [2]



number of missing observations: 1

After Color – 1989 (Total N=160)

No Color – 1983 (Total N=149)

Chi-Square=9.62, df=4, p<.05

* Content as coded in condensed subject-matter categories.

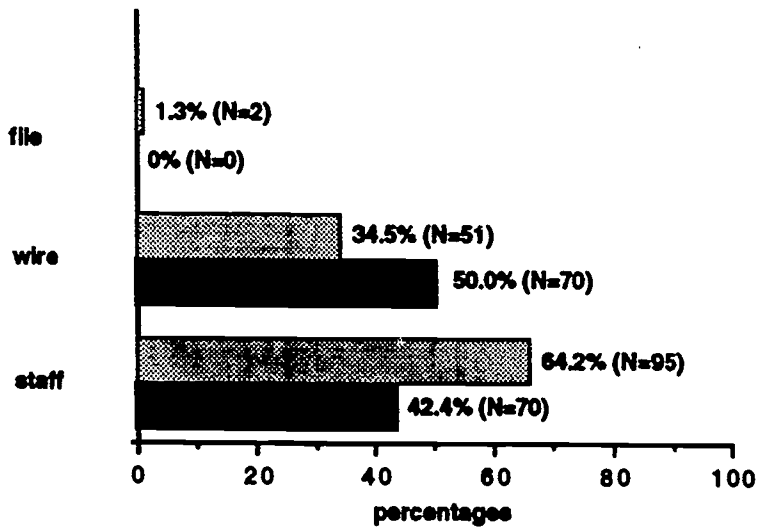
1 Papers publishing less than 40 percent of their front-page photos in color.

2 Papers publishing more than 60 percent of their fr

Origin of Front-Page Photos

Graph #11

Occasional Color*



number of missing observations: 0

After Color -- 1989 (Total N=148)

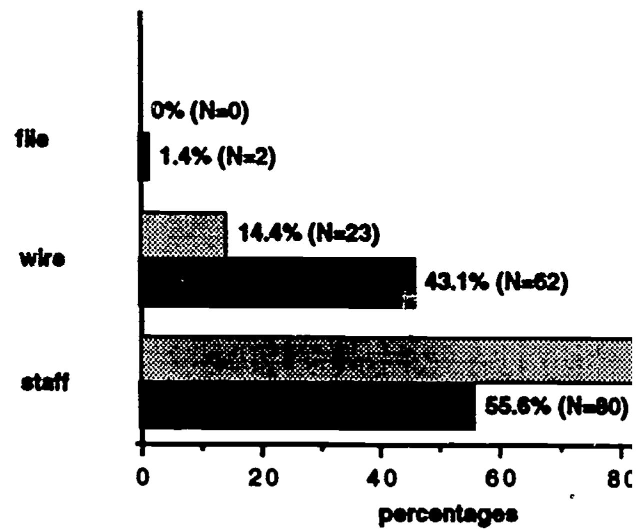
No Color -- 1983 (Total N=140)

Chi-Square=8.56, df=2, p<.05

* Papers publishing less than 40 percent of their front-page photos in color.

Graph #12

Frequent Color**



number of missing observations: 0

After Color -- 1989 (Total N=144)

No Color -- 1983 (Total N=160)

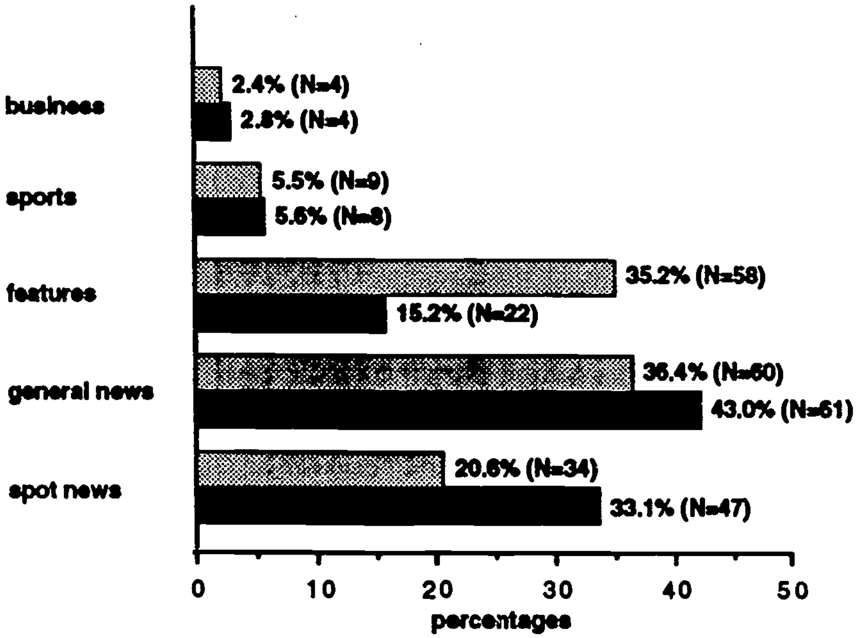
Chi-Square=34.11, df=2, p<.00001.

** Papers publishing more than 60 percent of their front-pa

A comparison of front-page photos from 198

Graph #13

1989 Color vs. Black-and-White: content**



number of missing observations: 0

Color -- 1989 (Total N=165)

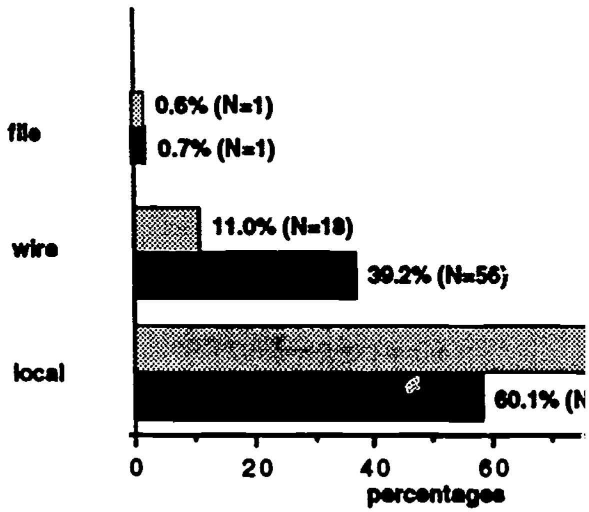
Black-and-white -- 1989 (Total N=142)

Chi-Square=16.72, df=4, p<.00

** Content as coded in condensed subject-matter categories.

Graph #14

1989 Color vs. Black-and-White: (



number of missing observations: 5

Color -- 1989 (Total N=163)

Black-and-white -- 1989 (Total N=143

Chi-Square=34.98, df=4, p<.00001

* In the eight papers where color was ava

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PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDES OF ALTERNATIVE AND MAINSTREAM JOURNALISTS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON JOB SATISFACTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDES OF ALTERNATIVE AND MAINSTREAM JOURNALISTS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON JOB SATISFACTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Introduction

The question of journalism's status as a profession is one that has incited ongoing debate within the community of working journalists and journalism academics (Weaver and Wilhoit, 1991). Although journalism is not a profession in the strictly formal sense, lacking such features as licencing requirements or enforcement organizations, it nevertheless is considered by some to be a profession in an "abstract formal sense" (Johnstone and Slawski, 1976), since journalists behave like professionals in some aspects (valuing autonomy and public service) but not in others (reluctance to join professional bodies, lack of consensus on job-related issues).

One area that has generally remained unexplored in this debate, however, is the effects that journalists' professional identification may have on their feelings about their working lives. While professionalism may be important to many journalists, there has been little attention paid to how the strength of affiliation with professional values or behaviours may affect a journalist's satisfaction with their job or commitment to their organization. Studying these job-related attitudes is particularly important in light of the slowing rate of growth in the journalism job force (Weaver and Wilhoit, 1992) and the numbers of journalists considering other kinds of work (Pease and Smith, 1991).

Identifying factors which relate to satisfaction and commitment will then suggest means by which media managers and workers can help improve these attitudes and perhaps increase overall morale and decrease turnover in the journalistic work force.

A flaw in the professionalism research that has been conducted in the past is the assumption that all journalists are employed by mass media news organizations, with the possible exception of distinctions drawn between print and broadcast media. This assumption ignores one of the fastest-growing segments of print media in the United States: the alternative press. Alternative newspapers in the U.S. reach approximately 3.5 million readers and bring in over $100 million yearly in advertising revenue, with an editorial style that takes an "anti-establishment" approach (Patner, 1990). The professional attitudes of journalists at these newspapers have not been explored, which is all the more surprising given that the differing news values of these publications might suggest that their employees might have differing professional attitudes.

This study, therefore, addresses two issues. First, it explores whether mainstream and alternative journalists hold professional attitudes, and if there is variation in those attitudes between these two groups. Secondly, it attempts to determine if professional attitudes affect job-related attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. It is hoped that the results will give insight into the effects of professionalism and also provide information on workers in a previously ignored, yet highly influential, segment of the North American media.

Professionalism

The identified reasons for professions existing generally focus on a recognized need for standardization and consistency. Weber (1947) saw professionalization as a form of rationalization, a sign of developing bureaucracy within an organization that would ultimately result in an efficient system of coordination and control. Gouldner (1954) interpreted bureaucratization and professionalism as a means of control utilized by powerful individuals wishing to protect their status. Abbott (1988) stated that professions emerge when a question of jurisdiction arises between different skills, citing the example of psychiatry, which developed as a profession distinct from psychology and medicine when there was conflict over who should care for patients suffering from "nerves".

Cultural and social factors must also be considered as forces influencing when and why professions arise or decline (Scott, 1982). Similarly, Wilensky (1964) contended that not all occupations will become professions. Success in organizing as a profession and thus gaining control over entry to and work of the profession, in Wilensky's view, depends on conditions not available to everyone: namely, control over areas of uncertainty and the capacity to organize for collective validation of work in such areas.

Thus, a major problem in the study of professions is defining when an occupation becomes or ceases being a profession. Clearly, some professions such as law or medicine are developed to the point where there is little question that they are professions. But what of work like social work, or teaching, or nursing? Etzioni (1969) defined these trades as "semi-professions", because of the reduced degree of autonomy, the supervision performed by people who are themselves semi-professionals or professionals, and the more extensive forms of control. However, these trades do display other characteristics of professional work, such as licensing of the practitioners and the ability of the licensing body to discipline its members.

Professionalism and Journalism

Journalism is a perfect example of a type of work which is neither professional or non-professional. "The journalist, unlike the lawyer or doctor, cannot be defined in terms of educational attainment, state certification, or professional standards....The journalist works in many different worlds and performs a multitude of functions" (Ghiglione, 1990, p. 14). Schudson's (1978) history of American newspapers identifies the desire to make journalism a respectable occupation as the initial force toward professionalization.

As a result of activity such as the "yellow journalism" wars in New York in the 1900s, which created disrespect and a lack of credibility for the press, commentators and journalists alike began pressuring for change in practices of journalism. At approximately the same time, journalist Walter Lippman called for professionalization as a way to "upgrade the dignity of the profession...and design traning in which the ideal of objective testimony is cardinal" (Lippman, 1922). Additionally, several newspapers and press associations, trying to avoid the image of the "gutter press", instituted codes of professional conduct, downplaying stories concerned with murder, crime, and scandal, and taking into consideration the plight of those involved in such matters, particularly women (Bates, 1989).

However, Lippman's ideal of objectivity was difficult to achieve, because of the inevitability of subjectivity in selection reporting, and presentation of news (Schudson, 1978). Additionally, the codes of professional conduct that were instituted had no punitive power, so there was no impetus beyond personal morality to adopt their principles. The drive toward formal professionalization was slowed by these practical problems in adopting formal standards, despite the fact that increasing numbers of journalism schools were improving general levels of education among reporters and providing professional training (albeit varying in quality and content from school to school). A further restrictive factor was the emergence of The Newspaper Guild as a trade union for journalists - thus perhaps taking the place of any professional body that could have served as a licensing or governing body.

By the 1960s, the idea of professionalism in journalism was "suspect" because of general distrust of professionalized institutions like the courts, government, and academia (Schudson, 1978). Journalists were better educated than in previous years, and generally recognized principles of conduct were institutionalized to greater or lesser degrees in newspapers' and press organizations' codes of ethics, but the drive toward formal professionalization was considerably weakened by this time. Dooley (1991) sees the existence of the National News Council in the United States from 1973 to 1984 as a means by which formal professionalization could have been achieved. The council, which heard complaints about news coverage and passed judgement on their validity, provided a forum in which issues relating to media content and coverage could be publicly debated and ruled upon, thus establishing and strengthening the legitimacy of ethical and professional standards. However, the Council ceased operation in 1984 because of lack of financial support.

The currently recognized standards of conduct for journalists, as summarized by Beam (1990), are: the expectation that journalists be liberally educated and committed to continuing education (although, he notes, this expectation is fairly loose compared to other professions or semi-professions); an expectation of impartiality in writing or editing; an emphasis on factual accuracy; an expectation of participation in occupationally-related organizations; an expectation of work toward access of sources of information, particularly governments; and an expectation that journalistic work serve the public interest. However, even though these standards may be transmitted as expectations of behaviour, they have no regulatory or enforcement power as do codes of conduct in other professions.

Professionalism, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment

In established professional occupations, expected standards of behaviour, knowledge, organization, and control are established either by members of the profession themselves or by some formalized governing body (Freidson, 1983). Professional standards establish values that members of the profession are expected to adopt and uphold, and maintain control over membership in the profession by forcing individuals to adapt these values as their own if they wish to belong (Johnson, 1972).

However, formal or informal professional standards may not be adopted by the individual when they prove to be incompatible with the realities of work. The novelist Theodore Dreiser illustrates this situation in relating the story of his first job interview at a newspaper:

> I looked about the great room, as I waited patiently and delightedly, and saw pasted on the walls at intervals printed cards which read: Accuracy, Accuracy, Accuracy! Who? What? Where? When? How? The Facts - The Color - The Facts! I knew what those signs meant: the proper order for beginning a newspaper story. Another sign insisted upon Promptness, Courtesy, Geniality! Most excellent traits, I thought, but not as easy to put into

> execution as comfortable publishers and managing editors might suppose (Dreiser, 1922).

Dreiser realized that while "accuracy...promptness, courtesy, geniality" might be ideals to strive for, the demands of competition between newspapers and their reporters might make these ideals difficult, if not impossible, to put into practice. Adopting certain behavioural standards, as expressed in this case by the cards on the walls, would mean the individual would not be able to perform the job in the fashion that she or he considered acceptable, and thus might affect job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Generally, job satisfaction is defined as individuals' cognitive, affective, and evaluative reactions towards their jobs (Locke, 1988). Job satisfaction has been researched extensively, most recently in terms of its relationship to such organizational and individual factors as performance, turnover and absenteeism (Griffin and Bateman, 1986). Research in this area using journalists as subjects has suggested that job satisfaction is related to the amount of input into decision-making in the workplace (Joseph, 1982), to race (Bramlett-Solomon, 1992), and to the size of the news organization (Bergen and Weaver, 1988). Studies of journalists' job satisfaction have also indicated that levels of job satisfaction are dropping over time, partly because journalists are now less likely to perceive that their newsroom is doing an outstanding job of informing the public (Weaver and Wilhoit, 1992).

Organizational commitment is defined as the extent to which an individual identifies with and is involved with his or her organization (Mowday, Steers, and Porter, 1979). Commitment involves a belief in and acceptance of organizational goals and values, a willingness to work hard for the organization, and a desire to remain a member of the organization (Mowday, Porter and Steers, 1982). Organizational commitment has also been conceptualized as part of the larger attitude of work commitment, which involves commitment to values, career, job, and union (Morrow, 1983). The organizational commitment of journalists has been studied less than their job satisfaction. However, one example is the factor of "desire to remain a part of the organization" which has been examined by Pease and Smith (1991). They found that 39.3% of men and 50.3% of women in their sample of 1,328 journalists did not think they would be at the same newspaper in five years, which indicates a relatively low level of organizational commitment.

Some previous research addressing the question of journalism as a profession has examined the relationship between professional status and job-related attitudes. Merrill (1974) argued that professionalism could not co-exist with a sense of social responsibility, and that true journalistic professionalism necessarily entailed autonomy because of the necessity of determining one's own responsibility in the course of journalistic work. Schwartz (1978), in an empirical test of

Merrill's ideas, surveyed 35 reporters, editors and photographers to determine how identification with the profession affected values. He found that "high professionals", those scoring high on qualities associated with professionalism (membership in professional group, belief in public service and self-regulation, sense of calling to the field, and feeling of autonomy), also displayed high ambition, need for power, and need for independence. "Low professionals" were more concerned with social responsibility and selflessness. These results suggest that professionalism of journalists may affect job satisfaction and organizational commitment, depending on how much autonomy or ability to undertake public service the job or the organization offers.

Becker, Sobowale, and Cobbey (1979) used data gathered from 570 journalists to determine how "professional sentiments" (freedom from supervision, helping people, support for editorial policies, importance of autonomy), among other factors, affected commitment to the profession and to the organization. They found that there was little support for a link between job satisfaction and professional sentiments, but that job satisfaction was significantly and positively related to both professional and organizational commitment.

Beam (1990) saw journalism professionalism as an organizational-level concept, arguing that in semi-professionalized occupations the practices of the organization would play a large part in determining the level of professionalism. His study of 300 editors determined that news organizations vary widely in the degree to which their practices conform with the practices that journalists, as an occupational group, believe are desirable, and thus supported the idea that the degree of the individual's professionalization may depend on the employing organization.

All of these studies, however, only used journalists working at American daily or weekly newspapers as their subjects. A further potential variation on the influence of professional standards in journalism is the contrast between mass media and alternative publications. While alternative and mainstream journalists are in the same profession, they may see their roles, purposes, and actions as being widely divergent. For the alternative journalist, adherence to such standards as "a disinterested or impartial approach" (Beam, 1990) may restrict the approaches to reporting which are part of the distinctiveness of the alternative press.

Herman and Chomsky (1988) see the intent of the mass media as being "to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs, and codes of behaviours that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society". The alternative press can be seen as a countervailing force to this goal. The alternative press questions "acceptable" values and beliefs, and draws attention to flaws in the institutional structures of society (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). An annual illustration of this division between the mainstream and alternative press is the "10 Most Censored Stories" collection. "Project Censored" at Sonoma State University assembles a panel of media observers each year, which selects and publicizes ten stories which were passed over or marginalized by the mainstream press but investigated in depth in the alternative press. The choices for 1991 included the CBS and NBC television networks' refusal to show footage of the Gulf War which graphically illustrated damage to Iraq's countryside (contrary to American military claims of minimal impact on civilians), and coverups of the true cost of the American savings and loan banks' collapse (Norris and Tira, 1992).

The mass media has also embraced the value of "neutral" and "objective" coverage with no obvious bias (Schudson, 1978); alternative newspapers, however, have seen their role more as "advocacy journalism...an irreverent, often strident approach" (Prendergast, 1990). These differences might manifest themselves at the individual level in identification with the professional standards of journalism, which, while not formally enshrined in any binding document, are taught in journalism schools and are transmitted through professional standards and interactions with others in the same occupation (Lavine & Wackman, 1988). Journalists at alternative newspapers might see themselves as members of the same profession as journalists at mainstream newspapers, and thus adhere to and support professional standards, or they might reject professional standards as indicative of the forces which ensure conformity in the mass media. In either scenario, it is entirely possible that the strength of identification with the profession will relate to how satisfied the worker is with his or her job and how committed he or she is to his or her organization.

Thus, the specific research questions which this study will explore are:

1) Do mainstream and alternative journalists consider themselves professionals? How do they define "professional"?

2) Does the adoption of professional standards affect job satisfaction or organizational commitment?

Methodology

The first step in the data collection process was to determine what an "alternative" publication was. It was important for consistency among and between subjects to choose a definable group of alternative publications that displayed common characteristics. The group selected was the Association of Alternative Newsweeklies (AAN), an 82-member association of newspapers located in North America. Nearly all AAN members are weekly or bi-weekly publications; the majority are located in urban areas. AAN members are defined as "alternative" and selected for membership if they meet one or both of two criteria: they are independent print media in cities where there is only one daily newspaper or publishing agency, or they meet the need for news and analysis which other media miss (AAN, 1992). Using subjects from AAN newspapers ensured that there would be a reasonable basis for comparison with subjects at mainstream newspapers, in that both types of workers would be employed by organizations whose primary functions were gathering and disseminating news on a regular basis.

In August, 1992, each AAN member listed in the current AAN Directory was contacted and asked for the names of full-time editorial staff. Because of the potential of a low response rate from a mail survey, editors as well as writers/reporters were included in the sample. This resulted in a list of 288 subjects from the alternative press.

Subjects in the mainstream media were chosen in a slightly different fashion. Only those publications in an area where there was also an alternative publication were considered for sampling. This was done to minimize the effects of geographical or regional variation. Staff reporters' bylines from two recent issues of each selected publication were then recorded. Then, every fifth name was chosen from the list of mainstream journalists in an area until a number identical to the number of alternative journalists sampled in the same area was reached. This resulted in a sample of 288 mainstream journalists.

A 10-page mail-out questionnaire was developed to survey all 576 subjects. The questionnaire included:

1) The short form (20 questions) of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss, Dawis, England, and Lofquist, 1967). This questionnaire has been widely tested and is considered one of the most reliable measures of job satisfaction (Cranny, Smith and Stone, 1992).

2) The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) (Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian, 1974). This is the most widely used measure of organizational commitment (Becker, 1992).

3) Two sections of the McLeod-Hawley professional orientation scale (McLeod and Hawley, 1964). This scale, designed to test the professional orientation of print journalists, has also been applied with success to broadcasters, photographers, and other information-production workers (Beam, 1990). The scale is divided into three sections: professional aspects of desired jobs, non-professional aspects of desired jobs, and items testing desire for professionalization ("professional implementation"). The majority of items in the "non-professional aspects" section - such as pay, security, task variety, and satisfaction with co-workers - were replicated by questions in the MSQ and OCQ, so this portion of the scale was omitted. Subsequent factor analysis of responses to the "professional implementation" items showed an extremely low coefficient of reliability for this section of the scale, so only the three items pertaining directly to the desire for a professional organization were retained for analysis.

4) Three open-ended questions to elicit the respondent's views of journalism as a profession and his or her self-perception as a

professional and as a member of a profession.

As of January 15, 1993, 312 completed questionnaires had been returned (154 from journalists at alternative newspapers, 158 from journalists at mainstream newspapers), along with 10 refused or undeliverable questionnaires. This gave an overall response rate of 54%. In statistical analysis, however, only those respondents who reported spending 50% or more of their time at work writing and/or interviewing were used, in order to ensure consistency in job duties. This resulted in a sample of 152 mainstream and 95 alternative journalists.

Results

Demographic variables for the subjects, with means and standard deviations, are presented in Table 1. The mainstream journalists in the sample were significantly older than the alternative journalists, had more journalism experience, and had more journalism education. The mainstream journalists had also been employed longer at their current workplace. There were no significant differences between the alternative and mainstream groups in their general education levels (the majority had at least completed technical school) or gender composition.

Insert Table 1 About Here

The first research question explored in this study was whether mainstream and alternative journalists considered themselves professionals. This question was partially tested by including the McLeod-Hawley professionalism scale in the questionnaire. The maximum possible "score" for this scale, as altered for increased reliability, is 65; 44 for the "professional orientation" section of the scale (maximum responses of 4 on each of the 11 items) and 21 for the "professional implementation" section of the scale (maximum responses of 7 on each of the 3 items). Note that the range of responses for the "professional orientation" scale in the questionnaire was originally established so that 1 was a positive response and 4 was a negative response; the data were recoded for this test to be consistent with the direction of the range of responses for the second scale.

Table 2 presents the McLeod-Hawley scores for alternative and mainstream journalists. The mainstream and alternative journalists did not differ significantly in their responses to this scale. It is worth noting also that a theoretical average score on this scale would be 32.5 (65/2), and 60% of all respondents had scores below this number. If the McLeod-Hawley scale can be taken as a reliable measure of journalists' adoption of professional

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Insert Table 2 About Here

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standards, this result would indicate that both mainstream and alternative journalists are not adopting their profession's standards or the beliefs underlying those standards.

The results from the McLeod-Hawley scale partially answer the question of whether mainstream and alternative journalists consider themselves professionals and how they define "professional". However, the questionnaire also included three open-ended questions relating to professionalism, which perhaps are more indicative of the respondents' actual feelings toward professionalism and their reasons for holding such attitudes. The results from these three questions are presented in Tables 3, 4, and 5.

Insert Table 3 About Here

Insert Table 4 About Here

Insert Table 5 About Here

Both mainstream and alternative journalists were consistent in identifying journalism as a profession and themselves as professionals, and consistent in their reasons for doing so. However, more mainstream than alternative journalists identified themselves as members of a profession.

The apparent division between professionals, as determined by the results of the McLeod-Hawley scale, and self-identified professionals influenced the exploration of the next research question: does the adoption of professional standards affect job satisfaction or organizational commitment? This question was tested by conducting a multiple regression, using two dummy variables to represent professionalism (0=low, 1=high) and type of newspaper (0=mainstream, 1=alternative). The dependent variables were job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The regression was conducted with two different classifications of professionalism. One regression used the McLeod-Hawley scale scores as the basis for division; respondents scoring above the mean of this group of respondents were classified as "high" professionals, and those below the mean were classified as "low" professionals. In the second regression, responses from the question "Do you consider yourself a professional?" were used as the basis for classification. The results of the two regressions are presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Insert Table 6 About Here

Insert Table 7 About Here

The only statistically significant regressions were those with organizational commitment as the dependent variable. Even then, the regression using self-identified professionalism should be viewed with caution, as in the entire sample there were very few respondents who did not identify themselves as professionals (10 mainstream, 9 alternative). In this type of regression analysis, a minimum number of 10 observations for every independent variable is needed for the resulting equation to be meaningful (Parasuraman, 1986). Therefore, the results of this particular analysis should not considered definitive.

Although the two regressions on organizational commitment were statistically significant, in both cases it was the presence of the "type" variable which resulted in significant results. Alternative or mainstream status appears to affect organizational commitment, with alternative journalists displaying higher levels of commitment. Attitudes toward professionalism, however, only affect job satisfaction, and only when professionalism is defined in terms of responses to the McLeod-Hawley scale. Professionalism is negatively correlated to job satisfaction in this case, indicating that high professionalism reduces job satisfaction.

Discussion and Conclusion

One reason for the lack of a stronger link between professionalism and job attitudes may be the scale that was used for one part of the test. The McLeod-Hawley scale was developed in 1963, when working conditions for journalists were quite different than they are today (Schudson, 1978). The McLeod-Hawley scale still represents professional values that are widely accepted in the news industry, such as the willingness to protect sources and the right of journalists to participate in determining news content and policies, but other issues - such as certification and writing styles - may be currently less relevant to an industry with a shrinking employment base and dissatisfied employees (Pease and Smith, 1991). Gaining employment may be of more immediate importance to journalists than worrying about, for example, what writing style to use.

Despite problems with the issue of certification, however, the McLeod-Hawley scale is still useful as a test for professional attitudes, if not as a test of specific questions related to the development of a profession's structure. The "professional characteristics" part of the scale is useful in testing the degree to which individuals desire their work to have the trappings of "professional" work: autonomy, personal development, use of skills, authority, and influence. However, it is possible that journalists do not feel strongly, or positively, about belonging to a profession that follows the structure of more established professions such as law or medicine.

Interestingly, however, the responses show a high level of self-identification as professionals, and, correspondingly, a high level of agreement about what qualities constitute a professional in this particular occupation. While these respondents may not want to be part of a profession that has licensing, educational requirements, and regulatory bodies, 92% of all respondents nevertheless consider themselves professionals. This indicates that professionalism perhaps needs to be conceptualized in ways other than that of belonging to a regulated occupation.

Journalism may represent a socially constructed profession, where there are no formal requirements for membership but there is nevertheless common understanding, passed on through training and experience, of how the job is done correctly. Endres (1985), in a study of socialization of journalists, found that journalists cited their own experience and colleagues' behaviours as the second and third strongest influence on their own journalistic ethics (after parents and home life). Further, it is possible that there are informal enforcement mechanisms for workers who violate these behavioural norms, such as refusing to share information with transgressors, avoiding interaction with them, or warning other workers of the unacceptable behaviour.

There were also significant differences between alternative and mainstream journalists in their responses to individual items in the two parts of the McLeod-Hawley scale. On the "professional characteristics" scale, the alternative journalists were much less concerned with advancement in a professional career, having a job with a respected newspaper, and full use of abilities and training. This perhaps reflects a stronger rejection by the alternative journalists of the traditional trappings of professionalism, and must also be considered in the light of the fact that alternative newspapers tend to be smaller than mainstream newspapers and thus perhaps offer less opportunity for advancement or complete use of skill.

The mainstream journalists' responses to this part of the scale showed them to be less concerned with influencing the public's thinking and with freedom from supervision. This may again be a function of the organization's size. Mainstream journalists may feel that they have less opportunity to influence public opinion when their work has to travel through several steps of editing and layout before it reaches the public. Similarly, they may be less concerned with freedom from supervision if they are accustomed to working in an organization where there is a defined hierarchy with several layers of responsibility.

The division between mainstream and alternative journalists was also apparent in the responses to the "professional implementation" scale. Mainstream journalists agreed more strongly with the ideas of mandatory college educations for beginning journalists and refresher courses for experienced journalists, and felt that training journalists to write was more important than getting the story. Alternative journalists agreed more strongly that placing the 5 W's (who, what, why, where and when) at the start of a story was overemphasized, that taking promotional junkets was acceptable, and that journalists should not work for newspapers they disagreed with.

These differences indicate that mainstream and alternative journalists are two distinct groups of workers with distinct concepts of how their jobs should be done. One hesitates to label these differing concepts as separate set of beliefs, because other results indicate that mainstream and alternative journalists perhaps have more beliefs in common than beliefs they disagree upon. However, alternative journalists could be said to have a broader concept of what journalism and working as a journalist entails. They do not believe, as much as mainstream journalists do, that a college education is needed to do the job, that journalists should continue to work for papers they do not agree with, that one particular style of writing is appropriate for all stories, and that journalists should take refresher courses.

For alternative journalists, then, professionalism involves influencing the public and having freedom and autonomy in writing and behaviour. Mainstream journalists apparently are more concerned with professionalism in a more traditional sense: that of advancing in a career and in personal development. Another source of information on concepts of professionalism is the responses to the open-ended questions on professionalism. Here, there was more consistency in responses between alternative and mainstream journalists.

The most commonly cited reason for self-identification as a professional by both groups was "observation of high standards of work or conduct" This classification included comments about quality of work, respect for sources or interviewees, meeting standards set by the employer or oneself, and following self-imposed or ethical codes of behaviour. It is notable that many of these reasons, offered without any prompting in the questionnaire, are similar to the informally understood journalistic standards of conduct articulated by Beam (1990).

The question of professionalism in an occupation is interesting to deal with in the abstract, but of more immediate and practical concern is the effects that such beliefs might have on worker attitudes, which, as argued earlier, may affect productivity and well-being. The test of whether the professional attitudes explored in this study related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment was somewhat complicated by the existence of two "types" of professionalism (scale-based and self-identified), so testing for these relationships was conducted using both "types". In only one case (scale-based professionalism and job satisfaction), however, was there a relationship to either attitude for either alternative or mainstream journalists. The respondent's status as an alternative or mainstream journalist was more significant in determining levels of organizational commitment than was their views on professionalism. Job satisfaction was not affected by the type of journalist, similar to the findings of Becker, Sobowale and Cobbey (1979).

There are several possible reasons for this almost non-existent relationship. One is that for most journalists professionalism may simply not be an issue - or, alternately, may be something that they accept without question - and thus does not affect how they feel about their jobs. The question of certification or regulation is clearly not a relevant question for these respondents, and there seems to be accepted standards of behaviour which are followed. More pressing concerns may be understaffing, changes in the industry, poor management, or overwork. These environmental factors are likely more relevant to job-related attitudes.

Another possibility is that if organizational commitment and job satisfaction are low, professionalism may not be influential because workers are not interested in doing their jobs differently; they simply do not want to do them. The means for alternative journalists on these attitudes were 4.972 (on a scale of 1 to 7) for organizational commitment and 3.722 for job satisfaction, and, for mainstream journalists, 4.515 for organizational commitment and 3.807 for job satisfaction. Other evidence previously cited (e.g. Wilhoit and Weaver, 1991) indicates that overall levels of job satisfaction in the newspaper industry are both declining and relatively low in comparison to other occupations. If this is indeed the case, then journalists may not see professionalism, or the possibility of having a formal profession, as something that may enhance their working lives, and thus are not concerned about it.

Conclusion

The results of this study provide much information for journalists and for those who study and manage journalists. Most important in this respect, perhaps, is the information on the views and attitudes of alternative journalists. The alternative press is a section of the media market that is likely to become much more influential in the future, given the dropping circulation rates of larger daily newspapers and the superior ability of alternative weeklies to target affluent and/or educated audiences (Association of Alternative Newsweeklies, 1992). Thus, the more that is known about workers at alternative newspapers, the more researchers and readers can understand the processes and ideologies at work in producing this kind of news.

The question of professionalization, although apparently not relevant to this particular group of mainstream and alternative respondents, is also one that bears watching. It is possible that if the job market in journalism continues to shrink professionalization will be examined as one method of simultaneously ensuring a supply of trained workers and of restricting access to employment. There appear to be potential legal barriers, relating to the First Amendment, to structuring the profession in the same manner as older, more established professions, since any regulation of journalists' activities might be interpreted as infringing on constitutionally guaranteed freedom of the press. Some form of required training and licensing examination may nevertheless become more attractive to employers as the number of jobs in journalism becomes smaller.

More importantly, variables that affect organizational commitment and job satisfaction for workers in this occupation need to be examined in greater detail. In a shrinking job market, one effective way of obtaining and keeping skilled workers is to determine what affects their commitment to the organization and their feelings about the job, and act accordingly. Further studies of this sort, investigating other variables that may affect job-related attitudes, will be of enormous theoretical and practical value.

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TABLE 1

Demographic Variables

	Mainstream Mean	Mainstream S.D.	Alternative Mean	Alternative S.D.	Overall Mean	Overall S.D.
Years with Current Employer	8.875**	7.540	4.526**	4.084	7.202	6.765
Years of Journalism Experience	14.901**	8.679	10.021**	6.089	13.024	8.131
Level of Education (5=completed technical school, 6=completed bachelor's degree)	5.678	1.107	5.484	1.344	5.603	1.205
Age (in years)	38.329*	9.119	35.221*	7.180	37.134	8.546
Years of Formal Education in Journalism	2.207*	1.950	1.436*	2.363	1.910	0.137

*p<0.05
**p<0.005

TABLE 2

Mainstream and Alternative Journalists' Responses to the McLeod-Hawley Scale

	Mainstream (n=152)	Alternative (n=95)
Professional Orientation (maximum=44)	18.107	18.316
Professional Implementation (maximum=21)	12.336	12.347
Overall	30.204	30.663

TABLE 3
Attitudes toward Journalism as a Profession

	Alternative		Mainstream	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you consider journalism a profession?	77 (85%)	14 (15%)	136 (90%)	15 (10%)

	Alternative	Mainstream
Reasons Cited in Open-Ended Responses*		
Skills/Experience/Expertise	30	33
Training	14	20
Importance to Society/Public	8	19
Standards/Quality	12	7
Discipline/Commitment Needed	9	5
Aptitude/Personality Type Needed	2	7
Paid for Work	5	2

*Only those reasons cited by two or more respondents are included. Many respondents cited more than one reason, so the total number of reasons is greater than the number of respondents.

TABLE 4
Self-Identification as Member of a Profession

	Alternative		Mainstream	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you consider yourself to be a member of a profession?	73* (82%)	16* (18%)	136* (91%)	14* (9%)

	Alternative	Mainstream
Reasons Cited in Open-Ended Responses**		
Skills/Experience/Expertise	10	14
Member of An Identifiable Group	13***	6
Paid for Work	10	2
Importance to Society/Public	6	3
Standards/Quality	3	4
Believe Journalism is a Profession	2	5

*Significantly different: chi-square=3.802, p=.0512.
**Only those reasons cited by two or more respondents are included. Many respondents gave more than one reason, so the total number of reasons is greater than the number of respondents.
***3 of the "alternative" respondents stated that journalists were an identifiable group with characteristics which they personally did not share or did not want to share.

TABLE 5
Self-Identification as a Professional

	Alternative		Mainstream	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you consider yourself a professional?	81 (90%)	9 (10%)	140 (93%)	10 (7%)

	Alternative	Mainstream
Reasons Cited in Open-Ended Responses*		
Observe Standards of Work/Conduct	39	30
Paid for Work	13	4
Skills	5	6
Experience	4	5
Work Hard	4	2

*Only those reasons cited by two or more respondents are included. Many respondents gave more than one reason, so the total number of reasons is greater than the number of respondents.

TABLE 6
Results of Regression With Scale-Based Professionalism (Classification Based on Responses to McLeod-Hawley Scale)
(n=247)

$$Y(\text{Organizational Commitment}) = a+b_1X_1(\text{High or Low Professionalism}) +b_2X_2(\text{Type of Newspaper})$$

	ß	s.e.
Professionalism	-0.108	0.153
Type	0.498**	-0.157

Multiple R^2 for Organizational Commitment Equation	0.025
Overall F for Organizational Commitment Equation	1.784*

$$Y(\text{Job Satisfaction}) = a+b_1X_1(\text{High or Low Professionalism}) +b_2X_2 (\text{Type of Newspaper})$$

	ß	s.e.
Professionalism	-0.143**	0.033
Type	0.097	0.076

Multiple R^2 for Job Satisfaction Equation	0.001
Overall F for Job Satisfaction Equation	1.059

*p<0.10
**p<0.05
**p<0.001

TABLE 7
Results of Regression With Self-Identified Professionalism (Classification Based on Responses to Question 71 in Questionnaire)
(n=240)

Y(Organizational Commitment) = $a+b_1X_1$(Professional or Not) $+b_2X_2$ (Type of Newspaper)

	ß	s.e.
Professionalism	0.246	0.288
Type	0.491	0.160**
Multiple R^2 for Organizational Commitment Equation	0.024	
Overall F for Organizational Commitment Equation	1.725*	

Y(Job Satisfaction) = $a+b_1X_1$(Professional or Not) $+b_2X_2$ (Type of Newspaper)

	ß	s.e.
Professionalism	-0.049	0.129
Type	0.103	0.072
Multiple R^2 for Job Satisfaction Equation	-0.018	
Overall F for Job Satisfaction Equation	0.323	

*p<0.10
**p<0.05

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"Markham Competition"

The Effect of Foreign News on Readers' Attitudes toward Foreign Countries

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Abstract

The present study examined, through two different approaches, the relationship between favorableness in U.S. newspaper coverage of 23 countries and readers' attitudes toward those countries. These two different approaches yielded results proving that the more negatively the news about a country is covered, the more likely the people have negative attitudes toward the country. Reasoned interpretations and implication of the results were also presented.

Abstract

The present study examined, through two different approaches, the relationship between favorableness in U.S. newspaper coverage of 23 countries and readers' attitudes toward those countries. In the first approach, people's feelings about 23 countries, which were surveyed in *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy,* were directly compared with the favorableness of news coverage about those countries by the *Washington Post* during the four-year period before the survey. In the second approach, the "Association Index," which was converted from the partial correlation coefficient (controlling four demographic variables) between people's feeling about those 23 countries and people's interest in reading news about other countries was considered as an 'expectation of real news coverage about the countries.' These two different approaches yielded results proving that the 'grand' hypothesis – the favorableness of news coverage about foreign countries affects readers' attitudes toward those countries – is statistically significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that the more negatively the news about a country is covered, the more likely it will be that the people have negative attitudes toward the country. Reasoned interpretations and implications of the results were also presented.

I. Introduction

What people know about the world beyond their immediate environment must be mediated by some type of medium because their direct contact or experience is always limited. For example, in order for people to understand the state of the world, as well as follow the events in the world, they cannot but rely on their valuable invention, the news media. Lippmann (1966) said that the world outside a person's direct experiences should be "explored" and "reported" through media, through which he can see "what no naked eye could see" and hear "what no [naked] ear could hear." He argued that the person "makes for himself a trustworthy picture inside his head of the world beyond his reach" (p. 18).

Today, the most powerful news media are mass media, which produce information and distribute it to a number of people simultaneously and efficiently. In their "cultivation hypothesis," Gerbner *et. al.* (1986) maintained that the "mass-produced messages" of television "create, fit into, exploit, and sustain the needs, values, and ideologies of mass publics" and "to the extent that television dominates their sources of information, continued exposure to its messages is likely to reiterate, confirm, and nourish (*i.e.*, cultivate) their values and perspective" (pp. 23-24). It is also true that "any symbolic representation of reality is based on selection and editing of material derived from reality, and thus depicts only a certain part of reality and portrays it from a specific point of view" (Adoni *et. al.*, 1984, p. 35). Then the distorted news should be expected to have a mass effect on people, and as a consequence, people may have distorted and incorrect images of distant objects or events. Lippmann (1966) also pointed out the distortion of information delivered through news media, arguing that the picture drawn inside people's heads "misleads men in their dealing with the world outside" (p. 18) because of the following factors:

> The artificial censorships, the limitations of social contact, the comparatively meager time available in each day for paying attention to public affairs, the distortion arising because events have to be compressed into very short messages, the difficulty of making a small vocabulary express a complicated world, and finally the fear of facing those facts which would seem to threaten the established routine of men's lives. (p. 18)

Another important fact is that the mass media are international, and so are news media. They cross borders and oceans, and affect people in other countries. Through information imported from other countries, people in a country can go beyond their limited environment and understand other human beings in other lands. The most direct and immediate type of cross-border information must be "today's news," transmitted in great amounts and at great speed. The effect of foreign news, therefore, has been the object of comprehensive studies by many researchers. Then, narrowing the focus, what is the effect of news from (or about) other countries? Foreign news provides plenty of world event summaries to help people understand what is happening in other countries. Updated information from a foreign country transmitted through the news media builds an accumulated image of the country in an audience's mind.

On the other hand, there have been persistent debates on the bad effect of foreign news, peaking with the New World Information Order debates by the Third World countries. They have argued the imbalance of the First World's news coverage about the Third World in terms of its *volume* and *favorableness.* Therefore, many studies, of which the majority have been done on the U.S. news media (not because of its relative severity but because of the activeness of study), were conducted to prove the existence of imbalance. Some of these studies (*e.g.*, Gonzenbach *et. al.*, 1991; Potter, 1987; Riffe and Shaw, 1982; Weaver and Wilhoit, 1981) presented very reasonable support for the Third World countries' argument.

Why, then, has the imbalanced, thus structurally distorted, representation of foreign countries been an object of intense discussion? It is because the distorted news coverage produces an incorrect image in people's minds. The news media in democratic countries are considered as the major agencies curing the country's own defects by reflecting and intensifying public opinion (Lippmann, 1966). Democracy, by definition, is a governmental system where the political decisions, including domestic and foreign policies, are influenced and established by all members of society through the form of public opinion. The news media should reflect reality as it is, and by doing so, establish and intensify public opinion, which results in government policies. In this sense, imbalanced, thus structurally distorted, news flow is a really fundamental matter, because it will limit natural and fair opinion formation. For instance, if a country has been rarely covered by news media, people would not be given sufficient information, and consequently, would not be able to set up any form of public opinion to raise objections to their government's direction; and if coverage is mostly unfavorable, people cannot but have negative attitudes toward the country and would think their government's unfavorable policy is justifiable and proper.

In fact, the favorableness of news about other countries changes "as the world kaleidoscope changes, as new enemies arise, or as government changes" (Boulding, 1959, p. 125). The enemy of the U.S. yesterday can become a friend today. As Boulding (1959) showed, during World War II, "most people in the United States visualized Germany and Japan ... as enemies, and after Hitler's invasion of Russia, Russia was for a while regarded as a valuable friend and ally. Today [as of 1958] the picture is quite changed: Germany and Japan are valuable friends and allies; Russia is the great enemy" (p. 125). However, now (1993), the "picture" is not the same as it was in 1958. The former Soviet Union had been the biggest enemy during the Cold War era. However, after the recent revolution, symbolized by "glasnost" and "perestroika," people in the U.S. perceived the country differently. Rather, Americans in the 1990s consider "the economic power of Japan" a more critical threat to the U.S. than "the military power of the [former] Soviet Union," "economic competition from Europe" and "the development of China as a world power" (Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 1991).

Whenever relationships change, the news media play a major role in reporting government's justifications. It is one of the major duties of news media to report what government, the first power agency in a country, says and does. What government thinks is consistent with its political direction and what it considers more important will be given more frequent and more extensive coverage. Lynch and Effendi (1964) maintained that the news coverage by the *New York Times* about India became more favorable as the U.S. relations with India improved. Lent (1977) added an example to support the claim that "United States media coverage of the People's Republic of China before and after Nixon's visit to that country in the early 1970s" (p. 47) had been significantly different. Similar tendencies can be found in more recent foreign news coverage. During the Bush administration, as the president put significant importance on the relationship with China and the former Soviet Union, the news coverage about these two countries became distinctly favorable. Another notable example is Nicaragua. After leftist Daniel Ortega was defeated by the opponent, pro-business candidate Violeta Chamorro, in the 1990 presidential election, the news coverage about the country dramatically improved.

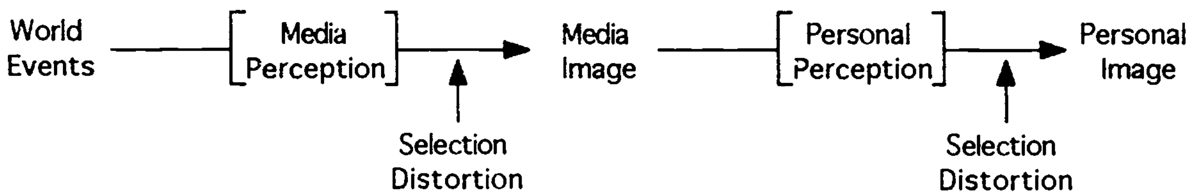
The favorableness of foreign news can also be affected by some intervening factors. It is noteworthy that after Argentina, Indonesia, South Korea, the Philippines and Turkey started lobbying through U.S. public relations consultants, the news about those countries became significantly more favorable (Albriton and Manheim, 1985). Governmental intervention can also be an example. As revealed by Davidson (1975), many U.S. foreign correspondents believe that the foreign news covered is largely determined by the international diplomacy of the U.S.

The superficiality of news coverage by newspapers is another unignorable problem of foreign news coverage, partly because the number of foreign correspondents decreases (Straughan, 1987), and consequently, dependence on the "secondary" news offered by wire services increases. The "secondary" news is more likely to be in a very short form with sometimes non-representative or sensational photographs. Background knowledge and various viewpoints are usually omitted, resulting in repeated superficial, and perhaps misleading, reflections of reality. This can be an example of "structural distortion," which seems to be more apparent for affairs of underdeveloped countries and events in which the U.S. is not directly involved and of which the contents are not sensational.

As McNelly and Izcaray (1986) stated, "what is ultimately at stake, however, is not just the content of the international news flow but its cumulative impact on audiences" (p. 547).

Then it can be hypothesized that if a country is negatively covered by the U.S. media, American people may not like the country and, to the contrary, if positively covered, they may like the country. Also, if a country is negatively covered by the U.S. media, there should be a negative relationship between a person's level of exposure to the foreign news and level of liking of the country. Conversely, the relationship between the person's level of exposure to the foreign news and the level of liking of a favorably covered country should be positive. The main purpose of this study was to empirically test the relationships. To be more specific, the present study examined through two different approaches, favorableness of U.S. newspaper coverage about twenty-three countries, and the relationship between coverage and readers' attitudes toward those countries. By being reflected in Galtung and Ruge's (1965) "Chain of News Communication" (p. 65), the framework of the present study can be clearly summarized.

Figure 1. Galtung and Ruge's Chain of News Communication



As long as news is not a random selection of events, there must be some factors determining whether an event will be printed in the newspaper. Many studies examined the factors working in the former "Selection & Distortion" step between "World Events" and "Media Image" and revealed factors determining whether an event can be selected by the U.S. news media (*e.g.*, Chang *et. al.*, 1987; Galtung and Ruge, 1965; Kariel and Rosenvall, 1984; Straughan, 1987). Those factors can be integrated into the following categories: Prominence (Impact or Size of the Event), Unusualness (Potential for Social Change Deviance, Normative Deviance and Unpredictability), Proximity (Language Affinity, Cultural Similarity and Geographical Distance), Timeliness, Relevance to U.S. and other origin factors (Eliteness, Press

Freedom, Population and the GNP of the Country). Understanding the factors of newsworthiness involved in the first half of the chain, the present study focused on the *impact* of the "Media Image" on the "Personal Image," the second half of the chain. In other words, the purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between the favorableness of news coverage about foreign countries by a newspaper and its possible effect on readers' attitudes toward those countries.

Figure 2 about here

Figure 2 is the visualization of two different approaches to test one "grand" hypothesis that *the favorableness of news coverage about foreign countries has an effect on people's attitudes toward those countries.* In Approach I, people's attitudes toward 23 countries, which were surveyed in *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy*, were directly compared with the average favorableness of news coverage about those countries by the *Washington Post* during the four-year period before the survey (1986-1990). The *Washington Post* was used as a representative U.S. newspapers because of its quality and influence. In Approach II, the association between people's attitudes toward those 23 countries and people's interests in reading news about other countries was considered an "expectation of real news coverage" about the countries. People's attitudes toward the foreign countries were obtained from the survey, *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy*, where the same respondents answered the question about their interests in reading news about foreign countries in general. These two approaches might sound similar but are basically different approaches designed to lend more generalized findings. Then the two approaches can be verbalized to produce two testable sub-hypotheses:

1. The average favorableness of news coverage about each country is *positively* correlated with people's attitudes toward the country.
2. If a country has been *positively* covered overall, the more people read news about the country, the more likely they will have a *positive* attitudes toward the country; and to the contrary, if a country has been *negatively* covered overall, the more people read news about the country, the more likely they will have a *negative* attitude toward the country.

Reading about other countries in a newspaper is not the only factor determining a person's attitude toward those countries. Knowledge about the country, travel experience (Korzenny *et. al.*, 1987) and some important demographic characteristics of the person, such as age, income level, education level and gender (McNelly and Izcaray, 1986; Perry 1987), are also significant factors, though not for all countries. Therefore the present study controlled the effects of the four demographic variables in the main correlation analysis.

News transmitted through other media, such as television, magazine and radio also have effects on the person's attitudes toward foreign countries, and personal contact with others (*e.g.*, conversations with friends) can be another influential factor. Non-news information carried by television or radio (*e.g.*, documentary or fictional drama) also cannot be overlooked. Then it is worth understanding the relationships among the people's uses of the four traditional news media: television, newspaper, radio and magazine. If the use of one medium as a news source suppresses the use of another medium, the examination of newspaper alone cannot produce any generalizable finding that explains the effect of foreign news exposure on people's attitudes toward foreign countries. According to Perry and McNelly's (1988) study, "Newspaper Exposure" has moderately positive correlations with "Television News Exposure (r=.21, n=374)," with "Cosmopolitan Media Exposure (r=.25, n=374)" and with "Network News Exposure (r=.16, n=370)." This means that people who are interested in "news" have high exposure to all kinds of media and each medium is not a substitute for another. Therefore, the study on newspaper alone may not produce any results contradictory to studies on other kinds of news media.

In the present study, a traditional definition was revised for a more clear and meaningful distinction between "foreign news in which the U.S. was involved" and "news that is solely about the foreign country or the relationship of the country with another foreign country." The terms "foreign news" and "internal news" have been used to define the news about foreign affairs in which the U.S. was not involved and "international" news to define the news about foreign affairs in which the U.S. was involved. The terms, "foreign" and "international" news, however, have been interchangeably used to include both kinds of news together in some other studies. In the present study, the following terms were used to avoid confusion: "foreign country news" for the news in which the event is not relevant to the U.S., "foreign relation news" about the event in which the U.S. is involved and "foreign news" as a general term of non-domestic news, including both "foreign country news" and "foreign relation news."

II. Method

A. Data Summary

The data collected in the national survey of *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy* and the newspaper abstracts from the *Washington Post Index* were either directly used as variables, or were transformed to create another necessary variable. The *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1990* is a quadrennial study which was designed by the Chicago Council of Foreign Relations and conducted by the Gallup Organization. It was designed "to investigate the opinions and attitudes of the general public and a selected group of opinion leaders (or elites), on matters relating to foreign policy" (Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 1991). Two separate surveys were conducted on two different samples, general population and opinion leaders. The present study used the data of the general population of a 1990 survey that was collected by "personal in-home interviewers, with a national probability sample of 1,662 men and women, aged 18 years of age or older" (Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 1991). The 1978, 1982 and 1986 data were also briefly summarized for a trend analysis. The *Washington Post* was selected to evaluate how favorably (or unfavorably) each country had been covered. In the actual process of news favorableness evaluation, for convenience, the *Washington Post Index* was used, because it briefly summarizes every "foreign news" report in the *Washington Post* under the name of the origin (or subject) country with indication of its original length .

Figure 3 about here

Average Favorableness of Foreign News Coverage (Column No. 1-6 in Figure 3) was calculated based on the evaluation of news abstracts in the *Washington Post Index 1987-1990* (most of them were from 1990 (about 50%) and 1989 (about 30%) issues). On the average, 63 news stories for each country (Mean = 63, Minimum = 31 & Maximum = 106) were drawn by using a mixture of systematic, random and population sampling methods (population sampling was used due to the small number of news stories in the cases of Nigeria and Taiwan). Each sampled news story was evaluated by the author as "bad" news (scored "-1"), "moderate" news (scored "0") and "good" news (scored "+1"). As the standard of "bad" news, the definition by Haskins (1981) was used, which is "new information about events, objects or other referents which are themselves generally considered to be unpleasant or harmful" (p.5). The "good" news was thus defined as the opposite concept of "bad" news, changing the adjectives of "unpleasant and harmful" to "pleasant and beneficial." The "moderate" news was defined as "news which can be on the middle of bad-good continuum, which contain equally good and bad contents, and which cannot be judged by the abstract only." The author's evaluation was proved fairly reliable through a reliability test by three graduate students with 15 randomly selected news stories from the sample news stories used in the present study. The simple correlation between the majority value of the three codings and the author's coding was 0.9. For the Weighted (by length of story) Favorableness evaluation, the length summary of the original article (categorized as Short, Medium and Long) under each news abstract was used. To obtain the average length of each

Short (S), Medium (M) and Long (L) news, 30 real news articles for each length class were randomly sampled from the real newspaper and the rough ratio of average lengths – "8" for long, "3" for medium, and "1" for short stories (in which photo, illustration and maps were counted 30%) – were obtained and used to calculate Weighted Favorableness scores. However, due to the limitation of the study, the strength of favorableness was not considered.

Average "Feeling Thermometer" (Column No. 7 in Figure 3) was also obtained from the *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1990*. In the survey, a total of 1,662 samples had been randomly separated into two equal-number subgroups and one of the subgroups had been asked about their attitudes toward 11 countries, while the other subgroup had responded for the other 12 countries. Excluding the sample who answered "Not Familiar," the "feeling thermometer" scores (in 0-100 continuum scale with anchors of 0 = "extremely cold," 50 = "neutral" and 100 = "extremely warm" feelings) about each country had been finally responded to by 755-820 respondents. The Average "Feeling Thermometer" scores for each country were calculated to estimate the average positiveness (or negativeness) of people's attitudes toward the country.

Association Index (Column No. 9 in Figure 3) was obtained through a multiple-step procedure. First, the partial correlation coefficients *(r)* between people's Interests in Reading "Foreign News" (3-point scale; 0 = "hardly interested at all" or "don't read newspapers," 1 = "somewhat interested" and 2 = "very interested") and their Individual "Feeling Thermometer" scores about *each* of 11 (or 12) countries were calculated, controlling for their age, education level, income level and gender. The four demographic factors were controlled, because in another partial correlation analysis (not presented), it was proved that those demographic factors have significant effects on people's attitudes toward foreign countries. For example, younger people prefer China, more educated people prefer Japan, richer people prefer Great Britain and males prefer Mexico. Finally, each country could obtain a partial correlation coefficient (Column No. 8 in Figure 3), of which one variable was (about 700) people's Interests in Reading

"Foreign News" (one answer per respondent), and the other variable was the people's Individual "Feeling Thermometer" scores for each country (11 or 12 answers per respondent).

The next step was to make a new index reflecting the level of the correlation. The simple correlation coefficient *(r)*, whether it is zero-order or higher-order, is not a proportional estimation of association. For example, in terms of the strength of correlation, the correlation coefficient of 0.4 is definitely greater than 0.2; however, it cannot be said that 0.4 is exactly the double of 0.2 (Witte, 1985, p. 95). Therefore, in the present study, the concept of "R-squared x 100 (*Percentage* of Variance Explained)" was used as an estimate of association. However, the "R-squared" loses a very important bit of information – the direction of association (original sign of the correlation coefficient) – by being multiplied by itself. Hence, a new variable, Association Index, was created by retaining the original sign of the correlation coefficient *(r)* in the process of squaring. This process can also be expressed by the following formula:

$$\textbf{Association Index} = \frac{r^3}{|r|} \times 100\ ; \ r = \text{Correlation Coefficient},\ |r| = \text{the Absolute Value of } r$$

The Association Index, therefore, means the *proportional strength* and the *direction* of the correlation between the two variables (maximum = 100 when r = 1). The strong positive Association Index for a foreign country – the more people read about a country, the more likely the people will have positive attitudes toward the country – can be interpreted as that the news coverage *had been* positive and people's attitudes *had been* favorably affected, or, changed or strengthened.

B. Analysis Method

1. Approach I

Simple regression analysis was conducted with Average Favorableness of "Foreign News" Coverage as the independent variable and people's Average "Feeling Thermometer" scores for each country as the dependent variable and using 23 countries as the cases. "Using the news story as the unit of analysis means that a one-inch filler at the bottom of the back page of the paper gets the same weight in the analysis as a story covering the entire front page" (Gonzenbach *et. al.*, 1991). The present study, therefore, considered the length of the news story and analyzed the "weighted" favorableness scores as well as the "unweighted" scores. To examine how differently "foreign country news" (not involving the U.S.) and "foreign relation news," (involving the U.S.) respectively, covary with people's Average "Feeling Thermometer" scores, additional correlation analyses were conducted by using the Average Favorableness for "Foreign Country News" and Average Favorableness for "Foreign Relation News" about each country as individual independent variables and the Average "Feeling Thermometer" score for the country as the common dependent variable.

2. Approach II

The Association Index, which had been obtained by transforming the original partial correlation *(r)*, – between people's Interests in Reading "Foreign News" and their Individual "Feeling Thermometer" scores about the 23 foreign countries controlling for their age, education level, income level and gender – was compared with the Average Favorableness of "Foreign News" about the country through scatterplot and correlation analysis. Therefore, as in the case of Approach I, each country was the case of analysis. A correlation analysis was used to find out whether the Average Favorableness of News Coverage about foreign countries was correlated with the Association Index, the strength and direction of the relationship between people's Interests in Reading "foreign news" and their Individual "Feeling Thermometer" scores about those countries.

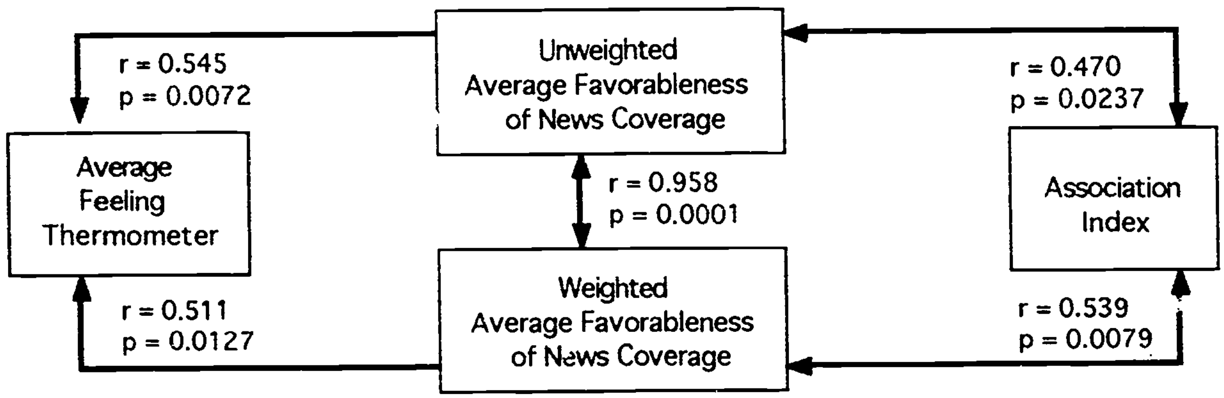
III. Results

A. Approach I (Average Favorableness of News Coverage ---> Average "Feeling Thermometer")

Sub-hypothesis 1 (the favorableness of news coverage about foreign countries has an effect on people's attitudes toward those countries) was proved to be statistically significant, and the direction of association, as expected, turned out to be positive. Therefore, it can be concluded that the more favorably a country is covered, the more likely people are to have positive attitudes toward the country.

Figure 4

Summary of Statistical Analyses



As summarized in the left half of Figure 4, both correlation coefficients are moderately positive (0.545 with Unweighted Average Favorableness scores and 0.511 with Weighted Average Favorableness scores as the dependent variable, respectively). Similarly with Stevenson's (1984) research on newspaper news stories, consideration of the volume of the news stories did not make any difference.

Figure 5 and 6 about here

According to the scatterplot in Figure 5, four outliers can be detected. The two countries that were too disfavored by American people to fit to the linear relationship are Iran and Iraq. To the country, Canada and Great Britain were so favorably evaluated by people that they are also located far from the expectation line. Incidentally, the four notably outlying countries are considered to have good reasons to be excessively disfavored or favored. As presented in Figure 6, the longitudinal trend of people's Average "Feeling Thermometer" scores about those four countries and some other countries is worth discussion, because the "reality" of a country – although it may be distorted in printed or broadcast news – is undeniably the most influential factor on the news favorableness and its consequence, people's attitudes toward the country.

1. <u>Iran and Iraq</u>: They had been involved in war, terrorism and/or hostage problems in the period and each country was, or had been, an enemy of the U.S. Iran's dramatic drop in people's "feeling thermometer" scores since 1982 is especially noticeable, "indicating a long-term drop in favorable attitudes among the American public toward Iran since the fall of the Shah and the coming to power of the Ayatollah Khomeini and continuing after the end of 1980 hostage crisis" (Rielly, 1987, p. 19).

2. <u>Canada and Great Britain</u>: Both countries had been remarkably favored by American people through the period. Canada is a bordering country (*cf.* Proximity), and historically, has not had any serious conflict with other countries. Great Britain is one of the closest and most stable friends of the U.S. and one of its strongest allies. Furthermore, both countries, partly because they use English as their first languages, are culturally similar to the U.S. (*cf.* Cultural Affinity).

3. <u>Soviet Union</u>: The "feeling thermometer" scores about the (former) Soviet Union almost doubled (34 to 60) from 1986 to 1990. The (former) Soviet Union, which had been a major enemy in the Cold War era, was fairly favorably covered by the U.S. news media as the revolution toward free-market capitalism proceeded.

4. <u>Japan and China</u>: These two countries showed big drops in the 1990 survey. Japan had been a strong ally as World War II became history and the Cold War era began, and consequently favorably covered by the news media in spite of the country's disadvantage in two important newsworthiness factors, "Proximity (Geographic Distance)" and "Cultural Affinity." However, the economic power of the country, which once worked for improving American people's attitudes toward the country, was rapidly swelling enough to threaten American economy, and thus aroused the American people's

animosity. China was negatively reported by the U.S. news media in 1989, largely because of the Tianamen Square Massacre, and this "bad" news affected American people's attitudes quite negatively.

Figure 7

Correlation Coefficients between News Favorableness Variables and Average "Feeling Thermometer"

(Pearson's Correlation Coefficients with Corresponding Probability Values in Parentheses)

	Foreign Relation News (Unweighted)	Foreign Relation News (Weighted)	Foreign Country News (Unweighted)	Foreign Country News (Weighted)
Average Feeling Thermometer	0.583 (0.0035)	0.574 (0.0041)	0.431 (0.0402)	0.361 (0.0908)

Figure 7 shows that Average Favorableness of "Foreign Relation News," compared with that of "Foreign Country News," had the stronger relationship with people's Average "Feeling Thermometer" scores about the country in both of the cases using Unweighted (0.583 vs. 0.431) and Weighted (0.574 vs. 0.361) Average Favorableness scores. Assuming the proportions of "foreign country news" and "foreign relation news" in real news coverage are almost equal (Gonzenbach, 1991), this implies that the involvement of the U.S., that is, direct relevance to the U.S., made the news more influential to the readers in building attitudes toward the country.

B. Approach II (Association Index <--> Average Favorableness of News Coverage)

As explained before, the Association Index is the value that was transformed from the original partial correlation coefficient *(r)* between people's Interests in Reading "foreign news" and their Individual "Feeling Thermometers" about each country controlling for four demographic factors. As presented in the right half of Figure 4, the Association Index of each country covaries with the Average Favorableness of Coverage about the country ($r = 0.47$ for unweighted and 0.539 for weighted scores; both are statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.05$ level).

C. Test of Grand Hypothesis (Average Favorableness of News Coverage - -> People's Attitudes)

Two basically different approaches yielded results proving that the "grand" hypothesis – that the favorableness of news coverage about foreign countries affects readers' attitudes toward (or feeling about) the countries – is statistically significant. Based on the scatterplot in Figure 5, there seems to be no proof of quadratic or cubic relationship between two variables. Therefore, it can be concluded that the more negatively the news about a foreign country is covered, the more likely the people have negative attitudes toward the country, and that as presented in Figure 4 and 7, the use of unweighted scores or weighted scores did not make any significant difference.

IV. Discussion

The importance of mass media in human life cannot be overstated. Accelerated by the development of new telecommunication technology, the effect of mass media is getting more powerful and immediate. People can see and listen to what is happening on the other side of the earth even without any time-delay. The inevitable problem is, however, that information transmitted by mass media cannot reflect reality without any distortion. Therefore, people are continuously affected by the distorted information carried by the media, and as a result, their images of distant objects or events are not perfectly congruent with reality.

During the past two decades, the underdeveloped countries have complained about the imbalance of news coverage by the developed countries. The underdeveloped countries have contended that the news was structurally and habitually imbalanced, and consequently, the countries have been mostly ignored by the news media of developed countries, unless they had a newsworthy conflict or natural disaster. Based on the result of the present study, the First World countries (Italy, Germany, Japan, Israel, Canada, Great Britain, France and South Africa) and the Second World countries (as of 1990, the Soviet Union, China and Poland) were, in large part, more favorably covered by the *Washington Post* than the Third World countries (Egypt, Iran, Mexico, Iraq, India, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, South Korea, Nigeria, The Philippines and Nicaragua). Limited to the purposive selection of countries by the data source, *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1990*, the Third World countries' claims seem to be reasonable.

The two different approaches used in the present study produced one identical finding. Generalizing the statistically significant findings, there are some countries that people dislike more as they read more news about the countries, and those countries were mostly the Third World countries. More directly speaking, American people do not like most of the Third World countries because the countries have been unfavorably reported in the U.S. news media.

However, what should not be overlooked is "reality." On the grounds that news media should reflect "reality" with minimum distortion, news about a country that is suffering from enduring domestic conflicts cannot be equally favorable to a country in a more peaceful and harmonious state. Although the selection of countries precluded more powerful generalization, most of the countries that were unfavorably covered either had serious domestic problems or persistent international troubles in "reality." If news favorableness were balanced across countries, as the Third World countries claimed, it would also yield distortion of "reality" because unequal states in "reality" would be treated as equal (Stevenson and Grady, 1982). This means that the perfectly balanced *and* accurate news coverage is virtually impossible.

However, the imbalance, which means structural distortion, is definitely a problem when it is abused on any purpose. If the news media in a country are directly controlled by government or if they just follow governmental direction in dealing with other countries, then government's pre-judgment tends to affect public opinion rather than public opinion affecting governmental policy. It is worth stressing that, as Lippmann (1966) argued, "public opinion must be organized for the press, if they are to be sound, not by the press" (p. 19). This problem is more serious in countries where the news media virtually belong to the ruling political party. It is undeniably wrong for any government claiming democracy to use the media as tools for controlling its people, because loaded (or, pre-evaluated) news reports deny people the "right to know" something as it is and impede their independent judgment of whether it is right or wrong.

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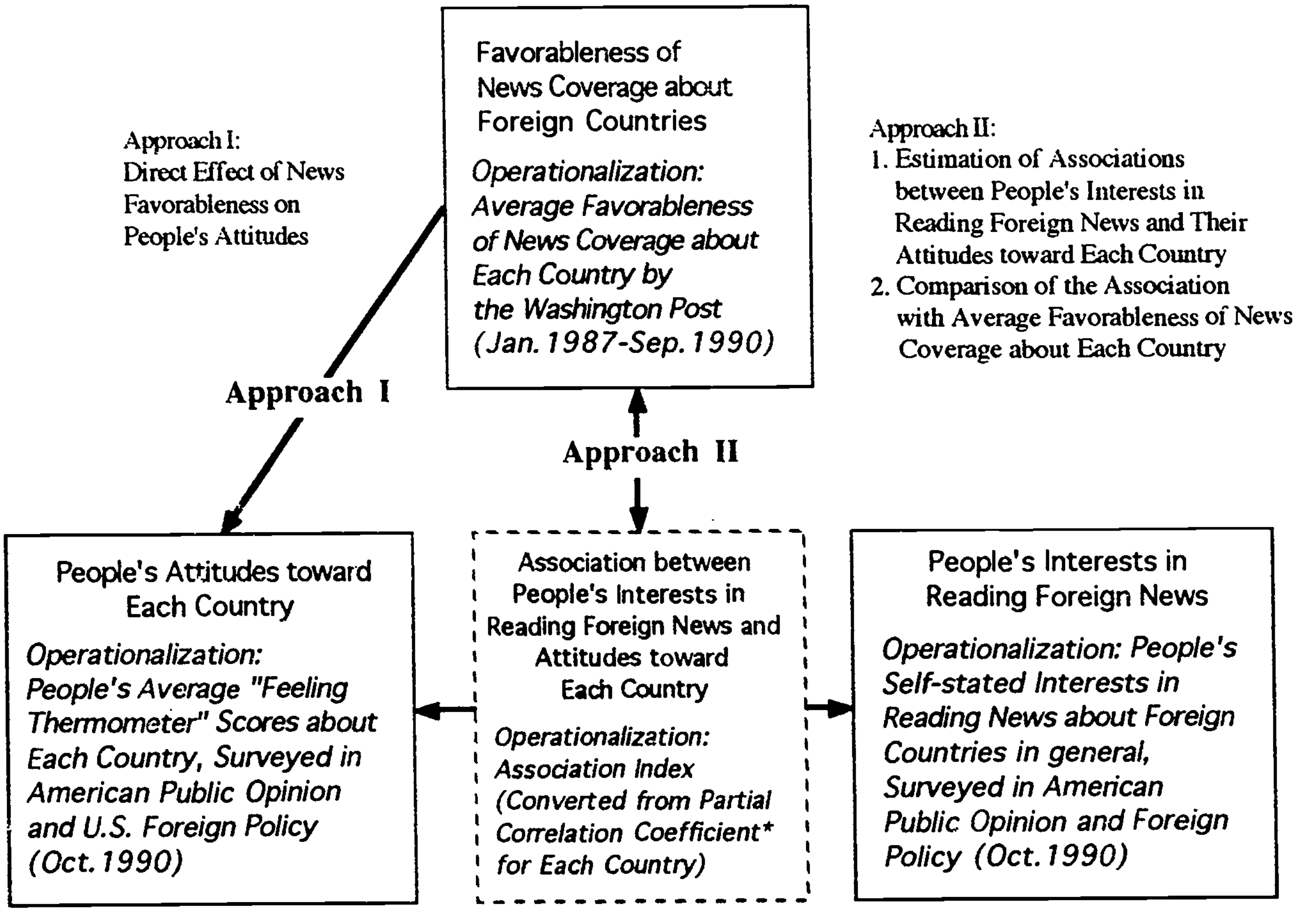
Figure 2

Framework of the Study



* Partial Correlation Coefficient between people's Interests in Reading Foreign News (in general) and their (Individual) "Feeling Thermometer" scores about each country, controlling for their age, education level, income level and gender.

Figure 3. Data Summary

Country	(1) Favor. - Forgn Relatn News Only (Unweighted)	(2) Favor. - Forgn Cntry News Only (Unweighted)	(3) Favor. - Average of Foreign News (Unweighted)	(4) Favor. - Forgn Relatn News Only (Weighted)	(5) Favor. - Forgn Cntry News Only (Weighted)	(6) Favor. - Average of Foreign News (Weighted)	(7) Average Feeling Thermo. Score	(8) Partial Correlation Coefficient (r)
Italy	0.3158	0.1379	0.2268	1.3158	-0.7586	0.2786	58.6028	0.058
Soviet Union	0.1538	-0.0909	0.0315	0.7500	-0.1818	0.2841	59.7915	0.127
Egypt	0.4194	0.2353	0.3274	2.2258	0.8824	1.5541	52.3792	0.11
Germany	0.0882	0.0811	0.0847	0.7059	0.5135	0.6097	61.8067	0.136
Iran	-0.5758	-0.4667	-0.5213	-3.6970	-2.5111	-3.1040	26.1400	-0.029
Japan	-0.0286	-0.0286	-0.0286	-0.7143	0.5429	-0.0857	51.5062	0.107
Mexico	-0.2581	-0.4063	-0.3322	-0.7097	-1.0938	-0.9018	55.8863	0.08
Israel	-0.1765	-0.3429	-0.2597	-0.8235	-2.2286	-1.5261	52.7958	0.03
Iraq	-0.7586	-0.6579	-0.7082	-5.2759	-3.3421	-4.3090	19.8797	-0.07
India	-0.4444	-0.5879	-0.5162	-2.4444	-2.8684	-2.6564	47.5785	0.12
Canada	0.0800	-0.2162	-0.0681	0.2400	-1.5946	-0.6773	76.2736	0.08
Brazil	-0.2353	-0.0909	-0.1631	-0.7647	-0.7273	-0.7460	53.8114	0.07
Great Britain	-0.0769	-0.2353	-0.1561	-1.0000	-1.0000	-1.0000	74.5668	0.12
Saudi Arabia	0.1923	0.1563	0.1743	1.7308	0.9375	1.3341	53.4819	0.08
China	-0.2432	-0.3488	-0.2960	-1.2703	-1.8140	-1.5421	45.2272	0.11
France	0.0455	0.3235	0.1845	0.5909	1.5588	1.0748	55.7146	0.08
Taiwan	-0.4118	0.0323	-0.1898	-0.7059	0.1613	-0.2723	48.7569	0.11
South Korea	-0.2414	-0.2188	-0.2301	-1.6207	-0.5000	-1.0603	47.7084	0.09
Poland	0.2500	0.1176	0.1838	1.4643	0.2059	0.8351	57.6085	0.15
South Africa	-0.2903	-0.1143	-0.2023	-1.2903	-0.4000	-0.8451	50.2726	0.12
Nigeria	0.3333	-0.1786	0.0773	1.6667	-0.4286	0.6191	46.3722	0.09
The Philippines	-0.5000	-0.5333	-0.5166	-3.1667	-4.1667	-3.6667	52.9047	0.05
Nicaragua	-0.1290	-0.1026	-0.1158	0.9355	-0.6410	0.1473	44.9881	0.10

(1) Unweighted Average Favorableness of Foreign Relation News Coverage (-1 ~ +1)
(2) Unweighted Average Favorableness of Foreign Country News Coverage (-1 ~ +1)
(3) Unweighted Average Favorableness of Foreign (Foreign Country + Foreign Relation) News Coverage Combined (-1 ~ +1)
(4) Weighted Average Favorableness of Foreign Relation News Coverage (-8 ~ +8)
(5) Weighted Average Favorableness of Foreign Country News Coverage (-8 ~ +8)
(6) Weighted Average Favorableness of Foreign (Foreign Country + Foreign Relation) News Coverage Combined (-8 ~ +8)
(7) People's Average Feeling Thermometer
(8) Partial Correlation Coefficient between people's (Individual) Interest in Reading Foreign News and Individual Feeling Thermometer for Each (
demographic variables: Age, Education, Gender and Income.
(9) R-squared with Original Sign of the Partial Correlation Coefficient (r) / Formula: $A = (R^3 / |R|) \times 10$

Figure 5
Scatterplot with Unweighted Average Favorableness of News Coverage and People's Average Feeling Thermometer

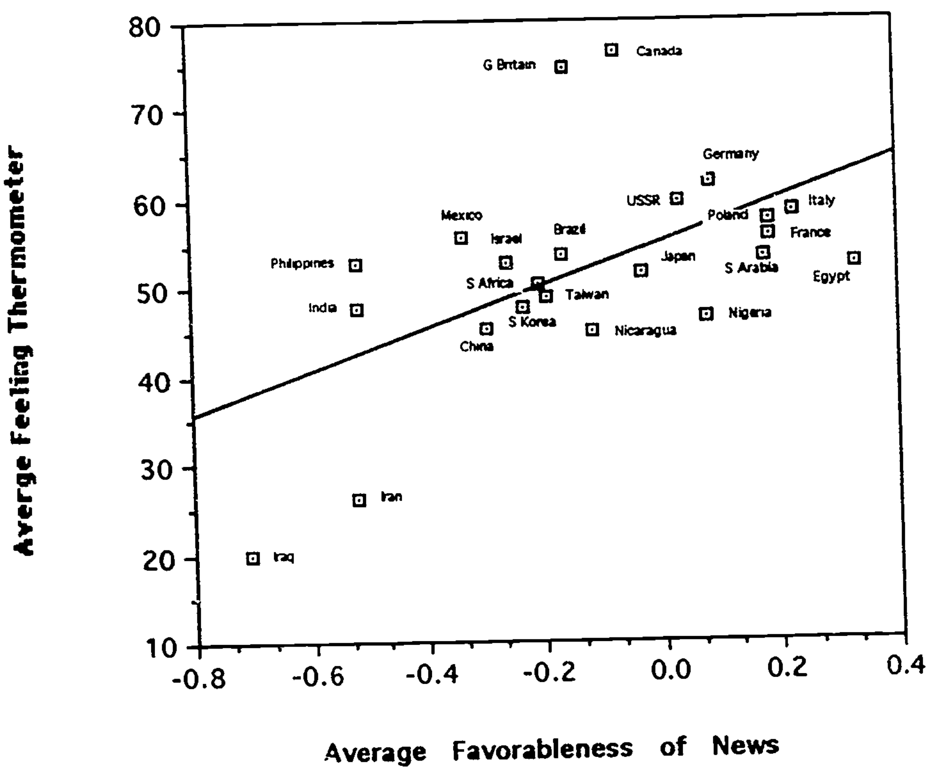
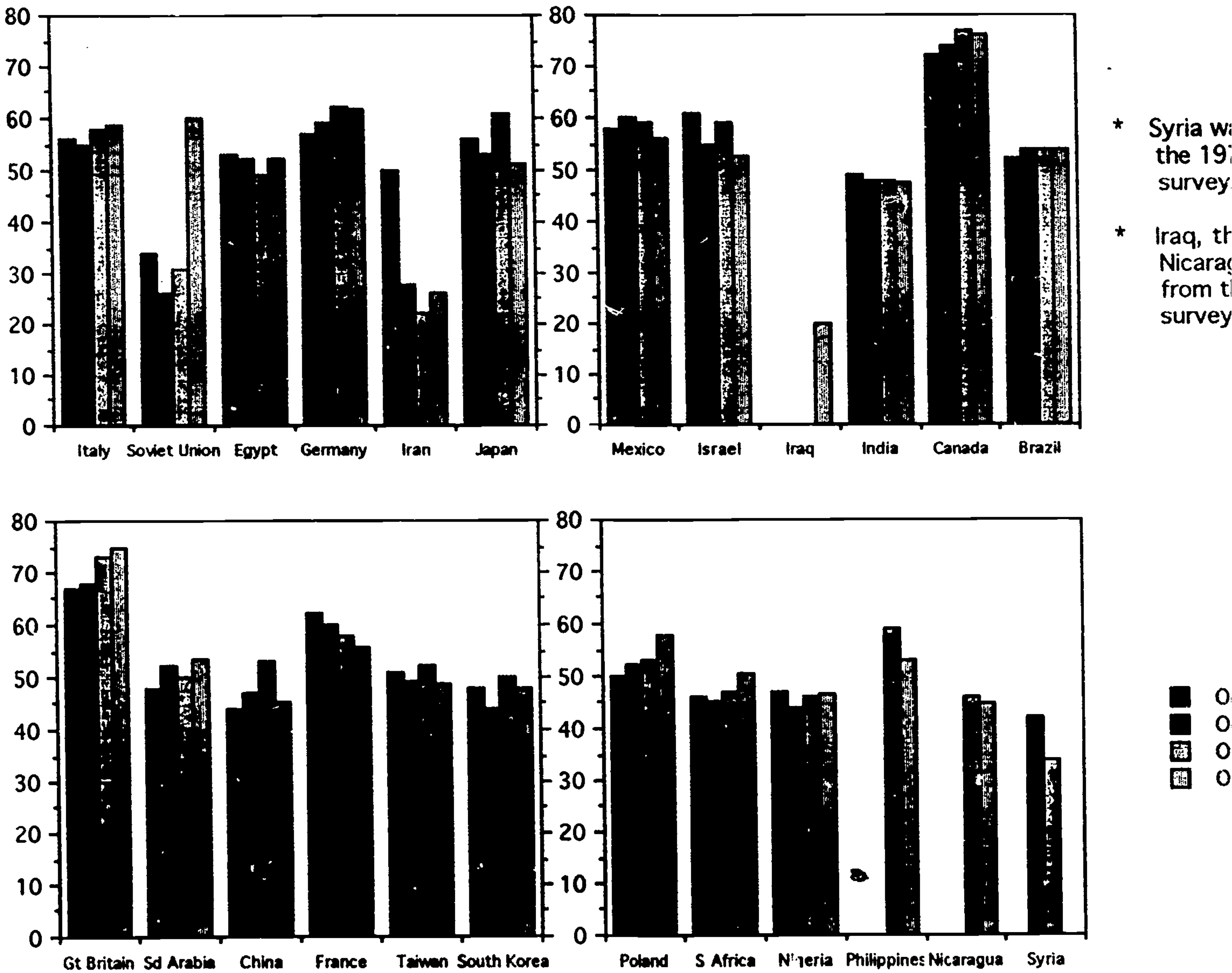


Figure 6. Trend of People's Feeling Thermometer
(Data from *Amerecan Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Relations 1978, 1982, 1986 & 1990*)



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COMMUNITY EDITORS' VIEWS ON EXTRALOCAL COVERAGE

P. J. Tichenor, G. A. Donohue, C. N. Olien and D. B. Hindman

University of Minnesota

Paper presented to the Communication Theory and Methodology Division, Assn. at the annual convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Kansas City, Missouri, Aug. 14, 1993.

COMMUNITY EDITORS' VIEWS ON EXTRALOCAL COVERAGE

P. J. Tichenor, G. A. Donohue, C. N. Olien and D. B. Hindman

The American newspaper has traditionally been viewed as an agent of institutional support in the local community.[1] The newspapers reports and interprets patterns of human activity and reinforces basic norms, values, and a sense of community attachment. Whether this support function is limited to purely local reporting, however, is a matter of journalistic and community concern. As power shifts from the local community to metropolitan concentrations of commercial and political influence, public affairs news from the larger society becomes increasingly relevant for community adjustment.

This is a study of the degree to which the community editors give high importance ratings to extralocal coverage, that is, coverage of events and issues beyond the local community and its immediate environment. The fundamental question is whether rating of extralocal reporting depends on community structure. Is it rated more highly in larger, diverse, more pluralistic communities, such as regional trade centers, than in smaller, more homogeneous and more isolated rural places? By editors of dailies, more than by editors of weeklies?

An analysis of these questions is important both for mass

1. Janowitz, Morris, The Community Press in an Urban Setting. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952.

communication theory and for concerns about community action. Theoretically, one might ask whether continued social differentiation leads to gaps in perceptions about social adjustment among a key set of communications professionals which, consequently, contribute to further widening of gaps in the system. To the extent that a group of editors holds rigid views about news coverage, such views may constitute a constraint on community adjustment to changing conditions.

Changes in communities

A fundamental aspect of social change in nonmetropolitan communities is long-term social differentiation, marked by a decline in agriculture as the dominant source of income, replaced by more diversity in sources of employment and economic activity generally. Accompanying this differentiation has been the increased importance of "extra-local" powers, placing a wide range of constraints on community action. Through political centralization and vertical integration, communities have increasingly become part of a "bureaucratically administered extracommunity system."[2]

After World War II, rural-dominated legislatures were generally reluctant to confront urban problems stemming from migration out of rural areas and into big cities. Urban legislatures sought solutions from federal sources, and the resulting national programs forced communities to deal with

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2. Roland Warren, "The American Community," in R. L. Warren and L. Lyon, New Perspectives of the American Community. Homewood, IL: Dorsey, 1983, p. 142.

distant agencies and recognize their own limitations.[3] Subsequent loss of the block grant programs during the 1980's underscored the dependence of the local community on the outside. This dependence would become apparent in any community development project requiring federal and/or state funds for street and road improvement, schools, or health facilities. Similarly, the emergence of discount retailing outlets, typically owned and managed by distant corporations, illustrated the growing dependence on outside economic forces.

With these changes, the "living space" of local residents widened considerably. The typical small rural community took on more of a limited residential status and provided an increasingly smaller portion of service and recreational needs of its inhabitants. The rural community became more of a community of residence, and less of a community of employment and full services. As this occurred, leisure time habits were modified in small towns, leading residents to circulate in a larger area for specialized shopping, services and recreation. An analysis of shopping patterns in one rural community suggested that they are related to choice of newspaper. Those who travel to a distant shopping center more may be less likely than local shoppers to read the newspaper published in the community of residence.[4]

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3. A. Gallaher, Jr., and H. Padfield, editors, The Dying Community. Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1980, p. 96.

4. P. J. Tichenor, C. N. Olien and G.A. Donohue, "Is Newspaper Reading Related to Where People Shop?" Newspaper Research Journal 9,1:61-71, Fall, 1987.

Changes in the press

Along with the larger community transition, newspapers in recent decades have experienced a number of changes, while maintaining their community orientation[5] and commercial basis. Dependence on advertising has increased as industrialization, economic development and population growth occurred. Bagdikian found that between World War I and 1965, daily newspapers changed from an average of 22 pages a day, of which 11 were ads, to 50 pages, of which 30 were ads.[6] Currently, in newspapers as a whole, advertising typically accounts for some 70 percent of revenue[7] and marketing strategies for maximizing circulation among potential shoppers at advertisers' outlets have become highly developed.[8]

Along with a shift to corporate ownership,[9],[10] media have

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5. Bagdikian, Ben, <u>The Information Machines</u>. New York: Harper, 1971, pp.69-83.

6. ibid, pp.79-80.

7. William L. Rivers and Wilbur Schramm, "The impact of mass communication," in W. L. Rivers, W. Schramm and C. G. Christian, eds., <u>Responsibility in Mass Communication</u>, 3rd ed. , New York: Harper and Row, 1980. Also, see Shirley Biagi, <u>Media Impact: An Introduction to Mass Media.</u> Belmont CA: Wadsworth, 1988, p. 388.

8. William J. Thorn with Mary Pat Pfeil, <u>Newspaper Circulation: Marketing the News</u>. New York: Longman, 1987, pp.80-121.

9. Demers, David Pearce, <u>Structural Pluralism, Competition, and the Growth of the Corporate Newspaper in the United States</u>. Minneapolis: Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1992. See also Editor and Publisher International Yearbook, 1991; Emery, Michael, and Edwin Emery, <u>The Press in America</u>. Englewood Cliffs N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1988, p. 335.

concentrated in metropolitan areas, largely as a response to advertiser needs to address audiences in suburban locations where the major retail outlets, and therefore major advertisers, are located. One outcome is a cutback in rural accessibility to the public affairs news of metro dailies, parallel with the loss of health, transportation, retail and other services. Decline in coverage has not been limited to metro dailies alone. Since 1965, 42 communities in nonmetropolitan Minnesota have lost their local weekly newspapers, while another 24 in effect lost the local paper as part of a merger with a newspaper headquartered in a different but neighboring community. These suspensions and mergers generally occurred in communities under 1,000 in population. In communities with higher population, the change was more often from one newspaper name to another, sometimes to status as a "shopper." [11]

Whether these trends lead to more extralocal reporting by the local community press is not entirely clear, although certain adjustments in operation have occurred. News and information, including coverage of business, has become the overwhelming concern of the community editors, even though the explicit idea of "boosterism" is emphasized less frequently by editors than two

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10. C. N. Olien, P. J. Tichenor and G. A. Donohue, "Relation between corporate ownership and editor attitudes about business," Journalism Quarterly 65:259-266 (Summer, 1988).

11. Data are from annual directories of the Minnesota Newspaper Association, 1965 and 1992.

or three decades ago.[12] Nonmetro dailies, located almost entirely in growing regional centers, are now mostly corporate enterprises and have increased circulation somewhat in areas vacated by the receding metro dailies. Editors of nonmetro dailies are likely to give business news a high rating, and to give more attention to non-local business news than are weekly editors.[13]

News coverage in community newspapers has shifted to less emphasis on neighborhood news and somewhat more on government and public agencies generally. In 1965, 46 percent, or nearly half, of the local and regional news content of 78 Minnesota county seat newspapers was classified as "neighborhood," while 32 percent was from public agencies--education, government, law enforcement or health. In 1985, neighborhood news had dropped to 24 percent, while coverage of the agencies had increased to 50 percent, or half the total.[14]

Reporting of local public controversy, as a proportion of all news, doubled between 1965 and 1979, even though in 1979 it still constituted less than 1 percent of all news in the

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12. G. A. Donohue, C. N. Olien and P. J. Tichenor, "How community editors see their jobs and organizations," <u>Sociology of Rural Life</u> 8,3 (spring,summer, 1986).

13. C. N. Olien, P. J. Tichenor and G. A. Donohue, "Relation between corporate ownership and editor attitudes about business," <u>Journalism Quarterly</u> 65:259-266 (Summer, 1988).

14. G. A. Donohue, C. N. Olien, P. J. Tichenor and D. P. Demers, "Community structure, news judgments and newspaper content," paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Minneapolis, August, 1990.

community press. Weeklies increased on this dimension more than did nonmetro dailies, although the total amount of such controversy is still greater in dailies.[15] While these findings suggest some shifting and professionalization of coverage, the concentration on local news along with minimization of conflict reinforces the view of the community press as an agent of stability and system maintenance.

Orientations toward extralocal coverage by editors

The focus of this study is on editorial orientation toward "extralocal coverage." This refers to the extent to which editors hold positive views about coverage of events and issues beyond the local community and its immediately adjacent area. Such an orientation presumably takes into account (a) the interdependence of the community with the larger society and (b) the dispersion of retail outlets and the diverse shopping and leisure habits of the community population. It is not a desertion of local institutions and centers of social power, but is a response that takes into account the impact of the larger society in the region.

Given the preceding discussion, the following hypotheses are stated for testing:

H1. The greater the degree of pluralism in a community, the higher the importance rating of extralocal coverage by the local editor.

Given the traditional maintenance role of the press, change

15. G. A. Donohue, C. N. Olien and P. J. Tichenor, "Reporting conflict by pluralism, newspaper type and ownership," Journalism Quarterly 62:489-499 (Autumn, 1985).

in press functions would be expected to follow, rather than lead, alterations in the larger system. Therefore, the larger, more diversified and urbanized communities would be expected to contain the conditions that would bring about the most editor support for extralocal coverage. While smaller, more homogeneous communities may be aware of their loss of power, the traditional orientation is typically one of maintenance of a small town ideal in the face of their declining power. Lacking mechanisms for adjustment, the tendency is to emphasize traditional values. For editors, this would mean continued emphasis on the local community as the primary if not the only focus of attention.

> H2. Editors of daily newspapers will tend to give higher importance ratings to extralocal coverage than will editors of weekly newspapers.

Increased frequency of publication typically entails a somewhat different role in news coverage. Daily newspapers tend to have larger staffs, more modern technology, more specialization and higher pay which, presumably, reflects a higher level of experience and training.[16,17] Also, daily publication generally includes regular subscription to wire and other syndicated news and editorial services. Among 18 Minnesota dailies, the proportion of news content devoted to state,

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16. William Griswold, Community structure, reporter specialization and content diversity among Midwest daily newspapers. Minneapolis: Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1990.

17. Marty Tharp, "Turnover and mobility at small daily newspapers," Newspaper Research Journal 12, 1:76-90, (winter, 1991).

national and international coverage averaged 43 percent in a four-week period of 1965, compared with 52 percent among 19 dailies in the same period of 1985.[18]

Weeklies increased their coverage of nonlocal government to some extent in the same period, but their total news space was still 93.5 percent local in 1985, slightly higher than in 1965.[19]

Methods

The data are from a telephone survey, in August of 1992, among a purposive sample of 92 Minnesota editors. The newspapers are primarily in county seats, and constitute a sample employed in studies in 1965, 1985 and 1991.[20]

Degree of pluralism is measured by an index based upon census data for county and city population, per capita county income and percent of county workforce in manufacturing.

Editor orientation toward extralocal reporting is measured by a set of ratings of importance of four content areas of news:

* business and economic news;
* education news;

18. The difference in number of dailies is a result of one newspaper changing from semi-weekly to daily publication during the 1965-85 period.

19. Previously unpublished data, reported to a conference on "Changing Communities and the Media," sponsored by Rural Sociology and the Minnesota Journalism Center at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, October 17-18, 1986.

20. The sample does not contain identical newspapers in all communities in all years, owing to some suspensions and new newspapers in a few of the communities.

* governmental news other than education; and

* news other than education, business and government, such as health, sports or crime.

Editors rated the importance of covering each area of news at five levels: local, county, neighboring county, state and national/international. Each rating was on a 10-point scale, from 0 (unimportant) to 10 (very important).[21]

The "extralocal coverage" scales are based only upon ratings of coverage outside the local community and county, that is, at the neighboring county, state and national/international levels. A scale was computed for each of the four areas of news. Alpha scores for the four scales range from .76 to .81.

These same ratings were employed in an alternate set of "level" scales, this time summing across the four content areas of news to create a measure of importance of reporting at each of the five levels. Again, all alpha scores were above .76.

A single dichotomous item, separate from the extralocal coverage scale, served as a measure of actual outside reporting. The question was whether, at any time in the past month, either the editor or a reporter had covered an event or other story at a place "outside your circulation area."

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21. The item wording was: "Next, we'd like to find out how important you consider various types of news from local, county, state, and national levels. For example, how important is it for you to report business and economic news at the local level: on a scale of zero to ten, with zero being of no importance and 10 being extremely important, how important is it for you to report business and economic news at the local level?" The wording was repeated for each of the three other content areas of news.

Results

Before considering the data testing the hypotheses, it is important to consider the association between the two independent variables--frequency of publication and structural pluralism. The zero order correlation among the 92 communities is .31, and significant at the .01 level. When the 7 twin cities metropolitan counties are removed, this correlation increases to .38, reflecting to some extent the fact that a number of highly pluralistic communities in the metro fringe or adjacent suburbs are served by weekly newspapers.

Whether a newspaper is published daily or weekly is even more strongly correlated with the community's status as a trade center, a concomitant of pluralism. An analysis of upper midwest communities from 1969-1989, including those in this study, produced a hierarchical ordering of them as retail trade centers.[22] Among the 92 study communities, trade center status is correlated with pluralism ($r=.65$, $p<.001$) and is somewhat more closely correlated with frequency of publication ($r=.44$, $p<.001$) than is the pluralism index. A cross tabulation of trade center status and frequency of publication, is presented in Table 1.

At the top of the hierarchy, the metropolitan region, six communities have weekly papers, largely in places that were once small farming towns but are now suburban residential communities

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22. T. L. Anding, J. S. Adams. W. Casey, S. de Montille and M. Goldfein, 1990. Trade Centers of the Upper Midwest. Minneapolis:Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota.

in the prime circulation area of the metro dailies. Outside the metro area, all of the primary regional centers and secondary regional centers have dailies. At the other end of the hierarchy, all partial shopping centers and all communities limited to convenience shopping are served by weeklies.

Table 1. Trade center status and frequency of publication among 93 Minnesota community newspapers, 1989.

	Metro	Primary Regional	Secondary Regional	Complete Shopping	Partial Shopping	Full Cnvnc&
Characteristics						
Ave. Pop@	983.87	122.84	41.51	12.50	5.13	2.75
No. Bus.@	23.84	3.10	1.03	.33	.14	.07
Newspaper type						
Number with:						
Daily	3	2	6	14	0	0
Weekly or Semi	6	0	0	15	34	12

@=in thousands
&=convenience centers

These data suggest that in nonmetro areas, status as a complete shopping center or more is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a paper to be daily, while being a secondary or primary center is sufficient for having a daily. Complete shopping centers, in the middle of the range, are split almost equally between having a daily or weekly newspaper. These are communities averaging about 12,500 in population and slightly more than 300 business establishments.[23] These account for more than half of the daily newspapers but less than a fourth of the weeklies in this sample. Precisely why these communities have historically had dailies or weeklies is not clear, although

[23]. ibid, p. 39.

it may be suggested that it relates to particular social/political traditions.

Pluralism and rating of extralocal coverage

The data provide, at most, only weak support for the first hypothesis, that the greater the degree of pluralism in a community, the more important the local editor would rate extralocal coverage. The data are presented first as extralocal scores for the four reporting areas, within high and low pluralism and according to frequency of publication (Table 2). In each area, the differences according to

Table 2. Mean "extralocal coverage" scores in four areas of reporting, according to pluralism and frequency of publication among 92 Minnesota editors.@

	Bus./econ.	Education	Gov't	Other
Pluralism				
Low (n:46)	3.95	4.41	4.6	3.71
High (n:46)	4.39	5.02	5.03	4.17
diff.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Frequency of publication#				
Weekly (n:67)	3.56	4.19	4.16	3.24
Daily (n:25)	5.81	6.12	6.57	5.80
diff. p	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001

@ Scores for each of the four scales are summated ratings of coverage at three levels--neighboring county, state, and national/international. Scale range is 0-10, with 10 being high.
# "Weekly" includes semi-weeklies.

pluralism are low and nonsignificant, while the differences according to weekly v. daily are highly significant in each area and provide strong support for the second hypothesis.

The strength of the zero-order correlations between rating of extralocal coverage and the other two variables, treated as continuous, are displayed in Table 3. While the coefficients for pluralism are positive for all four areas of reporting, none of the coefficients is above .25 and two are lower than .20, one

Table 3. Zero-order correlations between "extralocalism" and pluralism and publication frequency in four areas of reporting, among 92 Minnesota editors.@

	Bus./econ.	Education	Gov't	Other
Pluralism	.25 **	.18 *	.15 n.s.	.23 *
Publication frequency	.48 ***	.39 ***	.48 ***	.51 ***

being nonsignificant. By contrast, each of the zero-order coefficients between extralocal coverage scores and publication frequency is .39 or stronger and significant at the .001 level. The importance of frequency of publication is further evident from a hierarchical regression, with pluralism entered first as the background variable (Table 4). The beta for pluralism is nonsignificant in all four cases, and the overall effect for change in R-square for pluralism reaches significance in only two of the four reporting areas--business/economics and other reporting. For publication frequency, the beta is highly significant in each content area and the contribution to variance explained is greater than for pluralism.

The question raised by these findings is why the pluralism variable would be such a weak predictor of the ratings, while publication frequency is so robust. Two explanations may be suggested.

One is that in those regional trade centers where the decision to publish daily has occurred--generally more than a half century ago--that decision itself has led to a qualitative

Table 4. Hierarchical regression, extralocalism scores according to pluralism and publication frequency.@

Reporting area	Independent variable	beta	R-Square change	R-Square total	F-Change
Bus./econ	Pluralism	.113n.s.	.062	.062	5.93 *
	Wkly v. dly	.441***	.176	.238	20.57 ***
Education	Pluralism	.07n.s.	.034	.034	3.18 n.s.
	Wkly v. dly	.37***	.124	.158	13.10 ***
Other government	Pluralism	.006n.s.	.023	.023	2.16 n.s.
	Wkly v. dly	.477***	.206	.229	23.90 ***
Other	Pluralism	.076n.s.	.051	.051	4.82 ***
	Wkly v. dly	.483***	.211	.262	25.50 ***

@ In each reporting area, pluralism was entered first and frequency of publication second.
*=p<.05 ***=p<.001

difference in the coverage orientation of the newspaper. While the historical circumstances governing the choice of publication frequency have not been explored fully, the decision appears from data above to be related to a combination of status as a regional trade center, density of population, existence of a retail community seeking more advertising outlets, and a certain cosmopolitan orientation in the community. Thus, a decision to "go daily" is a community event, which leads to accumulation of organizational resources and practices which appear to shape reporting from that point on. As indicated above, daily newspapers have larger staffs and either subscribe to wire services or receive external news through their corporate affiliations, or both.

An additional factor explaining the weak effect of pluralism may be a form of geographic specialization that works against extralocal coverage by some of the weekly newspapers in suburbs and the metropolitan fringe, which would mean communities high on the pluralism index. These communities are in areas where metropolitan daily newspaper coverage is concentrated. Weeklies in such communities may specialize in local reporting of voluntary activities, school events and suburban politics, in ways that leave them out of competition with the metro dailies that circulate in the same areas. This explanation, it should be noted, would run counter to the "umbrella hypothesis" that emphasizes newspaper competition between community levels.[24]

Given that publication frequency seems to be the primary explanatory variable, it is worthwhile to examine the average ratings on the different levels in the "extralocal coverage" scale. In table 5, the ratings are summed across areas of news for weeklies but within each of the five levels, including the three levels treated as "extralocal" and the two treated as "local".

These data indicate that the higher rating by daily editors of coverage of news outside the local community--in neighboring counties, state and national/international levels--

Table 5. Minnesota weekly and daily editor ratings of importance of reporting news at five levels.@

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24. Compaine, B. M., C. H. Sterling, T. Guback and J. K. Noble, Jr., (1982). Who Owns the Media: Concentration of ownership in the Mass Communications Industry. White Plains, NY: Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc., pp. 60-61.

	Local level	Extralocal coverage levels County level	Neighbor-ing cnty	State level	Nat'l & int'l
Weekly and Semi-weeklies (n=67)	37.5	34.4	18.5	17.5	9.8
Dailies (n=25)	37.1	35.2	24.4	25.8	22.1
Difference, p=	n.s.	n.s.	<.01	<.001	<.001

@ Scores for each level are based on ratings summed across four areas of reporting. Highest possible score for each level (rating of 10 or "extremely important" in each area) is 40.

does not appear to be at the expense of emphasis on local coverage. For the local and county levels, the rated importance of coverage by editors of both dailies and weeklies is high and roughly equivalent.

As might be expected from the second hypothesis, the difference in importance ratings, between daily and weekly editors, increases the farther away from the community the news originates. Among weekly editors, there is a sharp break in importance of reporting between the county level and the neighboring county. Weekly editors give especially low ratings for national and international news, averaging less than 10 on a 0-40 scale.

Among the editors of dailies, local coverage is also the top priority, with external news (i.e., the "extralocal coverage" items) rated as a secondary function. Thus, the data underscore quite sharply the primary local orientation of community newspaper editors as a group. It should be noted that even for editors of daily newspapers, national and international news is rated, on the average, only slightly above the midpoint, i.e., 22.1 on the 0-40 scale. This is well below the rating given local news (37.1) by the same editors.

It might be asked whether personal characteristics of editors would be associated with these judgments. One possibility might be that a higher level of education would lead to a higher rating of extralocal coverage, apart from the structural conditions that were the focus of the study. Similarly, there might be reason to expect editors who have worked for longer periods of time in their communities to express more localistic orientations toward reporting. Both level of education and years of residence as an editor were measured, did not add significantly to variance explained in extralocalism, after effects of pluralism and frequency of publication were accounted for in the hierarchical regression.

A related measure was whether the editor or a reporter in the past month had covered an event or other story outside the newspaper's circulation area. These results tend to show some difference according to type of newspaper, and the difference is greater at high levels of pluralism (Table 6). The difference in coverage of outside events in high pluralism communities, between weekly and daily editors is 43 percentage points (72-39, $p<.05$)) whereas at the low pluralism level it is only 13 points (57-13) and nonsignificant. These findings again indicate that frequency of publication is a fundamental variable for explanation of variability in editor orientation to outside events, and

Table 6. Proportion of weekly and daily editors reporting coverage of outside events during the past month, according to community pluralism.

	Low Pluralism Weeklies (n:39)	Low Pluralism Dailies (n:7)	High Pluralism Weeklies (n:28)	High Pluralism Dailies (n:18)
Did cover outside events	44%	57%	39%	72%
Did not cover outside events	56%	43%	61%	28%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Diff., dailies v. weeklies	n.s.		p<.05	

reporting of them. They also support the interpretation, above, that weeklies in suburban and metro fringe communities may be highly specialized as local news organs.

Editor orientation and community role

A few additional aspects of the findings are worth noting, because of their relevance for an understanding of community leadership and influence. One such finding (Table 2) is that for both levels of pluralism and for both weeklies and dailies, the editors' extralocal coverage scores tend to be higher for education and government reporting than for either business/economic news or "other" news. One might ask, for example, why the ratings of external business news are not even higher than for government.

One of the most apparent trends in community economic affairs, and one of great current concern, is the continued growth of discount retail stores owned and controlled by large national corporations. The fact that editors give somewhat lower ratings for importance of business reporting from outside levels may derive from the high degree of power and influence held by the local business sector. That is, the local definition of the priority problem may be survival of the traditional main street business community, however problematic that survival may be. If this is the case, it may then follow that business news is directed largely toward the question of maintenance and growth of local enterprises, especially those upon which the newspaper depends for advertising. Typically, daily newspapers receive at least 75 percent of their advertising revenue from local sources.[25] For weeklies, it is even higher.

So far as the higher extralocal ratings of education and other government are concerned, the editors' ratings seem to reflect a shift in center of control of these agencies. The rules and regulations surrounding grants from state and federal agencies are a frequently noted fact of community life. High school mergers are increasingly frequent in areas of declining population.

While these findings are taken from a single time point, they should be seen in the context of other evidence cited above suggesting that weekly newspapers may be drawing inward while daily newspapers may be reaching out more to news of the larger society.[26] Located as they are in thriving regional centers,

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25. Shirley Biagi, op. cit.

26. G. A. Donohue, C. N. Olien and P. J. Tichenor, "Reporting conflict by pluralism, newspaper type and ownership," Journalism Quarterly 62:489-499 and 507, (Autumn 1985).

nonmetropolitan dailies are frequently in the early stages of what metropolitan centers experienced many years ago--a marked shift in population to growing residential areas outside the corporate boundaries of the local city.

Given the reduction in availability of metro daily newspapers in recent years, it appears that one major source of information about external forces is being gradually withdrawn from rural areas. Whether that information is to be replaced by other media, such as cable TV outlets and community newspapers, is an open question. Previous analyses suggest that regional dailies may replace some of the information formerly delivered by metro dailies. So far as weekly and semi-weekly papers are concerned, however, findings here suggest that minimal if any attention is given to external events and issues, regardless of potential local relevance.

There is another and quite different view on this question, often expressed by community media professionals themselves as well as by other spokespersons for community survival. This is the view that the community newspaper is one of the last bastions of small town survival and that concentration on purely local events and issues is essential for maintenance of the small town way of life. Evidence from this study suggest that such a view is widely held among editors. Whether it is an adaptive view is a potential question for community consideration.

Summary

A study of orientation toward extralocal news coverage was conducted among a purposive sample of 92 Minnesota editors. The hypotheses, based upon considerations of pluralism and patterns of community change, were that such ratings of importance of extralocal coverage would be associated with (a) community pluralism and (b) publication frequency. The data provide very little evidence of a direct effect of pluralism, but strong support for the hypothesis based upon publication frequency.

Compared with weekly editors, daily editors were more likely to give high importance ratings to coverage in neighboring counties, at the state level, and at the national and international level. All editors, however, assigned the highest importance of all to coverage in the local community and county, underscoring the primary localistic role of the newspaper.

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Design Desks:
Why are more and more newspapers adopting them?

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Design desks: Why are more and more papers adopting them?

Newspaper newsrooms have been going through a revolutionary change during the past decade, driven by a need to produce a better news report to attract more readers.

One solution editors have experimented with is what many call a "design desk." Design desks emerged as early as 1980 to help papers become more "reader-friendly," and were often formed when a paper was redesigned to bring consistency to all sections or in response to new technology. Editors argued that better-organized and better-looking papers would increase readership. For example, The Dallas Morning News set up a design desk as part of its news desk when the paper was redesigned in 1980.[1]

Broadly defined, a design desk is a small department of editors who design pages. This study is an attempt to further describe design desks and their work.

While more and more newspapers have been adopting some form of a design desk,[2] little research has been done to substantiate this or find out how design desks are structured, the backgrounds of the people who staff them, or test their effectiveness.[3] Perhaps this is because design desks come in so many forms, as this study shows, depending on each newspaper's unique situation.

There does not appear to be a consensus among editors about what a design desk does or whether it is effective.[4] This study was a first step in an attempt to find out about editors' perceptions of design desks, and in doing so, to answer fundamental questions about the structure and purpose of design desks and the people who staff them.

The study was done as a pilot and the initial results prepared as a brief report for the Associated Press Managing Editors convention in Honolulu in November 1992.

The goal of the study was to begin to provide basic information to the industry as well as a foundation for future study of design desks. This study and future ones could provide a body of information about design desks so that editors will have a better understanding of what works. A happy result would be that editors would not have to spend time and resources experimenting, but would have knowledge of what could work for their newspapers.

This study was prompted by these fundamental questions:

- What is a design desk and what do design desk editors do?
- Why are design desks being established, and what have they achieved?
- What are some of the factors that have contributed to the success of design desks as perceived by editors?
- Why do some newspapers not have design desks?

Background

Many newspaper editors faced with declining or stagnating readership have decided that than an overhaul of the traditional newsroom structure is the best way to reorganize the way stories are presented and told. Beat restructuring and the addition of design editors have been the hallmarks of such new structures. New positions such as topic editors and assistant managing editor for design have emerged. This has been well-documented in industry literature.[5]

Interest in design desks has increased as newspaper readership has declined. With an estimated household penetration dropping to 70 percent nationwide in the 90s from 98 percent in 1970, editors sought new ways to attract readers.[6]

Research by the Readership and Research Committee of the American Society of Newspaper Editors[7] indicated to editors in 1987 that they needed to:

- Respect people's time constraints.
- Help readers become more efficient retrievers of information;
- Make content more compelling;
- Improve local news coverage.

Gannett took a bold step with the establishment of USA Today in 1982, loaded with color, readouts, boxes, short stories and informational graphics — things readership studies said would be appealing.

In 1991 the American Society of Newspaper Editors heard at its annual convention in Boston that readers want different things and that newspapers may not be able to survive serving one audience.[8]

They were also told again that readers were too busy to read and that they wanted jazzier-looking publications.

Some editors have actually asked readers specifically what they want to see in their papers.[9] Alarmed by a gloomy outlook predicted by ASNE[10] in the 1980s, editors looked for ways to manage their newsrooms and package their papers to appeal to a broad spectrum of readers.

The traditional newsroom structure is like an assembly line. Stories are passed from reporter to editor to production with little communication in between. This structure facilitates the need to meet daily deadlines, not necessarily what works best for readers. Many stories that need photographs, graphs or maps don't have them because reporters didn't talk to artists or editors in time to create them.

Daryl Moen of the University of Missouri has concluded that traditional newsroom organization is a barrier to successful communication with the reader.[11] According to Moen, photographers and designers started the revolution in newsroom organization when the St. Petersburg Times and the Allentown (Pa.) Morning Call in the 1970s reorganized their newspapers as visual media. The role of photographers and designers changed. They made decisions about news instead of simply providing a service for reporters and editors. Writers, editors, photographers and designers became equally important in the news report.

The Poynter Institute for Media Studies in St. Petersburg, Fla., has taken the lead promoting the integration of writing, editing and design — a concept it calls WED. In the summer of 1991 it ran a fellowship program in which students put WED into practice:

> In the first week a writer did a story on a proposed incinerator at a local hospital. The incinerator was controversial because it might

spread pollution throughout the neighborhood. The artist and writer joined in the research phase of the story, interviewing hospital and city officials, and drawing the site and the equipment for future graphics. In this case, it was the designer who put the elements together and produced one of the lead stories in the first issue.[12]

The problem managing editors face is how to integrate writing, editing and design to produce a better paper. Some are organizing writers, editors, photographers and designers into teams; some have established design desks staffed by editors who have varying degrees of control over the news. Others are combining design desks with the team approach.

Leland (Buck) Ryan of Northwestern University initiated the concept of what he calls a display desk several years ago as a way to improve newsroom organization by integrating writing, editing and design. He sees it as "a solution to poorly organized pages, frustrated copy editors, and shrinking newsroom staffs."[13] But Ryan says his concept goes beyond what some editors traditionally think of as a design desk. He says previous attempts at reorganization "have brought us design desks, where art tends to reign over news judgment, and headline desks, which tend to live short lives because the work and the staff's future career possibilities are so limiting."

Do design desks integrate writing, editing and design, or is content sacrificed for art and presentation? This question may be partly answered by asking the original questions: What do design desks do? What have they accomplished and what are the factors that have contributed to design desk success? And why do some newspapers not have design desks?

Method

A survey was used to begin to gather data about design desks. It was mailed to 347 members of The Associated Press Managing Editors association selected from a mailing list in October 1992. The APME list was chosen because it contained about 30 percent of managing editors in the United States and Canada.

The deadline for surveys to be returned was the APME annual convention in November, so no surveys were received after that date since preliminary results were reported at the convention. Only managing editors were chosen for the survey since they are most often the ones in charge of initiating a design desk. If no managing editor was an APME member, editors most likely to oversee design desks were chosen.

One mailing was done since this was an exploratory study and because the deadline to return the surveys was the beginning of the convention. Many editors provided their names, so about a dozen editors were interviewed later by telephone or in person at the convention for more information on their design desks.

Some of the survey questions were based on interviews with editors about design desks; others were based on the goals and accomplishments of a display desk that was set up at the Logansport Pharos-Tribune by its editors and Buck Ryan of Northwestern University. The survey was then pre-tested by four people; two were newspaper editors in management positions, and one was formerly an editor.

The six-page questionnaire first asked respondents whether they had any experience with a design desk. Those who said "yes" were asked to answer the first part of the survey, and those who said "no" to answer the second part. This study focuses on those who said yes, but includes relevant information from editors who did not have a design desk.

The respondents were asked about their perceptions of the success of design desks and their accomplishments, such as improving the look of the paper or improving coordination among editors, designers and reporters. They were also asked factual questions so that information could be gathered about the structure of design desks, their expectations of design desks, the work carried out by desk editors, and the backgrounds of these editors.

For example, managing editors were asked to estimate what percentage of time design desk editors spend on tasks such as designing pages or writing headlines. They were also asked about their knowledge of the backgrounds and training of design desk editors — as graphics artists, copy editors, reporters, and so on. The respondents were asked to give the titles of editors who supervise design desk staff and which pages the staff work on. Those who did not have a design desk were asked why.

For purposes of analysis, newspapers were divided into circulation categories used by the American Newspaper Publishers Association: Under 50,000, 50,001-100,000, 100,001-250,000, and more than 250,000.

Results

There were 109 respondents, for a 31.4 percent response rate. Of these, 44 or 40.3 percent reported that they had experience with design desks; 65 reported no experience, but many said they were planning design desks, as is explained later.

Average editorial staff size of the newspapers that had experience with design desks was 165. Of these, 20 respondents reported that their newspapers' circulations were less than 100,000, and 24 had circulations of 100,000 or more.

The results of editors who reported on their experience with design desks in previous jobs but not in their current jobs were categorized by the size of their previous newspaper.

A series of interviews was conducted with editors to gather qualitative information and gain insight into the way individual papers were organized. These interviews were invaluable in illuminating the data and putting it into perspective.

The survey was useful as an exploratory study because it served as a springboard for the interviews and shed light on the issues and problems faced by the people who work in today's rapidly changing newsroom.

A follow-up survey could attempt to reach a larger sample. It might be directed at the front line leaders — design desk or design team chiefs — who are more intimate with day-to-day work flow of the desk. Additional depth interviews would be enlightening. Case studies would be provide useful examples of different types of structures.

One problem the study sought to clarify is that design desks mean different things to different editors. Editors wrote down different titles, such as layout or presentation desk. This study was an attempt to form a consensus about what they are and what they are called. But attempts at forming a consensus often served to highlight interesting and important differences in the way newspapers handle news.

Findings

What is a design desk?

Design desks exist in many forms, but the survey results indicated that in general, a design desk consists of one or more people whose job is exclusively to design pages as a small department separate from other desks that gather the news or edit the copy. Sometimes design desk editors design pages for many sections; sometimes just for the news section or for features.

At small papers the design desk may be simply the design editor; at large papers, design desks had as many as 19 people on them.

Some papers had more than one design desk. The News Tribune of Tacoma, Wash. has three design/editing pods — for news, for sports and for features, according to Tom Osborne, assistant managing editor for production.[14] The pods are staffed by copy editors and page designers and are supervised by a production editor, who reports to Osborne. A photo editor, working on a Mac editing station, works closely with the pods. The newspaper's graphic artists support all three pods and report to Osborne.

Most design desks were called that, although some papers named them layout, display or presentation desks. Design editor was also the most commonly used title for design desk chief, although other titles were also used: news editor, graphics editor, assistant managing editor/graphics, presentation editor, and topic editor/news. Most design desk chiefs reported to a managing editor, although an assistant managing editor was also frequently named at papers with circulations above 100,000.

The work of design desks

Survey respondents said design desks spent about half their time designing and dummying pages, and secondly, doing layout on a computer. This was defined as pagination or layout on a Macintosh computer. Some editors reported that their desks spent as much as 70 percent of their time designing and dummying pages. These results, which were calculated by circulation size category as well as for all newspapers as a group, were based on the mean response of each question as a percentage of total time on the desk.

There was some variation in the responses when categorized by circulation:

Designing/dummying pages: percentage of total time	
50,000 and under	44.5 %
50,001 - 100,000	40.5 %
100,001 - 250,000	47.1 %
Over 250,000	50 %

Size, as measured by circulation and staff size, did not have a great impact on how much time was spent dummying pages: the correlation was .512. But headline writing and doing layout on a computer did correlate strongly with size: .839 for both. This means that as newspaper size increased, so did the percentage of time the desk as a whole spent on headline writing and pagination.

In general, design desks also spent up to 10 percent of their time each on writing headlines and cutlines, creating informational graphics and selecting and cropping photos.

For large papers — those with circulations greater than 250,000 — a significant portion (15 percent) of the work of design desks was spent coordinating people and elements in a story or project on a page. This was not the case at papers with circulations under 250,000.

In general, design desk editors spent more time writing headlines and cutlines than editing copy. For large (> 250,000) and small papers (< 50,000), more time was spent on photo editing than writing headlines and cutlines, but at medium-sized papers the reverse was true. Design desk editors rarely wrote stories — 1 percent or less of the time was spent doing this.

Are particular tasks performed on design desks related to a perception of success? The respondents seem to think so. Successful design desks had the highest correlation with certain tasks: creating infographics (r= .858), designing pages (r= .758) and pagination (r= .649). Headline writing, on the other hand, produced a strong negative relationship with perceived success. This would appear to indicate that successful desks focused on design.

Responses varied on which pages they designed. Design desks mainly designed Page 1 and some section fronts. They also designed inside news pages. The primary function of some design desks was to handle special projects. At some papers inside pages with ads on them were handled by the copy desk while design desks worked only on section fronts and special pages.

At The Detroit Free Press, all pages except sports are produced on the design desk, according to Robert McGruder, managing editor for news.[15]

"At first it was a struggle," McGruder said. "It has evolved into something that works."

The sports section is often excluded from the design desk because of its late deadlines and special treatment.

Backgrounds of design desk editors

Editors responding to the survey on average expected a design desk editor to have layout and design skills first, and news judgment second. Papers with circulations above 250,000 ranked Macintosh computer graphics third, but smaller papers (<100,000) ranked copy editing or headline and cutline writing skills third (see Table 1).

TABLE 1
Rankings of design desk editors' attributes

*What knowledge / skills / attributes does an editor on the design desk need to do the job?**
Means of respondents' top five choices by circulation. Ranks in parentheses.

	< 50,000	50,000-100,000	100,001-250,000	>250,000
	n = 11	n = 11 n = 14	n = 12	
Layout and design	12.818 (1)	12.545 (1)	12.643 (1)	12 (1)
News judgment	9.812 (2)	8.455 (2)	12.214 (2)	10.143 (2)
Macintosh graphics	4.364			6.143 (3)
Pagination			5.429 (3)	
Copy editing	4.909 (3)	4.545	5.286	4.857
Headline/cutlines		4.818 (3)	4.286	5
Photo editing on computers		3.727		
Managing projects	4.909 (3)			

* On a scale of 1 - 15. Must have = 3; desirable = 2; not necessary = 1. Means of choices weighted by ranking from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most important. Blanks indicate the category was not ranked in the top five. The following categories were not in the top five: Writing, reporting, photography, managing people.

At small and medium-sized newspapers, having a background in Macintosh computer graphics was not so important: It produced a strong negative relationship with size ($r = -.908$). This may change in the near future. Many of the editors interviewed were planning to use a Macintosh-based pagination system that would import photos, text and graphics onto a page.

Respondents were asked about their knowledge of design desk editors' backgrounds. Copy editor ranked first, followed by editor with layout duties and reporter or graphics artist depending on newspaper size. Few design desk editors at papers with circulations of less than 50,000 had graphics artist backgrounds.

Reasons for establishing design desks

Managing editors at newspapers of all sizes said they established a design desk primarily to improve coordination among designers, editors and reporters. Their second and third choices were to improve the paper to attract more readers and to effectively use all available tools to tell stories. These were measured by taking the mean response to a question and weighting it by the rank respondents gave to their choices.

In general, the primary reason editors established design desks was not simply to improve the way the paper looked, as might be expected. It was used as a management tool to make editors, reporters, and designers and photographers more effective so the paper is better organized and designed in order to attract more readers. Design desks can improve coordination among staff.

The design desks. or pods, at The News Tribune of Tacoma, Wash. were set up in the belief that they would be the right structures to support pagination, said Tom Osborne, assistant managing editor for production.[16] Pagination is now being introduced. The goal is to have a computer system and organizational structure that allows copy editors, page designers, graphic artists and photo editors to work together on the same page at the same time.

Osborne said he believes in solving organizational problems at the pod level.. "The people who are doing the work will figure out how to do it best," he said.

A formula, or "cookie-cutter" approach to producing the news isn't desirable, he said. What works in one newsroom may not work in another because of differences in local conditions. "You won't make newspapers better through formulas, but through production processes that are uniquely suited to local needs," Osborne said.

A few respondents said they set up design desks to handle all zoned editions rather than each zoned edition handling its own layout. Several also responded that their design desks will be set up with pagination. Setting up a design desk to reach corporate goals or because a competitor had one got low marks from respondents. The following are the top two reasons editors chose to set up design desks (by circulation).

Up to 50,000
1. To improve coordination among designers, editors and reporters
2. To effectively use all available tools to tell stories

50,001-100,000
1. To effectively use all available tools to tell stories
2. To improve the paper to attract more readers

100,001-250,000
1. To improve the paper to attract more readers
2. To improve coordination among designers, editors and reporters

More than 250,000
1. To improve the paper to attract more readers
2. To effectively use all available tools to tell stories

Design desk success

Accomplishments of design desks

Did editors perceive that they achieved what they set out to do? The survey shows that in general, they did. A little more than 86 percent said they improved the look of the paper. (See Chart A after this page). This result received the greatest average weight — 2.9 on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the most important (see Table 2). This was weighted as 3.1 for newspapers with circulations above 250,000 — above the average for all newspapers.

TABLE 2

Accomplishments of design desks, by circulation

Respondents were asked the question: *After you set up a design desk, did you achieve any of the results listed below?* The numbers are the means of the responses, categorized by circulation size, on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the most important. (Ranks in parentheses.)

	All circulation categories	< 50,000	50,001 -100,000	100,001 -250,000	>250,000
Improved the look of the paper	2.903 (1)	2.743 (1)	2.644	2.986 (1)	3.143 (1)
Attracted more readers	.486	.057	.323	.689	.816
Increased efficiency & productivity	.653	.787	.444	1.056 (2)	.245
Improved coordination among editors, designers and reporters	1.456 (2)	2.250 (2)	1.413	.969 (3)	1.714 (2)
Increased creativity	1.361 (3)	1.9 (3)	2.218	.689	1.346 (3)
Increased standards of excellence	1.077	1.725	1.123	.643	1.225
Increased skills of staff through cross-training	.317	.938	.248	.204	0
Increased consistency	.842	.975	.818	.734	.612
Increased accuracy	.016	.15	0	0	0
Increased job satisfaction	.1	.688	0	0	0
Met corporate/company goals	0	0	.027	0	0

Improving coordination among editors, designers and reporters was the second most popular choice — 77.27 percent (See Chart A).

Another benefit was that creativity increased and staff members at some papers were involved in cross-training.

Setting up a design desk seemed to help some papers meet deadlines more often, but 58 percent of the respondents said there was no difference.

Editors said in follow-up interviews and letters that design desks are evolving and adapting to new conditions. Many are choosing a team approach, or something that combines a design desk and a team of reporters, copy editors, photographers and designers.

"We call it a presentation team," said Judy Christie, editor of the Shreveport Times.[17] "We've cross-trained everyone."

Christie said her paper is put together more efficiently now than before presentation teams — what she calls the design desk — were set up last year, and that sales have increased. "There's a direct correlation between the number of readers we pull in and the way we package Page 1," Christie said.

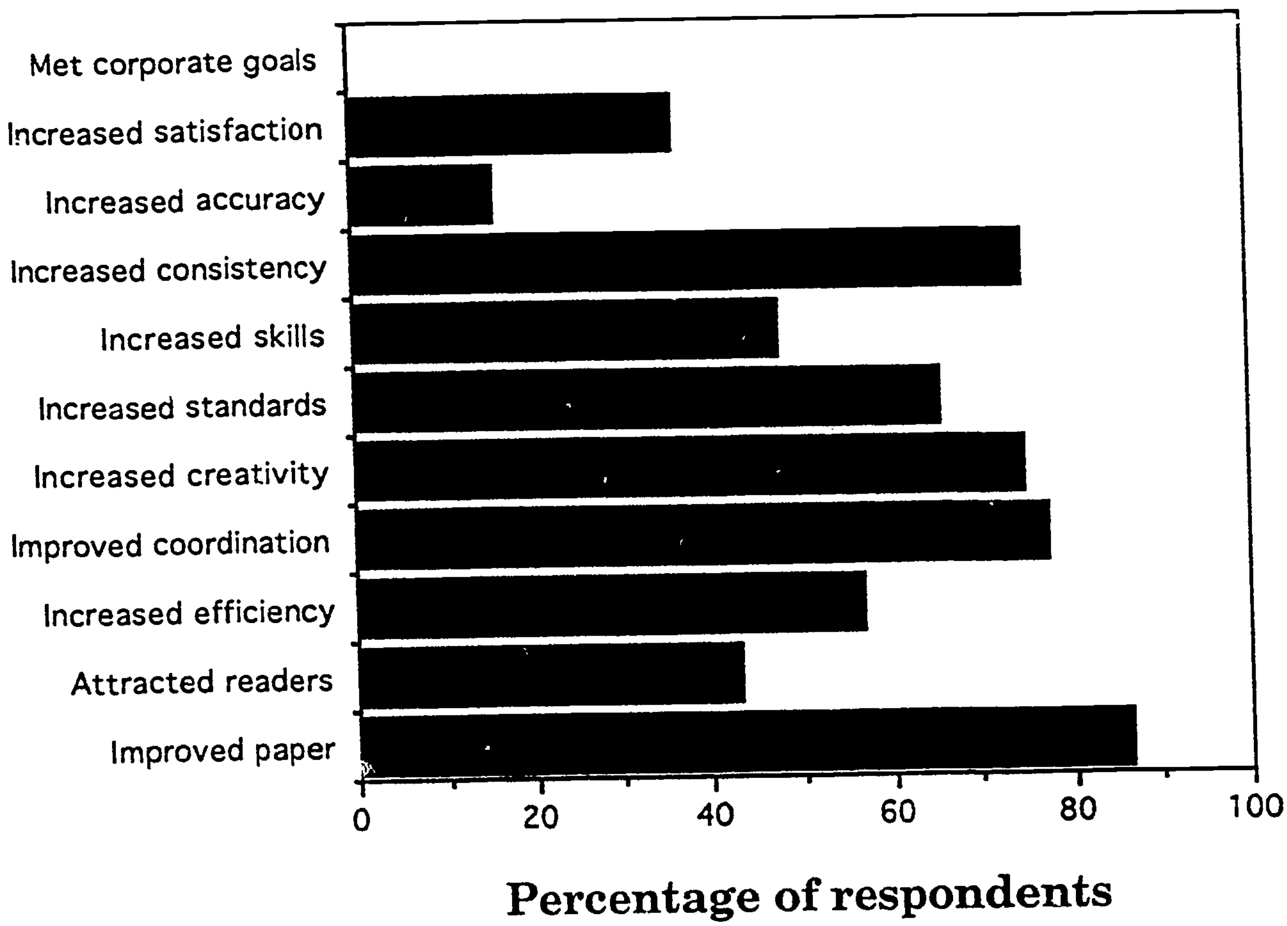
Influence of newspaper size on design desk success

Results of the study indicate that the success of a design desk, as perceived by editors, depends on newspaper size, size and skills of staff, and expectations about what the design desk can accomplish.

The existence and success of a design desk at a newspaper was related to newspaper circulation size, editorial staff size and how long the desk had been in existence. Larger papers were more likely to have had design desks in place for several years and more likely to report success with their desks than did small- and medium-sized papers.

Chart A
Accomplishments of design desks

Respondents were asked the question: After you set up a design desk, did you achieve any of the results listed below? Eighty-six percent said they improved the look of the paper; none said they met corporate goals.



The average year in which a design desk was established was 1989, with about 95 percent being set up after 1985. Almost 54 percent of respondents set up their design desks during the past two years. (See Chart B after this page). Only five editors reported that they dismantled their design desks, which lasted on average 1.34 years, because of leadership problems, a lack of resources and a lack of skilled staff.

The design desk idea appears to have spread over time from the larger papers to the medium- and small-sized ones. The first desks were set up about a dozen years ago at large newspapers. They are relatively young at newspapers with circulations of less than 250,000. For papers with circulations under 100,000, close to 70 percent started their design desks in the last two years. Those papers without design desks but who are planning them tended to be the medium-sized ones (28 papers in the 50,000 to 250,000 ranges. See Table 3).

TABLE 3

If you do not currently have a design desk, are you planning one?*

Circulation	Yes	No
Less than 50,000	7	13
50,001-100,000	14	2
100,001-250,000	14	1
Over 250,000	3	3

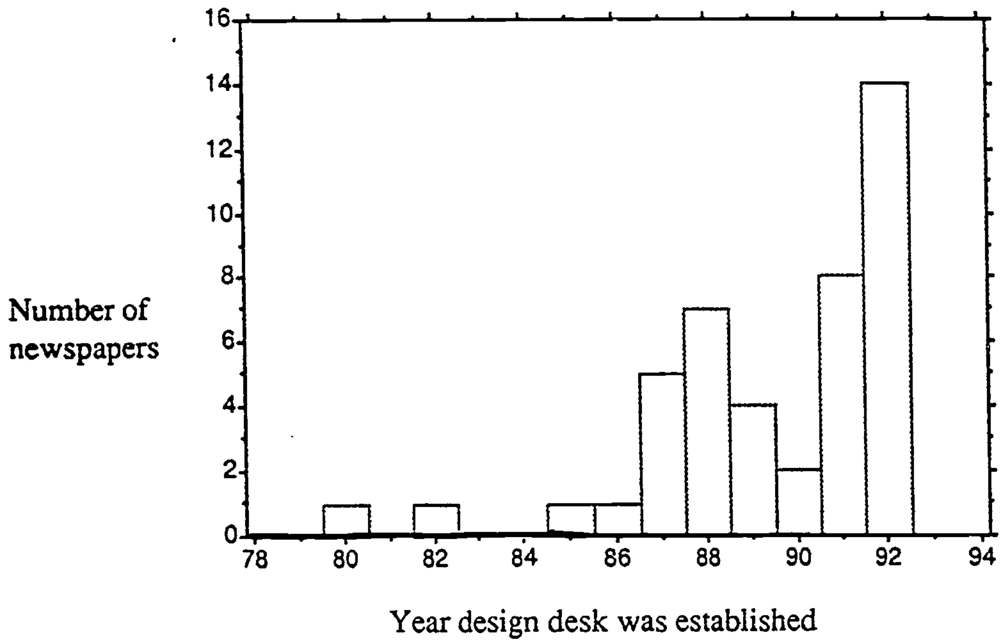
*Missing eight respondents

The larger the newspaper, the more likely the respondent reported success with a design desk. Circulation size correlated strongly and positively with a perception of success by editors ($r = .992$).

Editors reported that coordination among editors, designers and reporters had improved. Size was not a factor in this case, since it did not correlate strongly with their perceptions of success of the design desk.

Chart B
Design desk establishment

Bar chart shows that many newspapers established design desks in the last two years.



Size did have an impact when success was correlated with the accomplishments of the design desk by circulation. The strongest correlations were produced by the following: Attracting more readers (r = .862), increasing accuracy (r= .71), and improving the look of the paper (r = .676). Improving coordination among editors, designers and reporters, on the other hand, produced a weak, negative correlation, indicating that size had little impact on this accomplishment.

All editors from papers with circulations above 250,000 reported success, while only half of those with circulations below 50,000 reported success. (See Chart C after this page.) The mean value for success for all circulation categories on a scale of 0 - 2 was 1.6 (Yes = 2, Somewhat = 1 and No = 0).

Editorial staff size was strongly related to editors' perceptions of the success of the design desk. As staff size increased, so did the perception of success reported by managing editors. The correlation between these two was .964.

Large papers allotted a smaller proportion of their editorial staff to design desks: 1.8 percent for papers with circulations above 250,000, compared with 6.9 percent for papers less than 50,000. The average was 4.8 per cent.

Design desk size

The survey showed a fairly strong correlation between successful desks and the number of staff assigned to them (.836).

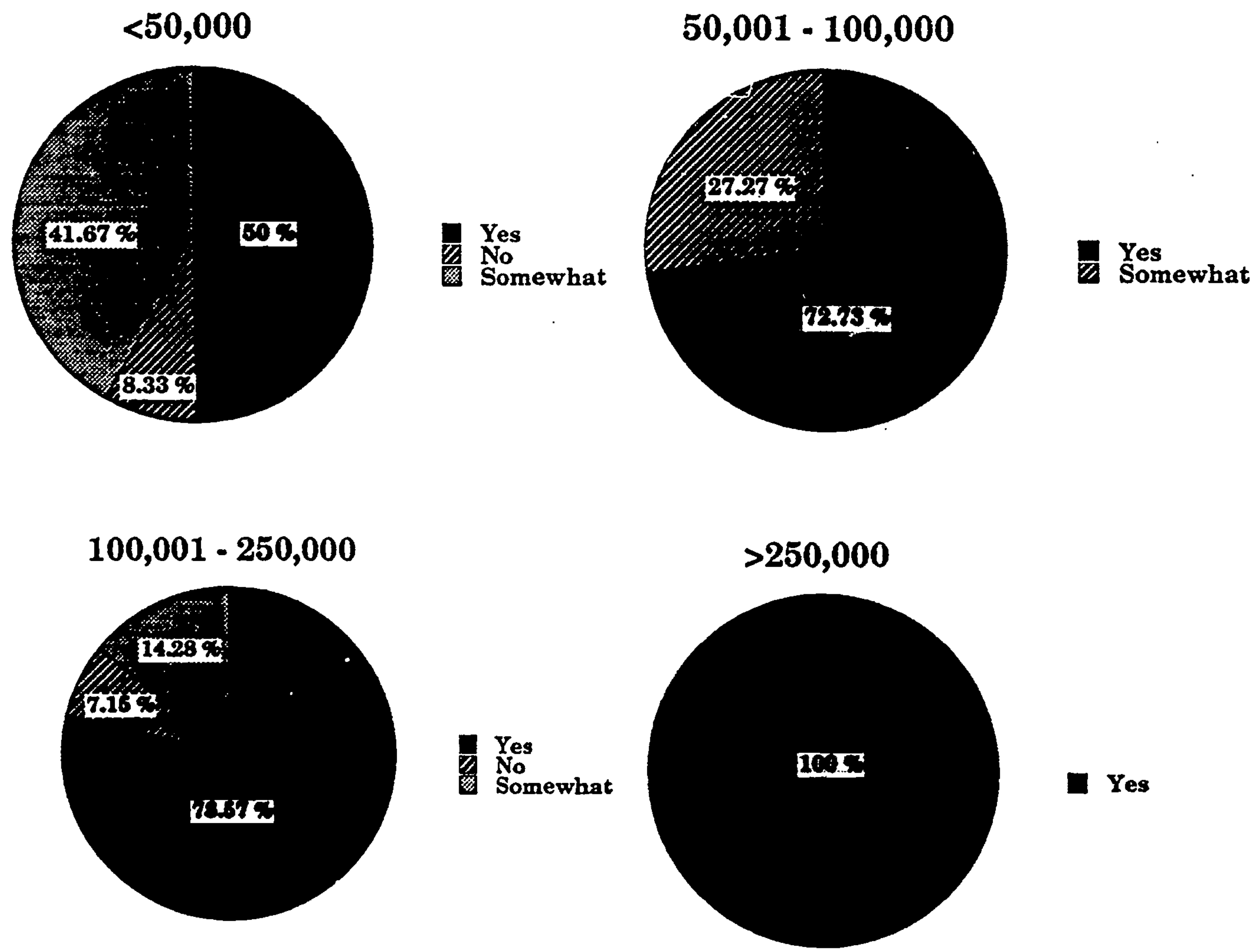
The average number of staff on a design desk was 5.7, or about 6 people, and the number ranged from one to 19 people, depending on newspaper size as measured by staff size and circulation.

Newspaper size had a direct impact on how many people were assigned to the design desk. The results of the survey showed a strong positive correlation between circulation and average design desk size (r= .944).

The size of a newspaper's editorial staff had less influence on how many people were assigned to the design desk, although it was also strongly positive (r= .784).

Chart C
Design desk success

Respondents were asked: In your opinion, has the design desk worked successfully? (By circulation)



Why many papers don't have design desks

Editors without design desks were asked to respond to the question: If you don't think it would be a good idea to establish a design desk, can you say why? They were given a list of choices and asked to check them and rank them. The means were examined on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the most important.

"Not enough staff" and "inadequate funding" were the most important reasons checked as they received the biggest values, and were followed by "staff insufficiently skilled." Others said they preferred using teams to produce the news.

Tight deadlines were also a problem for afternoon newspapers such as the San Francisco Examiner. The Examiner has a built-in style because there's little time to design the front page and other news pages, according the Pamela Brunger Scott, managing editor of operations.[18]

"We have what you call an Examiner look," Scott said. "We like that style to be clear in all special pages, series and fronts of special sections."

Several editors said their papers were either too small to have what they considered a specialized design desk. Others, such as the Los Angeles Times, said their paper was too large and complicated to have a design desk. (The L.A. Times has at least 17 copy desks.) Several said they feared they would lose control of the news to the design desk. They said that design desks separate news from content and that decisions about presenting the news would be made in isolation from the news. Yet few reported that they were happy with the status quo. They continue to experiment with a variety of newsroom structures.

Some have dismantled design desks in favor of formal or informal work groups or teams that get together to produce the newspaper.

George Benge, managing editor of the Springfield, Mo. News-Leader, is helping organize the paper using the maestro approach advocated by Buck Ryan.[19] Teams led by a maestro put together a package, for example. "The rest of the paper would be put together in the most appropriate way you can, for reader convenience," Benge said. The change at his newspaper has been driven somewhat by technology, and partly by a redesign in 1992.

"This is just an evolution," Benge said. "Ten years ago a special page was done by a designer. Now it's an Apple Macintosh and it's made the process more democratic. The computer has given them the power to execute their plans."

The London Free Press in Ontario underwent a major reorganization that led to worried employees joining The Newspaper Guild. Phil McLeod, editor of the London Free Press, changed the design and organization of the paper in 1989 and continues to experiment.

"We are integrating design right into a work team — we call them clusters — each of which is responsible for a broadly defined subject area," McLeod said.[20] Clusters are made up of reporters, editors, photographers, designers and graphics artists. Cluster leaders report through section editors who select stories and apportion space. The cluster leader is responsible for filling that space with headlines, stories, graphics and anything else.

The short-lived design desk was simply one manifestation of change, McLeod said.

"A design desk is important at the beginning of the change process, when you are really trying to come to grips with new forms of information presentation.

"Ultimately, however, one finds limitations in the fact that information design is disconnected from the gathering of the information. The first question for both the gatherers and designers needs to be 'what are we trying to do?' The same answer must apply. Therefore why not ask both at the same time; the answer comes jointly," McLeod said.

Design should not shape information; rather, information should shape design, McLeod said.[21] "Designers, when they are totally disconnected from the process tend to forget that what we're publishing is useful information," he said. "There needs to be a correlation between the two."

Conclusions

It is difficult to define a design desk and the work its editors do because each one is unique depending on the size and resources of the newspaper and skills of the staff. Some editors didn't like to use the word "desk," preferring "system" instead. Others said the editor was the design desk. But some generalizations can be made.

The goal of design desks is to make the paper look better to attract readers, which is supported by the fact that design desks spend about half their time designing pages. But they also have another main function — as a new way of structuring the newsroom to improve coordination among editors, designers and reporters.

A side benefit of this change in newsroom structure is that many editors reported an increase in circulation — their second goal for establishing the design desk.

Editors have experienced limitations with design desks, and have moved on to teams and other structures. "It's a change-oriented environment," said George Benge of the News-Leader. "That's the story right there." Newsroom structures are "all over the field," he said.

Design desks appear to be most effective when their editors are doing what the name of their desk implies — designing pages. They are expected to do layout and design, but their chief backgrounds are as copy editors and as copy editors with layout duties rather than as graphic artists.

Many editors said they didn't have design desks because they feared the loss of control of the news to designers. Perhaps this was true when design desks were first established to package information and make pages look jazzier, but that does not appear to be the case now at papers whose design desk editors have editing and reporting backgrounds.

The Boston Globe doesn't have a design desk, according to Tom Mulvoy, managing editor of news operations, because "it would be a whole change in the way we function."[22] Mulvoy, who often designs pages himself, says that pages should be laid out by people with "an integrated editing mind." He says he doesn't believe that takes place with pages that come from a design desk.

The number of design desks seems to be increasing. Newspaper editors appear to be combining them with a team approach to produce the news report. This may be possible because many journalists are being cross-trained so that "word" people acquire visual skills, and "visual" people acquire word skills.

The design desk editor is perhaps a new breed of journalist who has an integrated editing mind — who is a "word" person but who can integrate words with visuals. Successful design desk editors are also most likely to be those who stay connected to the news and their readers, and who are not concerned solely with presentation. In this way they appear to be producing better newspapers. The implication is that newspapers with successful design desks are those who cross-train their editors, have clear goals about what the design desk is supposed to do and understand their readers. Devoting sufficient resources is also important, since the larger the paper, the more likely the design desk will be successful. In other words, large size helps.

Different forms of design desks are also making inroads at newspapers going to pagination or planning a redesign of the paper in which visuals become more important. Sometimes this is easier to accomplish at small papers where a huge investment in technology isn't necessary. On the other hand, small papers would need editors with a variety of skills because they can't afford large design desk staffs. Large papers (>250,000), which reported 100 percent success with design desks, did not have to devote as large a proportion of their editorial staff to design desks as small papers did.

Further study of design desks in needed, particularly focusing on the issue of control of the news. What is the impact of design desks on news content? Do editors give up control over the news? Also, more information is needed on how design desks fit into the overall structure of the newsroom. How are staff trained for this desk? Should a design desk simply be used for feature pages, or are staff sufficiently skilled to handle breaking news, special projects and inside pages? Newsroom leadership is another issue that needs further study, since staffing and management of the design desk are determinants of success.

Notes

[1]Interview with Bill Evans, executive managing editor, The Dallas Morning News, in November 1992, at the Associated Press Managing Editors convention in Honolulu. Evans says the look of the paper is more organized and consistent now because the layout desk — what he calls the paper's design desk — is doing all the "header" pages. The layout desk was set up as a portion of the news desk after he realized that doing layout "was more than just someone on the rim doing it," he said. "We outgrew that."

[2] "Breaking tradition brings new readers," by Terry Eberle, former managing editor of The Times of Shreveport, La. Reported in the Associated Press Managing Editors Association Newsroom Management Committee Report, produced for the annual convention in Honolulu, November, 1992, p. 17.
Also see: Leland Ryan. *The Logansport Project: A report to the committee on small newspapers*. American Society of Newspaper Editors, January 1992. Presented at the San Jose Mercury News Graphics Design Conference, May, 1992.

[3] Design desks are occasionally referred to in industry periodicals, but not analyzed in detail.

[4] This observation, based on conversations with editors of several large daily American and Canadian newspapers, helped prompt this study.

[5] There are many well-documented cases of structural change in newsrooms: The Orange County Register, the London (Ont.) Free Press and others. Christian N. Anderson, "What exactly are they trying at the Orange County Register?" *The Bulletin*, April 1991, pp. 13-14.Ed Petykiewicz, "Small- and medium-sized dailies are leading the march away from traditional structures," *The Bulletin*, December 1992.
Betty Wells, "Challenges of the 1990s are reshaping traditional newsroom structures." *The Bulletin*, December 1992. Also see Robert Lockwood, *News by Design: A survival guide for newspapers*. Denver: Quark Press, 1992.

[6] Remarks by Peter Francese, president of American Demographics Inc., Proceedings of the American Society of Newspaper Editors annual convention, 1988, p. 236.

[7] *Report of the Readership and Research Committee*, Proceedings of the American Society of Newspaper Editors annual convention, 1987, pp. 314 - 319.

[8] William B. Ketter, "What do readers want?" *The Bulletin*, April 1991, p. 16.

[9] Many editors of Gannett newspapers, under the News 2000 program, published columns asking readers to write or call in with ideas about what they wanted to see covered.

[10]For example, see the *Report of the Readership and Research Committee*, Proceedings of the American Society of Newspaper Editors annual convention, 1987. ASNE readership reports done in later years, such as in 1988, 1989 and 1991, also focus on the problem of a fragmented marketplace of readers and how newspapers can appeal to them.

[11] Daryl R. Moen, *Newspaper Layout and Design*, 2nd ed., Iowa State University Press, 1989, p. 118.

[12] Pegie Stark, Don Fry, and Karen Brown, *Integrating writing, editing, and design put to the test in student seminar*, The Poynter Report, Winter 1991, p. 12.

[13] Leland Ryan, "Goodbye, copy desk. Hello, display desk" *The Bulletin* (American Society of Newspaper Editors), April 1991, pp. 7 - 8.

[14] Telephone interview with Tom Osborne, assistant managing editor for production, The News Tribune, Tacoma, Wash. May, 1993.

[15] Interview with Robert McGruder, managing editor for news, The Detroit News. Honolulu, November 1992.

[16] Telephone interview with Osborne, May 1993.

[17] Telephone interview with Judy Christie, editor of the Shreveport Times, March 1993.

[18] Telephone interview with Pamela Brunger Scott, managing editor of operations for The San Francisco Examiner.

[19] Telephone interview with George Benge, managing editor of the News-Leader, Springfield, Mo. May 1993.
[20] Letter from Phil McLeod, editor of the London Free Press, Ontario, October 1992.
[21] Telephone interview with McLeod, May 1993.
[22] Interview with Tom Mulvoy, managing editor of news operations, The Boston Globe. Honolulu, November 1992.

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Job Stress, Hardiness and Health Factors in Reporters and Copy Editors

Betsy B. Cook, assistant professor, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Steven R. Banks, associate professor, Marshall University
Ralph J. Turner, professor, Marshall University

This study was presented at the annual convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Kansas City, Aug. 13, 1993.

Job Stress, Hardiness and Health Factors in Reporters and Copy Editors

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Ralph J. Turner, professor, Marshall University

This study explored the relationships among job stress, personality hardiness and health factors in reporters and copy editors at 16 daily newspapers of dissimilar size and publication schedules. Specifically, the study looked for possible links between job stress, psychological coping resources and health problems.

Subjects took two psychological tests: (1) the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which measures jobs stress and job attitudes; and (2) the Hardiness Scale, which measures the psychological resources inherent in individuals that enable some to handle stressors more effectively. In addition, subjects completed a demographic questionnaire that included items relating to personal health, substance abuse, job attitudes, job absenteeism and personal illness, and effects of technological change.

The study clearly demonstrates a relationship among job burnout, hardiness and health. Personality hardiness was found to be a strong mediator in the effects of both stress and health problems. When reporters and copy editors demonstrated high levels of emotional exhaustion as measured by the MBI, they tended to miss more days of work due to illness. In addition, as emotional exhaustion and depersonalization scores increased so did the subjects' ratings of how often they felt sick.

Other results show that women reported significantly more health problems and had higher levels of emotional exhaustion than did men. Also, subjects from independent newspapers reported more health problems yet lower job burnout scores. Additional variables such as age, years of experience and use of pagination systems are explored.

The study suggests what types of employees may be at greater risk for health problems and job burnout. Implications for newspaper managers are discussed, including the relationship of job burnout and health problems to turnover, loss of productivity and revenue.

Job Stress, Hardiness and Health Factors in Reporters and Copy Editors

Before editors and publishers throw up their hands in frustration at complaints of job stress and burnout, the authors hope they will begin to consider the psychological components of job satisfaction. This study alerts newspaper managers to the potential costly problems related to job stress and health.

In recent years the effect of job stress on personal health has been a frequent topic of research in many professions.[1] Investigators have shown that the recent life histories of hospitalized patients contain significantly more frequent and serious stressful events than do histories of matched controls from the general population.[2] Stress can be caused by any number of sources. This study looked at occupational stress in newspaper reporters and copy editors and the effects that stress has on personal health. The study goes a step further by considering the intervening variable of personality hardiness that may affect the relationship between job stress and health.

This is the third in a series of studies by looking at job burnout, job attitudes and work environment in newspaper reporters and copy editors. The study found significant relationships among job stress, personality hardiness and health problems in reporters and copy editors at 16 daily newspapers.

Special thanks and recognition Raamie Barker, graduate student, W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications, Marshall University, for assistance with this study.

1 Suzanne C. Kobasa, "Stressful Life Events, Personality and Health: An Inquiry Into Hardiness," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 37:1-11 (January 1979).

2 Suzanne Kobasa, p. 1.

Literature Review

Excessive occupational stress can manifest itself in job burnout.[3] High burnout levels have been associated with job turnover, increased health risks and high work pressure. Freudenberger[4] indicated that job burnout is a syndrome of physical and emotional exhaustion produced by excessive demands on the energy, strength and resources of the individual. A relationship among job satisfaction, job burnout and job attrition has previously been noted.[5] It would appear that job satisfaction, job stress, job burnout and job attrition form a behavioral continuum. Symptoms include emotional exhaustion, psychosomatic complaints, treatment of co-workers as objects, and low levels of job satisfaction and personal accomplishment. When these responses persist over time they can develop into a syndrome labeled "job burnout".[6] Job burnout can be characterized as a type of withdrawal syndrome from work.

With increasing attention being paid to the debilitating effects of burnout, and with the growing consensus that stress is a contributing factor to burnout, researchers have begun to investigate variables that serve as resources that increase resistance or buffer stressful events. Personality hardiness is one such resource.[7] The hardy personality type has been looked at in hundreds of research studies featured in dozens of

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[3] Christina Maslach and Susan E. Jackson, Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual, 2nd ed. (Palo Alto, Ca.:Consulting Psychologists Press, 1986), p. 1.

[4] Herbert J. Freudenberger, "The Staff Burnout Syndrome in Alternative Institutions," Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice, 12:72-83 (Spring 1975).

[5] Michael R. Daley, "Burnout: Smouldering Problem in Protective Services," Social Work, 24:375-379 (September 1979).

[6] Christina Maslach and Susan E. Jackson, Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual, 2nd ed.(Palo Alto, Ca.,: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1986),p. 1.

[7] Suzanne Kobasa, p. 2.

scholarly journals including those published by the American Psychological Association and others.

Many of these studies have focused on a personality structure (hardiness) that differentiates individuals who become sick under stress from those who do not. For example, a person in good health is generally better able to withstand or buffer the effects of job stress. On the other hand, a sustained high level of job stress may cause significant health problems. Personality hardiness seems to mediate both stress and health problems. Thus, the more hardy the personality, the better able one is to cope with both stress and health problems.

Hardiness is comprised of three aspects of personality: (1) a sense of commitment to self and work; (2) perceptions of control over one's environment; and (3) the tendency to approach life changes with an attitude of challenge rather than threat. The theory of hardiness is existential in that it is based on the concept that if the world is able to produce stresses, it is also able to use them. Thus, coping is a method whereby the person *uses* each stress as an energy-giver rather than an energy-drainer. Researchers have looked extensively at individuals who experience high degrees of stress without falling ill compared to those persons who become sick.[8] These studies have found, for example, that personality hardiness moderates the effects of life stress in producing physical illness and depression in male executives.[9] Hardiness also has been shown to contribute to an individual's adapting to change which help reduce the risk of disease.[10] In addition, research has shown that hardiness can be a moderator in job burnout.

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8 Suzanne Kobasa, p. 2.

9 R. J. Ganellan and P.H. Blaney, "Hardiness and Social Support as Moderators of the Efforts of Life Stress," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 47:155-163.

10 Stephen Nagy and Charles L. Nix, "Relations Between Preventive Health Behavior and Hardiness," Psychological Reports, 65:339-345, (1989), p. 344.

Rich and Rich found that personality hardiness was an important stress-resistance resource in preventing or reducing burnout in female staff nurses.[11]

The hardy personality type formulated from these studies builds on the theories of existential psychologists including Kobasa and Maddi. Hardiness, they believe, can be learned through identification and construction of a logical and executable plan for self-improvement. Hardy persons are considered to possess three general characteristics: (1) the belief they can control or influence the events of their lives, (2) an ability to feel deeply involved in or committed to the activities of their lives and (3) the anticipation of change as an exciting challenge to further development.

Hardiness has been studied in its relationship to health; health has been studied with burnout, and hardiness has been looked at with burnout. However, this study is the first to examines all three variables together in one occupational group.

Stress and its physical and psychological effects on workers has been studied in many professions. A heavy work load and time pressure have been related to psychosomatic complaints, anxiety, depression and cardiovascular distress.[12, 13] Role ambiguity or lack of clarity about job roles and criteria

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11 Victoria L. Rich and Alexander R. Rich, "Personality Hardiness and Burnout in Female Staff Nurses," IMAGE: Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 19: 63-66, (Summer 1987), p. 66.

12 John R.P. French and Robert D. Caplan, "Organization Stress and Individual Strain," in The Failure of Success, Alfred J. Marrow, Ed. (New York: AMACOM, 1973).

13 James J. House, Anthony J. McMichael, James A. Wells, Berton H. Kaplan and Lawrence R. Landerman, "Occupational Stress Among Factory Workers," Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 20:139-160, (1979).

of adequate performance of specific tasks has been associated with job dissatisfaction, anxiety, and employee turnover.[14]

Self-reported stress in journalists has been studied in survey research. A German study which surveyed 285 journalists including 185 editors found that only 19 percent felt they had sufficient time to complete their jobs. The study also found 50 percent reported they worked more than 60 hours per week. More than half of the subjects in this German study said they felt themselves at least occasionally under time pressure.[15]

Giles has studied the effects of stress on newspaper editors. He states psychological reactions to stress come from the unconscious and are the results of personality, attitudes and self image. Editors in Giles' study were less likely to suffer from the psychological symptoms of stress if they had a sense of humor, felt competent and capable or if they believed they were responsible for their lives.[16]

A study of stress in newsrooms at Ohio dailies found that more than 90 percent of the respondents said they experienced job-related stress, with 23 percent reporting this stress hindered them in their job duties or made them feel bad. This study found the number one stressor to be personal desire for perfection (74 percent) followed by a supervisor's demands (68 percent).[17]

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14 Robert D. Caplan, Sidney Cobb, John R.P. French, R. Van Harrison and S.R. Pinneau, Job Demand and Workers' Health: Main Effects and Occupational Differences, (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan, 1980).

15 Heinz-Dietrich Fischer, "State of Health and Stress Factors in Occupation: The Mass Media Profession," Social Science Medicine, 21:1367-1371 (1985).

16 Robert H. Giles, Editors and Stress, New York: Associated Press Managing Editors Association, 1983, p. 10.

17 Fredric F. Endres, "Stress in the Newsroom At Ohio Dailies," Newspaper Research Journal, 10:1, 1-14, (Fall 1988).

A related phenomenon to stress, job burnout, has been studied in detail in other professions. However, burnout as it affects journalists using psychological tests that measure the condition has just begun to be studied. Job burnout in reporters and copy editors has been studied by Cook and Banks. In their previous studies they looked at burnout as a dependent variable, with demographic factors and work environment serving as independent variables.[18, 19] In their 1991 study, Cook and Banks found job burnout levels highest in young, entry level journalists working as copy editors at small dailies. The 1992 study replicated part of the 1991 study, but also found that various aspects of the work environment as measured by the Work Environment Scale correlated significantly with scores on the Maslach Burnout Inventory.

The hypotheses in this study are:

1. Job stress as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory will have an effect on the reported health of the journalists in the study.
2. Job stress as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory and its effects on health will be mediated by the psychological condition known as personality hardiness.

Method

Sample

In the current study, the subjects were a total of 96 reporters and copy editors from 16 dailies of dissimilar size and publication schedules. This represents 50.5 percent of the total population of 190 reporters and copy editors at all 16

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[18] Betsy B. Cook and Steven R. Banks, "Predictors of Job Burnout in Newspaper Reporters and Copy Editors," Journalism Quarterly, 70:1-10, (Spring 1993).

[19] Betsy B. Cook, Steven R. Banks, and Ralph J. Turner, "The Effects of Work Environment on Job Burnout in Newspaper Reporters and Copy Editors," Newspaper Research Journal, to be published Spring 1993.

papers. The maximum number of responses from any one newspaper in the study was 16. Only full-time employees handling news copy were surveyed, including beat and general assignment reporters and copy editors with both editing and layout and design duties. Surveys and tests were sent in December of 1992 and January of 1993.

This was not a study of attitudes of reporters or copy editors at a particular newspaper. Rather, the results look at the occupations of reporting and copy editing from all papers represented. Reporters and copy editors from the following newspapers with circulations noted participated in this study: *The Indianapolis* (Ind.) *News*, 98,672; *Vindicator* (Youngstown, Ohio), 88,091; *The Augusta* (Ga.) *Chronicle*, 70,670; *Lansing* (Mich.) *State Journal, 70,425; Waterbury* (Conn.) *Republican American*, 60,006; *Springfield* (Ohio) *Sun-News, 36,998*; *The Register-Herald* (Beckley, W.Va.), 32,001; *Times Herald* (Port Huron, Mich.), 30,218; *The Intelligencer* (Wheeling, W.Va.), 23,430; *The Shelby Star* (Shelby, N.C.), 18,029; *The Evening Telegram* (Rocky Mount, N.C.), 17,433; *Walla Walla* (Wash.) *Union Bulletin*, 15,260; *The Parkersburg* (W.Va..) *Sentinel*, 12,569; *Augusta* (Ga.) *Herald*, 12,053; *The Logan (W.Va.) Banner*, 10,170; and *The Cordele* (Ga.) *Dispatch*, 6,143.[20]

Instruments

The survey instrument was divided into three sections, a demographic survey and two psychological tests. The demographic survey featured items such as age, gender, title, income level, educational background and years of experience. In addition, the demographic contained questions on health, substance use, computer use and career attitude questions.

Career information items included the following statement: *Do you plan to leave journalism within the next five years?* The subject was asked to indicate yes or no. Other

[20] 1992 Editor and Publisher Yearbook.

career items were obtained by a simple summative score on each of the following items, ranked from 1 to 5 on a Likert type scale: *I am satisfied with my present work; I am working in the kind of job I wanted when I was a student; The world of work is different from what I expected; If I had it to do over, I would still choose a career in journalism.*

Questions on substance use and health requested information about the use of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs, as well as exercise and overall health. Computer use questions looked at the subject's use of video display terminals and/or pagination systems.

One of the psychological tests given was the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Scoring procedure for the MBI in this study was the frequency system.[21] The MBI is divided into three separate subscales: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Internal consistency reliability measures were reported by Maslach and Jackson as .90 for emotional exhaustion, .79 for depersonalization, and .71 for personal accomplishment. The highest reported level of criterion validity in the test manual was .68.[22] Scores at the upper end of the scale on (EE) emotional exhaustion and (DP) depersonalization indicate high levels of job burnout. Scores at the lower end of the scale on (PA) personal accomplishment indicate high levels of job burnout.

The second psychological test given was the hardiness scale, known as the Personal Views Survey. Hardiness is measured on the test with three subscales: (1) *Commitment* - The ability to commit to the task or project or relationship. This is not defined as "blind" commitment, rather a realistic commitment that can be re-evaluated if things change;

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21 Maslach and Jackson, 1986.

22 Maslach and Jackson, 1986.

(2) *Control* - The realistic knowledge and use of the amount of control or lack of control that one has in this and other situations. This includes the ability to obtain as much control as one needs for comfort or to remain committed; and
(3) *Challenge* - The use of both commitment and control to see events, relationships, problems and opportunities as challenges rather than as trouble. Challenge assists individuals to accept errors as errors rather than as personal faults.[23]

These three subscales interact to comprise the condition known as hardiness. The test has been used on more than 21,000 subjects from many professions over the last four years. The Alpha coefficient is .92; the standard deviation is 9.60. The test/retest reliability based on more than 400 subjects show an item to item correlation of approximately .960 for the individual items.[24]

Results

The essential nature of this study is to measure the interrelationship of the three primary variables: job burnout, personality hardiness, and health factors. A number of associated variables also were correlated with these primary variables. These included days missed from work due to illness, how often the subject felt sick, years of experience, title, age, and several self-reported job satisfaction questions. The relationships of the primary variables to the associated variables also will be presented.

In Table 1, the correlations between the major variables are presented. EE is emotional exhaustion, DP is depersonalization, and PA is personal accomplishment. **Health** is the subjects' own ratings of their personal health. **Hardiness** is personality hardiness.

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23 Skip Dane, Hardiness Research," a paper published by the Hardiness Institute, Casper, Wy., 1992.

24 Skip Dane, 1992.

As shown in Table 1, **health** correlated significantly with emotional exhaustion and with personality hardiness. As emotional exhaustion increased, positive health responses decreased. As personality hardiness increased, positive health responses increased.

Personality **hardiness** correlated significantly with all three measures of job burnout. As personality hardiness increased, emotional exhaustion and depersonalization decreased. As personality hardiness increased, personal accomplishment increased.

Tables 2 and 3 provide further examples of the interactive relationship between health, personality hardiness and job burnout. Table 2 presents an analysis of variance with health as the grouping variable and the subscales of the Maslach Burnout Inventory as the dependent variable.

As seen in Table 2, the relationship between health and job burnout is quite similar to the correlation values. In Table 3, an analysis of covariance model is constructed with health as the grouping variable, the job burnout subscales as the dependent variables, and hardiness as a covariate.

When hardiness is used as a covariate in the analysis of covariance model, the relationship between health and job burnout becomes much more significant. Thus, the interactive nature of the relationships between these three variables becomes more salient when hardiness is utilized as a covariate. In Table 3 it is quite clear that job stress has a significant relationship with health.

In Table 4 some additional variables are correlated with burnout and hardiness. The first three variables, **From work**, **Feel sick** and **Sleep**, are additional health variables. **From work** is days missed from work due to illness; **Feel sick** is how frequently one feels sick; **Sleep** is a rating of how often one has difficulty sleeping.

The second set of variables are demographic variables: **Experience** indicates the total years of experience in journalism; **Title** indicates whether the subject is a reporter or a copy editor; **Age** is the subject's age.

The third set of variables are job related variables; **Satisfied** indicates a rating of how satisfied the subject feels in his/her present job; **Quit job** is a rating of how often one thinks about quitting the present job; and **Leave jrn.** indicates whether the subject intends to leave the field of journalism in the next five years.

As seen in Table 4, days missed from work due to illness correlated significantly with emotional exhaustion. The more emotionally exhausted the subject felt, the more days missed due to illness. The level of sickness reported by the subjects correlated significantly with emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personality hardiness. As emotional exhaustion and depersonalization increased, the subjects' ratings of sickness increased. As hardiness increased, the subjects' ratings of their level of sickness decreased. Sleep behavior correlated significantly with both emotional exhaustion and with hardiness. As emotional exhaustion increased, difficulty in sleeping increased. As personality hardiness increased, sleeping difficulty decreased.

These three additional health related variables were placed in the same type of analysis of covariance model as was the primary health variable. In all cases the statistical significance of the relationship between job burnout and health increased in the same manner as it did in Table 3. Such results indicate the strong relationship between health factors, job burnout and hardiness. The nature of these results indicates that hardiness apparently mediates or buffers the relationship between job burnout and health.

In Table 4 some demographic variables that related either to job burnout or to hardiness were: years of experience, title and age. Years of experience had a significant inverse relationship with depersonalization. Those subjects with more years of experience had a significantly lower level of depersonalization. Title had a significant relationship with personal accomplishment. Reporters reported a significantly higher level of personal accomplishment than did copy editors. No other significant differences between reporters and copy editors were found.

Age had a significant relationship with depersonalization. Older subjects had a significantly lower level of depersonalization than did younger subjects.

In Table 4 three job related variables correlated significantly with either job burnout or hardiness. Satisfy, the subject's reported level of job satisfaction, had a significant correlation with emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and hardiness. As emotional exhaustion increased, job satisfaction decreased. As personal accomplishment and hardiness increased, job satisfaction increased.

Quit job, the subject's rating of how often they think about quitting their present job, correlated significantly with all three job burnout scales and with hardiness. The more the subjects considered quitting their present jobs, the more emotional exhaustion and depersonalization they expressed. The less the subjects considered quitting their jobs, the more personal accomplishment and hardiness they expressed.

On Table 4, **Leave jrn.** was an item in which the subjects expressed an indication to leave the field of journalism. There was a significant relationship between intention to leave and emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment, and hardiness. Those subjects who intended to leave journalism had significantly higher levels of emotional exhaustion and significantly lower levels of personality hardiness and personal accomplishment.

Additional Analyses

Some mention should be made of other variables in the study.

Substance Use

A number of items about smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol and substance use were included in the study. None of these variables related significantly to the primary variables in the study. The authors were concerned from the start about the response rate on these highly personal items. To ensure anonymity, respondents returned surveys directly to the authors in stamped, self-addressed envelopes. However, our concerns appear to be well founded because some respondents chose not to answer these questions at all.

Computer Use

Video display terminal and electronic pagination system use were also surveyed to determine if there was a relationship between job stress and working on computers. Responses were requested on the pagination items from copy editors only. However, neither of these variables related to any of the primary variables. It may be of interest to note only 18 percent of those responding about the pagination item indicated that they used an electronic pagination system. Among that 18 percent, the respondents were evenly divided about their satisfaction with the system and its ability to make their job easier.

Demographics

Gender, size of newspaper by circulation, type of ownership of the newspaper, education and income were also included as variables in the study. In the correlation analysis and in the initial analysis of variance models, these items did not relate to any of the three primary variables in the study. However, when an analysis of covariance model is constructed with hardiness as the covariate, the results for gender and type of ownership resemble the results in Table 3. In the analysis of covariance model with gender as the grouping variable, hardiness as the covariate and health as the dependent variable, women reported significantly more health problems.

When job burnout was used as the dependent variable, significant differences between the genders again were found. Women reported significantly more emotional exhaustion, but significantly less depersonalization. Women also reported more personal accomplishment with this covariance model.

When newspaper ownership was used as the grouping variable, hardiness as the covariate, and health as the dependent variable, the subjects from independent newspapers reported significantly more health problems. Yet on all the burnout measures in the analysis of covariance model, subjects from independent newspapers reported lower burnout scores. Thus, subjects from independent newspapers had less emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, but more personal accomplishment.

On the other hand, exercise related significantly to some of the health variables. However, exercise did not relate to hardiness, depersonalization or personal accomplishment. Exercise did have a significant inverse relationship with emotional exhaustion. Thus, exercise may also have some moderating effects on health problems or on the relationship between job stress and health.

Summary

The major findings in the study point to a significant interrelationship between job burnout, personality hardiness, and health factors.

Of all the variables studied, emotional exhaustion is most strongly linked to health problems in this sample. On every major health item in the study, emotional exhaustion had a significant relationship.

Hardiness was the second best predictor of health factors. This finding is consistent with others that have explored the relationship between hardiness and health or hardiness and job burnout.[25] What seems to be happening with these more hardy individuals is that they use the stress in a transformational manner. That is, these hardy individuals transform the stress psychologically into an energy giver, not an energy drainer.

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25 See for example Kobasa, Nagy and Nix, Rich and Rich.

One of the questions about such a study is to infer the exact type of relationship between the factors of job burnout, personality hardiness and health. While the relationship between job stress and health factors is interactive, the authors tend to believe job burnout is more likely to cause health problems rather than the reverse. Although health problems can contribute to job burnout, generally speaking we believe this study and other related studies point to job burnout as the more causative variable in health problems.

We believe that personality hardiness is an intervening, moderating variable in the relationship between job burnout and health problems. Those subjects with a high level of personality hardiness will be better able to handle job stress and will, therefore, suffer fewer health problems.

Hypothesis testing

Given the results of this study, the authors accept the original hypotheses as previously stated.

Discussion

It is important first to note the complex set of relationships among the psychological components of job burnout, hardiness and physical health. Caution must be followed in assessing just what these relationships mean. Howevfr, some results of this study clearly point to areas of concern for reporters, copy editors and in particular newspaper managers.

Journalists appear to be similar to other professionals in experiencing job stress. Mean scores on the psychological measures of job burnout and personality hardiness are similar to those in other professions. And although the study of health and its relationship to job stress has become a national priority, there is little information about journalists' health. The authors hope this study alerts editors and publishers to the potential costly problems related to job stress and health factors.

This study clearly demonstrates a relationship among job burnout, hardiness and health in reporters and copy editors. The effect of personality hardiness on the subjects' job burnout and health scores is important to note. Personality hardiness, as discussed in the literature review, seems to be an especially powerful psychological component. As found in the study, hardiness seems to mediate the effects of both stress and health problems. Therefore, measuring personality hardiness may be one key to assessing an individual's potential for health problems and job burnout.

But perhaps the most important findings in this study are the relationships of the three primary variables to days missed from work due to illness and how often subjects felt sick. When reporters and copy editors demonstrate high levels of emotional exhaustion as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory, they tend to miss more days of work due to illness. In addition, as emotional exhaustion and depersonalization scores increased, so did the subjects' ratings of how often they felt sick.

Also as noted in the results section, an analysis of covariance indicates that women reported significantly more health problems and more emotional exhaustion than men in the study. In addition, women's scores indicated less depersonalization and more personal accomplishment. Does this indicate women perceive their jobs as reporters and copy editors differently from men? Do women have different psychological coping mechanisms for dealing with stress and illness? The conclusions are not easy to draw. Women still bear the brunt of multiple roles in society, facing professional as well as personal and family-related pressure. It is these multiple roles that may cause women to experience more emotional exhaustion that in turn may lead to an increase in health problems.

In another analysis of covariance model, subjects from independent newspapers reported significantly more health problems, yet had lower job burnout scores. The latter finding is consistent with Stamm's study of job satisfaction and newsroom policy changes. That study found job satisfaction to be higher at "family-owned" newspapers than at chains.[26]

Other results show that those reporters and copy editors who think about quitting their present jobs or leaving journalism altogether also experience high levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and low levels of personal accomplishment and personality hardiness. It is interesting to note that 38 percent of all subjects said they plan to leave journalism in the next five years.

The implications for editors are clear. Emotional exhaustion and depersonalization may cause decreased productivity, increased job turnover and the loss of revenue when employees miss work, feel ill on the job, or intend to leave their jobs.

Literature in popular journalism periodicals points to the massive changes now taking place in newspaper management. New ways of organizing the newsroom, working with personnel, and advancements in technology all will have an impact on employees' attitudes toward their jobs. And the changes are not coming too soon. The authors frequently visit newsrooms around the country and speak with journalists. Morale is terrible. Reporters and copy editors complain about the age-old problems of salary, hours and advancement. But before editors and publishers throw up their hands in frustration at these complaints, we hope they will begin to consider the psychological components of job satisfaction.

This study points to a need for newspaper managers to get to know their employees beyond their newsroom skills. Other studies have shown that feedback from supervisors

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26 Keith R. Stamm and Doug Underwood, "The Relationship of Job Satisfaction to Newsroom Policy Changes," a paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications Convention, August 1992, Montreal, Canada.

increases job satisfaction.[27] Managers should be aware of outside influences on the employee that might affect his or her attitude about the job. Encouraging two-way communication will alert the editor to problems or potential problems. Conducting internal surveys to discover how employees feel and what they think about their jobs can be one way to begin this communication.

The authors' previous research all has pointed to the need for supervisors to be more supportive of reporters and copy editors, taking time to listen to what they think about their jobs. In addition, use of psychological tests, such as those in this study, may help editors and publishers better predict who is at risk for job burnout and illness.

It is obvious, if not expected, to point to the need for further research in the areas of job stress, personality hardiness and health in journalists. Results of such future studies will no doubt help improve the management of newspapers and the working conditions for journalists.

[27] Lori A. Bergen and David Weaver, "Job Satisfaction of Daily Newspaper Journalists and Organization Size," Newspaper Research Journal, 9:1-13 (Winter 1988).

Table 1

Relationship among health, job burnout subscales and personality hardiness

	EE	DP	PA	Hardiness
Health	-0.307566**	-0.17936	-0.01169	0.21316*
EE	--	0.46619**	-0.221177*	-0.47277**
DP	--	--	-0.09655	-0.33688**
PA	--	--	--	0.39309**

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

Table 2

ANOVA-Health and Job Burnout

Dependent Variables	F Value	p Value
EE	8.40	0.0005
DP	2.67	0.0752
PA	0.02	0.9819

Table 3

Analysis of Covariance
Health, Hardiness and Job Burnout

Dependent Variables	F Value	p Value
EE	17.09	0.0001
DP	7.26	0.0085
PA	15.60	0.0002

Table 4

Additional correlations

	EE	DP	PA	Hardiness
From work	-0.26169*	-0.15157	-0.03927	0.12018
Feel sick	-0.41023**	-0.24158*	-0.00952	0.31539**
Sleep	-0.44627**	-0.10505	0.02707	0.20845*
Experience	-0.00945	-0.30769**	0.12373	0.15606
Title	-0.05970	0.03472	-0.35159**	-0.04415
Age	-0.13471	-0.32418**	0.09360	0.03608
Satisfied	-0.35320**	-0.12041	0.27336*	0.29139**
Quit Job	-0.48460**	-0.24110*	0.43818**	0.43602**
Leave Jrn.	-0.32438**	-0.18058	0.30452**	0.22983*

* $p < .05$
**$p < .01$

EE - Emotional exhaustion as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory
DP - Depersonalization on the MBI
PA - Personal accomplishment on the MBI
Hardiness - Personality hardiness as measured by the hardiness scale

From work - Days missed from work due to illness
Feel sick - How frequently the subject reported feeling sick
Sleep - How often the subject had difficulty sleeping
Experience - Total years of experience in journalism
Title - Reporter or copy editor
Age - Subject's age
Satisfied - Rating of how satisfied the subject feels in present job
Quit job - How often the subject thinks about quitting the present job
Leave jrn. - Whether the subject intends to leave the field of journalism in the next five years

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THE RESPONSE OF NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION IN THE 1980S TO ECONOMIC AND OTHER COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

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THE RESPONSE OF NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION IN THE 1980S TO ECONOMIC AND OTHER COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

Introduction

This study examined variables that were associated with changes in newspaper penetration of households during the decade of the 1980s. Changes in penetration were correlated with changes in community economic indicators and other demographic measures, and with newspaper characteristics, broadcast variables and magazine circulation. The goal was to identify economic and other variables that were associated with penetration slippage or growth in the 1980s; this would provide publishers and editors with clues on how to cope with stagnant circulation penetration in the 1990s.

The study also examined the impact of Reagan/Bush economics and the upward redistribution of economic power on newspaper penetration. Columnist Kevin Phillips has documented the shrinkage of the American middle class during the 1980s (1990, 1993). He concluded that: "Wealth within the United States had been changing hands, regions, vocations, economic sectors and income strata with a vengeance" (1990, p. 7). This study looked at the impact of this redistribution of wealth on newspaper penetration.

Leaders in the newspaper industry have emphasized the importance of household penetration (defined as the percentage of occupied households in a geographic market that are served by a newspaper). Cathleen Black, president of the Newspaper Association of America, listed the decline in newspaper penetration as one of eight "critical industry priorities that the new newspaper association must address" (1992). The president of Gannett, John Curley, reported that his company is committed to increasing readership at its 83 dailies and halting the "slide of household penetration" (Curley, 1990; Janis, 1991).

One veteran editor suggested that circulation is the only true measure of a newspaper's worth, and that penetration of local households is the best indicator of circulation. Robert M. White II, editor emeritus of the Mexico, Missouri, Ledger, said that readers' desires to buy and read a newspaper regularly "determine the true quality of a newspaper" (Who, 1992).

Literature

A significant body of literature exists that traces the continuing slide in newspaper penetration since the 1930s and that identifies factors that are related to circulation and household penetration. Particularly pertinent are studies that use a sociological or macro approach and that relate newspaper penetration to community characteristics using aggregate and U.S. Census data. Other studies have examined the same issues using a micro or psychological approach and have relied on survey research to compare the characteristics of subscribers and nonsubscribers or readers and nonreaders.

Newspaper penetration has dropped ever since it reached a peak in 1930 of over one paper per U.S. household (Stamm, 1985). Bogart (1989, pp. 78-81) concluded that penetration dropped more in the 1970s than the 1980s. Adults who reported reading a newspaper "yesterday" declined from 76 percent in 1967 to 65 percent in 1987. However, persons who read a newspaper "everyday" remained at 54 percent in 1982 and 1987; and persons who read a paper at least once a week remained at 88 percent in 1982 and 1987.

Various scholars, relying primarily on surveys of newspaper users and nonusers, have identified correlates of newspaper readership. Bogart noted that although readership dropped in all groups for the 20 years, 1967-1987, it dropped more for women, blue collar workers and Caucasians (1989, p. 81). Thorn and Pfeil's book on newspaper circulation identified age, income, education and being married as positive predictors of newspaper readership (1987, p. 99). Education and income also were the strongest predictors in statewide surveys in 1971 in North Carolina and 1961 in Wisconsin (Penrose, et al., 1974, pp. 632-634).

Stone's review of readership research also identified variables associated with community attachment such as civil involvement, public affairs interest, mobility, voting, and having school-aged children (1987, pp. 109-121). Weaver and Fielder in a Chicago survey similarly found that a commitment to voting and to keeping informed was associated with the newspaper habit (1983). Political and social involvement also were associated with newspaper readership in the survey-based studies of Kebbel (1985) and Viswanath et al. (1990).

Other survey researchers have looked more closely at a physical attachment to a community. Stamm and Guest used home ownership as a baseline variable to examine the newspaper habit of newcomers in Seattle (1991). Home ownership, along with income and years of local residence, were powerful predictors of local subscribing in Denbow's survey in Murray, Kentucky (1975). The same relationships existed in Rarick's earlier survey of Mansfield, Ohio subscribers (1973).

Thus survey research has identified a significant association between newspaper consumption and individual-level demographics such as education, income and home ownership.

The same associations have been examined using aggregate data by correlating U.S. Census figures for counties with percapita consumption of newspapers. By correlating demographics and circulation penetration for census divisions of the Philadelphia Inquirer, Meyer determined that new housing, income and having children were positively associated with circulation ((1985, p. 54). By comparing the counties of chain and independent newspapers, Hale demonstrated that chain papers served communities with heavier sales of magazines and with higher levels of household income and consumer spending (1985).

Ten other studies have used community characteristics to evaluate newspaper use: Stone (1977), Stone and Trotter

(1981), Stone et al. (1981), Turpin (1974), Eberhard (1974), Lasorsa (1991), Lacy (1987, 1988), Blankenburg (1987) and Hagner (1983).

Various studies by Stone have used community-level variables to explain county circulation or penetration. The 1981 study by Stone et al. concluded that the number of households in the home county was most successful in predicting circulation; but it was less successful in predicting penetration. Another Stone study (1977) found the best predictors of circulation to be resident-owned homes, population, and single-family dwellings. A third study, by Stone and Trotter (1981), found that such census measures as per capita income and percent Caucasians, as well as such broadcast measures as number of radio stations and presence of local television, added some to the predictive power of number of households.

Turpin explored circulation change between 1960 and 1970 in Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (1974). Population change emerged as the strongest variable; however, level of education and personal income also accounted for some of the change in circulation. Eberhard also analyzed SMSAs for two time periods, 1940 and 1970. However, he focused on the characteristics of the home county within the SMSA, not the total SMSA.

Other studies have used community-level characteristics to examine media competition. Lacy's (1987) analysis of economic variables and radio stations in 72 cities for 1929 and 1948 demonstrated that radio had little effect on the decline of newspaper competiton. Another Lacy study (1988) determined that such intermedia variables in a market as TV and radio stations and percent of cable subscribers have little impact on the allocation of newspaper resources such as reporters, news hole and wire services. Blankenburg (1987) concluded that the variable, growth in households during the last decade, was the strongest predictor of the circulation that survives a local merger of newspapers. Hagner looked for correlates of newspaper competition within SMSAs and found the strongest predictors to be population, income, commutors into a city, land area, cities over 25,000 and proximity to a larger SMSA. Lastly, Lasorsa (1991) discovered that newspaper competition in a county, as well as income, education and racial diversity, were predictors of public opinion diversity.

In conclusion, a significant number of researchers have used county-level demographics, as well as mass media characteristics, to predict newspaper circulation and media competition.

Methodology

The unit of analysis in this study was 187 home counties of dominant dailies. (This was operationalized as counties with one daily in which outside papers reached fewer that one in ten households.) Counties with dominant dailies were used in order to limit the influence of outside newspapers and to examine newspaper circulation in a relatively pure environment; this minimized any effects of changes in out-of-county newspapers on a dominant paper's in-county circulation. The study was expanded to include one neighboring, contiguous county for each home county. This was done to approximate most newspaper markets which include a home county and one or more adjoining counties.

This permitted the analysis of four versions of the dependent variable, changes in newspaper household penetration between 1980 and 1990: home county weekday penetration, home Sunday penetration, neighboring county weekday penetration, neighboring Sunday penetration.

Four types of predictor or independent variables were selected: newspaper characteristics, economic census characteristics, social census characteristics, and media competition measures.

Eight newspaper characteristics of the 187 dominant dailies were measured for both 1980 and 1990. Except for three characteristics which were dichotomous and not continuous (chain ownership, Sunday edition and morning publication), variables for the correlational analysis were constructed that measured the percentage change from 1980 to 1990. For example, the variable, change in weekday cirulation, was created by using the equation, circulation change equals the amount, 1990 circulation minus 1980 circulation, divided by 1980 circulation. For the three dichotomous variables, the 1990 values were used for the correlation analysis. The newspaper variables were: chain ownership, Sunday edition, whether most circulation was morning, total daily circulation, total Sunday circulation, cost of one-week subscription, cost of one line of advertising, number of wire services.

Economic characteristics were measured for both the home and neighboring counties for 1980 and 1990. Variables for the correlation analysis were created by computing the percentage change in a characteristic between 1980 and 1990. The five economic variables were: median home value, median rent, unemployment, median household income, percentage of families below the poverty level.

The nine social variables were similarly measured for home and neighboring counties for both years and transformed into variables that measured the amount of change over the decade (the exception was population density, in which the 1990 value was used): population density, population, households, Caucasians (excluding persons of Spanish heritage), natives (born in the state), median age, home ownership, high school education, 16 years of education.

Ten variables measured media competition. Broadcast variables were measured for home counties only for both time periods. This was done because most broadcast markets included both the home and neighboring counties. Magazine circulation penetration was determined for both county types and both time periods; variables for the magazine correlation analysis reflected change in the penetration during the decade. The variables were: percentage of cable subscribers of homes passed by system, basic monthly cable charge, number of radio stations, number of television stations, Better Homes and Gardens, Cosmopolitan, National Geographic, People, Sports Illustrated and Time.

Newspaper characteristics came from the 1981 and 1991 issues of Editor and Publisher International Year Book. Cable and broadcast data came from The 1981 Broadcast/Cable Yearbook and The Broadcast Yearbook 1991. Census data came from the County and City Data Book, 1983, 1990 Census of Population and Homes and 1990 Census of Population and Housing: Summary of Social, Economic, and Housing Characteristics.

The initial research plan was to obtain data on newspaper and magazine penetration from the 1981 and 1991 versions of Circulation which was published by American Newspaper Markets. However, the service was sold to Standard Rate and Data and the new owner did not own a copy of the 1981 report. Subsequently, the 1981 SRDS Newspaper Circulation Analysis, published by Standard Rate and Data, was used for 1980 data on newspaper penetration of counties. And 1981 data on magazine penetration came from Circulation '82/'83. Thus the magazine findings reflect the nine years, 1981-1990, and not ten years. (Most data on market penetration of newspapers and magazines, regardless of where it is published, originates with the Audit Bureau of Circulation.)

Nonparametric correlations were computed to measure the relationship between the four versions of the dependent variable on newspaper penetration change and the various independent variables on newspaper characteristics, economic indicators, social community demographics, and other media variables. The focus of the study was the association between change in newspaper penetration and change in other variables during the decade. Two-tailed tests of significance were used because of the lack of hypotheses of a direction in the relationships.

Lastly, variables most strongly associated with penetration were placed in one regression equation to account for the maximum amount of variance in change in penetration.

Findings

The 187 dominant dailies came from 40 states and had a mean 1990 weekday circulation of 54,440. The papers were dominant in their home county; outside dailies reached a mean of 2.7 percent of households in the home counties.

The papers mirrored changes in all U.S. dailies during the 1980s (Table 1). There was growth in the number owned by chains and the number publishing in the morning and on Sunday. Total weekday circulation dropped somewhat, while total Sunday circulation grew. However, penetration of households dropped, particularly for the all-important measure, weekday penetration in the home county. Advertising rates grew faster than subscription rates. And the number of wire services that the papers subscribed to grew, but by less than the number of papers that converted to chain ownership; thus chain news services probably accounted for most of this growth.

Table 1

While newspaper penetration slumped, broadcasting showed increases in cable penetration and in the number of radio and television stations. Cable charges increased more than newspaper subscription prices but less than newspaper advertising. With the exception of one magazine, magazine penetration slumped even more than newspaper penetration.

The 187 home counties had a mean population of 151,322, compared to 36,568 in the neighboring counties (Table 2). Population density in neighboring counties was 28 percent that of the home counties. Thus the two groups of counties resembled pairs of urban and suburban/rural counties.

Table 2

In both groups of counties, population grew more slowly than the number of households, age and minorities increased, home ownership decreased slightly, and home values increased much more than rent. Unemployment inched up, poverty grew, and the proportion of persons with a high school and a college education grew.

The heart of this study was the correlations between the various predictor variables and the four dependent variables--change during the 1980s in household penetration of weekday and Sunday papers in home and neighboring counties.

Not surprisingly, change in total weekday circulation was positively related to three measures of changes in penetration (Table 3). This included one of the strongest correlations in the study, .42, between total circulation and weekday penetration in the home county. Similarly, change in total Sunday circulation was positively related to growth in local Sunday penetration. If a newspaper was healthy enough for its total circulation to grow, its penetration also tended to grow.

Table 3

Surprisingly, change in weekday penetration was negatively associated with publishing on Sunday and in the morning in 1990. This was contrary to expectations and there was no simple explanation. Between 1980 and 1990 some 29 (16 percent) of the papers changed from evening to morning publication. The stronger performance of the remaining, evening papers may have resulted from the relative strength of the medium-sized, evening papers that dominated this study. The association also may have been caused because papers that converted to morning did not regain all of their former subscribers.

Changes in advertising and subscription rates were generally unrelated to penetration. Curiously, advertising increases were negatively correlated with weekday and Sunday penetration in neighboring counties. Papers in markets that could tolerate major increases in ad rates may have been less aggressive in pursuing circulation outside of their home county.

Social variables accounted for some significant relationships that were consistent with previous studies (Table 4). First, population density and changes in population were negatively associated with changes in local penetration of the weekday paper. Second, even stronger negative associations existed between circulation penetration and changes in the number of households; there, correlations were significant for all four versions of the dependent variable. These associations indicated that an environment with rapid growth in population and households caused circulation penetration to stagnate.

Table 4

Age and home ownership were positively associated with changes in local weekday penetration. As persons grow older, they are more likely to purchase a newspaper. And as people become more attached to a community, through such factors as home ownership, they are more likely to subscribe to a local paper. The modest increase in median age in the sampled counties was not enough to increase circulation penetration. And the drop in home ownership may have depressed circulation.

One other social variable, race, which was measured as the percentage of Caucasians, was positively correlated with newspaper circulation; it is possible that hidden economic variables contributed to this negative association between growth in racial minorities and circulation. Lastly and inexplicably, increases in college educated residents was negatively associated with weekday circulation in the home and neighboring counties. Such a change may have been associated with the addition of newcomers and persons in their 20s and 30s in communities, factors which traditionally depress circulation.

One goal of this study was to examine the impact of Reagan/Bush economics of the 1980s on newspaper penetration. Those financial losses by the middle class led columnist Kevin Phillips to write a book with the title, The Politics of Rich and Poor (1990). The book's credibility was enhanced by the fact that Phillips is a conservative and not a liberal. A chart in another Phillips book published three years later underscored the erosion of family purchasing power (1993, p. 28). During the years, 1977-1990, incomes of the top one percent of families increased 45 percent, and 20 percent for families in the top ten percent. However, families in the eighth and ninth deciles increased only 3 and 6 percent while families in the seventh decile enjoyed 0 percent growth; and families in the first through sixth deciles saw incomes drop from 3 to 11 percent.

Table 5

This study examined two kinds of economic variables, media characteristics and community demographics. As already reported, media economic variables were unrelated to circulation penetration; advertising rates and subscription prices were largely unrelated to home county penetration. (The next section indicates that another media economic variable, cable charges, was largely unrelated to newspaper penetration.) Table 5 reports the correlations for the five community economic variables. Only one of 20 correlations was significant; rent changes were negatively associated with local weekday penetration. Rapid rent increases may have been tied to growing demand for rental units caused by new people moving into a county. And these newcomers may have been reluctant purchasers of local newspapers. Surprisingly, such major economic indicators as household income, unemployment and poverty level were unrelated to penetration. This was contrary to findings in Bogart's thorough summary of newspaper market data (1989, p. 83). He reported a strong association between reading a newspaper "yesterday" in a 1987 national study. Readership was 48 percent for persons making less than $10,000, 64 percent for persons in the $20,000s, 72 percent for those in the $40,000s and 78 percent for persons making over $60,000. But the substantial association between newspaper use and income does not hold up when it is measured using community-level data.

Lastly, the influence of other mass media variables was examined. There were few significant correlations. Cable penetration was positively associated with local weekday circulation. Thus increases in cable subscribing were positively correlated with increases in circulation penetration (Table 6). People apparently were not cancelling their newspaper subscriptions to pay for cable. Other significant broadcast associations included a positive correlation between the number of radio stations and Sunday penetration in nearby counties, and a negative correlation between cable charges and weekday penetration in neighboring counties.

Table 6

Because both newspaper and magazine penetration fell during the decade, it was expected that the two would be related. However, only one of 24 newspaper-magazine correlations proved to be significant (Table 6). That was a rather substantial correlation of .34 between local weekday penetration of newspapers and penetration of Better Homes and Gardens. Since both measures were falling during the decade, the positive relationship indicates that the two were similarly responding to changing conditions in the environment.

The ten predictor variables that had the strongest correlations with weekday penetration, including Better Homes and Gardens, were entered into a regression equation. Only two variables accounted for significant amounts of variance. The number of households, which was negatively associated with newspaper penetration, accounted for most of the variance. But total weekday circulation also contributed significantly.

Conclusions

This study demonstrated that aggregate-level data, and the use of community characteristics, is quite effective in documenting both the magnitude and correlates of change in circulation penetration. Some 32 predictor variables were used to explain changes in four versions of the dependent variable, penetration of county households. The 24 significant correlation that emerged provided clues on what conditions could be troublesome in the 1990s in depressing the critical measure of newspaper effectiveness, household penetration.

Both the descriptive and the correlational findings underscored the contrast between weekday and Sunday editions of newspapers. They clearly are contrasting mass media. The decade of the 1980s was unhealthy for weekday penetration; it dropped by 8.5 percent of households in home counties and half that--3.9 percent--in neighboring counties. Sunday penetration, however, remained stable, dropping by only 1.3 percent of households in home counties and actually increasing by 2.3 percent in neighboring counties. Sunday penetration was stronger than weekday penetration in other ways. Sunday exceeded weekday penetration in home and neighboring counties in both 1980 and 1990. But the gap between the two significantly widened over the decade from 6.3 and .5 percent of households to 13.5 and 6.7 percent.

Publishers who are attempting to strengthen weekday circulation in the 1990's need to transfer what is successful for their Sunday paper to their weekday edition. This will succeed only if what is appealing about Sunday papers is not tied exclusively to the additional time for reading that is available on Sunday and not on weekdays.

The variables used in this study, which did not include measures of leisure time, were unsuccessful in explaining Sunday circulation. Only 3 of 32 predictor variables were related to change in Sunday penetration in home and neighboring counties. And only one predictor, change in households, was related to both home and neighboring Sunday penetration; it was correlated -.23 with both. Thus a rapid increase in households, and the factors associated with that growth, depresses Sunday penetration throughout the circulation area. But other variables in this study were unrelated to Sunday penetration.

Change in households was the only one of the 32 predictor variables that was significantly correlated with all four measures of circulation penetration. It also was negatively related to weekday penetration in the home and neighboring counties. Number of households was the only community demographic that was related to more than two of the four penetration measures.

Only one predictor was related to three measures of penetration. Total weekday circulation was positively correlated to both measures of weekday penetration and the measure of local Sunday penetration. Thus overall growth in weekday circulation contributes to penetration of both the weekday and Sunday edition.

However, most other newspaper characteristics were unrelated to penetration. Publishing in the morning and on Sunday were negatively related. This may have been an artifact of this sample which was restricted to monopoly papers that dominanated in their home counties. Also, the proportion of papers that added Sunday editions during the decade--6 percent--and changed from evening to morning publication--16 percent--may have been abnormally high and thus not representative of all daily newspapers. The newspaper characteristics included in this study--such things as number of wire services and subscription price--simply did not explain changes in household penetration. If newspaper characteristics make a difference, and we have to assume that they do, they involve idiosyncratic factors that were not measured here. These could range from color photographs and news hole to comic selection and aggressiveness in news coverage.

The variables in this study were most successful in predicting local weekday penetration. There were 13 significant correlations for that dependent variable, compared to 3 to 5 for the neighboring weekday penetration and the two measures of Sunday penetration. Of the 13 significant correlation, 7 were social demographic variables. Besides households, which already has been discussed, local weekday penetration was negatively associated with population density and population and positively related to age, home ownership and race (measured as Caucasians). Also, local penetration was negatively correlated with college-educated residents. These findings are quite consistent with previous research. They indicate the difficulty in maintaining local weekday penetration in the 1990s for a community that is growing rapidly. In such an environment, the variables that were negatively associated with penetration--density, population, households, and college educated--may be growing in strength; and the variables here that were negatively associated with penetration--age, home ownerhip and Caucasians--may be diminishing. That clearly is one of the challenges for newspaper leaders in the current decade. These also are conditions which constitute givens and thus cannot be directly manipulated by publishers.

A major impetus for this study was Reaganomics which shifted economic power from the middle class to the upper class during the 1980s. Did the Reagan-Bush economic policies, which were supported by most newspaper publishers who editorially endorsed the election of Reagan, contribute to the decline of newspaper penetration? That question was explored with five community economic variables--home value, rent, unemployment, income, and poverty. Other economic variables that were examined were newspaper subscription cost, advertising rate, and cable TV charges.

For the most part, economic variables did not relate to changes in household penetration. The economic losses of the poor and middle class of the 1980s which were documented by columnist Kevin Phillips, were not related to changes in newspaper penetration in this study. One reason is that formal hypotheses were not posed, which would have resulted in more sensitive, one-tailed tests of significance. The five economic demographic measures generated 20 correlations with the four penetration measures. Only one correlation was significant; rent had a -.30 correlation. This is consistent with the other measures of high-growth communities. Rapid growth was related to increases in renting and rent rates, which weakened ties to communities and newspapers. The direction of the economic correlations was consistent with logic. Of twelve correlations for unemployment, income and poverty, ten were negative; the other two were .00 and .01. And some of the correlations would have been significant if formal hypotheses had been used.

But even if such correlations had proven to be statistically significance, the practical significance would have been weak. A correlation of -.13 between penetration change and income change, for example, is of little practical significance because it only accounts for 1.7 percent of total variance.

The weak correlations with economic indicators may reflect the fact that newspapers already have become a class medium which circulates more with groups in higher social and economic strata. Changes in income, unemployment and poverty largely affect lower economic groups which are weaker users of newspapers. Economic variables at the aggregate level may not be as sensitive as those at the individual level at detecting responses to newspaper use.

One other finding concerned the lack of significant correlations between newspaper penetration and other measures of mass media. Of 40 correlations, only 4 were significant. The two significant correlations with local weekday penetration were noteworthy. Cable penetration had a correlation of .23, indicating that local cable was not growing at the expense of newspaper circulation. And local weekday penetration was correlated .34 with penetration change for Better Homes and Garden. This was one of the strongest correlations in the study. It also was the only one of 24 correlations between newspaper and magazine penetration that was significant. This indicated that newspaper weekday and Better Homes penetration responded similarly to some community changes.

TABLE 1. FREQUENCIES OF MASS MEDIA VARIABLES

Characteristic	1980	1990	Percent Change
Newspaper			
Chain Ownership	58.8%	73.3%	24.7
Sunday Edition	81.3%	87.2%	7.3
Morning Edition	42.8%	59.4%	38.8
Weekday Circ.	55,740	54,440	-2.3
Sunday Circ.	69,433	73,196	5.4
Subscription	$1.24	$2.00	61.3
Advertising	$.81	$1.88	132.1
Wire Services	2.22	2.34	5.4
Newspapers in Home County			
Weekday Pen.	.652	.567	-13.0
Sunday Pen.	.715	.702	-1.8
Newspapers in Nearby County			
Weekday Pen.	.456	.417	-8.6
Sunday Pen.	.461	.484	5.0
Broadcasting			
Cable Pen.	.62	.70	12.9
Cable Charge	$7.48	$12.73	70.2
Radio Stations	8.74	10.60	21.3
TV Stations	2.84	3.50	23.2
Magazines in Home County			
Better Homes	.097	.086	-11.3
Cosmopolitan	.033	.027	-18.2
Nat. Geographic	.100	.083	-17.0
People	.032	.027	-15.6
Sports Ill.	.024	.034	50.0
Time	.043	.038	-11.6
Magazines in Nearby County			
Better Homes	.092	.082	-10.9
Cosmopolitan	.016	.01	-6.3
Nat. Geographic	.090	.077	-14.4
People	.018	.018	00.0
Sports Ill.	.018	.029	61.1
Time	.031	.030	-3.2

TABLE 2. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF COUNTIES

Characteristic	1980	1990	Percent Change
Home Counties			
Pop. Density	142.35	146.70	3.1
Population	151,322	155,941	3.1
Race (Whites)	82.7%	80.1%	-3.1
Natives	68.0%	69.3%	1.9
Age	29.0	32.50	12.1
Households	52,822	58,081	10.0
Ownership	67.1%	66.1%	-1.5
High School	65.7%	74.6%	13.5
College	15.0%	17.9%	19.3
Home Value	$40,005	$55,996	40.0
Rent	$213	$274	28.6
Unemployment	6.9%	7.0%	1.4
Income	$18,234	$25,019	37.2
Poverty	10.8%	12.3%	13.9
Neighboring Counties			
Pop. Density	38.74	41.82	8.0
Population	36,568	39,481	8.0
Race (Whites)	85.1%	84.3%	-0.9
Natives	74.5%	74.8%	0.4
Age	30.9	34.4	11.3
Households	13,428	14,520	8.1
Ownership	75.3%	74.6%	-1.2
High School	58.3%	68.6%	17.7
College	10.8%	12.8%	18.5
Home Value	$33,034	$48,033	45.4
Rent	$185	$219	18.4
Unemployment	7.4%	7.2%	-2.7
Income	$16,320	$23,497	44.0
Poverty	13.2%	13.6%	3.0

TABLE 3. CORRELATION OF NEWSPAPER PENETRATION AND NEWSPAPER CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	Home County Weekday	Home County Sunday	Neighboring County Weekday	Neighboring County Sunday
Chain Ownership**	-.12	-.07	.03	.11
Sunday Edition**	-.16*	.01	-.03	-.06
Morning Edition**	-.27*	.02	-.04	.05
Total Weekday Circulation	.42*	.16*	.20*	.09
Total Sunday Circulation	.02	.27*	.03	.16
Subscription	-.09	.00	-.05	-.05
Advertising	.13	-.05	-.21*	-.22*
Wire Services	-.07	-.03	.07	-.04

*Two-tailed probability of less than .05
**1990 value of variable used instead of the difference between the 1980 and 1990 values

TABLE 4. CORRELATION OF NEWSPAPER PENETRATION AND SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Characteristic	Home County Weekday	Home County Sunday	Neighboring County Weekday	Neighboring County Sunday
Population Density	-.29*	.08	-.12	-.04
Population	-.15*	-.03	-.11	-.14
Households	-.29*	-.23*	-.17*	-.23*
Race	.22*	-.05	.03	-.02
Natives	.05	.15	.08	.04
Age	.25*	.08	-.03	-.16
Home Ownership	.21*	.04	.07	.03
High School	.07	-.10	.03	.04
College	-.15*	.03	-.19*	-.11

*Two-tailed probability of less than .05

TABLE 5. CORRELATION OF NEWSPAPER PENETRATION AND ECONOMIC DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Characteristic	Home County Weekday	Home County Sunday	Neighboring County Weekday	Neighboring County Sunday
Home Value	-.14	-.09	-.02	.05
Rent	-.30*	.01	-.09	.02
Unemployment	-.05	-.06	-.02	-.11
Income	-.13	-.01	-.07	.01
Poverty	.00	-.01	-.10	-.11

*Two-tailed probability of less than .05

TABLE 6. CORRELATION OF NEWSPAPER PENETRATION AND BROADCAST AND MAGAZINE VARIABLES

Characteristic	Home County Weekday	Home County Sunday	Neighboring County Weekday	Neighboring County Sunday
Cable Penetration	.23*	-.10	-.07	-.11
Cable Charges	.16	.08	-.19*	-.08
Radio Stations	-.11	.04	.10	.17*
TV Stations	.03	-.17	.17	-.01
Better Homes	.34*	.02	-.01	-.05
Cosmopolitan	.05	.03	-.01	.03
Nat. Geographic	.13	.00	.01	.01
People	.09	.03	-.06	-.03
Sports Ill.	-.13	.11	-.18	-.08
Time	.14	-.05	-.04	-.01

*Two-tailed probability of less than .05

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