

AN ORGANIZATIONAL AND
ECONOMIC CASE STUDY
OF THE DETROIT NEWS

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
WALKER ROBERTS
1972

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ABSTRACT

AN ORGANIZATIONAL AND ECONOMIC CASE STUDY
OF THE DETROIT NEWS

By

Walker Roberts

In 1873, James Scripps launched the Evening News in Detroit and, until his death, he fought to maintain its independence from the Scripps newspaper chain operated by other members of the Scripps family. The Evening News, now the Detroit News, stands today an independent economic and journalistic Gibraltar--a monument to James Scripps, and the family which followed him, as the evening newspaper with the largest daily circulation in the nation.

This newspaper is considered in a ten chapter case study. Each chapter analyzes an aspect of the organization or tries to put its activities in a perspective useful to a reader. The organization of the newsroom operations are considered in detail with special attention to the key city desk operations and the recent (March 1971) move to the Metro zoning concept. Nine principles or guideposts of newsroom management are selected and illustrated by examples of their application at the News.

Outside the newsroom, the News gets a summary organizational analysis. One of the major contributions to understanding the remainder of the News results from the discussion of responses to a questionnaire designed to elicit information necessary to apply the demand curve concept of classical economics to the News. Demand curves are drawn for classified and display advertising and for circulation.

A chapter is devoted to the plans of the News to construct a \$35 million satellite plant about twenty miles from its downtown editorial offices. The plans leave the News little alternative but become one of the first major metropolitan newspapers in the nation to commit itself to cathode ray tube writing, editing, and layout.

The description of the Detroit News is buttressed by a brief history, a review of circulation trends, demographics of the Detroit market, a content analysis comparing the News and the morning Detroit Free Press, a review of the News activities in advertising and research, and an explanation of the nationally recognized "Secret Witness" program.

Accepted by the faculty of the School of Journalism,
College of Communication Arts, Michigan State University,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master
of Arts degree.

W. Cameron Meyers
Director of Thesis

AN ORGANIZATIONAL AND ECONOMIC CASE STUDY
OF THE DETROIT NEWS

By

Walker Roberts

A THESIS

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

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PREFACE

This study is designed to be read by journalists and publishers concerned with the organization of their newsrooms. It describes how the personnel and executives of the Detroit News, one of the largest and unquestionably most successful newspapers in the nation, organize and perform their daily activities. The study provides an example against which to compare any other newspaper. It also provides a detailed look at a successful editorial zoning operation which, when in operation less than six months, thwarted the entry of a suburban daily newspaper into the highly competitive market of the News.

The study will be of interest to those concerned about satellite plant operations, as the News will begin printing in a new \$35 million plant during the summer of 1973. The plant is located twenty miles from the point news copy is written, edited, and dummied, committing the largest circulation daily evening newspaper in the nation to cathode ray tube writing, editing, and make-up.

The study will also hold interest for those concerned with the economics of the newspaper industry. Demand curves are drawn for three aspects of the News--

classified advertising, display advertising, and circulation.

The study should be of value as a tool for giving a new Detroit News employe a look at his new environment. He would find a brief history, including labor strikes and circulation trends, some varied perspectives on Detroit demographics, and observations on the content of the News and the morning Free Press, a rival in the Detroit market.

This thesis has been conceived and executed to maximize the writer's exposure to the type of knowledge needed to succeed in the management and control of newspaper newsrooms. It is viewed as a class to be tailored to the specific needs, interests, and ambitions of the student. The research for this study has provided an opportunity for the detailed examination of one of the nation's finest newspapers--an opportunity that would not be possible in the workday world of any reporter, even on the staff of the Detroit News.

No thesis examining a large institution such as the Detroit News can be written without the cooperation and interest of the management and staff. Thanks are due Martin Hayden, editor of the News, for allowing the writer to wander freely through the editorial operations to talk to personnel who, in the vast majority, responded with candor about all aspects of their work. Hayden's willingness to allow such a case study is a tribute to his staff,

demonstrating his vast confidence in the staff's efficiency and professionalism. This confidence was found to be well placed.

Peter B. Clark, publisher of the Detroit News, provided a significant amount of time to explain his views and goals and was kind enough to allow the information to be gathered for the chapter on the economics of the market of the News. While the chapter does not deal with the specifics of revenue and profit, it tells those with some financial background that the News is an economic Gibraltar. Allowing the public even a narrow view of the economics of the News is a demonstration of Clark's confidence in his organization.

The aid of numerous members of the News staff was indispensable. Assistant Managing Editor Boyd Simmons knew who had the answers to every question. William W. Lutz, the feature editor, provided guidance around difficult stumbling blocks. Don Easter, assistant to the managing editor and news editor prior to a recent heart attack, not only provided a description of the intricate detail of the news processing operation but also had the kindness and patience to read much of this thesis. Assistant Managing Editor Burdett C. Stoddard, in charge of the city desk, displayed understanding and restraint while aiding me in working out difficult parts of the thesis.

Paul Carman, assigned the task of introducing the News to computers and cathode rays, provided indispensable help.

Most of top management provided a significant amount of time in the form of interviews. Glenn P. List, the circulation manager, was a major contributor as were Paul Poorman, the managing editor; Robert Lubeck, the associate editor in charge of features; Associate Editor John O'Brien; Assistant Managing Editor Albert Abbott; General Manager Tom Dorris; Advertising Director Kenneth T. Carlson; and, Classified Advertising Manager Norman Young.

Also among those at the News who deserve thanks for their assistance are the many reporters and editors who were telephoned at their homes and probed with blunt questions by someone they didn't know. These questions almost invariably dealt with the sensitive issues of conflict within the News and were, with few exceptions, answered with candor and detail.

The help of two members of the faculty of the School of Journalism of Michigan State University must be mentioned: Professor John Murray provided a wealth of ideas (possibly not fully knowing he did so) during numerous informal discussions about the News and journalism generally; and, my adviser and thesis director, Dr. W. Cameron Meyers, who provided simple solutions to

apparently difficult problems and who, like myself, had the fortune to be introduced to journalism at Washington State University.

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CHAPTER I

A HISTORICAL VIEW OF THE DETROIT NEWS

It All Began in 1873

The first issue of a Detroit tabloid newspaper came off the press August 23, 1873. The new paper was to compete with four other broadsheet newspapers, the Daily Union, the Advertiser & Tribune, the Free Press, and the Journal for circulation and advertising in a population center of about 80,000.¹ The competition was morning papers; the tabloid was an evening product.

Its publisher was an idealistic but business-oriented newsman with about fifteen years experience. He was James Edmund Scripps and his newspaper was the Evening News, now the Detroit News. Scripps was born in 1835, the son of English immigrant parents who settled in Illinois when he was nine years old. Scripps had worked for a time on the Chicago Tribune but lost his job in 1857, a victim of an economic depression. At age twenty-four, he went

¹E. A. Batchelor, Jr., "They Guided the News for Its First Seventy-Nine Years," Detroit News Pictorial Magazine, Aug. 18, 1963, p. 7.

to Detroit where he became financial editor of the Detroit Advertiser. In 1862, the Advertiser merged with the Tribune to become the Advertiser & Tribune. Scripps was named general manager and editor of the merged paper. In all, he worked on it about fourteen years.

Scripps acquired 40 per cent ownership of the Advertiser & Tribune during the period he worked for it. When, in 1872, a fire destroyed the building that housed the newspaper, Scripps collected \$30,000 as his portion of the insurance money. He used part of this money to launch the Evening News in the midst of the depression of 1873.²

Scripps believed that a newspaper, independent of political affiliations, charging a low price to both readers and advertisers, and containing more news than its competitors would be successful. His paper sold for two cents a copy when the competition was charging five cents.

The paper was aimed at family readership and stressed news of general interest. Its initial issue carried seventy news items as compared with about thirty in each of the competing papers.³ Its tabloid size undoubtedly contributed to its success, making it easier to

²William W. Lutz, Detroit News feature editor, interview Sept. 9, 1971. Lutz is working on a detailed history of the News.

³Batchelor, "They Guided," p. 6.

read on the horse-drawn street cars that crisscrossed the town and were then the major means of transportation.⁴

But, for all of Scripps's effort, success was not instantaneous. Circulation soon fell from its initial printing of 10,000 to 4,800 and advertising revenue fell with it.⁵ This crisis brought his sister Ellen and half-brother Edward W. Scripps to Detroit to help him. They also provided minor amounts of money. His brother George H. Scripps provided \$2,000. As a promotional measure, Scripps invited citizens to insert free classified advertising. The response was great and established the paper as a classified advertising medium.

He saw poor presswork as being a major problem. To correct this, he borrowed \$15,000 from John J. Bagley, the governor of Michigan. His efforts were successful, but financial success was further assured when the News won the contract to publish city council proceedings, which brought with it the designation, "The Official Paper of the City of Detroit."⁶ By February, 1874, seven months after it was launched, the Evening News was making money. The newspaper never lost money again until 1929, caught

⁴Lutz, Sept. 9, 1971.

⁵Batchelor, "They Guided," p. 6.

⁶Ibid.

in the tide of the Great Depression.⁷ In late 1874, the Evening News absorbed the Daily Union, picking up its 2,000 subscribers.⁸

On February 25, 1888, the paper expanded from tabloid to broadsheet in four-page format. On May 5 of that same year it was forced to expand to eight pages because of increased advertising.

In August, 1890, James Scripps started the first Detroit Times and sold copies for one cent each to prove to his family that a newspaper could make money at the one-cent rate. He discontinued the Times after eighteen months, then reduced the price of the News to a penny. Shortly after dropping the price of the News, Scripps left for Europe for treatment of an ailment. During his absence, Edward raised the price of the publication back to two cents and increased the advertising volume. Circulation price and advertising volume were reduced upon James' return.⁹

In the early 1880s, Edward Scripps purchased a paper--the Press--in Cleveland, and before the decade

⁷Lutz, Sept. 9, 1971.

⁸Batchelor, "They Guided," p. 6.

⁹William W. Lutz, "Hazen S. Pingree and James E. Scripps: Working for the Common Man," Unpublished manuscript, June, 1971.

ended he had built the framework of the Scripps League, later the Scripps-Howard Newspapers. James Scripps held some ownership in the chain. Just after the turn of the century, when the antagonism between James and Edward grew in intensity because James refused to bring the News into the chain operation, James purchased sixteen of Edward's shares (the bulk of Edward's holdings) in the News, and Edward purchased James' interests in the chain. The transaction was completed January 22, 1903.¹⁰

The financial strength of the News has helped it shape Detroit, but its effectiveness in bringing desired change was undoubtedly influenced by the progressive political and social philosophy of Scripps.¹¹ In the 1880s, the newspaper lamented editorially the corruption in city government¹² and as the turn of the century approached it campaigned for lower rates and better service for gas, electric and street car utilities. The News favored public ownership of the transit system. It was probably these consumer oriented campaigns that gave it the circulation advantage over competing newspapers. By 1905, its circulation was 200,000--equivalent to the combined circulations of its competitors.¹³

¹⁰Lutz, Sept. 9, 1971.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²William W. Lutz, "The Expose that Changed Detroit From 'Boodle City, U.S.A.,'" Unpublished manuscript, September, 1971.

¹³Lutz, Sept. 9, 1971.

Cartoonist Burt Thomas was an influence in the drive for better city government and lower utility rates. His famed cartoon character, Mr. Straphanger, was the woe-begone working man who pictorially suffered from most of the problems facing city residents.¹⁴

James E. Scripps died in 1906. George G. Booth, Scripps's son-in-law, followed Scripps as publisher. Booth was on hand as Edwin G. Pipp, editor, worked two weeks with a citizens group and a detective agency to effect the arrest of nine aldermen (city councilmen) on charges of accepting bribes. The arrest was July 25, 1912.¹⁵

The trial didn't begin until July 6, 1914, and lasted until April 27, 1915, resulting in the acquittal of all the alleged bribe takers. But the News and reformers in city government had set the forces of change into motion for the adoption of a new city charter in 1918, which provided for the election of councilmen-at-large, eliminating the power of the wardheelers to control elections.¹⁶ The scandal and the efforts of the News resulted in the first non-partisan, mayor-type city government in the United States.¹⁷

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Lutz, "The Expose."

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Lutz, Sept. 9, 1971.

In 1884, while Scripps was yet alive, he began publication of the Sunday edition of the News. In 1891, he gained control of the financially shaky morning paper, the Detroit Tribune. The Tribune continued to publish and became the training ground for Scripps's son, William E. Scripps, a future publisher of the News, and his son-in-law, Edgar B. Whitcomb.¹⁸ On October 15, 1893, the Sunday News and the Sunday Tribune were merged into the Sunday News-Tribune. On August 23, 1905, the Evening News absorbed the morning Tribune but continued to publish the morning edition. This morning edition was later renamed the Detroit Tribune. On January 30, 1915, the morning edition was discontinued, and on December 12, 1920, the Sunday issue changed its name from the Sunday News-Tribune to the Detroit News.¹⁹

The News absorbed the Journal in 1922, and acquired the assets of the Hearst-owned Times on November 7, 1960.

One of the last acts of James E. Scripps was to change the name of the Evening News to the Detroit News. He did this in 1905, a year before his death.²⁰ On

¹⁸Batchelor, "They Guided," p. 6.

¹⁹Miracle at Your Doorstep: Picture Story of a Great American Newspaper, published by Detroit News, circa 1970, p. 30.

²⁰Batchelor, "They Guided," p. 7.

January 4, 1970, the place name was dropped from the flag of the Sunday edition and it became the Sunday News, giving the Sunday edition a more regional personality.

The News has historically dominated the three-county trading area of Detroit, including Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties, but its circulation has rapidly deteriorated beyond the three county boundaries. The movement to increased suburban coverage began in the 1950s, culminating in the expansion into three metropolitan bureaus in 1970 with four Metro or zoned editions.²¹

Upon Scripps's death, a trusteeship became effective, with his son William E. Scripps and sons-in-law, George Booth and Edgar B. Whitcomb, named trustees. Booth was designated publisher. Booth retired from the post in 1929. William E. Scripps guided the News through the Great Depression and remained its publisher until his death in 1952. William Scripps's interest in radio had brought station WWJ into being in 1920, one of the first radio stations in the nation.²²

Upon the death of William Scripps, George Booth's son, Warren S. Booth, became publisher. Peter B. Clark, a great grandson of James E. Scripps, assumed the post on November 22, 1963.

²¹Lutz, Sept. 9, 1971.

²²Batchelor, "They Guided," p. 7.

There were fifty shares of stock in the original enterprise. There has been no known stock split; profits are believed to be divided among the 158 family members of the closed corporation.

The News has cultivated its top editors from within its staff. During its ninety-eight years of existence, it has had eight editors, each with an average of thirty-five years time on the staff.

The first editor was, of course, James E. Scripps, who was succeeded in 1906 by Michael J. Dee. Dee was also the first city editor and Washington correspondent. The third editor was Patrick C. Baker who came up through the back shop to become, in 1907, at age thirty one, the top editor. Baker was forced to resign in 1910 because of failing eyesight.²³

He was succeeded by Edwin G. Pipp who had served as managing editor. After conflicts with management over policy concerning World War I, he was replaced in 1918 by the Washington correspondent, George E. Miller. Miller retired from the job in 1933 at age seventy-five. W. Steele (Doc) Gilmore guided the News as editor for the next twenty years, until his retirement in 1953.

²³W. K. Kelsey, "Eight News Editors in Ninety Years," Detroit News Pictorial Magazine, Aug. 18, 1963, p. 15.

Harry V. Wade, who had been named associate editor in 1951, was named to succeed Gilmore. In 1959, Wade retired and passed the job on to the present editor, Martin S. Hayden.²⁴

Labor Unrest Marked the 1950s and 1960s

With a certain artificiality, it is possible to divide the history of the News into two major segments. The first is its dramatic scramble for success under the guidance of James E. Scripps. The second is the cataclysmic strikes that occurred in 1955-1956, 1964, and 1967-1968. Each of the strikes was more lengthy than the one that preceeded it and between each strike there were minor work stoppages and labor unrest. An exact measure of the impact of the strikes is impossible. It appears that the 1967-1968 strike, however, cost the News and the Free Press each about 75,000 subscribers. News personnel report that this loss has gone to no other papers, although it is probable that a small part of it has gone to suburban dailies. Many suburban dailies in the Detroit trading area and temporary strike papers expanded sizably in circulation during the strike, but with the resumption of publication by the News and the Free Press they lost virtually all this circulation. The trend lines for both the News and the

²⁴Ibid., p. 16.

Free Press show growing circulation, but at a rate not dissimilar to the pre-strike growth rate. Thus it appears that about 150,000 newspaper subscribers in Detroit have joined either the ranks of the non-newspaper readers or those who have reduced the number of newspapers they read daily. It must also be noted that for some reason the earlier, albeit shorter, strikes did not cause a significant circulation decline.

The first of the three strikes began December 1, 1955, leaving Detroit newspaperless for the first time in its history. (There had been work stoppages, but never had they prevented publication for more than a single day.) The shutdown lasted for forty-six days, ending on January 15, 1956. When the shutdown occurred, eight of the sixteen plant unions were working under expired contracts. The strike was precipitated by the local of the International Stereotypers and Electrotypers Union of North America and impacted 4,700 newspaper workers.²⁵ The problems of the stereotypers were quickly solved, but new problems followed, involving the printers local of the International Typographical Union and the mailers local of the ITU. The stereotypers, mailers, and printers were the only unions at any time on strike, but their picket

²⁵Carl Muller, "Pacts end strikes at three papers," Detroit News, Jan. 16, 1956, p. 1.

lines effectively halted operations. Whether a tactical ploy or not, the strike was timed to interfere with the profitable and voluminous Christmas advertising.

On July 13, 1964, the pressmen and plate and paper handlers walked off their jobs and formed their potent picket line around the Free Press and the News. It was the beginning of a 134-day shutdown. At this time it was the longest major metropolitan newspaper strike in the history of the nation.²⁶ The strike, which terminated with publication on November 25, 1964, was as involved as it was long. The 275 striking pressmen and 140 paper and plate handlers idled about two-thirds of the 4,100 employees of the News and the Free Press. Editorial, advertising, clerical and maintenance employees at the News were kept on the payroll throughout the shutdown.

During the long shutdown, the mayor of Detroit, the Michigan governor, and the U.S. President all tried their hand at finding an equitable solution. Major portions of an agreement option were worked out in Washington, D.C., between the unions, management, and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service backed by President Lyndon B. Johnson. The strikers, however, showed little deference to the President of the United States and dumped the idea 230 to 17.

²⁶ Jack Crellin, "How papers, unions reached agreement," Detroit News, Nov. 25, 1964, p. 1.

Ferment grew in the nonstriking unions. This irritation climaxed on November 18 when the powerful Jimmie Hoffa of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffers, Warehousemen and Helpers of America threatened to send his members across the picket line if the News and the Free Press decided to publish again. About this time Detroit area citizenry formed the Citizen's Committee for Community Affairs, and began to put pressure on government leaders to halt the strike.

The Detroit Council of Newspaper Unions, which had long been working to bring the strike to an end, initiated a meeting on November 19, which resulted in agreements which finally brought an end to the strike. The final solution came on November 21, 1964, with the next four days required to set the newsgathering machine in motion.

The formula for the settlement was provided by the late Walter P. Reuther, president of the United Auto Workers union. The nearest thing to a concession granted the unions was that during the first year of the three-year contract, the News continued manning its presses with a sixteen-man maintenance crew rather than a fifteen-man crew as management desired. On all other terms, the union returned to offers available without the news blackout.²⁷

²⁷"Press Peace in Detroit," New York Times, Nov. 23, 1964, p. 36.

But, the longest and most vicious of the strikes was yet to come. Of 266 days duration, it was almost exactly twice as long as the 1964 strike. The strike began against the News on November 16, 1967, by the teamsters local. The strike impacted the 4,600 at the two newspapers. As during the prior strikes, both newspapers closed. Nonstriking Free Press personnel were furloughed while the News management kept nonstriking personnel on its payroll.

As if another massive strike were not enough of a problem for the newspapers, just two days after the teamster pickets formed their barrier around the News, an interim or strike paper was on the streets. It was the Daily Express. Within four days two other strike papers joined it, the Daily Press and Daily Dispatch. A proposed Detroit Times died before getting to press. Distribution of the papers was by groups of teamsters normally employed by the News or the Free Press. About a month after the strike papers started, the News fired seven of its district managers who were working for the Express and who were members of the teamsters union. It was charged that they had conspired to unlawfully appropriate News circulation lists to distribute the interim paper and had profited by more than \$300,000 because of use of the lists.

The firing was upheld by an independent arbitrator in January, 1969.²⁸

It took until March 15 to settle the matter with the teamsters. By that time four other crafts--the printers, pressmen, photoengravers, and paper and plate handlers--had gone on strike and condemned the teamsters' settlement terms as "inadequate."

On April 23, Governor George Romney attempted to intervene, summoning the publishers and top union officials to his office in Lansing. Peter B. Clark, publisher of the News, rejected the offer and the governor countered with a subpoena. The News subsequently asked a federal court to bar the governor and a state senate committee that was preparing legislation that would have made arbitration mandatory from interfering with negotiations on grounds that the federal government had pre-empted the state in the field of labor relations since the firms involved were clearly in interstate commerce. The News was upheld and the state was barred.

The News then moved to attack the union flank. It began a large scale training program in June to communicate backshop skills to its non-union employees. In July, the News printed a small paper for several days on a trial

²⁸Robert Popa, "News upheld in firing of seven," Detroit News, Jan. 29, 1969, p. 3.

run basis, destroying the issues after each printing. The last union reached agreement on August 1. Union voting officially ended the strike August 6.²⁹ The training program was discontinued and publication resumed August 9, 1968, with a cautious promise by a union official who stated that "no one union will ever strike again, and the reason is certainly obvious."³⁰

The strike disrupted morale of the News staff. Although the newsroom staff was being paid during the nine months strike--much of the time on full salary--many left for other jobs. "When the strike was over, the old habits had to be rebuilt; the automatic reaction of the staff within the formal organization was lost," recalled Boyd Simmons, then News city editor, now assistant managing editor.³¹

It was also felt that the competent Free Press reporters, writers who created problems for the News, were lost because of the strikes.³²

²⁹"Newspaper Strike Report," News Bulletins, Aug. 6, 1968. News Bulletins was a house organ published during the 1967-1968 strike.

³⁰"Longest newspaper blackout."

³¹Boyd Simmons, assistant managing editor, interviewed Sept. 9, 1971.

³²Robert E. Lubeck, associate editor in charge of features, interviewed Oct. 6, 1971.

A Historical Look at News Circulation

The complex circulation patterns of Detroit newspapers are best reflected in the accompanying graphs. It will be noted that during the 1950s the News and the Free Press, the only morning newspaper in Michigan, were locked in a struggle for circulation leadership with the Detroit Times not far behind. The average circulation for the News and the Free Press during this period was about 450,000 papers daily and for the Times about 400,000. By 1960, the Times circulation was sagging rapidly. The Sunday Times dropped from about 535,000 in 1953 to 440,000 in 1960.

The purchase of the Times assets by the News in 1960 and the resultant death of the Times brought dramatic changes in circulation patterns.

Between 1960 and 1971, the circulation trend line for the News appears to be falling slightly, while that of the Free Press is definitely inclining upward. Also to be noted, although it is not reflected well on the graphs, is a sudden spurt of growth of the Sunday News in 1959 with the introduction of the TV Magazine. The cataclysmic drop in circulation following the 1968 strike should be compared with the negligible declines in circulation following the earlier strikes.

Another matter worth considering is the decline in city zone sales experienced by both newspapers. Likewise,

both were gaining circulation rapidly in the suburbs.
 (See Fig. 1 and Fig. 2.) An examination of Fig. 5a and Fig. 5b makes it easy to see the reasons for concern by the News management between 1965 and 1970, as the Free Press was reducing the lead of the News in both the daily and Sunday fields.

Table 1. March 31, 1971, circulation of the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press.

Detroit ABC City Zone				
Counties	Detroit News		Detroit Free Press	
	Daily	Sunday	Daily	Sunday
Part of Macomb 43 households	28	28	65	61
Part of Oakland 10,197 households	3,370	4,919	3,003	3,142
Part of Wayne 583,302 households	295,451	338,754	189,069	163,355
Circulation in All Zones				
Total Detroit City Zone 593,542 households	298,849	343,701	192,137	166,558
Metropolitan Area 1,266,585 households	615,851	751,307	417,942	394,811
Total Circulation all Zones	646,385	859,550	593,124	649,071

Source: Audit Bureau of Circulation audit reports.

The regional and statewide circulation graphs and the chart of circulation of each newspaper by counties demonstrates the local character of the News and the somewhat broader circulation of the Free Press (see Fig. 3, Fig. 4 and Table 1).

The Audit Bureau of Circulations statement for March 31, 1971, demonstrates the relative strength of the News in the three-county area as compared with the Free Press. It also shows how little of the News circulation goes outside the three county area of the state and region.

The 8:30 A.M. press run produces 306,000 papers of which 59 per cent are sold within the city, 34 per cent within the retail trading zone, and 7 per cent in other zones. The city zone corresponds closely to the Detroit city limits including some heavily populated but geographically small suburbs. The retail trade zone is the remainder of the six-county area surrounding Detroit.

The News also publishes zoned editions, but the newspaper zones do not correspond to the trade zones. When a newspaper "zones" it prints a somewhat different paper for each zone and the papers can be different in either advertising or news. Three of the four zoned editions of the News are distributed in the retail trading zone; they are called Metro North, Metro East, and Metro West. The fourth zoned edition, Metro Detroit, is sold in the city zone. For the 11:30 A.M. make-over or update of the news

in the paper, 387,000 copies are printed with 36 per cent remaining in the city, 63 per cent going to the retail trade zone, and 1 per cent to all other zones. The 3:30 P.M. final make-over, designed to give businessmen the final stock markets, publishes 14,000 papers with 78 per cent sold in the city, 21 per cent in the retail trade zone and 1 per cent in all other zones.³³

The daily edition of the News is on newsstands and in coin boxes in the city and trade area by 10:00 A.M. News street sales are running about 76,000 papers daily. The Free Press daily street sales run considerably heavier. The Free Press reported its March, 1971, street sales to Audit Bureau of Circulations as 118,911. On Sundays, the News and the Free Press lie side by side, both coming off the press about the same time. Here the reader preference for the News is demonstrated dramatically, for the Free Press street sales in the city zone drop from 70,000 to 42,000 while the News climbs from 53,000 to 70,000. In the suburban areas, street sales of the Free Press is 40,000 on Sunday and the News 61,000. This differential occurs despite the higher price of the News on Sunday, forty cents as opposed to thirty cents for the Free Press.³⁴

³³Glenn P. List, Detroit News circulation manager, interviewed Oct. 5, 1971.

³⁴List, interviewed Sept. 28, 1971.

Both the News and the Free Press are firmly in the coin box business for vending their street sales. The News has 2,300 coin boxes and the Free Press 3,000 boxes. Price rises cause significant problems with the coin boxes as they are designed to accept only certain combinations of coins and the boxes can not give change.

Table 2. Comparisons of circulation before and following price increases by the News and the Free Press.

	Sept. 30, 1971	Sept. 30, 1970
<u>Daily:</u>		
City Zone		
News	293,219	298,288
Free Press	180,082	193,725
Retail Trade Zone		
News	334,625	319,142
Free Press	252,780	253,770
Total		
News	650,180	639,703
Free Press	574,431	593,369
<u>Sunday:</u>		
City Zone		
News	335,839	340,054
Free Press	163,090	166,009
Retail Trade Zone		
News	436,207	426,803
Free Press	279,922	266,827
Total		
News	848,278	850,078
Free Press	657,976	642,754

The Free Press and the News have both recently raised prices, but have raised different prices. In July, 1971, the News raised its Sunday price to forty cents from thirty cents.³⁵ In February, 1971, the Free Press raised its daily street sale price to fifteen cents from ten cents and its home delivered price from ten cents to 12.5 cents. The Free Press had generally raised its price to coincide with increases in price by the News until 1965 when it raised its price outside the Detroit market area and slowly extended these increases into Detroit.³⁶

Publishers statements of September 30, 1971, issued by the Audit Bureau of Circulations show the Free Press to have been hurt somewhat from its price rise, while the price rise by the Sunday News did not cause a significant loss. Comparisons were made in the daily and Sunday circulations of the News and the Free Press between September 30, 1970, and September 30, 1971. For the weekday

³⁵For the News, seventy-two pages of newsprint weights a pound and a pound of newsprint costs 8.25 cents. The Sunday paper usually weights three pounds. Even at the forty-cent rate for the Sunday paper, the circulation price does not pay for the newsprint. The carrier earns a dime of this forty cents and the teamsters who operate the carrier system must get their commission. The result is that the retail price has been eroded below the twenty-five cents necessary to pay for the newsprint. Jim Leonard, Detroit News assistant circulation manager, interviewed Oct. 19, 1971.

³⁶List, Sept. 28, 1971.

circulation, the News city zone declined 1.7 per cent and the Free Press city zone declined 7.2 per cent. In the retail trade zone the News gained 5 per cent and the Free Press gained four tenths of 1 per cent. In total, including all weekday zones, the News gained 1.5 per cent and the Free Press lost 3.3 per cent. For the Sunday editions, for which the Free Press held its price and the News raised, the News declined 1.2 per cent in the city zone the Free Press declined 1.8 per cent. In the retail trade zone, the News gained only 2.1 per cent as compared with 5 per cent for the Free Press. For total Sunday circulation, the News was down one-fifth of 1 per cent while the Free Press gained 2.3 per cent.

The price increase by the Free Press has probably relieved the News of the competitive pressure it has faced from the Free Press for years.

Circulation brings about 25 per cent of the total revenue of the News with advertising bringing the remainder.³⁷

³⁷Leonard.

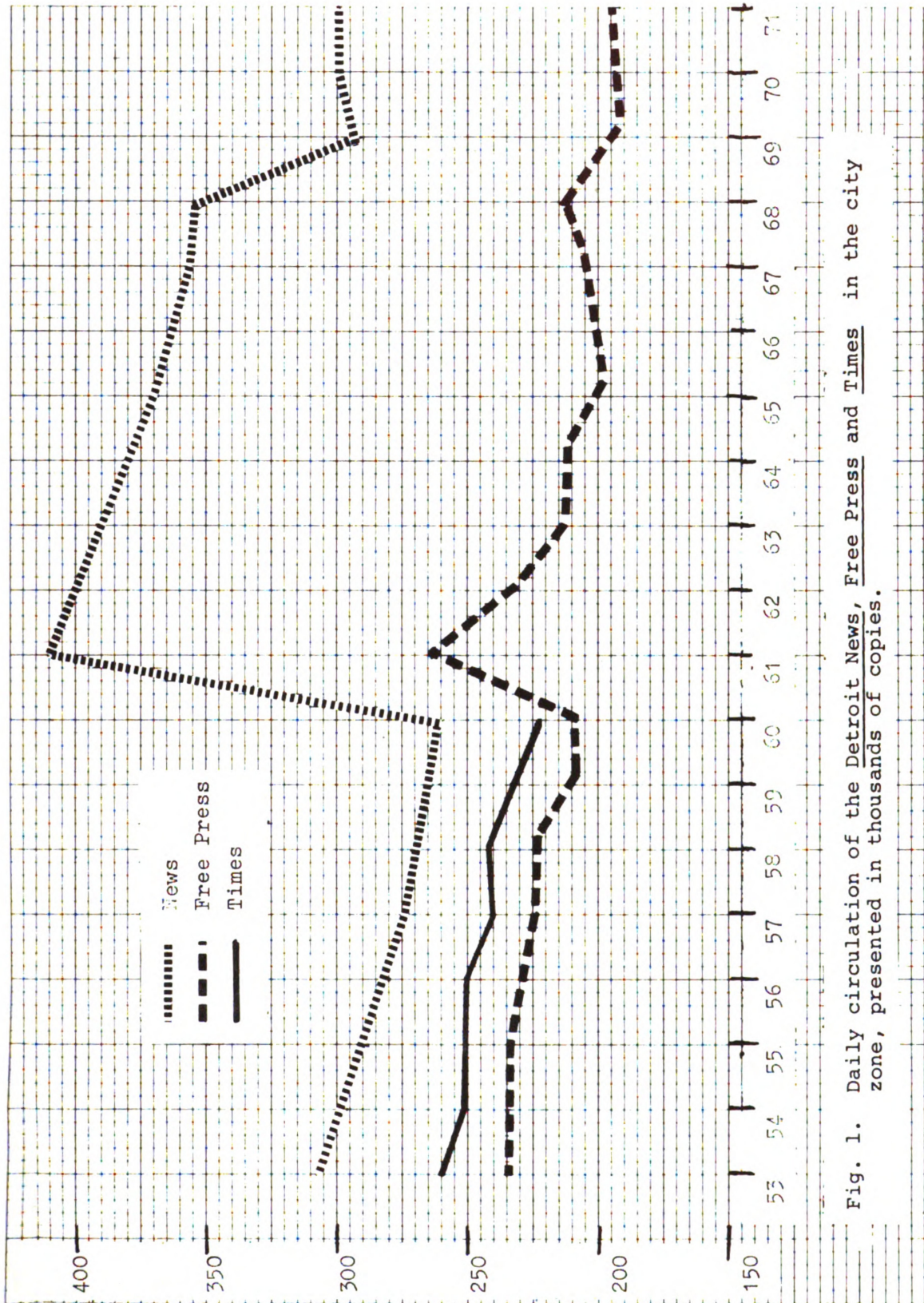


Fig. 1. Daily circulation of the Detroit News, Free Press and Times in the city zone, presented in thousands of copies.

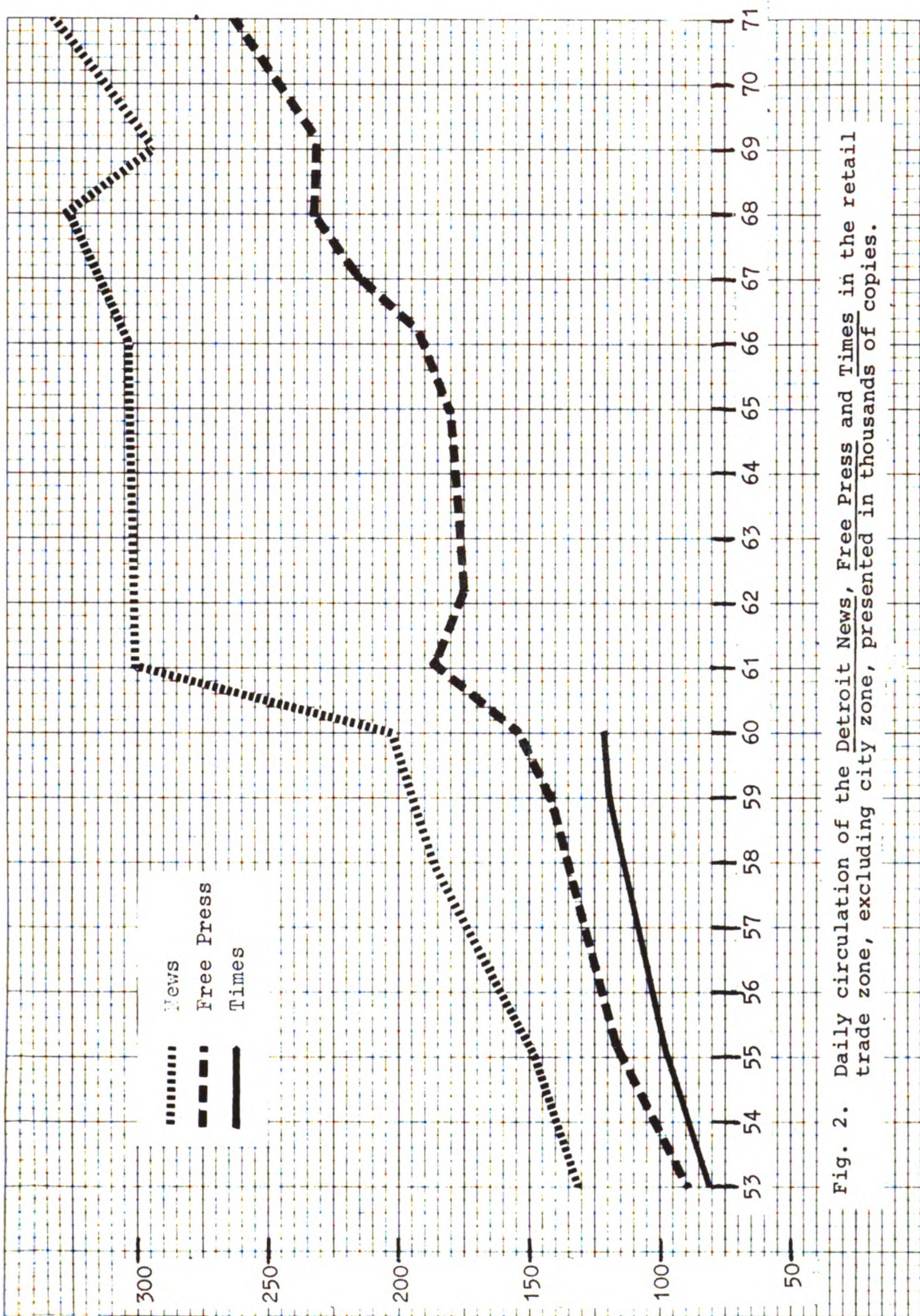


Fig. 2. Daily circulation of the Detroit News, Free Press and Times in the retail trade zone, excluding city zone, presented in thousands of copies.

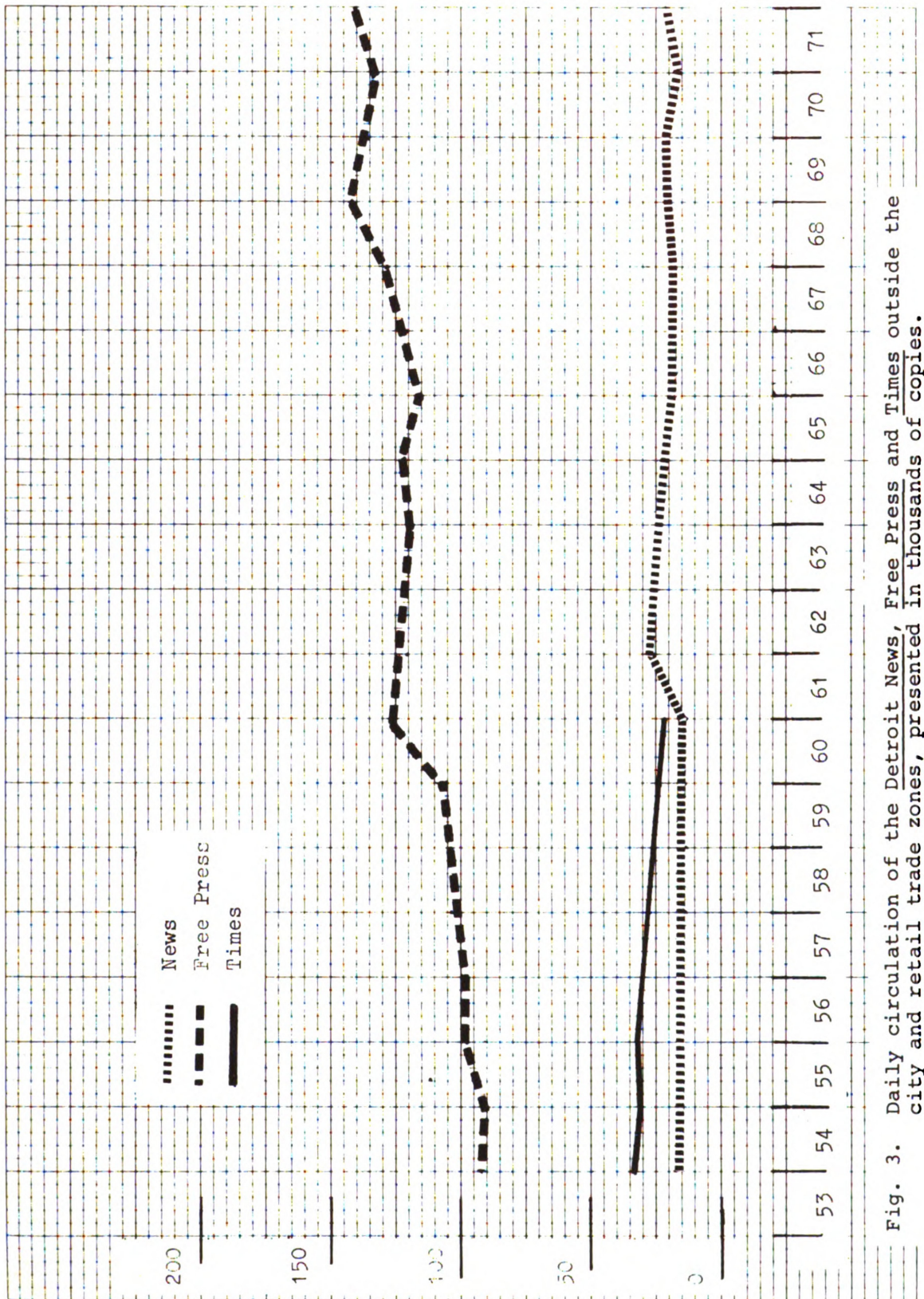


Fig. 3. Daily circulation of the Detroit News, Free Press and Times outside the city and retail trade zones, presented in thousands of copies.

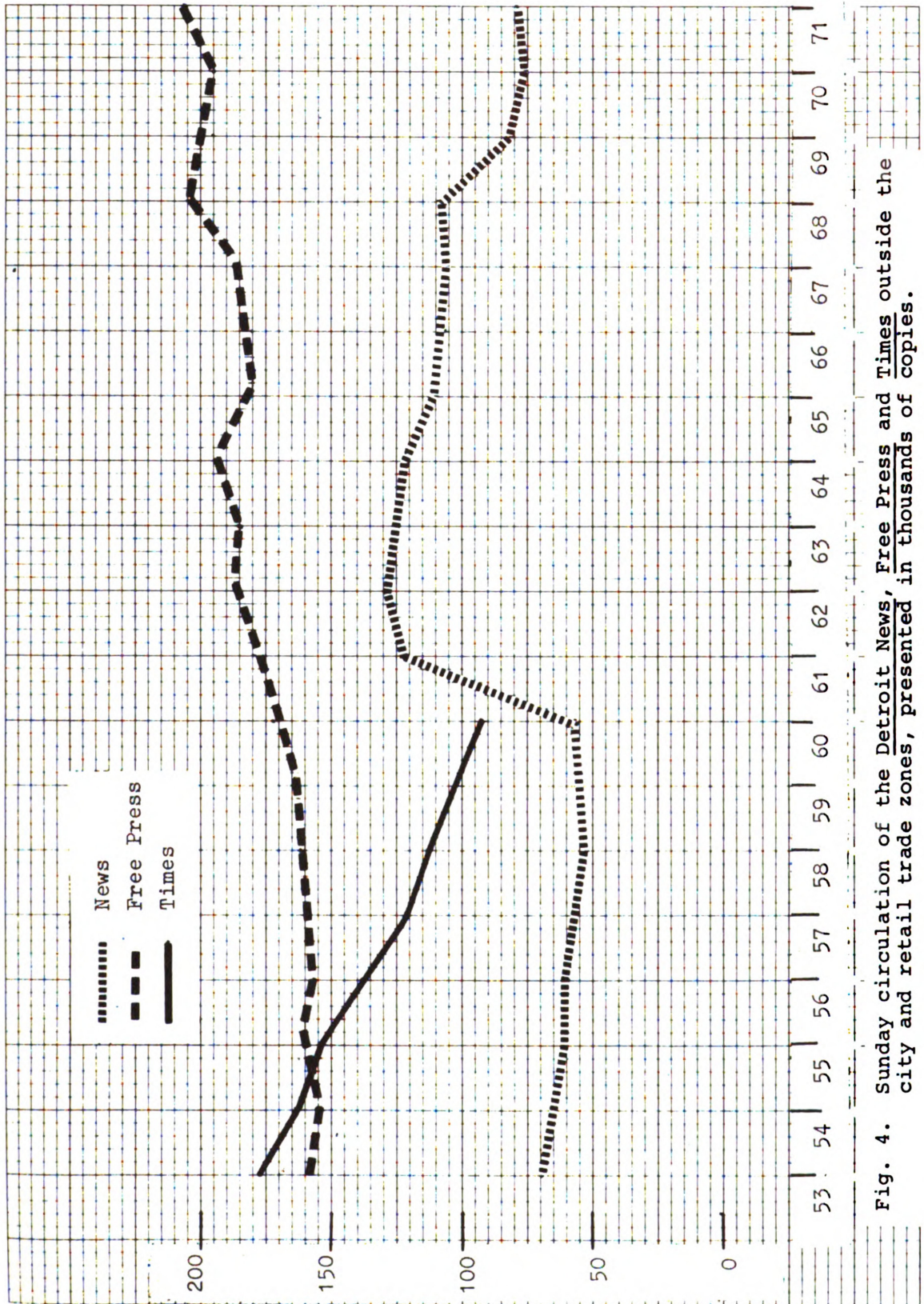
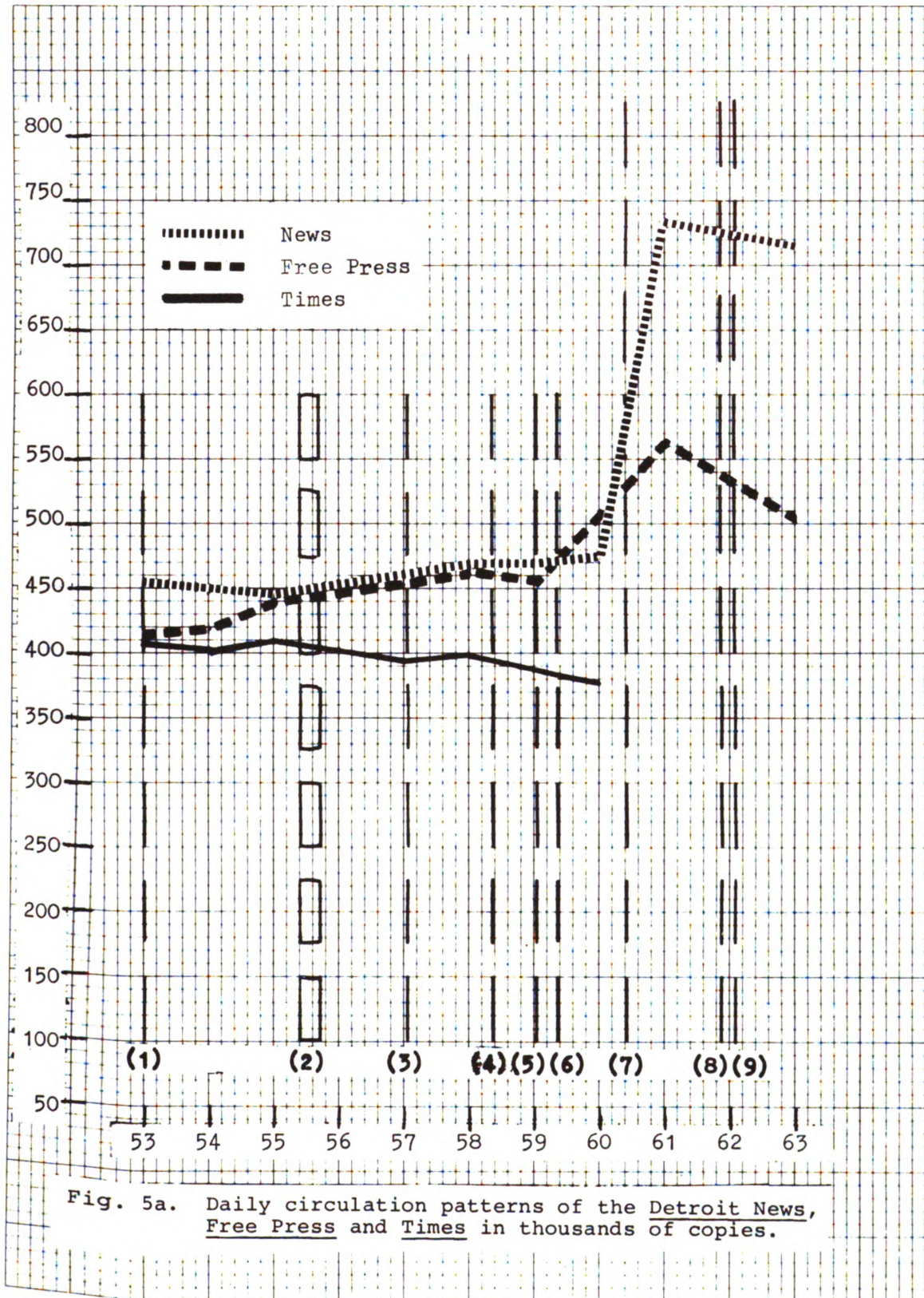
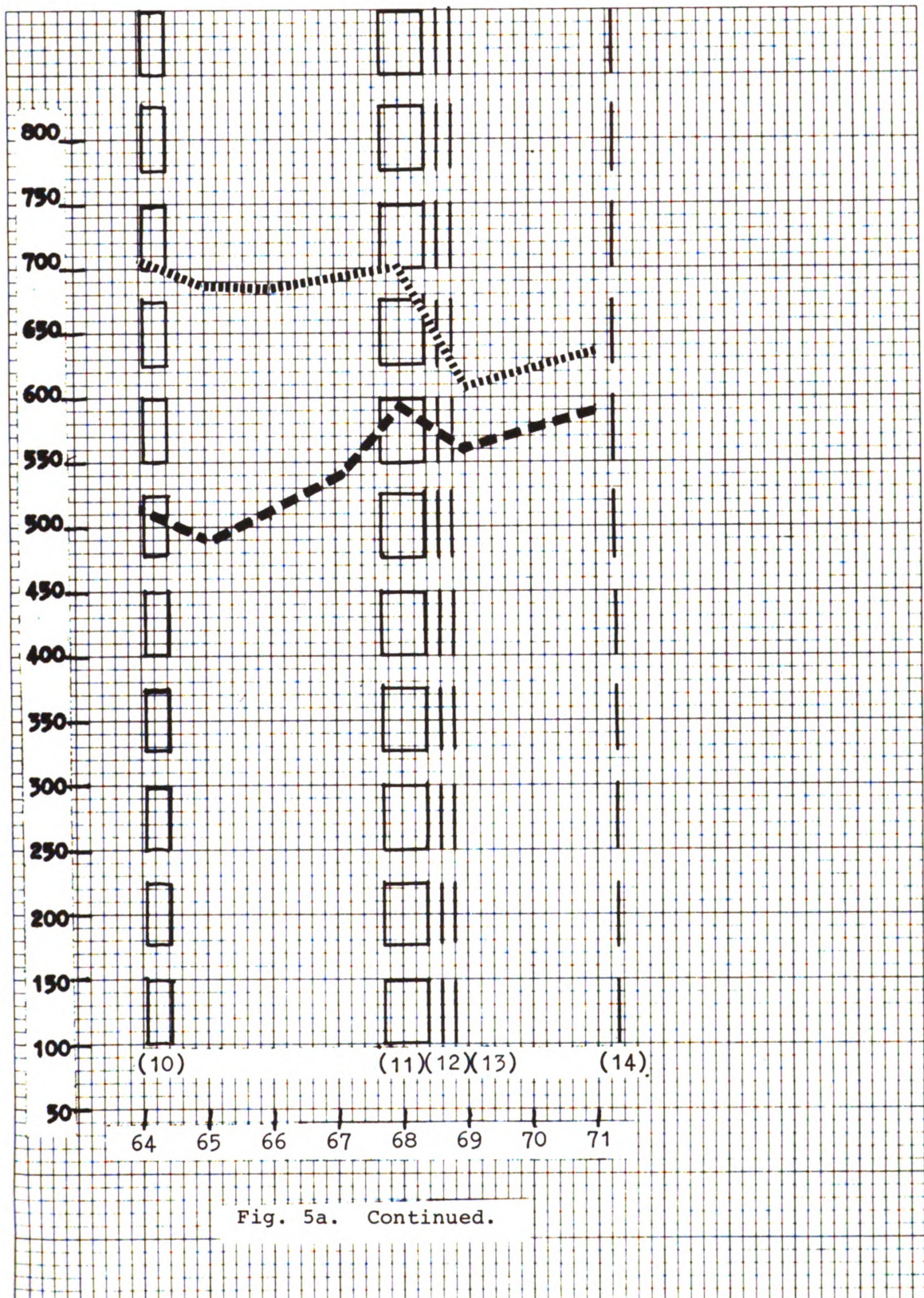
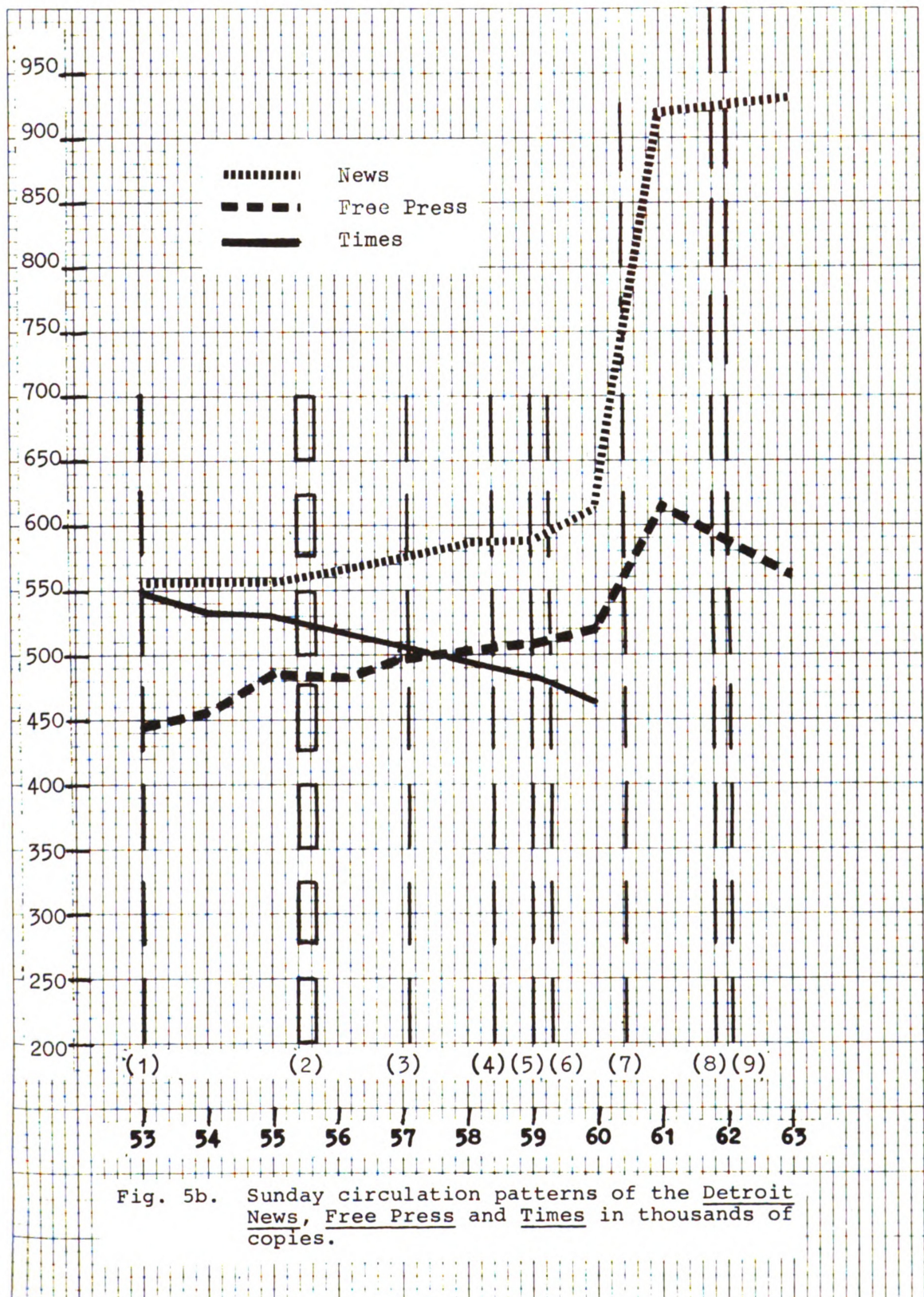
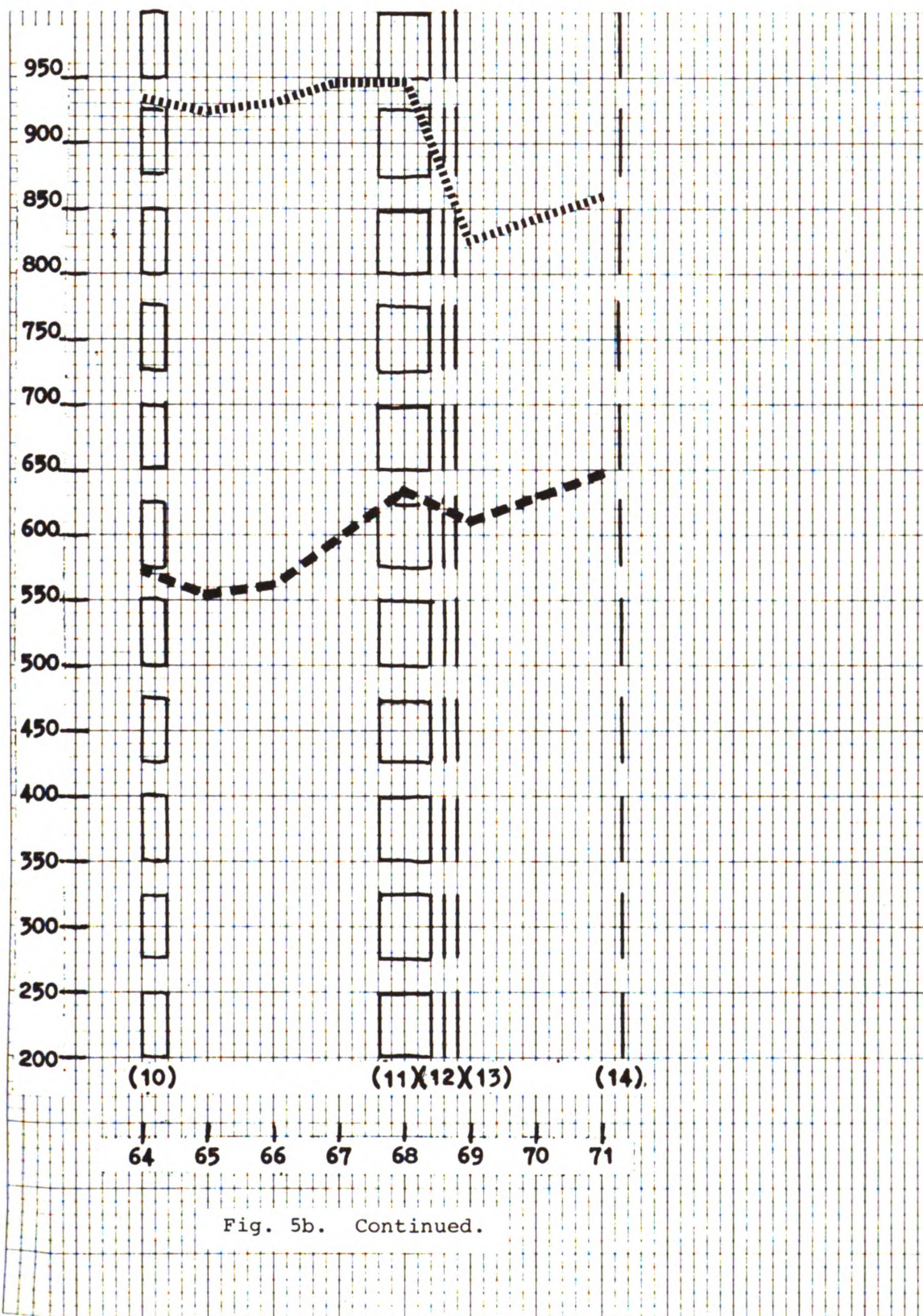


Fig. 4. Sunday circulation of the Detroit News, Free Press and Times outside the city and retail trade zones, presented in thousands of copies.









Footnotes to Fig. 5

¹Rates effective in 1953 were daily seven cents, Sunday twenty cents, weekly subscription forty cents plus twenty cents for the Sunday issue for a total of sixty cents.

²Strike from December 1, 1955, through January 15, 1956.

³Strike from August 17 through August 23, 1957.

⁴Work stoppage September 4, 5 and 6, 1958.

⁵Price increase effective June 1, 1959 to eight cents daily and twenty cents Sunday with the weekly price forty-five cents plus twenty cents for the Sunday paper for sixty-five cents.

⁶Work stoppage September 8, 9, 24, 25, and 26, 1959.

⁷Assets of the Detroit Times purchase November 7, 1960.

⁸Strike April 12, 13 and 14 and April 16 through May 10, 1962. Also work stoppages February 14, 1962, and September 25 and 26, 1962.

⁹Price increase effective May 20, 1963 to daily ten cents, Sunday twenty-five cents, weekly fifty cents plus twenty-five cents for the Sunday or seventy-five cents. Also a work stoppage October 22 and 23, 1963.

¹⁰Work stoppage April 1, 2 and 9, 1964. Also strike July 14 through November 24, 1964.

¹¹Strike November 16, 1967 through August 9, 1968.

¹²Price increase effective August 9, 1968, to daily ten cents, Sunday thirty cents, and weekly sixty cents plus thirty cents for the Sunday or ninety cents.

¹³Circulation not audited due to disagreement between the News and Audit Bureau of Circulations.

¹⁴Price increase effective July 18, 1971, raising only the Sunday price to forty cents for a total subscriber price of one dollar weekly.

Table 3. Detroit News and Detroit Free Press circulation by Michigan counties.

County	Free Press		News		Households
	Daily	Sunday	Daily	Sunday	
Alcona	318	584*	161	394	2,394
Alger	125	247	11	171	2,595
Allegan	592	1,224	---	258	19,494
Alpena	1,633	3,260*	247	1,679	8,771
Antrim	671	1,022*	130	628	3,928
Arenac	294	480	180	469	3,407
Baraga	62	210	---	---	2,372
Barry	738	1,311	7	231	11,480
Bay	3,526	6,021	271	2,009	34,571
Benzie	405	532	3	459	2,796
Berrien	912	1,753	5	457	50,758
Branch	1,708	3,417*	90	711	11,208
Calhoun	4,267	6,676	256	972	44,422
Cass	215	347	---	---	13,357
Charlevoix	1,068*	1,774*	76	471	5,002
Cheboygan	1,761*	2,683*	238	801	4,944
Chippewa	1,937*	3,461*	8	992	9,296
Clare	1,196*	1,692*	396	824	5,345
Clinton	1,424	2,417	44	419	13,605
Crawford	579*	843*	174	317	1,976
Delta	123	465	6	196	10,816
Eaton	1,541	2,229	58	300	19,878
Emmett	1,470*	2,346*	68	477	5,499
Genesee	19,967	23,088	1,349	6,095	129,747
Gladwin	583	1,015*	80	434	4,211
Grand Traverse	1,893	3,446*	13	1,321	11,429
Gratiot	1,967*	2,932*	171	458	11,332
Hillsdale	1,331	2,817*	114	1,225	11,408
Houghton	138	545	19	122	11,062

Table 3. Continued.

County	Free Press		News		House- holds
	Daily	Sunday	Daily	Sunday	
Huron	1,355	2,433	648	1,781	---
Ingham	14,366	15,363	1,101	2,502	77,042
Ionia	1,551*	2,064*	126	474	12,809
Iosco	1,665*	2,378*	935	1,527*	7,327
Isabella	2,775*	3,934*	545	1,141	11,990
Jackson	4,522	6,541	680	2,419	42,261
Kalamazoo	3,855	7,379	314	1,115	59,406
Kalkaska	179	227	6	301	1,745
Kent	9,843	6,169	140	588	123,826
Lake	121	200	2	98	1,981
Lapeer	1,881	3,387*	1,300	3,317*	13,835
Leelanau	257	623	6	311	3,326
Lenawee	4,264	7,205*	392	1,898	24,239
Livingston	4,272*	5,706*	3,099	5,632*	16,886
Luce	420*	598*	2	657*	1,746
Mackinac	833*	1,241*	5	812*	2,943
Macomb	52,024*	51,956*	91,653*	118,222*	171,578
Manistee	959	1,321*	7	337	6,471
Marquette	317	1,599	19	1,612	18,184
Mason	964	1,111	5	304	7,275
Mecosta	1,153	1,539	170	348	7,791
Midland	3,526*	7,328*	346	1,815	18,013
Missaukee	197	265	---	88	2,216
Monroe	4,077	6,727*	1,708	4,585	33,202
Montcalm	1,325	1,946	1	344	12,395
Montmorency	344	571*	218	445*	1,782
Muskegon	2,074	3,487	51	1,197	47,031
Newaygo	323	308	4	187	8,446
Oakland	88,057*	96,747*	87,972*	129,225*	264,566

Table 3. Continued.

County	Free Press		News		House-holds
	Daily	Sunday	Daily	Sunday	
Oceana	130	330	1	86	4,602
Ogemaw	545	940*	250	586	3,846
Osceola	514	570	73	354	4,602
Oscoda	217	319*	114	267	1,596
Otsego	1,081*	1,450*	256	497	3,025
Ottawa	2,024	2,212	8	386	35,934
Presque Isle	1,016*	1,574*	144	547	3,833
Roscommon	1,101*	1,589*	578	964*	3,587
Saginaw	6,836	10,056	523	2,968	63,143
St. Clair	6,681	8,761*	3,680	8,376*	36,416
St. Joseph	809	2,375	17	376	15,201
Sanilac	1,194	1,961	847	2,295*	10,551
Schoolcraft	221	365	3	295	2,565
Shiawassee	2,291	5,231*	220	1,961	18,581
Tuscola	1,380	2,451	522	1,705	13,709
Van Buren	508	1,430	1	371	17,262
Washtenaw	17,208*	24,969*	4,522	11,367	68,578
Wayne	277,861*	246,108*	436,226*	503,860*	830,441
Wexford	1,329*	1,795*	2	474	6,234
Canada					
Ontario	7,154	11,970	1,179	12,127	

*Reaches 20 per cent or more of the households in the county.

Source: Audit Bureau of Circulation, March 31, 1971, audit report.

CHAPTER II

A DEMOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE DETROIT NEWS MARKET AND THE RESPONSE PATTERN OF READERS

A systemic view of any newspaper must describe the people that the newspaper serves and the success of the publication in its competition with other media. This is particularly significant since the Detroit market is one of the few competitive newspaper markets remaining in the United States.

The city of Detroit lost more than 150,000 in population between 1960 and 1970. The 1970 count was 1,511,482, down from 1,670,144 in 1960 or a decline of 9.5 per cent.¹ The three-county area, the Detroit Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA), recorded a general increase in population. Wayne County, in which all of Detroit lies, recorded no significant population change--an increase of only 454 residents--with 2,666,751 residents in 1970. Wayne County is considered 98.2 per cent urbanized. Macomb

¹U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, 1970 Census of Population, Michigan: Advance Report of Final Population Counts, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971.

County, also in the SMSA and bordering the Detroit city limits, increased in population 54.1 per cent during the decade to 625,309 in 1970. Macomb County is 92.2 per cent urbanized. Oakland County is the third county in the SMSA and it increased population 31.5 per cent to 907,871 in 1970. It is 90.0 per cent urbanized (see Table 4).²

Table 4. Population by counties in the Detroit television area of dominant influence.

County	1970 Population	Per Cent of Change from 1960	Per Cent Urban
Lapeer	52,317	+24.8	12.0
Lenawee	81,609	+ 4.9	40.3
Livingston	58,967	+54.2	11.0
Macomb	625,309	+54.1	92.2
Monroe	118,479	+17.2	35.0
Oakland	907,871	+31.5	90.0
St. Clair	120,175	+12.1	46.0
Sanilac	34,889	+ 8.0	-0-
Washtenaw	234,103	+35.8	78.2
Wayne	2,666,751	-0-	98.2

Source: 1970 Census of Population, Advance Report, Michigan Final Population Counts, p. 3.

²Ibid., 1970 Census of Housing, Michigan: Advance Report of General Housing Characteristics, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971.

Negroes make up a large portion of the Detroit newspaper market. Population statistics present evidence that the black population as a percentage of the total declines as one moves into the suburbs surrounding Detroit.

Michigan has a total population of 8,875,083, of whom 11.2 per cent are black. The three-county area or Detroit SMSA has a total population of 4,199,931, of whom 18 per cent are black. Detroit has a population of 1,511,482, of whom 43.7 per cent are black. Detroit has 17 per cent of the population of the state and has 66.6 per cent of the black population.³

It is predicted that Detroit population will decline to 1,280,000 by 1979. The projection was made in late 1969 by the Michigan Department of Health, and the overall projections compare favorably with those of the 1970 census.

The population of Detroit began dropping and changing in the 1950s. During that decade, 23.5 per cent of the white population left the city while the black community increased by 60.4 per cent. Of the 1,670,144 residents, according to the 1960 census, 29 per cent were Negroes. This has climbed to 43.7 per cent with only 1,511,482 Detroit residents in 1970.

³Ibid., 1970 Census of Population, Michigan: Advance Report of General Population Characteristics, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971.

The Health Department had estimated the population of the city in 1968 at 1,570,000 with blacks making up 40.4 per cent of the total. In 1968, a total of 80,000 whites moved from the inner city to the suburbs. This was the sharpest decline in Detroit population in the decade and appears to be a result of the 1967 Detroit riots. During that year, despite the riots, 20,000 blacks moved into the city.

The population changes are due to immigration and emigration rather than birth rate. During 1968, the net natural increase of whites--the number of births exceeding deaths--was only 518. Without 944 illegitimate white births, the white population would have shown the first natural loss in nearly two centuries. The death rate is also increasing in the Negro community and the birth rate falling. There was an increase of 8,796 births over deaths in 1968 among the city's black residents. More than half the increase was accounted for by illegitimate births.

Blacks outnumbered whites among children up to age nine by about a 9-to-7 ratio. At the other end of the scale, whites aged sixty or more outnumbered blacks about 3-to-1. Negro adults made up 34 per cent of the city's voting age population of 1,033,000 persons in 1968. The projection of population trends by the Health Department in 1969 indicated that by 1972, the population of Detroit

would be equally divided between blacks and whites although white adults would hold a numerical advantage over blacks of voting age.⁴

The population shift awards the suburbs political power at the expense of the central city. Detroit districts--because of a loss of 177,000 in population--are expected to expand to include some of the suburbs. This would weaken the power of the Democratic congressional strongholds of the city. The predominately Republican districts of Oakland County, which gained more than 210,000 residents, and Democratic Macomb County, with a population increase of more than 213,000, will contract.⁵

Women dominate Michigan's population. This trend is reflected in Detroit where the SMSA has a total male population of 2,047,548 and a total female population of 2,152,383. The black population in the SMSA reflects a similar trend with 362,846 males and 394,237 females. In the city of Detroit there are 723,868 males and 787,614 females with 316,170 Negro males and 344,258 Negro females.

The number of households strongly impacts the newspaper market. In the Detroit SMSA there are 1,266,585

⁴"Detroit's big 'D' is getting smaller," Detroit News, Oct. 1, 1969.

⁵"City's census loss is suburbs' political gain," Detroit News, Aug. 10, 1970.

households and in the city of Detroit there are 497,753 households.

Living conditions in Detroit would appear to be somewhat better than those of the state as a whole. There are an average of 3.3 people per occupied unit statewide, 3.3 in the Detroit SMSA, but the figure drops to 3.0 in the city of Detroit. Statewide there are 3.5 people per owner occupied unit and 2.7 people per renter occupied unit. In the Detroit SMSA there are 3.6 people per owner occupied unit and 2.5 per rented unit, while in the city of Detroit there are only 3.3 people per owner occupied unit and 2.5 per rented unit. There are 1,322,200 housing units in the Detroit SMSA, and 529,185 in the city of Detroit.

There is a tendency for blacks to be renters, not home owners and this tendency is statewide. While 11.2 per cent of the state population is black, 7.5 per cent of homeowners are black and 19 per cent of renters are black. The Detroit SMSA has an 18 per cent black population with 12.5 per cent of the homeowners black and 29.3 per cent of the renters black. Detroit has a 43.7 per cent black population with 33 per cent of the home owners black and 47.4 per cent of the renters black.

City of Detroit living units are smaller than those of the state and SMSA average, but there are fewer persons living in the average living unit. The median

number of rooms per living unit for the state as a whole is 5.2 and the same figure holds for the Detroit SMSA, but falls to 5.1 for Detroit. Statewide, the median number of persons per housing unit is 2.9, and this figure also holds for the Detroit SMSA, but in the city of Detroit this falls to 2.4 persons.

The statewide trend is for blacks to live in more cramped quarters than the population average, but in Detroit the average number of persons per room, both black and total population, decline. Statewide, 7.8 per cent of all persons live in occupied units with 1.01 or more persons per room. The average for blacks is 12.3 per cent. In the Detroit SMSA these figures are 7.8 and 11.8 per cent respectively, and in Detroit they fall to 7.6 and 11.2 per cent.

The average Detroit rent appears to be a bargain when measured against the state average. The median rent for the state is \$95 per month, declining to \$94 for the SMSA and to \$80 for Detroit. The median value of owner occupied property statewide is \$17,500, jumping to \$19,600 in the SMSA, but falling to \$15,600 in the city of Detroit.⁶

Residents of the Detroit Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area appear to have more disposable income than the average for Michigan. The Detroit SMSA has a

⁶1970 Census of Housing.

Table 5. Household income breakdowns.

Income Categories	Detroit		State	
	house- hold income*	% age of total**	house- hold income*	% age of total**
\$0 - \$2,999	9.2	1.1	13.0	1.8
\$3,000 - \$4,999	7.6	2.7	9.3	3.6
\$5,000 - \$7,999	18.7	10.8	20.9	13.6
\$8,000 - \$9,999	17.7	13.5	17.5	15.1
\$10,000 - \$14,999	27.8	28.5	24.5	28.3
\$15,000 - \$24,999	14.4	23.3	11.3	20.5
\$25,000 and above	4.6	20.1	3.5	17.1

*This category includes the number of households that fall into a particular income category.

**This category is the percentage of income that the income category contributes to the total state income.

Source: "1971 Survey of Buying Power," Sales Management, July 10, 1971, p. C54.

per capita income of \$3,785 and an average household income of \$12,498. This compares with a per capita income of \$3,369 and a household income of \$11,238 for the state. The number of households with income below \$8,000 is below the state average, while the number above that income is greater than the state average (see Table 5).

Of Detroit households, 31.3 per cent receive an income in excess of \$10,000 a year. The average Detroit family income is \$11,007, which is lower than the state

average of \$11,238. The difference is balanced in the wealthy suburbs. The Wayne County average is \$11,895, Macomb average is \$12,075, and the Oakland County average jumps to \$14,672.

Of the seven counties that lie outside the SMSA but within the Area of Dominant Influence (ADI), Washtenaw (containing Ann Arbor, population 99,797) is the largest with 234,103 population of which 17,822 are black. St. Clair County is second with 120,175 population, Monroe County 118,479, Lenawee County 81,609, Livingston County 58,967, Lapeer County 52,317, and Sanilac County with 34,889 population. The black population is negligible in these last counties, between 2,703 for St. Clair to fourteen for Sanilac.⁷

The most recent Detroit newspaper readership data available was compiled in 1969.⁸ Three figures could be compared with 1970 census data. The SMSA population estimate was 1.2 per cent high, the Detroit population was 3.8 per cent high and the estimate of total potential readers was 5.74 per cent low. This level of error, if kept in mind, should not damage the usefulness of the data. It was statistically estimated that the original

⁷1970 Census, Population Characteristics.

⁸Market Detroit: A Profile of Metropolitan Detroit and Its Newspapers, Detroit: Detroit News, c1969.

Table 6. Detroit metropolitan newspaper audience.

	Total Adult Readers*			
	Weekday		Sunday	
	Total No.	%	Total No.	%
Metropolitan Detroit	2,519,500	100.0	2,519,500	100.0
Metropolitan Detroit Newspaper	2,141,900	85.0	2,104,500	83.5
Detroit News	1,426,800	56.6	1,608,500	63.8
Detroit Free Press	907,200	36.0	902,600	35.8
News/Non-Free Press	1,036,200	41.1	1,198,300	47.6
Free Press/Non-News	516,600	20.5	492,400	19.5
News and Free Press	390,600	15.5	410,200	16.3
Macomb Daily	133,500	5.3	--	--
Pontiac Press	166,300	6.6	--	--
Royal Oak Tribune	123,500	4.9	--	--
Other Newspaper	90,700	3.6	41,100	1.6
Metropolitan Detroit Non-Newspaper Reader	377,600	15.0	415,000	16.5

*Totals may be plus or minus 100 due to rounding.

Source: Market Detroit: A Profile of Metropolitan Detroit and Its Newspapers, Detroit: Detroit News, c1969.

data had a 95 per cent probability of being within 97.8 per cent accurate.

The survey found that 15 per cent of Detroit SMSA adults (eighteen years of age or above) are not newspaper

readers. The 85 per cent remaining are divided between five newspapers although the following percentages, which apply to weekday circulation, will not add to 85 per cent because of overlapping circulation: Detroit News 56.6 per cent; Detroit Free Press 36 per cent; Macomb Daily 5.3 per cent; Pontiac Press 6.6 per cent; and Royal Oak Tribune 4.9 per cent. Other newspapers are taken by 3.6 per cent (see Table 6).

Age was shown to set no necessary readership pattern with the average in all categories fluctuating around 56 per cent for the total News readers, 36 per cent for total Free Press readers, and 41 per cent for exclusive News readers and 21 per cent for exclusive Free Press readers.

Education did influence readership. Readership of the News climbed from 47 per cent for those with grade school or less education to 69.5 per cent for those with advanced college degrees. An increase from 24 to 51 per cent was experienced for the Free Press. Exclusive readership held constant at about 40 per cent for the News and 21 per cent for the Free Press. The statistics suggest that the exclusive-reader category decreases with increased education accounting for the tendency for educated readers to take both papers.

The News is somewhat more popular with whites than with blacks, 58.4 per cent to 50.4 per cent, but the Free

Table 7. Weekday adult readers by household size, dwelling type, tenure.

		Total News Readers	Total Free Press Readers	Exclusive News Readers	Exclusive Free Press Readers	Detroit Market Profile
		Total Adults	% Adults	Total Adults	% Adults	Total Adults
		Total Adults	% Adults	Total Adults	% Adults	Total Adults
HOUSEHOLD SIZE						
Members:						
1 or 2	341,000	55.1	212,700	34.4	264,800	42.8
3 or 4	544,800	56.7	330,200	34.4	402,100	41.8
5 or more	541,100	57.6	364,300	38.8	369,300	39.3
DWELLING TYPE						
Unit:						
Single	1,138,300	58.6	714,900	36.8	808,100	41.6
Multiple	288,500	50.0	192,700	33.4	227,900	39.5
TENURE						
Occupied:						
Owner	1,182,200	58.1	747,400	36.7	843,700	41.5
Renter	235,000	50.7	154,900	33.4	185,300	40.0

Source: Market Detroit: A Profile of Metropolitan Detroit and Its Newspapers, Detroit: Detroit News, cl969.

Table 8. Weekday adult readers by age, education and race.

	Total News Readers		Total Free Press Readers	
	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%
<u>AGE</u>				
Under 25	124,600	51.0	89,500	36.6
25-29	161,000	52.8	88,400	29.0
30-34	167,100	54.5	113,800	37.2
35-39	204,800	60.8	140,400	41.7
40-49	353,400	61.6	215,300	37.5
50-64	266,000	55.7	172,900	36.2
65 or Older	142,700	54.7	79,700	30.5
21 or Older	1,371,300	56.4	874,600	36.0
<u>EDUCATION</u>				
Grade School or Less	240,500	45.9	127,300	24.3
Some High School	280,700	50.3	176,700	31.7
Graduated High School	505,100	60.2	318,000	37.9
Some College	217,800	62.9	149,900	43.3
College Graduate	83,500	64.5	64,100	49.5
*Beyond College	71,200	69.4	53,100	51.7
<u>RACE</u>				
White	1,138,800	58.4	699,100	35.9
Non-White	288,100	50.4	208,000	36.4

*Outside Confidence Limits

Source: Market Detroit: A Profile of Metropolitan Detroit and Its Newspapers, Detroit: Detroit News, c 1969.

Exclusive News Readers		Exclusive Free Press Readers		Detroit Market Profile	
Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%
90,800	37.2	55,700	22.8	244,500	9.7
126,000	41.3	53,300	17.5	305,100	12.1
129,600	42.3	76,300	24.9	306,400	12.2
134,600	40.0	70,200	20.8	336,800	13.4
240,900	42.0	102,800	17.9	573,600	22.8
199,600	41.8	106,400	22.3	477,600	19.0
111,200	42.6	48,300	18.5	261,000	10.4
998,700	41.1	502,100	20.7	2,431,200	96.5
208,600	39.8	95,400	18.2	524,100	20.8
210,500	37.7	106,500	19.1	557,900	22.1
367,500	43.8	180,400	21.5	839,000	33.3
145,300	42.0	77,400	22.4	346,000	13.7
48,400	37.4	29,000	22.4	129,500	5.1
41,100	40.0	22,900	22.3	102,600	4.1
808,700	41.5	369,100	19.0	1,948,400	77.3
227,600	39.8	147,500	25.8	571,100	22.7

Table 9. Weekday adult readers by sex and marital status.

	Total News Readers		Total Free Press Readers	
	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%
SEX, MARITAL STATUS				
<u>Male</u>	689,800	56.0	485,200	39.4
Married	597,100	55.7	409,300	38.2
*Unmarried	92,700	57.9	75,800	47.4
<u>Female</u>	737,000	57.2	422,000	32.8
Married	598,400	57.7	352,700	34.0
*Unmarried	138,600	55.1	69,300	27.5

*Includes Single, Divorced or Separated, Widowed.

Source: Market Detroit: A Profile of Metropolitan Detroit and Its Newspapers, Detroit: Detroit News, c1969.

Table 10. Weekday adult readers by length of residence.

Length of Residence	Total News Readers		Total Free Press Readers	
	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%
Less than 1 year	150,100	53.2	97,900	34.7
1-5 Years	446,700	57.9	274,700	35.6
More than 5 Years	830,100	56.5	534,600	36.4

Source: Market Detroit: A Profile of Metropolitan Detroit and Its Newspapers, Detroit: Detroit News, c1969.

Exclusive News Readers		Exclusive Free Press Readers		Detroit Market Profile	
Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%

471,900	38.3	267,300	21.7	1,231,600	48.9
420,200	39.2	232,400	21.7	1,071,500	42.5
51,800	32.3	34,900	21.8	160,100	6.4
564,300	43.8	249,300	19.4	1,287,900	51.1
447,500	43.2	201,900	19.5	1,036,200	41.1
116,800	46.4	47,400	18.8	251,700	10.0

Exclusive News Readers		Exclusive Free Press Readers		Detroit Market Profile	
Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%
117,500	41.6	65,300	23.1	282,200	11.2
319,600	41.5	147,700	19.2	771,000	30.6
599,100	40.8	303,600	20.7	1,466,400	58.2

Table 11. Weekday adult readers by household income.

Household Income	Total News Readers		Total Free Press Readers		Exclusive News Readers		Exclusive Free Press Readers		Detroit Market Profile	
	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%
Under \$3,000	67,900	47.9	38,000	26.5	57,000	40.2	26,600	18.8	141,600	5.6
\$3,000-4,999	136,900	54.9	82,100	32.9	106,500	42.7	51,600	20.7	249,400	9.9
\$5,000-7,999	178,700	59.1	94,600	31.3	138,500	45.8	54,700	18.1	302,300	12.0
\$8,000-9,999	220,000	56.7	138,500	35.7	163,000	42.0	81,500	21.0	388,000	15.4
\$10,000-12,499	158,200	54.6	108,400	37.4	115,300	39.8	65,200	22.5	289,700	11.5
\$12,500-14,999	178,100	63.7	106,600	38.1	123,600	44.2	52,000	18.6	279,700	11.1
\$15,000-19,999	118,300	62.6	76,300	40.4	82,000	43.4	40,100	21.2	189,000	7.5
*\$20,000-24,999	38,200	69.0	24,300	43.6	22,900	41.4	8,900	16.1	55,400	2.2
*\$25,000 or More	17,900	64.6	17,500	63.0	8,100	29.3	7,700	27.7	27,700	1.1
\$15,000 or More	175,800	64.6	123,500	45.4	109,700	40.3	57,700	21.2	272,100	10.8
\$10,000 or More	512,500	60.9	343,300	40.8	345,900	41.1	175,900	20.9	841,500	33.4

*Outside Confidence Limits.

Source: Market Detroit: A Profile of Metropolitan Detroit and Its Newspapers, Detroit: Detroit News, c1969.

Table 12. Weekday adult readers by home value or monthly rent.

	Total News Readers		Total Free Press Readers		Exclusive News Readers		Exclusive Free Press Readers		Detroit Market Profile	
	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%
<u>HOME VALUE</u>										
*Under \$10,000	46,000	50.0	29,000	31.6	35,100	38.2	18,100	19.7	91,900	4.5
*\$10,000-12,499	43,600	47.4	32,700	35.5	35,100	38.2	24,200	26.3	91,900	4.5
\$12,500-14,999	104,000	50.3	71,300	34.5	78,600	38.0	45,900	22.2	206,800	10.2
\$15,000-19,999	297,600	57.5	182,600	35.3	221,400	42.8	106,500	20.6	517,800	25.4
\$20,000-24,999	193,700	56.7	140,300	41.1	128,400	37.6	75,000	22.0	341,300	16.8
\$25,000-34,999	246,800	61.6	163,300	40.8	158,600	39.6	75,000	18.7	400,600	19.7
\$35,000 or More	161,100	71.9	83,500	37.3	112,700	50.3	35,100	15.7	224,100	11.0
<u>MONTHLY RENT</u>										
Under \$75	82,400	51.1	44,800	27.8	66,700	41.4	29,000	18.0	161,100	34.8
\$75-99	64,200	50.0	43,500	33.9	50,800	39.7	30,200	23.6	128,200	27.7
\$100-149	46,000	44.2	35,100	33.7	36,300	34.9	25,400	24.4	104,100	22.4
\$150-199	16,900	49.9	14,600	43.0	14,500	42.8	12,100	35.8	33,900	7.3
*\$200 or More	12,100	66.7	10,900	60.0	6,100	33.4	4,800	26.6	18,200	3.9

*Outside Confidence Limits.

Source: Market Detroit: A Profile of Metropolitan Detroit and Its Newspapers, Detroit: Detroit News, c1969.

Press has approximately the same popularity with both, 35.9 for whites and 36.4 for blacks (see Table 8).

The Free Press appears to be relatively more popular with males than females although the News remains the dominant newspaper. Of males, 56 per cent read the News while 57.2 per cent of the females read the News. Of males, 39.4 per cent read the Free Press while 32.8 per cent of females read the Free Press. The exclusive News readers are about 5 per cent higher among women than among men and the exclusive Free Press readers are about 2 per cent higher among men than women (see Table 9).

Total readership for the News climbs from 48 per cent in households with \$3,000 or less income to almost 70 per cent in households with more than \$20,000 a year income. The Free Press makes a comparable climb from 26.5 per cent to 44 per cent. The exclusive News readers remain at about 41 per cent through all categories of income and the Free Press remains at about 21 per cent. It is likely this is explained by the correlation between education and income and education and readership (see Table 11).

Dwelling type and ownership impact readership of both newspapers. Of people who live in single unit dwellings, 58.6 per cent take the News and 36.8 take the Free Press, while of those in multiple units, only 50.0 per cent take the News and 33.4 per cent take the Free Press.

In owner-occupied dwellings, 58.1 per cent take the News and 36.7 per cent take the Free Press. In renter-occupied units this figure changes to 50.7 and 40.0 (see Table 12).

Home value and rent can be expected to correlate closely with income and accordingly with education. Income and education have been shown to correlate with increased readership, and, as expected, home value and rent do likewise. For adults residing in homes of under \$10,000 value, 50 per cent read the News and 31.6 per cent the Free Press. For those living in homes valued at between \$25,000 and \$35,000, readership of the News climbs to 61.6 per cent and 40.8 per cent for the Free Press. While it is not possible to say that it is necessarily statistically significant, of those residing in homes valued at more than \$35,000, readership of the News climbs further to 72 per cent, but that of the Free Press falls to almost 37 per cent. Readership of the News by those living in rental units costing \$75 or less a month is approximately 50 per cent, climbing to 66.7 per cent for those paying \$200 or more. Comparable Free Press readership climbs from 27.8 per cent to 60 per cent. The increase of readership by home owners and renters appears to be due to a decline in non-newspaper readers because the percentage of overlapping circulation remains relatively constant; there is no apparent tendency to shift away from one newspaper in preference for the other between categories (see Table 12).

Table 13. Weekday adult readers by occupation of household head.

Occupation	Total News Readers		Total Free Press Readers		Exclusive News Readers		Exclusive Free Press Readers		Detroit Market Profile	
	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%
<u>EMPLOYED</u>	1,199,200	58.4	765,900	37.3	852,200	41.5	416,800	20.3	2,053,400	81.5
Professional, Technical	183,600	62.3	127,900	43.4	123,200	41.8	67,800	23.0	294,800	11.7
Manager, Official, Non-Farm Proprietor	155,200	59.8	106,700	41.1	103,000	39.7	54,500	21.0	259,500	10.3
Clerical, Sales	157,400	64.4	117,300	48.0	100,400	41.1	60,600	24.8	244,400	9.7
Foremen and Skilled Craftsmen	406,800	59.8	231,300	34.0	293,200	43.1	117,700	17.3	680,300	27.0
Semi-skilled, Operatives and Laborers	287,500	52.1	166,100	30.1	231,700	42.0	110,400	20.0	551,800	21.9
<u>NOT EMPLOYED</u>	220,000	47.2	138,900	29.8	179,900	38.6	98,800	21.2	466,100	18.5

Source: Market Detroit: A Profile of Metropolitan Detroit and Its Newspapers, Detroit: Detroit News, cl969.

Table 14. Weekday adult female readers by age of housewives.

Age of Housewives	Total News Readers		Total Free Press Readers		Exclusive News Readers		Exclusive Free Press Readers		Detroit Market Profile	
	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%	Total Adults	%
Under 25	28,000	41.7	17,900	26.5	25,200	37.5	15,000	22.3	67,200	6.8
25-29	51,200	52.4	29,800	30.5	39,100	40.0	17,700	18.1	97,800	9.9
30-34	59,500	53.8	36,300	32.8	45,600	41.2	22,300	20.2	110,600	11.2
35-39	75,500	65.9	38,200	33.3	56,800	49.6	19,600	17.1	114,600	11.6
40-49	104,200	64.7	51,200	31.8	75,400	46.8	22,400	13.9	161,000	16.3
50-64	64,200	57.5	34,400	30.8	53,900	48.3	24,200	21.7	111,600	11.3
65 or Older	39,900	65.2	18,600	30.3	30,600	50.0	9,300	15.2	61,200	6.2

Source: Market Detroit: A Profile of Metropolitan Detroit and Its Newspapers,
 Detroit: Detroit News, c1969.

Readership by type of employment does not show any unexpected preferences between newspapers, but demonstrates which groups choose to read. Of those persons employed, an average of 58.4 per cent read the News and 37.3 per cent read the Free Press. The tendency is for people employed in clerical and sales work to have the highest readership with 64.4 for the News and 48.0 for the Free Press and the semi-skilled operative and laborers to have the lowest readership with 52.1 for the News and 30.1 for the Free Press (see Table 13).

The only group in which the percentage growth of News readership between categories obviously outstripped that of the Free Press was with housewives compared by age categories. The older the housewife, the stronger the tendency to be an exclusive News reader. For those under twenty-five years, 41.7 read the News and 26.5 read the Free Press. At age 35-39, almost 66 per cent read the News and 33.3 per cent read the Free Press. This was the high point in total readership for both papers. By age sixty-five and older, 65.2 per cent read the News and 30.3 per cent the Free Press. Exclusive News readers climbed from 37.5 per cent at age twenty-five years or under to 50.0 per cent at age sixty five or older. The exclusive Free Press readership tended to slump from its high of 22.3 per cent with the twenty-five years or younger housewife irregularly down to 15.2 per cent for the housewife sixty-five years and older (see Table 14).

CHAPTER III

A QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE COMPARISON OF THE CONTENT OF THE NEWS AND THE FREE PRESS

In making a quantitative comparison of the editorial and advertising content of the Detroit News and the Free Press, the most noticeable difference in the two papers is size. The News appears to consistently carry more than twice the advertising lineage of the Free Press. The newshole of the News appears to be consistent at about 30 per cent greater than that of the Free Press. The zoned newshole of the News is 250 per cent greater than that of the Free Press on the average. These averages are interpolated from the seven day lineage reports for the weeks of August, 1971.

Detailed analysis was made of the seven issues of the News and comparable issues of the Free Press. The zoned edition for Detroit proper, Metro Detroit, was used for the News and the Metro edition was used for the Free Press. The issues were selected, one for each day of the week, randomly through the month of August. The issues were Sunday, August 8; Monday, August 30; Tuesday, August

3; Wednesday, August 18; Thursday, August 19; Friday, August 6; and Saturday, August 21. The supplements and magazine inserts that were found in the Sunday editions of both newspapers were computed into standard columns and column-inches of advertising and news space.

Free Press advertising averaged 43 per cent of that in the News. For the sample week, 37 per cent of the space in the News was editorial news and opinion. The Free Press was almost exactly 50 per cent editorial for the sample week.

The content analysis shows that while there are fewer news stories in the Free Press than in the News, the number is proportional to the amount of space in each paper. The analysis was organized to determine whether there was a tendency for one publication to run longer stories than the other. Average length was selected as an index of the propensity of a newspaper toward depth and interpretative news stories which are usually longer than average. In all cases considering general wire and general local, the story lengths were approximately similar--any differences could not be called significant. The Free Press ran about one-third less stories in each category, however, than did the News. The Free Press ran about one-third fewer wire photographs than did the News, but both newspapers ran their pictures about the same size. Both the Free Press and the News have similar

habits with regard to tying wire pictures and wire stories together. Similar characteristics existed for handling and sizing of local photography as existed for wire photography.

Considering the space differential, the Free Press appeared to be somewhat more liberal in its use of portrait photographs and other miscellaneous art including small local cartoons and story signatures.

The organizational characteristics of the editorial pages are similar regarding the number and size of editorials, cartoons, columns, and letters-to-the-editor. While the News plays its ombudsman column, Contact 10, on the first page of the second section, it devotes almost twice the space to what the Free Press gives its comparable but page-one Action Line column. Contact 10 was displayed in an average seventy-two inches while Action Line play averaged forty-three inches.

Both papers devote about equal space to radio-tv logs (not including the Sunday News, TV Magazine) and to weather. The Free Press allocates about 25 per cent more space to markets than does the News. The Free Press does not publish a news-in-brief/index column to which the News devotes thirty-three inches daily.

From a quantitative perspective, the women's pages of both papers appear to be similar. Local and wire or syndicated material are run about the same length, although

there are fewer stories in the Free Press, reflecting the relative shortage of space. The News made greater use of local photography in its women's section, and the local pictures were run somewhat larger. The use of wire or syndicated photography in the women's sections was too sporadic to make a reliable statement.

The News runs a weekly Kitchen Talk section on Wednesday. This section contributes to the high ratio of advertising on that day. The Kitchen Talk of the sample issue was found to be uncommonly small--a casualty of the sample approach to analysis. The September 29 issue appeared to be typical. The August 18 issue had only fourteen pages, while the September issue contained twenty eight. Only 20 per cent of the space in both were editorial material. The bulk of the editorial material was recipes and consumer hints. Most of the advertisements were purchased by food stores.

The number of women's and sports columns were about equal for the News and the Free Press, although columns in the Free Press tended to be shorter than those in the News.

News sports tended to run more wire stories than the Free Press but to run them about one-third shorter. There were about 100 per cent more local sports stories in the News than in the Free Press and the local stories ran about one-fourth longer in the News. It would appear

that the Free Press sports page is more inclined to use wire service copy to cover out of town games while the News tends to cover than with its sports staff.

The emphasis on locally shot sports pictures in the News was obvious. The use of wire sports photography in the News was especially heavy in the Saturday and Sunday editions when the big crush of sports events occur. Local pictures were used all seven days by the News but only two days by the Free Press. There was a strong tendency on the part of both papers to tie their pictures to stories.

The Free Press runs twice the number of miscellaneous features that the News runs, but the News tends to run them somewhat longer. The main feature diet for the Free Press is the syndicated column while the News makes heavy use of children's features, bridge columns, and such that would appear to appeal to a broader spectrum of reader interests.

Both papers make modest use of the picture series, both averaging more than one of these series an issue.

There appeared to be a consistent trend for the Free Press to have more stories on page one than the News carried. The average for the News was a little more than five stories; commonly only four stories ran page one. The Free Press consistently ran seven stories including its ombudsman column, Action Line. The Free Press ran an

average of two-page one pictures daily to the one page one picture daily for the News. The differences in page-one make-up is probably influenced by the front page of the News having five 16.6 pica "legs" or columns as compared with the eight 11.5 pica (standard) columns of the Free Press. The differing formats would be a major factor in shaping the use of illustrations.

During the sample period, the Free Press serialized a popular book. The News does not serialize although it will occasionally condense a best-selling book.

The pattern of space devoted to editorial and advertising can be seen on the daily lineage reports (Table 17). On Sunday, the News editorial department was given almost 10,000 column-inches which was one-third of the entire paper. On Monday, the News editorial space varied considerably with each of the zoned editions, but for Metro Detroit it was about 3,800 which was 42 per cent of the entire paper. The space allocation on Tuesday was approximately the same as that of Monday. On Wednesday, editorial space was increased to about 5,000 inches but was only 26 per cent of the edition. Editorial inches continued to climb on Thursday to about 6,000 and the percentage also climbed with editorial to 38 per cent of the paper. By Friday editorial space dropped to about 4,000 inches or 45 per cent of the edition. Saturday was the slim paper for both editorial and advertising; editorial

inches totaled 2,440 and was almost 60 per cent of the newspaper. There was no zoning on the sample studied for Saturday although a page in sports was available to be zoned.

Attempts at making inferences or statements concerning the quality of the two newspapers were difficult because of the subjective nature of such evaluations. An apparent characteristic of the News is to go after stories of national interest with local writers rather than rely on the wire services. This is undoubtedly a tactic designed to tailor national news stories to local interests as much as possible. It also provides more information on an event than the wire services can provide; judgments of news value by the News editors concerning an event are sometimes at variance with either the news judgments of the wire service editors or their ability to transmit copy.

Several stories were selected from both newspapers and followed toward their conclusions. All required treatment over several days. The Apollo 15 moon flight was first studied. The relative play by both newspapers was similar, but the News tended to provide more copy. The News also covered the story for a longer period. The Free Press ended heavy coverage on August 11, 1971, while the News continued to give the story prominent play until August 15. The attempted escape from the San Quentin

prison in California by the Soledad brother was also followed through its life as news. The event occurred August 21. The Free Press got the story into its Sunday, August 22 edition, the News did not. Both the News and the Free Press print Sunday editions about the same time for morning delivery. The edition sampled was an early one for the News. The subsequent play of the story by the News was as high as played by the Free Press, and the stories were about the same length and there were approximately the same number of photographs used as illustration. Again, the Free Press discontinued reporting the event on August 27 while the News continued to handle stories on the matter through August 29.

On August 11, a Detroit man was given an artificial heart in a Detroit hospital. Both papers gave the story extensive display although the News provided somewhat more volume of copy. The Free Press dropped consideration of the heart operation on August 15 while the News continued to follow the perilous condition of the patient through August 18.

On August 28, a collision between ships on the Detroit River released a significant quantity of oil into the river. The story broke at a time favorable to the Free Press which selected it as the page-one lead story to run under a banner headline. The News played the story on page two although it gave it considerable space. A

second-day story was run by both papers before the matter was dropped.

The morning of August 26 a Detroit policeman was slain. The News got the break. It was played page one on the fold under a two "leg" headline. The next day the Free Press picked up the story and gave it more space than did the News, but on page three. On August 27 the News had moved its report to page seven where it went under a five-column (standard) headline. The Free Press ran no story on August 28, but the News did, placing it on page three.

Two significant stories were found in the News but could not be found in the Free Press. These were the plan of Blue Shield health insurance to trim its proposed rate increases, and the report of the faulty homes being sold under government auspices. There were no significant stories found in the Free Press that could not be found in the News.

There is questionable validity in discussing the editorial page stance of the News and the Free Press. It is one common method, however, of evaluating newspapers. To measure the relative editorial positions, fifty editorials were selected at random and rated on a seven category scale including Conservative, mildly Conservative, Republican, depth analysis, Democrat, mildly Liberal and Liberal (see Table 15). Because the author rates an

editorial in a given manner does not mean anyone else will rate it similarly. However, it is felt that general agreement can be reached that one editorial might be more Liberal or Conservative than another and thus it becomes legitimate to rate them in the above manner as long as it is remembered that it is the position of the editorial in comparison to the other forty nine that is important, not its absolute rating.

Table 15. Relative Conservative-Liberal bias of editorials in the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press.

	Free Press	News
Conservative	0	0
Mildly Conservative	1	16
Republican	7	2
Depth Analysis	23	26
Democrat	0	0
Mildly Liberal	18	6
Liberal	0	0

For the News, sixteen editorials were found to be mildly Conservative (none was considered Conservative), two were considered Republican, twenty-six were depth analyses, and six were rated as mildly Liberal. None rated Democratic or Liberal. The Free Press rated more

toward the Liberal end of the scale. One editorial was mildly Conservative, seven were Republican, twenty-four were depth analyses, and eighteen were mildly Liberal. It was concluded that both newspapers probably are Republican in their politics with the News editorial page considerably more conservative than that of the Free Press.

Table 16. Results of content analysis for sample week of the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total	Average	
Date	Aug. 8	Aug. 10	Aug. 11	Aug. 12	Aug. 13	Aug. 14	Aug. 15			
Pages in Issues	164 ^a 64 ^a	48 40	52 32	104 48	90 48	56 36	24 28	538 296	77 42	News Free Press
Total Column Inches	29,162 11,008	8,448 6,880	9,152 5,504	18,304 8,256	15,840 8,256	9,856 6,192	4,224 4,816	95,018 50,912	13,574 7,273	News Free Press
Total Advertising Inches	19,330 5,739	4,453 3,805	5,204 2,289	13,378 4,699	10,411 4,750	5,533 2,877	1,876 1,689	60,186 25,850	8,598 3,693	News Free Press
Editorial Newshole	9,832 5,269	3,995 3,075	3,948 3,215	4,926 3,557	5,429 3,506	4,323 3,315	2,348 3,127	94,986 25,062		News Free Press
Editorial Newshole as Percentage of Total Newshole	34% 48%	47% 55%	43% 58%	27% 43%	34% 42%	44% 53%	55% 65%	b b	36.5% 49.5%	News Free Press
Wire Stories Longer Than 8.5 Inches	22 20	29 18	25 14	18 15	41 16	19 14	8 16	162 113	23 16	News Free Press
Total Number of Wire Stories Longer Than 8.5 Inches	424 450	542 365	474 243	331 306	757 303	338 297	126 283			News Free Press
Average Number of Wire Stories Longer Than 8.5 Inches	19.5 22.5	18.5 20	19 17.5	18.5 20.5	18.5 19	18 21	15.5 17.5	127 138	18 19.5	News Free Press
Total Number of Wire Stories	52 37	55 29	43 26	42 27	87 34	41 22	17 36	337 211	48 30	News Free Press
Total Wire Copy Inches	549 522	636 414	548 297	420 364	936 388	423 317	169 342			News Free Press
Average Length of Wire Story	10.5 14	11.5 14	12.5 11.5	10 13.5	11 11.5	10.5 14.5	10 9.5	76 88.5	11 12.5	News Free Press
Number of Local News Stories Longer Than 8.5 Inches	44 30	29 13	25 23	38 25	34 23	47 20	14 21	231 155	33 22	News Free Press
Total Number of Local News Stories Longer than 8.5 Inches	1,371 925	572 401	595 478	1,037 509	884 501	995 462	250 433			News Free Press
Average No. of Local News Stories Longer Than 8.5 Inches	31 31	19.5 31	24 21	27 20.5	26 22	21 23	18 20.5	166 169	24 24	News Free Press
Total No. of Local News Stories	57 37	43 21	45 34	61 33	58 32	65 34	28 33	357 224	51 32	News Free Press
Total No. of Local News Inches	1,436 952	633 436	692 533	1,160 546	1,066 544	1,086 521	341 495			News Free Press
Average Length of Local News Stories	25.5 25.5	14.5 21	15.5 15.5	19 16.5	18.5 17	16.5 15.5	12 15	131 136	19 19	News Free Press
Number of General News Wire Pictures	21 12	7 6	13 7	12 6	19 12	11 6	3 5	86 54	12 8	News Free Press
Total Inches of General News Wire Pictures	336 218	122 113	266 74	202 84	352 195	186 87	54 89			News Free Press
Average Size of the General News Wire Picture	16 18	17.5 19	20.5 10.5	17 14	18.5 16	17 14.5	18 18	124 110	18 16	News Free Press
Number of General News Wire Pictures Tied to Copy	15 7	4 2	1 4	3 2	3 6	2 3	-- 2	28 26	4 4	News Free Press
Number of General News Local Pictures	13 10	15 5	10 6	5 5	10 4	18 6	10 9	81 45	12 6	News Free Press
Total Inches of General News Local Pictures	216 152	437 102	168 109	106 118	184 36	360 103	251 160			News Free Press

^aPage equivalents, includes supplements.^bHalf of a per cent average error in measure.

Table 16. Continued.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total	Average	
Date	Aug. 8	Aug. 30	Aug. 3	Aug. 18	Aug. 19	Aug. 6	Aug. 21			
Average size of General News Local Pictures	16.5 15	29 20.5	17 18	21.5 23.5	18.5 9	20 17	25 18	147 121	21 17	News Free Press
Number of Local General News Pictures Tied to Copy	6 10	8 3	9 3	1 3	7 3	10 3	3 2	44 27	6 4	News Free Press
Number of Pieces of Miscellaneous Art and Facial Pictures	36 57	28 23	14 12	19 25	31 18	20 20	8 20	156 175	22 25	News Free Press
Total Comics, Inches	7 ^c 10 ^c	194 282	184 288	183 301	187 290	187 290	176 287	1,120 ^d 1,749 ^d	187 292	News Free Press
Number of Editorials	3 4	3 3	4 3	3 3	3 4	4 3	3 4	23 24	3 3	News Free Press
Average Editorial Length in Inches	18 15	16.5 17	14 21	18 22.5	18.5 15.5	12.5 23	22 17	119 131	17 19	News Free Press
Number of Letters to the Editor	4 8	9 5	3 6	6 7	6 8	7 10	13 6	48 50	7 7	News Free Press
Average Letter to the Editor Length in Inches	5 4	3.5 7.5	8 6.5	4 5	4 5.5	5 4	5.5 8	35 40	5 6	News Free Press
Number of Editorial Page Columns	8 8	7 6	8 5	7 6	8 5	8 6	-- 1	46 37	7 5	News Free Press
Average Length for Editorial Columns	27.5 24.5	29.5 22	27 19	30.5 20	25 19	25.5 20.5	-- 33	165 158	24 23	News Free Press
Number of Editorial Cartoons	3 4	5 2	3 2	3 2	4 2	4 2	2 1	26 15	4 2	News Free Press
Average Size of Each Editorial Cartoon	18 12.5	11 19	16 16	16.5 20	16 17.5	11 14.5	15 21	105 120	15 16	News Free Press
Column Inches Devoted to an Ombudsman Column	77 36	77 64.5	77 40	77 40	77 40	77 40	41 40	503 301	72 43	News Free Press
Total Inches Devoted to Radio and TV Logs	40.5 --	81.5 86	83 86	79 86	79 86	84.5 86	80 86	527 516	75 74	News Free Press
Total Inches of Stock Market Tables	474 496	204 --	278 345	258 338	249 332	241 323	-- 354	1,705 2,189	244 313	News Free Press
Total Inches Devoted to Weather News	34 29	34 34	35 34	35 26	35 34	33 34	32 34	238 225	34 32	News Free Press
Total Inches Devoted to News-in-Brief	33 --	33 --	33 --	33 --	33 --	30 --	33 --	33 --	33 --	News Free Press
Total Number of Women's Wire Service Stories	3 1	2 4	-- 3	6 4	7 --	1 3	-- --	19 15	3 2	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Women's Wire Service Stories	38 18	34 15	-- 20	37 32	22.5 --	36 31	-- --	167 116	24 17	News Free Press
Total Number of Women's Local News Stories	13 12	6 4	8 4	15 11	6 8	6 1	-- 6	54 46	8 6	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Women's Local Stories	30 34	19 25	22 27.5	33 18	18 18.5	18.5 2	-- 15	140 140	20 20	News Free Press
Number of Women's Wire Service Pictures	2 15	1 --	-- 2	2 1	1 --	-- --	-- --	6 18	1 2.5	News Free Press
Average Size in Inches of Women's Wire Service Pictures	16.5 11.5	30 --	-- 8.5	11 60	24 --	-- --	-- --	81 80	10 10	News Free Press

^cDoes not include color comics section.^dDivided by six days.

Table 16. Continued.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total	Average	
Date	Aug. 8	Aug. 30	Aug. 3	Aug. 18	Aug. 19	Aug. 6	Aug. 21			
Number of Women's Wire Service Pictures Tied to Copy	1	1	--	2	1	--	--	5	1	News Free Press
Number of Local Women's Pictures	15	--	1	1	--	--	--	17	2	News Free Press
Average Size in Inches of Women's Local Pictures	15	3	4	8	2	8	--	40	6	News Free Press
Number of Women's Local Pictures Tied to Copy	3	6	2	5	4	4	4	28	4	News Free Press
Number of Women's Columns	18.5	20	16.5	24.5	25.5	15	--	120	17	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Women's Columns	15	11	13.5	11	10.5	18.5	12	91	13	News Free Press
Number of Sports Columns	10	3	4	8	--	7	--	32	5	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Sports Columns	3	6	2	5	4	--	4	24	3	News Free Press
Number of Wire Service Sports Stories	6	5	4	7	4	4	--	30	4	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Wire Service Stories	7	2	2	3	2	3	1	20	3	News Free Press
Number of Local Sports Stories	50	29	26	36	32	35	--	209	30	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Local Sports Stories	28	23.5	22	29	32	23	24	181	26	News Free Press
Number of Sports Columns	4	3	2	2	3	3	2	19	3	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Sports Columns	4	--	1	4	3	4	2	18	2.5	News Free Press
Number of Wire Service Sports Stories	34	25	26	17.5	24	22	29	178	25	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Wire Service Stories	32	--	30	21	23.5	28.5	21	156	22	News Free Press
Number of Local Sports Stories	34	12	6	12	16	12	10	102	15	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Local Sports Stories	15	9	10	10	12	9	13	78	11	News Free Press
Number of Wire Service Sports Stories	8.5	11.5	12.5	5.5	5.5	7.5	12.5	65	9	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Wire Service Stories	8.5	18	14	19	13.5	12.5	12	98	14	News Free Press
Number of Local Sports Stories	24	26	23	14	22	22	25	156	22	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Local Sports Stories	22	16	14	8	12	7	13	82	12	News Free Press
Number of Wire Service Sports Stories	13	11	12.5	24.5	16	13.5	14.5	115	16	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Wire Service Stories	16.5	10.5	9.5	10	11	16.5	10	84	12	News Free Press
Number of Local Sports Stories	33.5	31	37.5	54.5	39.5	43	66.5	305	46	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Local Sports Stories	79.5	82	34	40	37.5	67	75.5	415	59	News Free Press
Number of Wire Service Sports Stories	8	--	8	11	8	11.5	--	--	--	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Wire Service Stories	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	News Free Press
Number of Local Sports Stories	54	31	66	86	79	63	86	466	67	News Free Press
Average Length in Inches of Local Sports Stories	44	81	123	92	90.5	89	89	609	87	News Free Press
Number of Wire Service Pictures	3	--	--	--	--	--	6	9	1	News Free Press
Average Size in Inches of Sports Wire Service Pictures	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	9	1	News Free Press
Number of Sports Wire Service Pictures Tied to Copy	14	--	--	--	--	--	13.5	27.5	4	News Free Press
Number of Local Sports Pictures	14	40	10	13	36	26.5	20.5	160	23	News Free Press
Average Size in Inches of Local Sports Pictures	3	--	--	--	--	--	1	4	.5	News Free Press
Number of Sports Pictures Tied to Copy	--	1	--	2	--	--	1	4	.5	News Free Press
Number of Local Sports Pictures	2	2	3	3	3	5	5	23	3	News Free Press
Average Size in Inches of Local Sports Pictures	2	--	2	--	--	--	--	4	.5	News Free Press
Number of Miscellaneous Columns and Features	17	22	33	26.5	21.5	21.5	16.5	158	23	News Free Press
Average Size in Inches of Miscellaneous Columns and Features	20	--	24.5	--	--	--	--	44.5	6	News Free Press
Number of Local Sports Pictures Tied to Copy	2	2	2	2	1	5	4	18	2.5	News Free Press
Number of Miscellaneous Columns and Features	1	--	1	--	--	--	--	2	.25	News Free Press
Number of Local Sports Pictures	17	7	8	7	10	10	4	63	9	News Free Press
Average Size in Inches of Local Sports Pictures	17	21	16	19	20	18	17	128	18	News Free Press
Number of Local Sports Pictures Tied to Copy	28	25.5	19	20	48	18.5	22	181	26	News Free Press
Number of Miscellaneous Columns and Features	29	20.5	18.5	18	19	22	18	145	21	News Free Press
Number of Picture Series	1	2	1	1	2	3	2	12	2	News Free Press
Number of Picture Series	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	11	1.5	News Free Press
Number of Jumps From Page One	4	3	4	4	2	3	--	20	3	News Free Press
Number of Jumps From Page One	5	3	4	5	6	4	3	30	4	News Free Press
Number of Other Jumps	6	4	5	2	5	4	2	28	4	News Free Press
Number of Other Jumps	5	6	7	6	5	5	1	35	5	News Free Press
Number of Page One Stories	6	6	4	4	6	6	6	38	5.5	News Free Press
Number of Page One Stories	7	7	7	8	7	6	7	49	7	News Free Press
Number of Page One Pictures	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	8	1	News Free Press
Number of Page One Pictures	3	1	3	2	1	3	4	16	2	News Free Press
Number of Inches Devoted to Book Serialisation	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	News Free Press
Number of Inches Devoted to Book Serialisation	263	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	News Free Press

Table 17. Lineage records for the sample week of the
Detroit News as reported by the firm.

	Sunday, August 8, 1971			
	Detroit	West	North	East
Main Body, B&W Pages	128	128	128	128
Main Body, 4-Color Pages				
Sunday Roto Lines	54,250	54,250	54,250	54,250
Sunday TV Mag. Lines	20,770	20,770	20,770	20,770
Sunday Comics Pages	15,810	15,810	15,810	15,810
Full-Run Preprint Lines				
Part-Run Preprint Lines			2,318	
Above Totaled in Lines	408,270	408,270	410,588	408,270
Classified 8-Column	94,761	94,716	94,716	94,716
Full-Run Dis- play Lines	170,445	170,445	170,445	170,445
Full-Run Dead Head Lines	4,982	4,982	4,982	4,982
Part-Run Dis- play Lines	432	4,134	2,868	2,537
Part-Run Dead Head Lines	--	--	--	--
Total Advertising Lines	270,620	274,332	273,056	272,725
Total Space Less Advertising	137,650	113,948	137,532	135,545
Metro Editorial Lines	2,048	995	1,930	1,647
Metro Editorial Inches	146	71	139	118
Full-Run Editorial Lines	135,602	132,953	135,602	133,898
Full-Run Edi- torial Inches	9,686	9,497	9,686	9,564

Table 17. Continued.

	Monday, August 30, 1971			
	Detroit	West	North	East
Main Body, B&W Pages	48	48	48	48
Main Body, 4-Color Pages				
Sunday Roto Lines				
Sunday TV Mag. Lines				
Sunday Comics Pages				
Full-Run Pre- print Lines				
Part-Run Pre- print Lines	8,840			
Above Totaled in Lines	127,880	119,040	119,040	119,040
Classified 8-Column	23,086	23,086	23,086	23,086
Full-Run Dis- play Lines	41,810	41,810	41,810	41,810
Full-Run Dead Head Lines	1,238	1,238	1,238	1,238
Part-Run Dis- play Lines	381	310	2,867	2,304
Part-Run Dead Head Lines	1,240	1,240		620
Total Adver- tising Lines	67,755	67,684	69,001	69,058
Total Space Less Advertising	60,105	51,356	50,039	49,982
Metro Editorial Lines	6,897	6,412	8,143	7,496
Metro Editorial Inches	493	458	582	535
Full-Run Editorial Lines	53,208	44,944	41,896	42,486
Full-Run Edito- rial Inches	3,801	3,210	2,993	3,035

Table 17. Continued.

	Tuesday, August 3, 1971			
	Detroit	West	North	East
Main Body, B&W Pages	52	52	52	52
Main Body, 4-Color Pages				
Sunday Roto Lines				
Sunday TV Mag. Lines				
Sunday Comics Pages				
Full-Run Pre- print Lines				
Part-Run Pre- print Lines	8,840	13,328		13,328
Above Totaled in Lines	137,800	142,288	128,960	142,288
Classified 8-Column	24,245	24,245	24,245	24,245
Full-Run Dis- play Lines	39,863	39,863	39,863	39,863
Full-Run Dead Head Lines	1,259	1,259	1,259	1,259
Part-Run Dis- play Lines	12,911	14,093	2,794	14,322
Part-Run Dead Head Lines		616		980
Total Adver- tising Lines	78,278	80,076	68,161	80,669
Total Space Less Advertising	59,522	62,212	60,799	61,619
Metro Editorial Lines	4,434	7,117	7,215	6,442
Metro Editorial Inches	317	508	515	460
Full-Run Editorial Lines	55,088	72,959	53,584	74,257
Full-Run Edi- torial Inches	3,935	5,211	3,827	5,304

Table 17. Continued.

Wednesday, August 18, 1971				
	Detroit	West	North	East
Main Body, B&W Pages	102	102	104	102
Main Body, 4-Color Pages	2	2	2	2
Sunday Roto Lines				
Sunday TV Mag. Lines				
Sunday Comics Page				
Full-Run Pre- print Lines	10,584	10,584	10,584	10,584
Part-Run Pre- print Lines				
Above Totaled in Lines	268,504	268,504	273,464	268,504
Classified 8-Column	25,005	25,005	25,005	25,005
Full-Run Dis- play Lines	169,146	169,146	169,146	169,146
Full-Run Dead Head Lines	1,499	1,499	1,499	1,499
Part-Run Dis- play Lines	1,580	3,057	8,742	1,146
Part-Run Dead Head Lines	1,236			
Total Advertis- ing Lines	198,466	198,707	204,392	196,796
Total Space Less Advertising	70,038	69,797	69,072	71,708
Metro Editorial Lines	7,199	5,231	6,678	6,870
Metro Editorial Inches	514	374	477	491
Full-Run Editorial Lines	62,839	64,563	62,394	64,838
Full-Run Editorial Inches	4,489	4,612	4,457	4,631

Table 17. Continued.

Thursday, August 19, 1971				
	Detroit	West	North	East
Main Body, B&W Pages	89	95	91	95
Main Body, 4-Color Pages	1	1	1	1
Sunday Roto Lines				
Sunday TV Mag. Lines				
Sunday Comics Pages				
Full-Run Pre- print Lines				
Part-Run Pre- print Lines		9,600		9,600
Above Totaled in Lines	223,200	247,680	228,160	247,680
Classified 8-Column	28,091	28,091	28,091	28,091
Full-Run Dis- play Lines	116,392	116,392	116,392	116,392
Full-Run Dead Head Lines	949	949	949	949
Part-Run Dis- play Lines	1,743	13,611	7,210	16,450
Part-Run Dead Head Lines				72
Total Advertis- ing Lines	147,175	159,043	152,642	161,954
Total Space Less Advertising	86,025	88,637	75,518	85,726
Metro Editorial Lines	4,382	6,790	5,957	5,791
Metro Editorial Inches	313	485	425	414
Full-Run Editorial Lines	81,643	81,847	69,451	79,935
Full-Run Editorial Inches	5,832	5,846	4,969	5,710

Table 17. Continued.

	Friday, August 6, 1971			
	Detroit	West	North	East
Main Body, B&W Pages	56	56	56	56
Main Body, 4-Color Pages				
Sunday Roto Line				
Sunday TV				
Mag. Lines				
Sunday Comics Pages				
Full-Run Pre- print Lines				
Part-Run Pre- print Lines				
Above Totaled in Lines	138,880	138,880	138,880	138,880
Classified 8-Column	24,040	24,040	24,040	24,040
Full-Run Dis- play Lines	49,265	49,265	49,265	49,265
Full-Run Dead Head Lines	2,472	2,472	2,472	2,472
Part-Run Dis- play Lines	168	1,845	964	3,498
Part-Run Dead Head Lines	1,000	--	616	--
Total Advertis- ing Lines	76,945	77,622	77,357	79,275
Total Space Less Advertising	61,935	61,258	61,523	59,605
Metro Editorial Lines	7,048	6,540	6,805	4,887
Metro Editorial Inches	503	467	486	349
Full-Run Editorial Lines	54,887	54,718	54,718	54,718
Full-Run Editorial Inches	3,920.5	3,908.5	3,908.5	3,908.5

Table 17. Continued.

Saturday, August 21, 1971				
	Detroit	West	North	East
Main Body, B&W Pages	24	24	24	24
Main Body, 4-Color Pages				
Sunday Roto Lines				
Sunday TV Mag. Lines				
Sunday Comics Pages				
Full-Run Pre- print Lines				
Part-Run Pre- print Lines				
Above Totaled in Lines	59,520	59,520	59,520	59,520
Classified 8-Column	20,500	20,500	20,500	20,500
Full-Run Dis- play Lines	4,016	4,016	4,016	4,016
Full-Run Dead Head Lines	838	838	838	838
Part-Run Dis- play Lines				
Part-Run Dead Head Lines				
Total Advertis- ing Lines	25,354	25,354	25,354	25,354
Total Space Less Advertising	34,116	34,116	34,116	34,116
Metro Editorial Lines				
Metro Editorial Inches				
Full-Run Editorial Lines	34,116	34,116	34,116	34,116
Full-Run Editorial Inches	2,440	2,440	2,440	2,440

Table 18. Seven day lineage reports for August, 1971.

	News	Free Press
<u>Week ending Aug. 8, 1971</u>		
Total Newspaper Columns	4,225	2,504
Total Advertising Columns	2,635	1,258
Total Editorial Columns	1,590	1,246
Zone Advertising Columns	87	--
Zone Editorial Columns	113	29
<u>Week ending Aug. 15, 1971</u>		
Total Newspaper Columns	4,673	2,722
Total Advertising Columns	3,011	1,385
Total Editorial Columns	1,662	1,337
Zone Advertising Columns	118	--
Zone Editorial Columns	104	29
<u>Week ending Aug. 22, 1971</u>		
Total Newspaper Columns	4,499	2,569
Total Advertising Columns	2,837	1,295
Total Editorial Columns	1,662	1,274
Zone Advertising Columns	131	--
Zone Editorial Columns	103	36
<u>Week ending Aug. 29, 1971</u>		
Total Newspaper Columns	4,489	2,666
Total Advertising Columns	2,837	1,397
Total Editorial Columns	1,652	1,269
Zone Advertising Columns	77	--
Zone Editorial Columns	112	33

CHAPTER IV

THE EDITORIAL OPERATIONS OF THE DETROIT NEWS

The Newsroom Is The Key To Newspaper Success

This chapter focuses on what is believed to be the most important part of a newspaper--its newsroom. There are other elements of a newspaper which have high significance and some of these will be considered. It is suggested that the "total product" concept is irrelevant. Such a concept views a newspaper as a composite of circulation, advertising, research and other activities, all of which are seen as having an equally necessary place in the operation. The essence of a newspaper, however, is its journalism--its most creative and socially significant area. A newspaper rises, falls or stagnates on the basis of reader reaction to the news product. The arguments that housewives purchase newspapers because they wish the display advertisements and that classified advertising is read for its information value cannot be disputed. But, on the whole, and over the long run in a competitive situation such as the Detroit market, the quality of the news product is the fulcrum that allows the organization

to teeter in the direction of success or failure. This does not minimize the importance of the salesmanship of the advertising departments, the aggressiveness of the circulation effort in finding new customers and getting the paper to the doorstep on time, the attention attracting talents of the promotion department, etc. Acquiring and holding terrain is the goal of a military; artillery and aircraft may well make this mission possible, but in final analysis it is the infantryman who sits on line with the artillery and aircraft in an invaluable but definitely support role. While holding terrain is the mission of the military, the provision of a desired and acceptable editorial product that will attract circulation must be the first objective of a newspaper. It is obvious that the First Amendment to the United States Constitution is a reflection of a special social duty imposed on the journalist but not on an advertising salesman, a pressman, or the circulation manager. It is also obvious that the personality descriptions of a newspaper have little to do with promotion and less to do with classified advertising; to call a newspaper bright or grey is to refer to its editorial product.

The editorial product, like the newspaper as a whole, is departmentalized. Within the News editorial department, the bulk of the responsibility for the special duties of the journalist and for the personality of the

newspaper falls upon the managing editor, and within his sphere of influence the city desk complex bears the brunt of this burden.

The Detroit News City Desk

For sake of discussion, the members of the newsroom can be placed in four categories: News-gatherers, news-processors (associated with general news), fringe departments (sections outside general news), and supervisors.

There are a total of 277 people in the newsroom up from 220 in 1965. Of these, 110 are reporters and twenty-five photographers--the news-gatherers. The news-processing element consists of sixty-two deskmen. There are thirty-five supervisory personnel who carry the title editor.¹

When forty-five clerical personnel are added to the supervisors and news-processors, the newsroom is seen to have approximately a 1:1 ratio, news-gatherers to support personnel. These figures understate the number of support personnel, for the approximately sixty under the associate editor in charge of features and the dozen

¹Paul A. Poorman, Detroit News managing editor, interviewed Oct. 14, 1971.

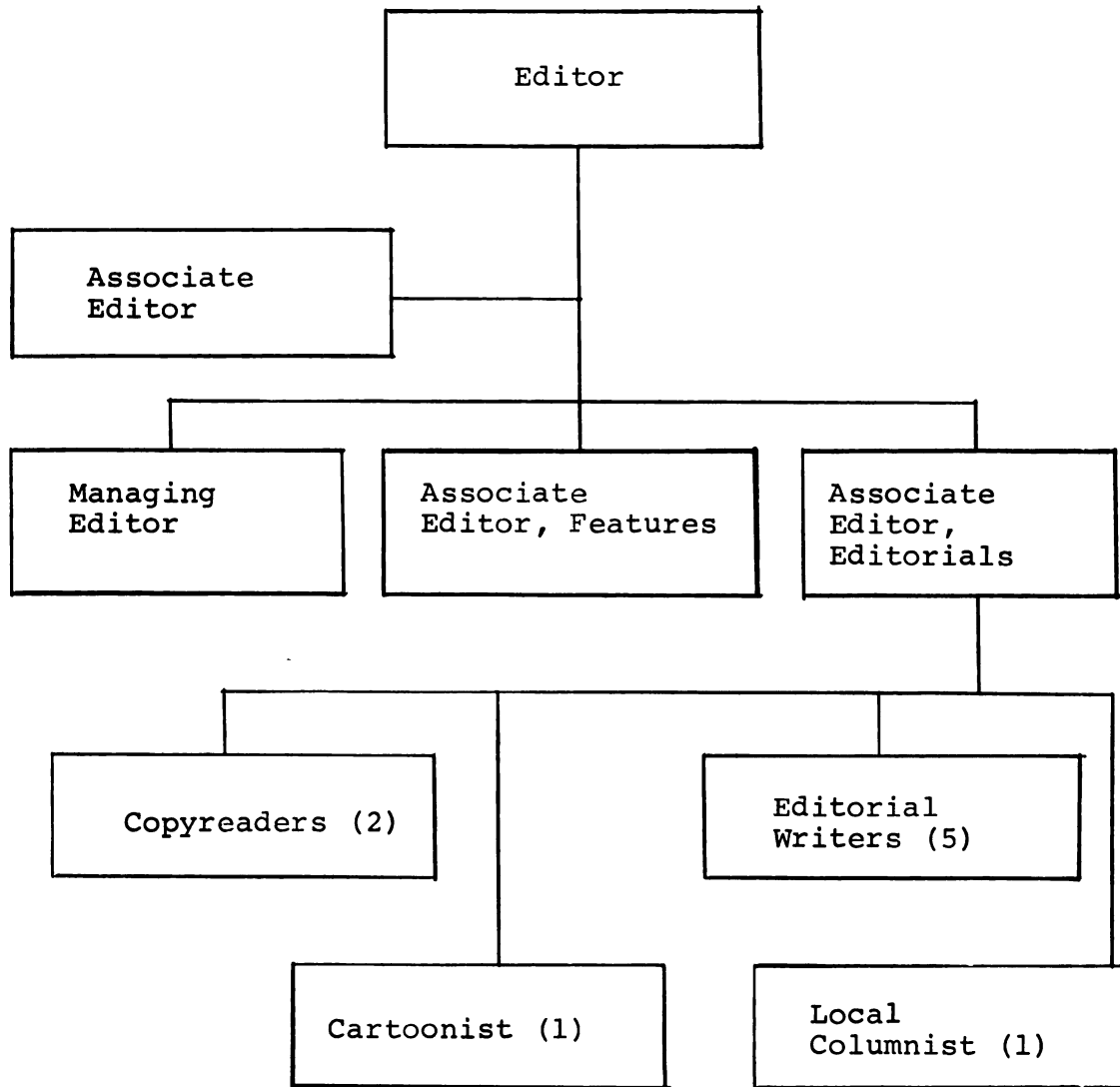


Fig. 6. Top newsroom management superior-subordinate relationship chart for the News.

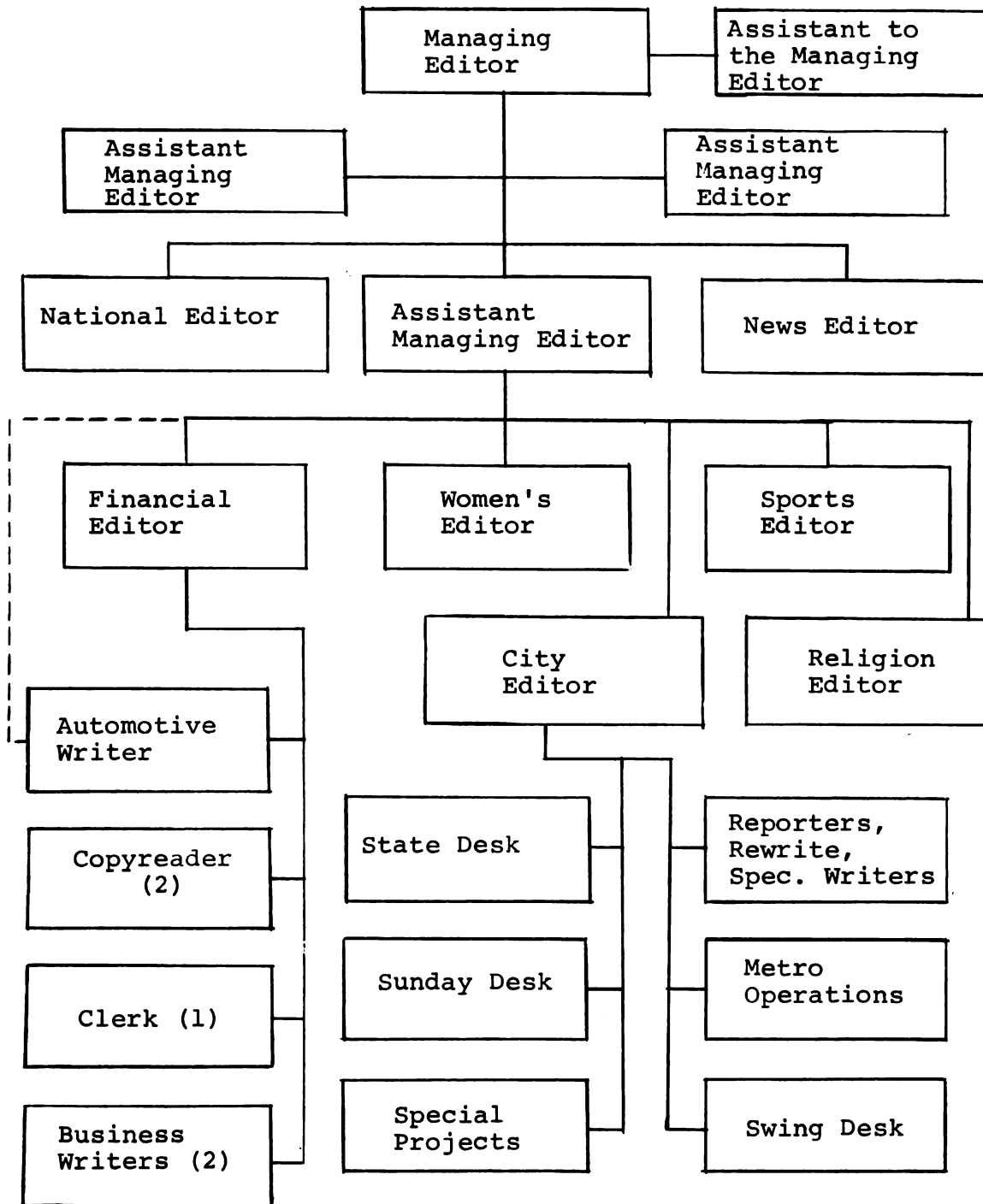


Fig. 7. Middle management superior-subordinate relationship chart for the Detroit News newsroom.

editorial page personnel will largely fall in the categories under support personnel.²

The fief of the city desk includes approximately seventy-five people, including reporters, rewrite personnel, and assistant city editors. It operates twenty out of twenty-one shifts a week, although evening and night staffing is light.³

The city desk complex is composed of four separate desks, each with specific duties. These desks are the state desk, Sunday desk, special projects desk, and swing desk. The assistant managing editor (AME) in charge of news-gathering (the city editor on most newspapers) maintains his desk in the complex as does the city editor (who is the chief assistant to the assistant managing editor).⁴ Each desk is manned by an assistant city editor. AME Burdett C. Stoddard says that his "theory of how to run the city desk is to get exceptionally good men, get them to know all the jobs and impress on them that

²Poorman said that he has been unable to learn of other newsrooms that are analyzing their staffs according to such a ratio. His goal is to push the ratio well below 1:1 and believes this may be possible with future technology such as electronic editing. Poorman, interviewed Oct. 1, 1971.

³William C. Tremblay, Detroit News city editor, interviewed Oct. 5, 1971.

⁴One veteran editor saw potential for confusion between the duties of Assistant Managing Editor Stoddard and City Editor Tremblay in the present arrangement.

what they are doing is the city desk job" so they do not identify with the specific slot they are manning, but with the overall mission. He looks upon the city desk as an operations center. Each of the separate units of the city desk has definite responsibilities, but the integrated or operations concept stressed by Stoddard and the occasional rotation of personnel make it easier for a deskman with excess capacity to accept part of the task of an overloaded compatriot. "It's everybody's job to get the job done and it seems to work well."⁵

City Editor William Tremblay is responsible for all news coverage in the city, the suburbs, and the state. Stoddard concentrates on an overview, monitoring the special projects and the stories for the Sunday edition. Personnel problems also fall under Stoddard's purview.

A major control point in the city desk complex is the swing desk. The city editor maintains a calendar file for assignments which he orders according to significance. The afternoon before or the morning of the day the story is to be covered the swing man issues the assignments, keeps track of the reporters whereabouts and the status of the stories, takes incoming telephone calls from reporters or news sources and allocates them to a bank of six rewrite men, informs the city editor of breaking news

⁵Burdett C. Stoddard, Detroit News assistant managing editor, interviewed Sept. 30, 1971.

Table 19. Comparative table of organization for the
Detroit News newsroom.

	1971	1968	1967	1966	1965
Managing Editor	14	14	13	12	11
Financial	7	6	6	4	2
News Desk	38	36	37	34	32
City Desk	75	71	73	73	75
Zones	37	19	19	18	2
Lansing Bureau	4	9	9	9	9
Washington	7	7	6	4	4
Sports	24	21	21	21	20
Art & Photo	43	43	44	41	37
Women's	28	27	27	28	28
Total	277	253	255	244	220

Deployment:

Reporters -- 110

Photographers -- 25 Total News-gathering -- 135

Desk -- 62

Clerical -- 45 Total Support -- 107

Editors -- 35

or of the state of significant news stories and, with the city editor, processes incoming copy. Normally the city editor or assistant city editor who assigns the story gives the copy its initial processing.⁶

⁶Tremblay, Oct. 5, 1971.

The state desk has undergone a significant decline in importance in the last few years. For many years, the state editor was a strong position and had a station approximately equivalent to that of the city editor.⁷ The title state editor has been abandoned, and the state desk is now manned by an assistant city editor.⁸ Many story ideas originate with the state desk, its Lansing bureau and net of correspondents, but it also accepts assignments from the city editor and keeps him informed of breaking news in a manner similar to the swing desk.

The Sunday desk has two major responsibilities. First, it must generate news story assignments that are appropriate for the Sunday edition. Commonly the bulk of these assignments--often lengthy in-depth stories--are given out on Monday and Tuesday. The Sunday desk editor must also coordinate stories that can be written for the Monday paper; the News prides itself on a quality Monday product. The second major responsibility is the coordination of news for the Metro Detroit edition. Here the editor is concerned with news of significance from within the city but which is not of concern to the suburbs. The

⁷John H. O'Brien, Detroit News associate editor, interviewed Sept. 21, 1971.

⁸Poorman, Oct. 14, 1971.

pages that go to the suburbs do not contain this news.⁹
The Metro Detroit edition provides the Sunday editor with 400 to 500 column-inches per day to be filled.¹⁰

Coordination is a problem for the Sunday desk and is solved by two weekly meetings. The first is on Wednesday when ideas for the coming Sunday paper are considered and major decisions are made. On Friday, the second meeting is held and the problems are considered in more detail. Managing Editor Paul Poorman, AME Stoddard, CE Tremblay, the Sunday desk editor and Sunday news editor are in attendance as well as anyone else whose duties may be relevant to the planning.

The major flow of Sunday copy arrives or is processed on Thursday and Friday.¹¹

While the swing desk is primarily concerned with the minute to minute occurrences that result in copy for the full-run circulation, the Sunday desk is concerned with both the immediate but smaller problem of Metro Detroit space and the more lengthy (two or three weeks)

⁹The four Metro editions are run concurrently; all four editions are being printed at the same time. The printing of one edition does not follow another with a makeover of the zoned pages between printings. The 11:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. makeovers involve the entire paper and are primarily concerned with general news.

¹⁰Tremblay.

¹¹Ibid.

view of the needs of the Sunday paper. The special projects desk is concerned primarily with the long run project news stories, the color photography which commonly accompanies these often prestigious efforts and with the special supplements which the advertising department spends several months packing with advertising. The special projects desk has risen rather spontaneously in the last two years to meet a need which was not being filled efficiently otherwise, This desk also aids the Sunday desk in processing and coordinating Metro Detroit copy and the relative lack of time pressure on this deskman allows him to aid the other assistant city editors when they are under pressure to accomplish "the city desk job."

Stoddard said that he would like to have one more man on the city desk complex. He did not see one more man as moving the desk complex in the direction of making it cumbersome and thought it "could help eliminate some of the little frictions that exist." Presently, he says, his assistant city editors have unequal loads, but there was little that could be done as all were overloaded most of the time which limited the possibilities of shifting loads.

It is likely that the kind of assistant city editor Stoddard would like to add would be a graphics expert. Currently, the News has no problem covering breaking news

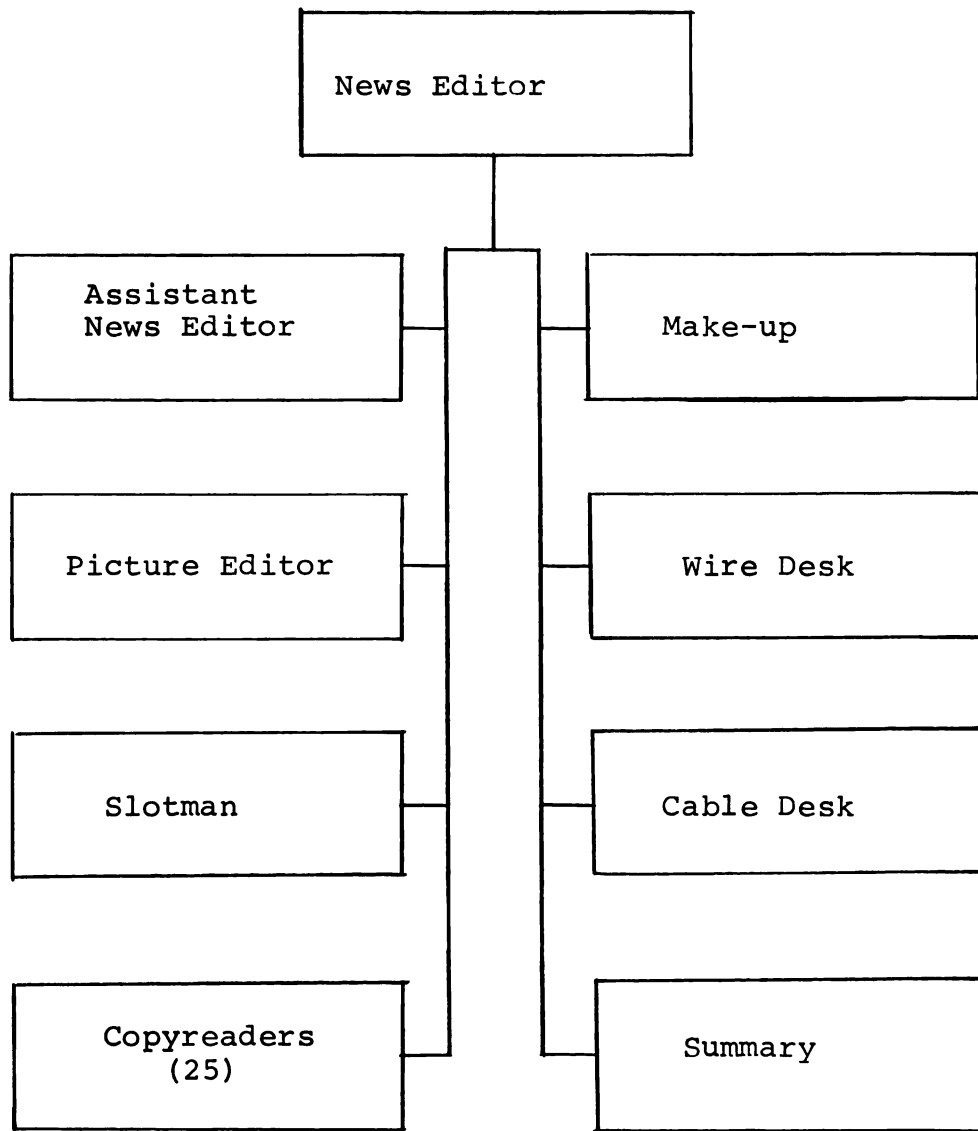


Fig. 8. Superior-subordinate relationship chart for the news-processing element of the Detroit News newsroom.

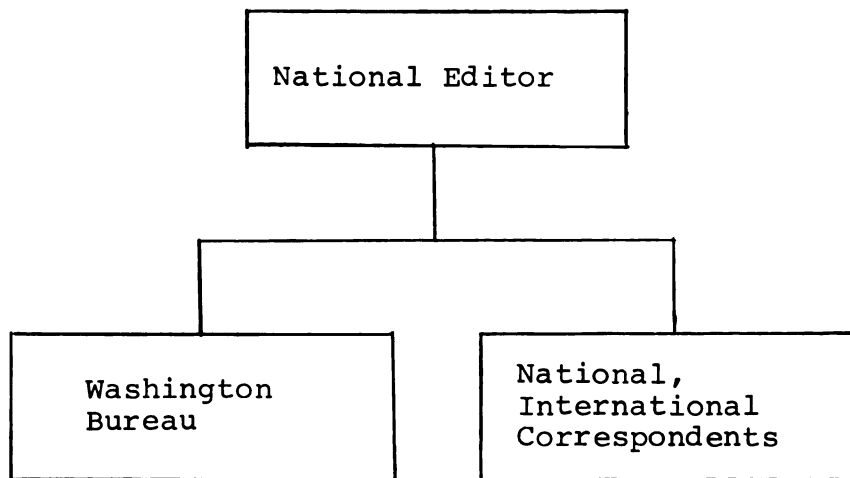


Fig. 9. Detroit News national desk organization.

pictorially, but has a significant problem providing photography of high artistic and communicative qualities for its lengthy project stories.¹² Don Easter, formerly news editor and now assistant to the managing editor having recently recuperated from a heart attack, is currently coordinating graphics. Easter has proposed that the News add to the city desk a graphics specialist (not the existence of a photo editor under the news editor, Fig. 9), and that his major duties be that of helping photographers illustrate project stories, provide signatures for continuing stories, coordinate artists in drawing maps, etc. Easter sees no problem with the photo coverage of breaking news, but he believes that the problems of predicting the

¹²Stoddard, Sept. 30, 1971.

news angle of a feature or depth story is so great that coordinating art for this kind of story requires the attention of an imaginative, graphics-oriented editor.¹³

At present, the city editor or an assistant assigns a photographer to cover breaking news. The contact prints come back to the city editor, who, if under edition deadline pressure, hand carries them to the news editor. The city editor, picture editor, and news editor then select the one to print. When there is no pressure-- which is most of the time because the first edition is on the press about the time most of the city desk personnel arrive for work--the contacts are marked to order a selection of what city desk personnel believe to be the best frames. The prints, the original contacts, and the story go to the news editor and photo editor. They normally choose one of the enlargements to be engraved, but the news editor and photo editor retain the option of selecting one of the remaining frames on the contact sheet. The same procedure is used for maps.¹⁴

The photographers do not actually work for the photo editor who is the "copyreader" for photography and who assists the news editor in photo selection. He has

¹³ Donald S. Easter, Detroit News assistant to the managing editor, interviewed Sept. 29, 1971.

¹⁴ Tremblay.

the basic responsibility to ensure that wire pictures are linked to wire copy. The graphics specialist visualized by Easter would probably be titled assistant city editor.

The News editorial management does not consider itself a "heavy picture paper," although the average size of its pictures are slightly larger than those of the Free Press. While the reasons for this may be historic, they may also be practical; when a newspaper is running 65 per cent advertising, much of its news space will be found above advertisements. These holes do not lend themselves to displaying a large photo.¹⁵

Tremblay, the city editor, maintains an emergency photographer who receives assignments only from the top city desk personnel. This photographer is somewhat of an anomaly, for Tremblay does not believe in holding reporters "just in case." He prefers to have everyone busy, but to know where everyone is. Thus, when a major story breaks, he moves in reporters who are working on less crucial news stories.¹⁶ The reporters who work evenings usually are not burdened with heavy assignments. The evening operation is generally kept poised, ready to react to crises.¹⁷

¹⁵O'Brien, Sept. 21, 1971.

¹⁶Tremblay.

¹⁷Philip Corner, Detroit News assistant city editor in charge of the evening shift, interviewed Oct. 8, 1971.

"The whole idea is to make a striking force out of everything," says Stoddard. The city desk organization permits immediate reorganization of priorities. The philosophy of top newsroom management toward reporters is that they must have maximum flexibility.

At one time the theory [in the newspaper industry generally] was that you should separate the types of news and have specialists who covered areas with well defined limits. The flow of news is so tremendous [today] that you must be able to get on top of it with people that can bring out the significant elements--not let anyone be an independent operator that cannot be called and not allow the paper to get into a situation where the reporter is covering up a news story.¹⁸

The goal of the newsroom management is to have the maximum number of general reporters but to cultivate or use the special interests each of these reporters may have. Currently, a large group of generalists with special interests are providing much of the specialty copy.¹⁹ The News continues to have specialty writers including its labor, science, education, aviation, religion and ecology writers. These reporters provide considerable in-depth copy and there is a tendency not to bother them with minor assignments. But this specialist is not as independent as he apparently once was.²⁰

¹⁸Stoddard, Sept. 30, 1971.

¹⁹O'Brien, Sept. 21, 1971.

²⁰Stoddard, Sept. 30, 1971.

The News is also attempting to get its specialists to apply their talents locally. Stoddard objects to sending reporters long distances to cover stories that have either low readership or that are reported by the wire services. There is considerable travel, however. Expensive news coverage, particularly travel costs, is seen as a long run strategy in that covering a story live is a means of improving the competitive position of the News. Travel is also seen as having educational and morale advantages for the staff.²¹ Stoddard's objective is to apply the specialties to local problems that are more significant to the reader and therefore help to build readership.

In this same vein, the emphasis at the News has shifted toward the writing reporter and away from the non-writing legman. The rewrite man remains a fixture because of his flexibility, and because of his ability to blend the information from several reporters; he is one of the few ways to rapidly cover breaking news. The obvious tendency is for the News to hire experienced reporters, however, with writing backgrounds. To a large degree this appears to be in response to the need felt for a large volume of depth and interpretative material. The sensitive matters with which these reporters deal can be handled

²¹Peter B. Clark, Detroit News publisher, interviewed Oct. 13, 1971.

more accurately and with more background color by a writing reporter than is possible with the third party involvement of the rewrite man.

The shifting attitude toward specialists has another side effect. "A lot of lines are crossed within the newspaper where good stories are turned up in other departments," Stoddard notes.²² Sports, women's, finance, and feature editors are urged to tell the city desk about stories they have uncovered that may be worth page-one play. Often, city side stories will find their way to the women's or sports pages, etc. The system prevents top stories from being guarded until they can be played first by a fringe department. The agreement, however, is that they will get page one play. Some conflicts over policy have come when one of the fringe departments has surrendered a story to city side and, because of mid-day breaking news, the story has been moved to an inside page where it recieved less play than could have been afforded by the fringe department that originated it.

Writers with specialties increasingly are coming to be assigned to adjustable shifts. When events are planned in the specialist interest-area at night, their schedule will be arranged so that they cover them rather

²²Stoddard, interviewed Oct. 1, 1971.

than assign an evening-shift reporter unfamiliar with the material.²³

Stoddard was asked whether the drift away from specialization and toward writing reporters has caused the beat system to break down. Stoddard said that the drift has at least altered the beat system. He sees the change as having "broken down the automatic defense mechanism" of reporters when they have missed a story and the competition has picked it up. The move away from rigid assignment to beats has tended to reduce the tendency for reporters to withhold a news story or for some reason wait, without the city editor's knowledge, to break the story at the time the reporter desired. Managing Editor Poorman believes the beat system causes reporters to fail to recognize stories as well as to "sit on them." He said he also thinks the beat system has caused the reporter to become preoccupied with certain aspects of a beat which he defines as news to the exclusion of other newsworthy events. If a beat is seen as a topic area rather than a geographic area, the News is trying to move away from specialized beats to general reporters with specialties.

²³Corner.

From Raw Copy to Finished Product

The day's product of the city desk, the wire stories and all pictures--all general news not developed by the fringe departments--flow across the desk of the news editor, the man responsible for the final processing of copy for backshop composition, and for guiding the placement of type in the final newspaper make-up.

The news editor himself is responsible for the selection of the stories that run on pages one and three, for the quality of their headlines, and for the page make-up. His assistant is responsible for the make-up of the remainder of the paper. International wire service news is handled by the cable desk and national wire service news by the telegraph desk. Both work in conjunction with the picture editor to link wire photos with related news stories. A major task of the summary desk is to write the summary of news within each day's edition. The summary runs on page two and each item is followed by the page number on which the story is printed. In all, about forty people work for the news editor, and twenty-five of these work for the slotman as copyreaders. The slotman controls the flow of copy and checks the completed headlines before either sending them to the composing room or to the news editor. Once the copy reaches the composing room it is the general responsibility of the printers, but a make-up editor stationed in the composing room continually

monitors the incoming copy. The make-up editor directs the printers as type is placed in the chase forms, solving the multitude of problems that arise in attempting to follow a page dummy or layout plan.²⁴

There is a communications problem between the city desk and the news desk because of the temporal distance that exists between the two operations. The news editor's crew begins arriving about 11:00 P.M. with additions to the crew scheduled as the major loads come--at midnight, 1:00 A.M.; 3:30 A.M., 4:30 A.M. and 8:30 A.M. Thus, sufficient people are on hand when the major crush of effort occurs in preparation for the 8:30 edition, the second largest edition printed in terms of circulation, and remain on hand through the makeovers that follow.²⁵ The major communications medium between the two desks is the ubiquitous memorandum. The city editor nightly leaves a letter noting the exclusive stories, those that involved special effort, and those that the News was able to report with some advantage over competition. This provides the news editor with some idea of the city editor's view of the significance of a story. These notes also come from the assistant managing editor and the managing editor.²⁶

²⁴Easter.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Tremblay.

A national desk, established in April, 1971, coordinates the efforts of the seven-man Washington bureau and national and international correspondents. The national desk, or the national affairs editor, serves as the city editor of the national and international scene and is more concerned with guiding the Washington bureau and correspondents to story ideas that will not be duplicated by the wire services than he is with the final product. The stories generated or coordinated by the desk go straight to the city desk; the national desk initiates stories but does not concern itself with their processing.²⁷ At first glance, it appears that the national editor falls under the news editor's domain. His desk is physically located in the news editor's desk complex. The national editor falls under the managing editor on the same plane as the news editor and assistant managing editors, although with a different level of responsibility.

Zoning Evolves as a Competitive Technique

On March 1, 1971, the Detroit News entered an aggressive and ambitious zoning program designed to tailor the largest circulation daily evening newspaper in the nation to the localized needs of Detroit and its suburbs. The Detroit three-county area was split into four zones:

²⁷Easter.

Table 20. Wire services to which the Detroit News subscribes.

Wire Source and Name	Speed (min.)	Upper Case Lower Case uc/lc	Justifi- cation	Frequency (hours)
Associated Press A wire	60	uc/lc	yes	24
Associated Press B wire	60	uc/lc	yes	24
AP Michigan Big Cities wire (state wire)	60	uc/lc	yes	24
NANA (North American Newspaper Alliance) (leased from AP)	60	uc		
NANA (spare)	60	uc		
Associated Press (spare)	60	uc/lc	yes	
AP Race wire	60	uc/lc	yes	
AP Race wire (duplicate)	60	uc/lc	yes	
AP Supplemental Sports wire	60	uc/lc	yes	
AP Supplemental Sports wire (duplicate)	60	uc/lc	yes	
AP Sports wire	60	uc/lc	yes	
AP D market wire	60	uc/lc	yes	
AP Dataspeed market wire	15,000	uc/lc		1
United Press Inter- national A wire	60	uc		24
UPI B wire	60	uc		20
UPI State wire	60	uc		24
UPI Race wire	60	uc		
UPI Sports wire	60	uc		20
Dow Jones Financial wire	60			
Press Relations wire	60	uc		

Table 20. Continued.

Wire Source and Name	Speed (min.)	Upper Case Lower Case uc/lc	Justifi- cation	Frequency (hours)
Washington Star/ N.Y. Times wire	60	uc		
Washington Post/ N.Y. Times wire	60	uc		12
Weather wire	60	uc		24
Teletex A	60	uc		
Teletex B	60	uc		
Local race wire	60	uc		

NOTE: Until November 1971, the News subscribed to the Reuters news service. It arrived on a sixty character per minute printer in upper case only.

Metro North, which consists of Oakland County; Metro East, which consists of all Macomb County; Metro West, which consists of all Wayne County excepting the inner city, which is Metro Detroit. Metro West space includes the Dearborn and Downriver page(s) in which news of this area is concentrated.

The News saw itself as ahead of all competing papers--the most relevant competition being the suburban dailies--in national and state news, but the need for local news was not being met, indeed could not be met. The four part-run zones could fill this gap and change the image of the News, which was becoming strongly identified with the inner city. Zoning was seen as allowing the

reader to identify the newspaper with his community, yet retain the massive service attributes of a large metropolitan newspaper which no suburban daily could afford.²⁸

Zoning is strictly a long-run benefit for the News. Advertising was not part of the Metro zoning decision and to date there has been no increased effort by advertising salesmen to promote zoned advertising more aggressively than it has been promoted for the last eight to ten years, the period the News has been zoning for advertising. The goal was to create a foundation for circulation increases in the suburbs. Coincidentally, the zoning also provided the city with improved news coverage.²⁹ News officials say there is little question, however, that ultimately the four Metro sections will carry a heavy volume of advertising and that classified advertising will be zoned.

Plant capacity appears to be a major reason why the News is not pushing zoned advertising. In critical areas, the backshop approaches 100 per cent capacity. This is particularly true of the linecasters which appear to be receiving marginal preventive maintenance. Display advertising is set by cold type, but a surge in display advertising would mean more news space. Zoned classified

²⁸James T. Dorris, Detroit News general manager, interviewed Oct. 8, 1971.

²⁹Stoddard, Sept. 30, 1971.

advertising will wait until the Sterling Heights plant is in operation in 1973. All classified is set on the line-casters. An equally important capacity problem is that without preprinting--printing the night before and inserting the section into the next day's product--the press capacity is ninety-six pages. Considering that the use of color advertising cuts press capacity because additional press units are needed for color, the News appears to consistently operate near the maximum capacity of its presses. A surge of zoned advertising may consistently force the newspaper beyond the capacity of its presses--or require restrictive devices that can be avoided simply by not promoting zoned advertising.

News officials play down the plant capacity problem. They say that the goal is an improved editorial product and that if this is achieved, the advertising will come automatically. Also, advertising has not been pushed to allow editorial and circulation departments to test their ability to handle the program. A News official says he believes that increasing the zone advertising lineage too early would have "muddied the waters."³⁰ Zoning was unquestionably a test for the circulation and editorial departments, but the real test appears to be in the composing room. The move to Metro doubled the effective news

³⁰Dorris.

THE DETROIT METROPOLITAN AREA

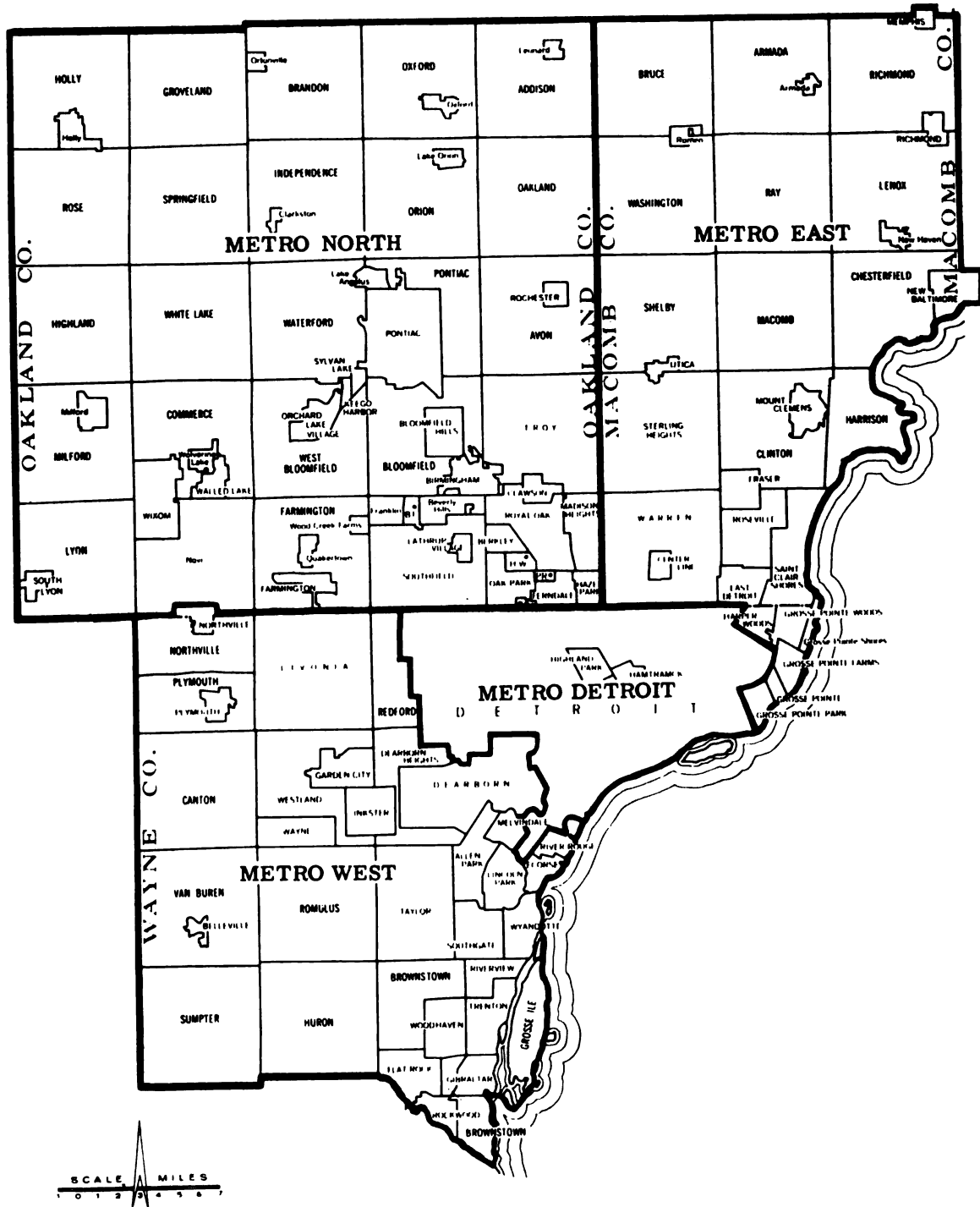


Fig. 10. Map of the Detroit News Metro edition zones.

columns per day, on the average, for each Metro page is used four times, and doubling the news space doubles the amount of type that must be set.³¹

In late 1969, a task force was assembled by Peter B. Clark, News publisher. The entire project was secret, high level, and was conducted by the general manager, the managing editor, an assistant managing editor (Stoddard), the advertising manager, the circulation manager, the operations manager, and the promotion manager.³² The team itself was a first; never before had the News used such a task force to gather information upon which to base recommendations to top management. It is also thought that such an approach may be used for future information gathering and that no other newspaper has used such an approach to making major decisions.³³

The team was charged with determining whether expanded editorial zoning would improve circulation and if so, how should such zoning be approached. "What is significant here is that the word advertising was not mentioned," noted Poorman, the managing editor. The philosophy under which the information-collectors operated was that a good

³¹Herbert Boldt, Detroit News Metro editor, interviewed Sept. 30, 1971.

³²Poorman, Oct. 1, 1971.

³³Dorris.

news product would help to increase circulation, which in turn would attract increased advertising volume. "The aim of any organization is to make money, but that oversimplifies what a newspaper has to do to sell advertising. Relatively few [newspapers] fit the editorial product into the advertisement sales-circulation expansion chain," Poorman added.

In the year and a half the committee met, it commissioned a survey of the Detroit area. The study analyzed reader interests and desires, reader opinions of the News and local papers, other items necessary to determine the probability that zoning would strengthen the News, and how to divide the three-county area into zones.

Production surveys showed that the present News plant facilities could not accommodate the strain of going to Metro sections. Although the survey of plant capacity was obviously disregarded, going Metro did result in "a strain in production--a strain on the entire operation."³⁴

In conjunction with the survey of community reaction, the News performed an analysis of every competing newspaper published in its retail trading area, to find out what were their resources and ability to compete, and why people read them. The team also probed the history of zoning on the News itself.

³⁴Poorman, Oct. 1, 1971.

The task force visited seven other papers across the nation to examine their zoning operations and their competitive situations. "It was found that they had gone into zoning because they thought they should, because they were worried about competing papers, and because zoning gave them added space. But, primarily it was to get more advertising," Poorman said. The kind of analysis used to arrive at the decision to zone was found inadequate at all of the newspapers studied. Little was learned from them. "After seeing what was being done, we would inquire into why, and no one seemed to have any answers. We found vast confusion and found conflicts within staffs concerning what they thought their paper's goals were," Poorman said. All in all, the plans or procedures used by "no other paper could solve Detroit's problem."

Possibly the most similar zoning operation to that of the News was in operation at the Los Angeles Times. It was found that Los Angeles zoned almost entirely for advertising. Metro Editor Herb Boldt said that the downtown Los Angeles Times operation sends punched typesetting tapes and mats to its suburban Orange County plant and tells the zone staff which stories can be deleted and which cannot. Boldt thought that the parent office left the suburban bureau too little room to editorially represent the Orange County area. If such a policy were imposed in the News, he saw it seriously cutting into

potential productivity of his staff which, he said, often produces an average three-and-a-half columns per man per day and consistently more than two columns per man per day.

Costs were not considered by the task force until a determination was made as to the optimum method by which zoning should be approached. Once this was determined, a price tag was calculated and it was concluded the proposal should be presented to the publisher. The main report was submitted September 8, 1970, and was accepted in January, 1971.³⁵ Approval was anticipated, and an extensive recruiting program was launched in late 1970, aimed at spotting the desired newsmen so that they could be quickly contacted and brought to the News. Boldt was appointed Metro editor one month before the program was launched in March, 1971.

A fundamental question the News has faced is the issue of what is its competition. Poorman answers that

within the fraternity the Free Press is treated as competition. We know the people who work there and are conscious of what they are doing, but I spend a lot of time preaching that they are not our competition. Our competition, probably in order, is the host of other ways in which people get news--that can be simplified by saying radio and television--second, competing suburban dailies and third, things that people would rather do than read newspapers.

³⁵Dorris.

He sees the Free Press as a big newspaper, but sufficiently smaller than the News in the crucial areas of advertising, of circulation in the three county area, and of personnel and talent that it is controllable. He had not always thought this, he said, and did not think it following the newspaper union strike in 1968.

The opinion of Poorman and other News management may have been shaped by the community survey conducted during the planning for the Metro editions. The survey showed that the propensity of the population is to prefer afternoon newspapers. "It indicated to us that there is ample room for this newspaper [the News] to grow and compete, and ample opportunity to stay ahead of the morning competition," says James T. (Tom) Dorris, the general manager. He also sees a need for aggressive competition with the small dailies and weeklies. There would be follow-up testing to determine the impact of the Metro editions after an appropriate period of time.

Quality appeared to be a major problem. One of Poorman's major concerns is that the quality of his news product not be allowed to slip, although it seems to be recognized that the same definitions for news cannot be used in the Metro editions, in which smaller news items assume greater significance. Poorman, who compared the Metro product with the general run product, obviously was annoyed by the significance differential, all the while

accepting it. Metro Editor Boldt compares Metro pages with suburban dailies and weeklies and sees his suburban competition succumbing to mundane and inane information for their news columns. He saw his crew as looking for significant news and keeping after a story until it worked itself out or solutions had been found.

Boldt sees himself as "a small town newspaperman inside a metropolitan newspaper." He sees the missions of the city desk and the Metro desk as being significantly different. The city desk, he believes, has to face the the problems of competing with television and has to respond with depth and background stories to maximize the capabilities of print. The same is not true out in the suburbs, although his crew is pushing for all possible depth and significance. He sees his reporters providing "the first truly professional news coverage" in the areas of their responsibility and that their competition is print, not electronic. Because the competition is print media, the competitive effort is more traditional than that required of the city desk. The electronic media, however, are accepted as one of the major factors in the News decision to go to the Metro editions. "We are trying to stay a local paper, a home paper," Editor Martin Hayden explains, noting the weakness of electronic media in detailed news coverage.³⁶

³⁶Martin S. Hayden, editor of the Detroit News, interviewed Sept. 24, 1971.

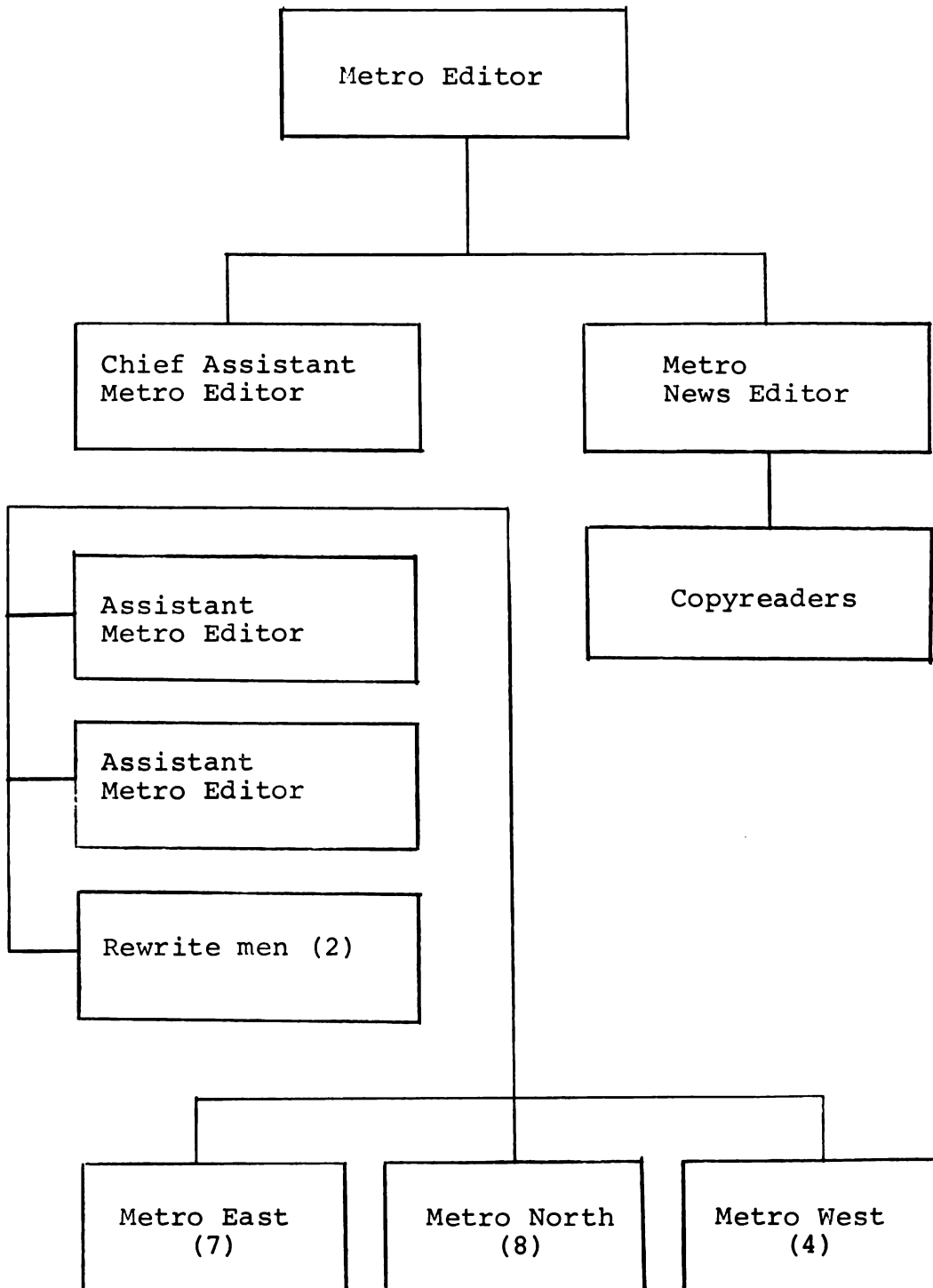


Fig. 11. Superior-subordinate relationship chart of the Detroit News Metro edition operations.

It is generally argued by News employes that the Metro editions are not designed to drive suburban dailies out of existence. The goal is to "serve the growing suburbs with a large, complete metropolitan paper. If it prevents the suburban dailies from becoming large, this is a plus factor," according to Tremblay, the city editor. He sees a need that must be met by the News, for if it fails some other publication will fill the need. There was little question that News management was becoming concerned that the big paper would become locked into its market by suburban papers--in a manner similar to that which suburban newspapers have encirculated the large Chicago metropolitan newspapers.

Boldt reports that the Metro sections have already succeeded in halting the installation of one suburban daily. The Observer group of weeklies has gone so far as to build a plant, he said. The 1970 recession and the emergence of the Metro sections of the News were sufficiently discouraging that the effort was apparently abandoned.

Detroit currently is surrounded by five suburban dailies and by twice that many weeklies.

Although immediate circulation gains from Metro zoning are not expected, the News management expects zoning to demonstrate its significance within five years with News circulation slowly out-climbing its competition.

Possibly the importance will never be demonstrated by a positive activity, but by the halting or retarding of competition.

Two weeks of dry runs preceeded publication of the first Metro editions. The first week of dry run was strictly limited to the editorial department with copy processed to the point that it could be sent to the composing room. The second week copy was set into type and placed in the type forms, but the process halted short of stereotyping. There were several dry runs with the press using dummy plates. No papers were printed. "Overall it went brilliantly," Poorman says. But two errors were made. The first was that the amount of additional space available to the editorial department approximately doubled by the use of Metro space four times and the number of inside men (rewrite, make-up, editors) required was underestimated. Second, the complex problems of advertising layout coupled with the limited composing room capacity almost resulted in chaos.³⁷

The Metro editions provided a bonus of additional space for city news. All of the zoned space was an increase in space; the same space was retained for general run news. Metro Detroit includes the city's eight regional school boards, which the newspaper management thinks is of

³⁷Poorman, Oct. 1, 1971.

significant interest to its inner-city readers, and allows the paper to cover them more rapidly and effectively than can the weeklies and better than the Free Press, which, like the News prior to Metro, has little space for the school board activities.³⁸

The zoning concept is not new for the Detroit News. On March 2, 1960, the News initiated three zoned editions distributed on Wednesdays. These were designed to facilitate advertising sales and had little impact on the editorial side. The Free Press brought zoning to Detroit in August, 1959, when it split the Detroit area into pie shaped segments and demonstrated that zone advertising could be sold. In early 1960, the Detroit Times also began zoning for advertising, splitting the city into three pieces.

In August, 1960, the News established seven Wednesday zones in a bid to gain dominance in the zone advertising field. The Free Press, with its early lead, held that dominance through much of 1961. In October, 1960, the News established seven Sunday zones. In November it purchased the assets of the Detroit Times, removing it from the competitive picture. In February, 1961, the News continued, apparently by trial and error, to adjust its zoning plan. It cut back to four Sunday zones and

³⁸Stoddard, Sept. 30, 1971.

established a state zone. In October, 1965, the application of formal research resulted in the first Thursday zoning and the first major effort at editorial zoning. By 1966, the pattern of seven Thursday zones, three inside the city for advertising and four in the suburbs for editorial and advertising. The Wednesday and Sunday zoning was retained for advertising although there was some women's page editorial space. The product on Thursday was in supplement form and provided about twelve columns of newshole for each zone. Stoddard was named the first zone editor and had eight reporters who also wrote for the city desk. The zones roughly corresponded to the present ones, but with two zones in western Wayne County. There were circulation gains that were attributed to zoning and part-run advertising increased.³⁹

The leap into Metro zoning in March, 1971, was cushioned somewhat by emphasizing one zone, which was Oakland County, or Metro North. There was sufficient staff increase in all areas that it was believed the News could maintain a competitive posture with local media, but Metro North was fully staffed with eight people. In June, 1971, Metro East (Macomb County) was increased to seven people. As of October, 1971, there were four full-time reporters in Metro West (western Wayne County), with the

³⁹Poorman, Oct. 1, 1971.

goal being expansion to six. The four are aided by some part-time help and by the city-county bureau, which covers Wayne County courthouse activity for the zone.⁴⁰

When Metro East was enlarged in June, the staff was adjusted in favor of inside men to improve the balance of inside men-reporters to a more efficient ratio.

Prior to moving to the Metro concept, the zoned sections employed twenty-two people in the editorial side, eleven of whom were reporters (a 1:1 ratio of reporters to support). On March 1, 1971, this number increased to thirty-seven people, of whom nineteen were reporters. In June, the number increased again, to forty-eight people, of whom twenty-four were reporters.⁴¹ The reporters are split between five offices spread throughout the suburbs, not including the central news office on Lafayette Boulevard in downtown Detroit. Boldt tries to keep the load per reporter limited to three or four communities. He has allowed the reporters to work out of the office they find most convenient. The majority of the copy is transmitted to the central office over nineteen Xerox Telecopies or facsimile machines. The Telecopiers require between four and six minutes a page to transmit. Some stories are phoned into the main office and handled by rewrite personnel.⁴²

⁴⁰Boldt.

⁴¹Poorman, Oct. 1, 1971.

⁴²Boldt.

Boldt's editing staff in the central office handles all of the editing of Metro copy, writes the headlines, and completes page layout dummies; Metro news does not go through the news editor. Although Metro Detroit news is generated on the city desk, the copy is given its final processing and dummied by the Metro editors.

"We try and hew the line that a story that is general run caliber is put in general run. This initiates people to reading the entire paper," according to Boldt. How does the Metro desk keep from getting a provincial outlook? Easy, says Boldt, for both AME Stoddard and CE Tremblay want all stories of general run quality and while a large part of the check on him is a post event check, it is nevertheless a check. This oversimplifies Boldt's problem, however, for stories do not neatly fall in the category of general run or Metro section. Commonly, a story must run in all Metro sections, but requires a significant rewrite or alteration in size or play between Metro sections to accommodate the varying interests of the population groups in the event. Turning the story over to the city desk for general run will mean a common denominator will be selected and thus it will get inadequate play or detail for those close to the event and will be overplayed for those far from it. This is a problem that must be solved story by story and results in

significant communication between the Metro and the city desks.⁴³

Three photographers are assigned to Boldt each week, one for each zone. They cover sports, women's news, and straight news. Technically, the Metro editor is responsible for women's news and sports, both of which have Metro sections, but it has worked out, in fact, that each of these departments handles its own speciality, including editing and page dummies. There is usually one Metro page in each of the women's and sports sections. These pages are usually not in the same section of the paper as the main Metro news; Metro has become a thoroughly integrated concept, not simply an inserted section.

The size of the sports and women's Metro pages is apparently determined almost solely by the amount of advertising available, although there is some attempt to hold open a minimum newshole on any given day. The Metro pages have allowed increased emphasis on high school sports and have permitted the News to substantially increase publication of wedding and engagement pictures.⁴⁴

As of March 31, 1971, the daily Metro Detroit circulation was 261,000; Metro North, 87,000; Metro East, 113,000; and Metro West, 167,000. On Sunday, Metro

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

Detroit circulation jumps to 303,000, Metro North to 130,000, Metro East to 141,000, and Metro West to 196,000.

No one says the Metro editions have caused circulation to increase, but it is argued that circulation is continuing to grow and that Metro probably is making a contribution. It is also noted that readers are aware of the Metro concept and look for specific Metro editions. Editor Martin Hayden puts forth the most forceful argument that Metro may be doing its job. He says that while the News circulation is down 3,000 papers over the March circulation figure, it is due to the normal summer slump and is an increase over 1970 for the corresponding period. This is seen as probably due to Metro competition with the suburban dailies. This relative circulation increase, incidentally, pushed the News well ahead of the second largest circulation daily evening newspaper in the nation, the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.⁴⁵

There has been an apparent decline in the circulation of suburban dailies surrounding Detroit, but the 1970 economic recession and natural seasonal adjustments are more likely to be the cause than Metro editions with their short life.

⁴⁵Hayden, interviewed Oct. 5, 1971.

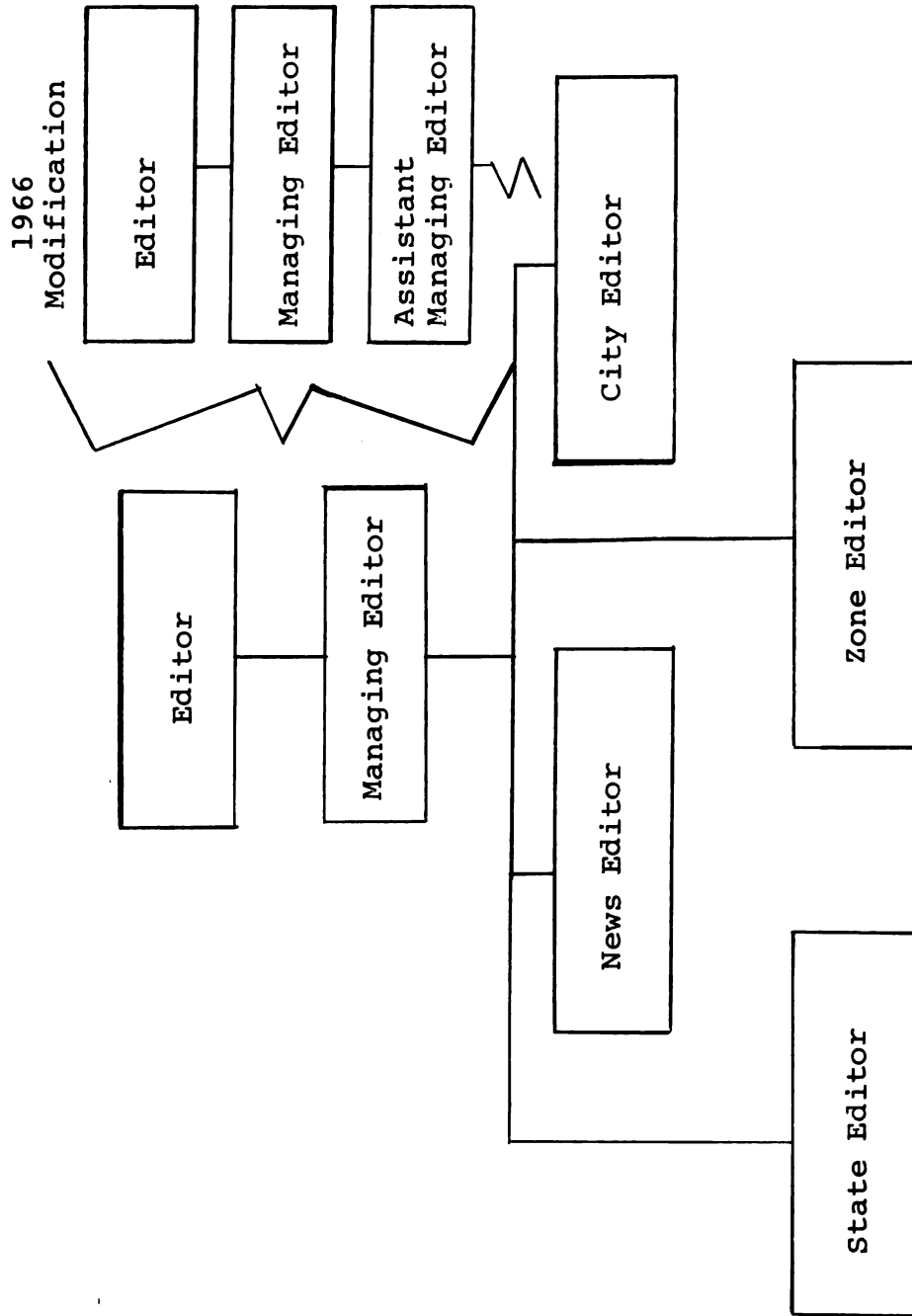


Fig. 12. Detroit News newsroom management organization circa 1964.

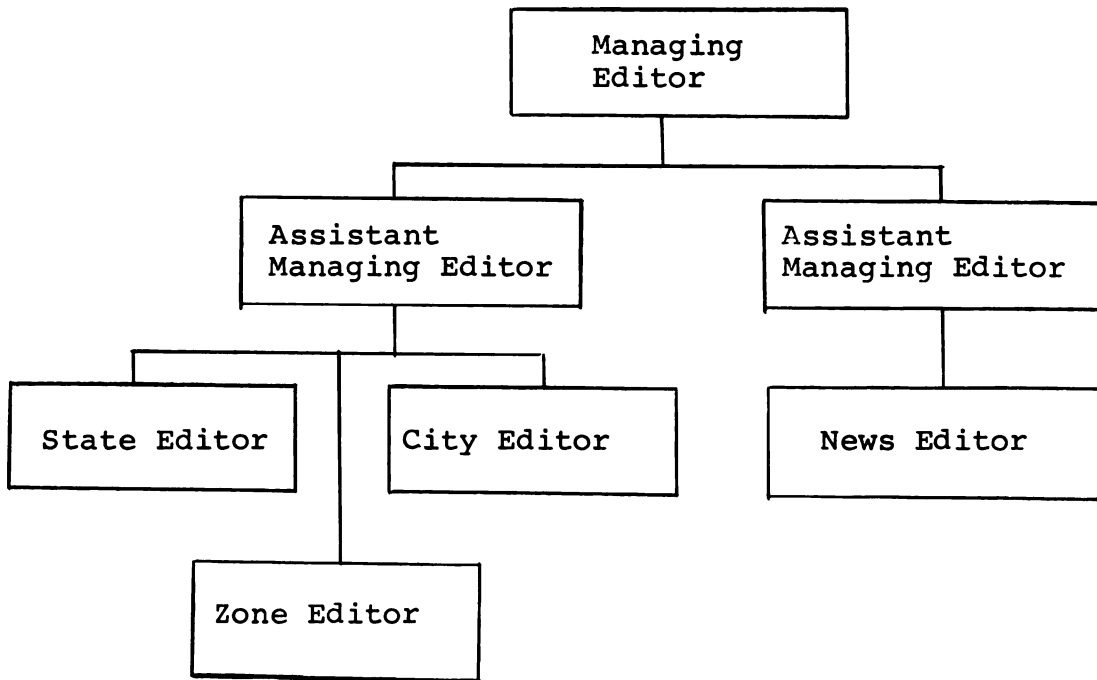


Fig. 13. Detroit News newsroom management organization circa 1967.

Staff Changes Add Planning Capacity

Recent evolution of the top newsroom management has brought increased planning capacity. In 1964 (see Fig. 12), the managing editor had direct responsibility for the news editor, the city editor, the state editor and the zone editor. About this time the zone editor had available only twelve columns of editorial space once a week. In 1966, an assistant managing editor was added to the superior-subordinate relationship chart. In 1967, there was a second assistant managing editor slot opened. At this time one had charge of the news-gathering functions

and another had charge of the news-presentation operations.

Since 1967, the chart has tended to revert to its old form. There are now three assistant managing editors. Two have staff functions including such problems as personnel, budgets, and the planning for the pending changes involving the Sterling Heights plant. The third assistant managing editor, Stoddard, holds the title almost by virtue of a shortage of other titles. Most properly, Stoddard should be titled city editor and City Editor Tremblay assistant city editor. Logically this would require that the present assistant city editors be called assistants to the assistant city editor--at best an awkward title.

Associate Editor John O'Brien said he believed the News was undermanned at the executive level prior to the addition of the assistant managing editors, which provided planning capacity and allowed for appropriate coordination of special projects.⁴⁶

The Meeting Is the Major Communications Tool

Like most, maybe all, modern corporations, the editorial department of the News uses the meeting as a major

⁴⁶O'Brien, now nearing retirement, has significant perspective as he served as managing editor of the News from January 11, 1965, to June 23, 1969, at which time Poorman was named to succeed him.

means of communication. The publisher meets with his department heads once weekly, on Thursday. Six usually attend including the executive vice-present, the general manager, the editor, the managing editor and the associate editors (John O'Brien and Robert Lubeck). Others are called as needed.⁴⁷

At 11:00 A.M. daily, Martin Hayden, the editor, meets with his entire staff of major editors. This includes the fringe departments. The major advantage seen in the morning meeting of the editorial department heads is that it gives them an opportunity to learn about what is going on in the newsroom and it allows them to get a general glimpse of Hayden's views on matters. Hayden has a desire to hear from everyone in attendance; he wants to get a glimpse of everyone's views. Some of the editors see those who are below Poorman, the managing editor--virtually everyone in attendance--as being inhibited by his presence and thus unwilling to discuss matters with Hayden, Poorman's superior, until they had the benefit of Poorman's view on the subject at hand. Others didn't agree that Poorman's presence particularly inhibited anyone. The morning editorial meeting is an innovation of Hayden's--his way of accomplishing the job.⁴⁸

⁴⁷O'Brien, interviewed Oct. 12, 1971.

⁴⁸O'Brien, Sept. 12, 1971.

Within the city room itself, there are few meetings. There are no weekday meetings for the city desk--the desk is established in such a manner that there is constant consultation and this is reinforced by the memo system. On Wednesday and Friday a meeting is held with reference to the Sunday and Monday papers. Usually the managing editor, assistant managing editors, city editor, Sunday desk editor, Sunday news editor, Metro editor, state desk editor, and women's editor attend. Here, the content of the Sunday paper is considered and some attention is given to the content of the Monday paper.

Feature Department a Major "Fringe"
Of the Newsroom

At the beginning of this chapter it was suggested that the news-gathering function of the Detroit News could be dichotomized into the city desk and fringe elements. By this definition the Metro operation can be designated as a fringe element, but only with due reservation because of the importance it has assumed in the newsroom. Four other major fringe departments should be quickly discussed. They include sports, finance, women's news, and the feature section.

The largest of the four departments is the feature section and it is organized under an associate editor who reports to the editor and has stature approximately equivalent to that of the managing editor. Robert Lubeck,

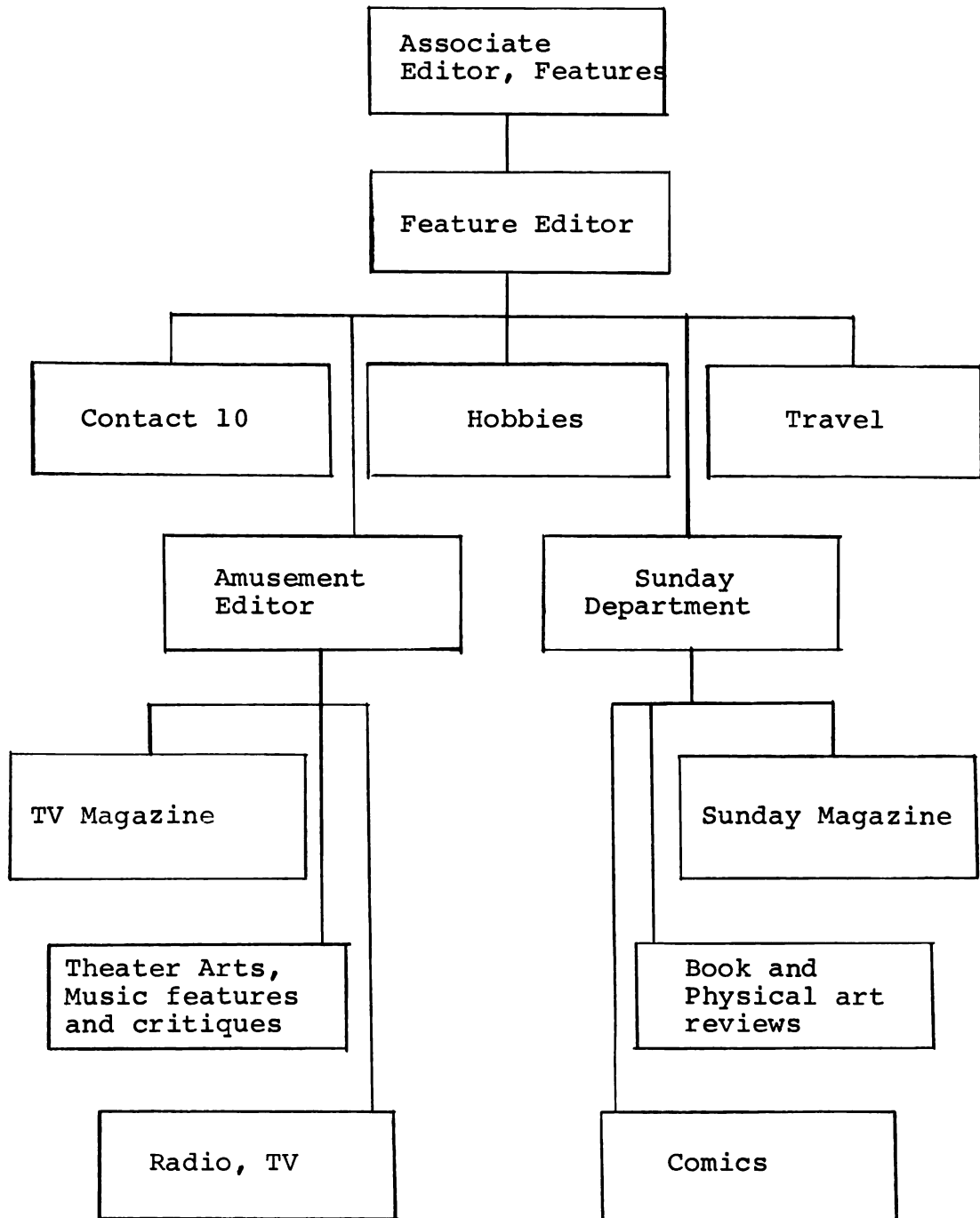


Fig. 14. Superior-subordinate relationship chart of the Detroit News feature section.

associate editor in charge of features, said he sees himself as being in charge of the "extras" of the paper. His operations are designed to provide depth to the personality of the News, and to achieve this he spends about \$1 million annually for features, columnists, cartoons, etc. About sixty people work in the department in varied functions (see Fig. 14). While the feature department is not entirely Sunday oriented, much of its activity is aimed at the readership of the Sunday paper. Contact 10 (the ombudsman column), the hobbies sections, and travel section are found among the pages of the daily newspaper. Much of the work by the amusement editor and most by the Sunday department is aimed at the Sunday paper.⁴⁹ As in the case of the other fringe departments, the features are edited and dummied by editors under Lubeck.

Many of the activities of the feature department appear to have been shaped during what someone on the News calls a "panic," which lasted about four years, from 1965 to 1969. A quick check of historic circulation trends shows that during this period the Free Press, although remaining significantly below the News, was climbing rapidly in circulation; the News was not climbing. If the rate of climb could have been maintained, the Free

⁴⁹Robert E. Lubeck, Detroit News associate editor in charge of features, interviewed Oct. 6, 1971.

Press could have overtaken the News in the early 1970s. Such was the general concern, at least.

It was during this time that Contact 10, the News ombudsman column, was installed in the feature department. The Free Press had started its ombudsman column, Action Line, in 1965, to become one of the first papers in the nation to effectively use the concept. According to some, the majority of the middle management thought ombudsman columns were a fad for both newspapers and readers and in time would succumb to the fate of all fads. During the 1968 strike, a poll was apparently taken of this middle-management staff to determine whether launching such a column should be recommended to the publisher. Reportedly, only one voted yes out of about a dozen; Lubeck says he voted yes. Lubeck says he pushed at the time to have the column run on the front page where the Free Press runs Action Line. The publisher felt sufficiently strongly about the column that he ordered it set in motion. The first year it ran on page one where Action Line had always run in the Free Press and has continued to run. After the year, the column was moved to page one of section B six days a week but kept on page one on Saturday. Eleven people are on the staff that write the column.

"The Free Press had a three-year lead," Lubeck said.

Every survey showed that it was what readers were buying the Free Press for. In the beginning I believed that the ombudsman column was just a reading column

and did not take it seriously. But that went out the window quick. We get 1,800 calls a day, all that can be taken on the recording machine, and 400 or 500 letters. Many are desperate. I think the News is forced to consider their problems. Readers don't have a chance any more. Ombudsmen are really what newspapers are all about.

He added that he saw the ombudsman column as the heart of the newspaper.

Whether or not it is the heart of a newspaper, it has proved to be of significant social value. Post Office inspectors, Federal Bureau of Investigation officials, auto companies, chain stores, and even Ralph Nadar's people inspect the filed complaints that come into the newspaper. Commonly, there is a pattern to the complaints that identify problems that can be turned over to the Better Business Bureau or the prosecutor's office.

Lubeck said he thought that it is significant that Contact 10 names offenders. He says this is usually done only when there is a pattern of complaints; companies' names are not used in the column when the complaint is the result of a simple error by some low-ranking employee.

A less successful venture during this intensive period to out maneuver the Free Press was the Other Section, a once-weekly overground-underground newspaper and an experiment in journalism. It was launched in September, 1969, in an attempt to reach the eighteen to thirty-five-year-old age group on its terms. The Other Section, produced by the feature department, had good readership,

but there were two serious flaws. First, a good cross-section of the entire Detroit News readership read the Other Section, not simply the youth. There was no reason to think youth read the Other Section in greater numbers than read the News as a whole. Second, it was costing the News about \$500,000 a year to produce and the advertising it attracted was negligible. While the Other Section missed its readership target and while it failed to attract advertising, it was found that the Other Section added significantly to the average time spent with the paper of the more than 40 per cent that read it. An average of seconds less than thirty minutes is spent daily with the Detroit News by readers who did not read Other Section. Those who read it spent nine-and-a-half minutes doing so, spending an average of thirty-seven minutes with the paper. Thus, almost all of the time spent reading Other Section was additive.⁵⁰

Publisher Clark termed the Other Section an "interesting experiment" and "a calculated risk" aimed at an age group. He added that the outcome suggested that the News over-estimated the homogeneity of this age group. He added that he felt this age group could also be reached through the sports and recreation pages, the automobile

⁵⁰Lubeck, interviewed Oct. 21, 1971.

articles, the front page, etc.--areas where the News has been active and has continued to be active.

He also saw dilemmas in editing such a production; acquiring a staff for such an effort, and if found inside the paper or hired from outside for the job, how do such personnel fit into the existing staff? The News hired a staff with underground newspaper background especially for the task. Clark also explained that the overground-underground newspaper concept meant that the newspaper had to contain within itself a contradiction. "Can a good, grey midwestern newspaper also be an underground newspaper?" The focus of editorial criticism of the Other Section was considerably at variance (liberal, anti-war, anti-establishment) with the editorial posture of the News. (A News staffer outside the editorial department said the editorial stance of the News compares closely with that of the Chicago Tribune although the editorial writing style is different.) Clark added that an internal conflict might be within the realm of possibility somewhere, but not on the News. For all of its glamour, novelty, and inventiveness, the Other Section was not paying its way and died in October, 1970.

In January, 1969, the News withdrew as a subscriber to This Week, a preprinted Sunday supplement, in favor of its own viable pictorial, the Sunday News Magazine. The News feature department had long produced a pictorial

magazine using some syndicated material from Metro Group. In 1966, Metro Group was dropped, the present name was placed in the logotype of the pictorial, the magazine enlarged, the emphasis on pictures decreased and the emphasis on local copy increased. It grew from about forty pages in 1965 to sixty in 1970. The demand for color advertising outstripped the press capacity and resulted in the purchase of new presses in 1970, by the firm that prints the magazine, to increase press capacity 50 per cent. The magazine ranks behind only the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times and St. Louis Post-Dispatch magazines in national advertising lineage.⁵¹

Probably one of the most strikingly successful moves by the feature department occurred at another period in the News history when the Free Press appeared to be closing the circulation gap. In 1959, the News began its own television magazine. In appearance it resembles TV Guide. The little magazine, about six by eight inches, was the apparent cause of an increase in the Sunday News circulation by one hundred thousand newspapers over the period of one year. (See historical circulation data.)

⁵¹William W. Lutz, "The Rise and Decline of the National Newspaper Supplement and the Rebirth of the Locally Edited Magazine," March, 1971, unpublished manuscript.

The goal has been to make the magazine self-sufficient--it could be sold on the news stands as a TV Guide. It contains descriptions of TV movies and background on the stars in addition to a calendar of television programs. Considerable money and time are spent providing background information for sporting events as each sport comes into season and is watched on television.⁵²

The bulk of the product is printed in black and white on standard thirty-two pound newsprint. This core is wrapped with several pages of high quality paper that is designed for color printing. The finished product is stapled. The advertising, pictures, and features on the color-wrapper pages are syndicated to several West Coast newspapers.

The advertising response is significant. Lubeck says 125 advertisers are waiting to advertise in the television magazine. The display advertising department says it takes about six months from the time an advertiser requests an advertisement to be placed in the magazine until space is available.

The magazine is zoned for Detroit, Lower Michigan, and Northern Michigan. The majority of the advertising is deleted from the television magazine distributed in Northern Michigan, where only 70,000 papers sold.⁵³

⁵²Lubeck, Oct. 6, 1971.

⁵³Ibid.

Sports Has Its Own Manner
of Specialization

The twenty-four man sports department of the News may well provide one of the most significant ingredients of the personality of the newspaper.

Like the other departments it is self-contained with its own copy processors and its own zone pages. The sports department has carried the concept of the general reporter with a speciality or specialties further than has the city desk. All of the non-Metro sports reporters and photographers specialize in a limited number of sports but are capable of covering most major sports.

The demands on the department are being shaped by the increasing number of night sporting events and the increased need to travel to cover sporting events. The organization of sports parallels that of the city desk in that there is approximately a 1:1 ratio of reporters to support personnel. There are sixteen writers and two photographers out of approximately twenty-four. There are also a number of correspondents who provide copy.⁵⁴

Two writers are assigned to the zones. There is a sports Metro editor, but his activities are partially integrated into the main sports copy desk and are expected to be fully merged eventually. Presently the zone pages

⁵⁴Robert R. Sieger, Detroit News sports editor, interviewed Oct. 13, 1971.

are produced by the sports Metro editor on a Monday-through-Thursday basis but the Friday zones are produced by the main desk. Every Saturday there is a sports page(s) available to be zoned. Sports is the only department of the paper that zones on Saturday. There is no Sunday sports zoning.

The associate sports editor serves as the counterpart to the special projects desk of city side. He coordinates special and project stories and special sections, etc.⁵⁵

Deadlines Awkward for Women's Section

The inability of the women's pages to handle breaking news puts the department in a limbo between features and hard news. Monday, Tuesday and Friday are the only days when the women's section is able to handle breaking news. On Monday, women's section copy must be sent to the composing room for both Tuesday and Wednesday editions and also for the Kitchen Talk section. Kitchen Talk is a large section that often runs thirty pages, about 80 per cent of which is filled with food advertisements. Most of the copy is recipes and food features.⁵⁶

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Barbara Hitsky, Detroit News assistant women's editor, interviewed Oct. 7, 1971.

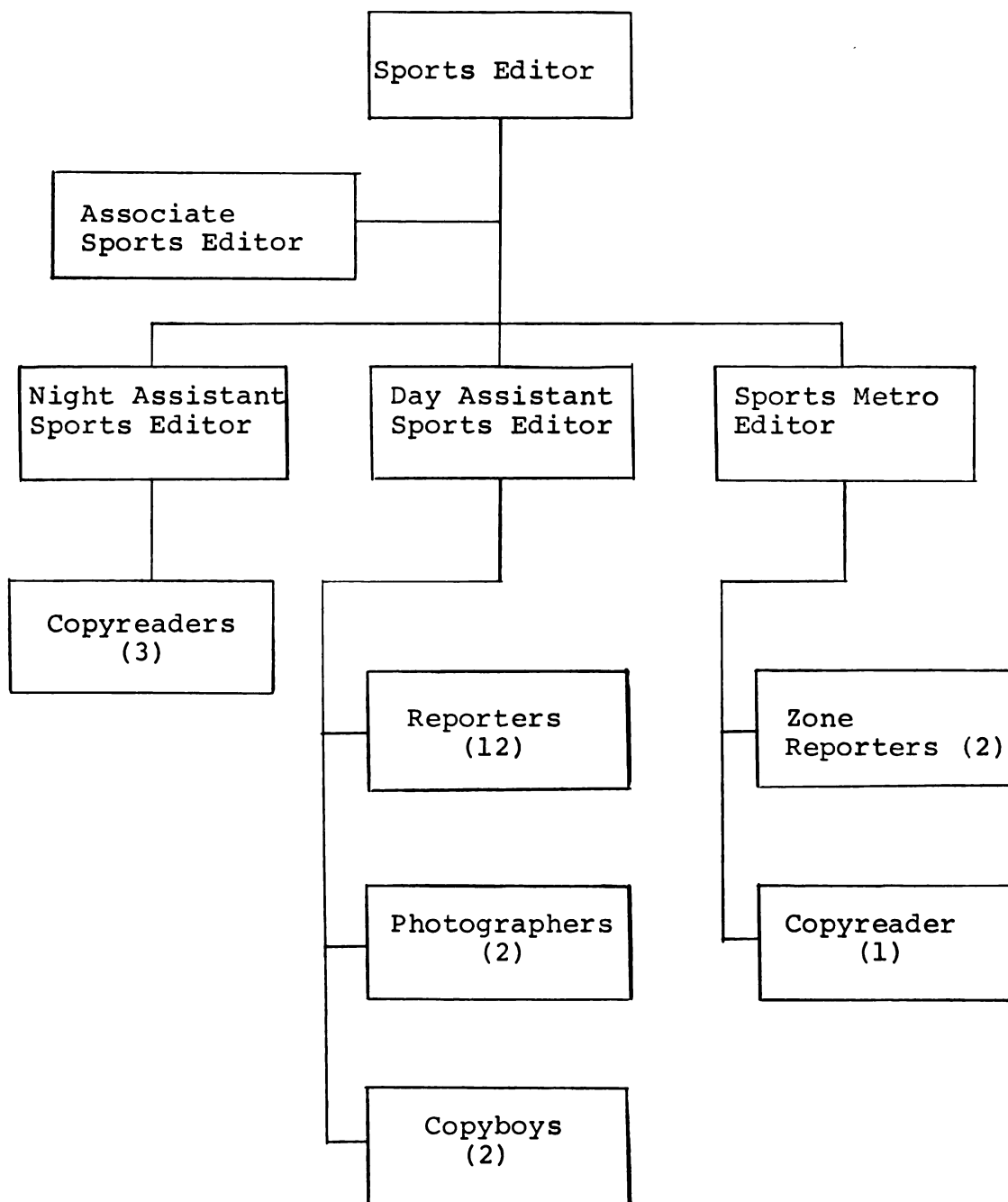


Fig. 15. Organization of the Detroit News sports department.

The emphasis on society is decreasing. There is currently only one society writer. Several reporters were assigned to write social news as recently as 1969.

The women's section also has its own copy desk, which edits and prepares copy for Kitchen Talk, the women's Metro pages, and for the full run woman's news pages. Experience, the News advice column, writes its own heads and dummies its own page.

The Metro pages contain only local copy. This rule is met by a women's Metro editor who, with an assistnat, guides two staff writers and about thirty correspondents. There is no problem filling Metro pages although the number of columns available each day varies widely.

Six general reporters cover events that do not fall into the domain of the six beat reporters. The six beats are fashion, food, beauty, home furnishings, society, and consumer news. All reporters occasionally write stories for the city desk.

Although the News purchases considerable syndicated material, little is used because of the ability of the staff to generate local copy.⁵⁷

The Detroit News women's section was judged the best in the nation in the 100,000 and over circulation category for 1970. The award was made by the National

⁵⁷Ibid.

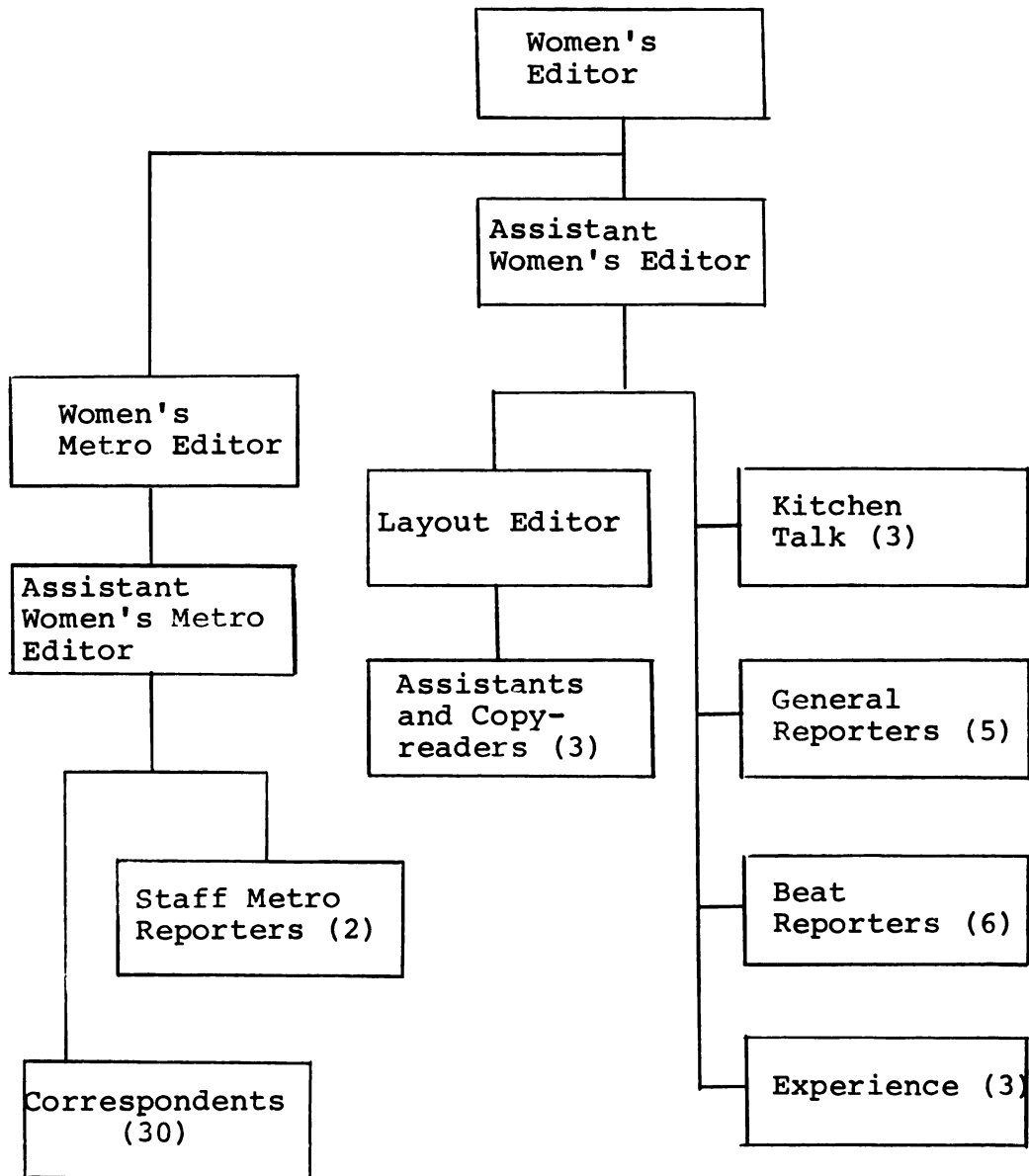


Fig. 16. Organization of the Detroit News women's department.

Federation of Press Women.⁵⁸ The department has also won other awards.

Business and Finance Has No Zoned Pages

Business and finance is a small department with seven employees. Unlike the other major departments of the paper, it does not put out zoned pages. The automotive writer is considered a member of the department (see Fig. 7), but he also has significant direct responsibilities to the city editor as a specialty writer.

The section fills about seventeen columns daily, about ten of which are markets. On Saturday, the average is three or four columns jumping to thirty-four or thirty-six columns on Sunday. The space devoted to markets in the Sunday News is double the weekday space.⁵⁹

The finance department is served by the Dow-Jones and the Associated Press national business wires for copy. The markets arrive on an AP Dataspeed wire.

⁵⁸"News Women's Pages Judged Best in Country," Newsfolks, Summer, 1971, p. 11.

⁵⁹Dennis Shere, Detroit News business and finance editor, interviewed Oct. 12, 1971.

CHAPTER V

ASPECTS AND ATTITUDES OF NEWS MANAGEMENT

The Evening Newspaper Dominates What Might Have Been a Morning Market

Why is the Detroit News a strong evening newspaper in a market that, to an outside observer, might as well have given its support to the morning newspaper? There appears to be no way to determine the exact answer to this question, but answers appear to fall into three categories: historical accidents, Detroit market characteristics, and aggressiveness on the part of the News.

During its recent history, the city has been served by more evening than morning newspapers. Until the Detroit Times succumbed to the pressures of competition in 1960, the evening newspapers--the Times and the News--sold two-thirds of the total newspaper circulation, leaving the other third to the morning Free Press. Until the last few months before the purchase of the assets of the Times by the News, however, the News held the circulation lead of all three newspapers.

Traditionally, the News has dominated the Detroit newspaper market. Editor Martin Hayden recalls that in the early 1900s, when the Tribune was being printed as the

morning edition of the News, a joint Sunday edition was printed under the logotype of the News-Tribune. At that time the Free Press dominated the Sunday field. When the News absorbed the Tribune, the Sunday edition was renamed the News. The change of name was the only change about the Sunday edition, but the name News was enough to draw sufficient Free Press readers that the News soon dominated the Sunday field.¹

Detroit has been described as a "lunch bucket community." The family habits appear to shape the choice between morning and evening newspapers. The preponderance of families do not appear to awaken early enough to allow the breadwinner(s) of the family to read the morning newspaper. And, the work shifts of many Detroiters begin early--often they have left for work before the Free Press can be delivered. Further, families tend to have eaten their evening meal by 6:00 P.M. This habit pattern allows the wage-earners to read the evening newspaper prior to the evening television news, and, recognizing this, the News tries to assure the paper is delivered sufficiently early that the housewife has an opportunity to read the paper before her husband's arrival home from work.²

¹Martin S. Hayden, editor of the Detroit News, interviewed Sept. 24, 1971.

²Ibid.

The dominance of the News in Detroit is not all luck. The amount of effort and money expended in maintaining dominance is probably the reason the News has retained its position. The News has never surrendered to traffic but has increased the number of trucks and drivers and shortened routes to increase their delivery speed. Hayden sees many evening metropolitan newspapers surrendering to the traffic and delivery problems.

The News never resorted to the featurized newspaper style, which to Hayden is a symbol of surrender by evening newspapers. The battle to get a paper on the doorstep at the proper time has been costly for both the newspaper and its reader. To deliver the product on time, the News has had to resort to early deadlines. The 8:30 A.M. edition is on the doorstep of many subscribers when they come home at 4:30 or 5:00 P.M.

The home delivery of an early edition generated a number of complaints until the system was altered about 1965 to reduce the number of significant makeover changes. The evening and night crew have been reinforced and the number of highly competent news desk personnel on the night shift has been increased so that the first edition, if not made obsolete by breaking news, could run generally intact all day, although this seldom happens. It is common to change twenty-five to thirty-five pages between the 8:30 A.M. and the 11:30 A.M. editions.

The problem of the early edition being read at 5:00 P.M. is a major reason for the move to Sterling Heights. The new plant will allow trucks to serve important parts of the massive suburban area without bucking the evening rush-hour traffic.

The News also supports a heavy circulation promotion effort designed to appeal to the resident readers--everything from spelling bees to soap box derbys. Zoning allows the News to run a greater proliferation of wedding and engagement pictures in its women's pages; Hayden said he believed this is valuable for building News circulation.³

To retain maximum continuity among its customers, the News has a special airplane edition that is flown to Northern Michigan for about sixty-five days between June and September. For seventeen years the News has been flown north to where many Detroit-area people summer.⁴

News officials say the newspaper does not make money flying the newspapers north and probably loses money; it is believed to be worthwhile to keep customers in the habit of reading a newspaper and in the habit of reading the Detroit News.

Hayden says he cannot explain why a newspaper is a success or failure, adding that he had never seen a paper

³Ibid.

⁴Newsfolks, Summer, 1971, p. 7.

that had begun to slip that was able to reverse its fate. From his perspective of forty years on the News, Hayden observes that the local political view of the paper or community probably had little to do with a newspaper's success, and said there is no reason to think the News does a better job of reflecting the local political views than its competitor. He sees no reason to think that editorial position had anything to do with the decline in circulation of such papers as the Chicago Tribune.

Because of the inability to determine which road leads to success, the News tries to make modifications and innovations carefully. "We are not confident that we know enough about the business to avoid mistakes which could nullify past good--or worse," Hayden said. "This [newspaper management] is a very nebulous business."

Peter B. Clark, the publisher of the News, sees demographics and community histories as having an impact on newspapers, but he sees a good part of the strength of a newspaper being in its organization. He said he thought the organization of people called the Detroit News might be equally successful if it operated the morning paper in the community.⁵ The Detroit News was seen as being attuned in some way to its market, but also, the market is somewhat

⁵Peter B. Clark, Detroit News publisher, interviewed Oct. 15, 1971.

more attuned to print than some other metropolitan areas in the nation. The Detroit newspapers have had better success selling their product than newspapers in most cities, if the market remains stable.

The Destruction of the Free Press
Not Seen as Possible

Clark says he does not think it is possible for the News to push the Free Press out of business. The competition is real and intense, he says, and he thinks the intensity is increasing. The News would not act, if it could, to destroy the Free Press on moral and practical grounds. It would not be proper to bankrupt it because alternative or competitive perceptions of events should be available to the public and it is difficult for a monopoly publication to artificially present alternate perceptions that the market brings automatically.

On practical grounds, being in a competitive market shields a publication from the criticism and abuse that monopoly media must face. This abuse might well offset the advantages of monopoly--given the existing economic strength of the News. Clark says he does not see the electronic media interests of the News in Detroit, WWJ-TV, -AM and -FM, as causing any conflict between it and the Federal Communications Commission if the Free Press did not exist. Besides suburban dailies, there are twenty-two radio stations, four

VHF television stations and two UHF television stations in the Detroit market area.

The News in Competition with Television

The Detroit News management has moved to squarely confront what it visualizes as its major competition--television. In the economic battle of the media, television is a heavyweight, and, recognizing this, the News has yielded before the punch. Its stories have, in large measure, become lengthy and much staff time is spent in the investigation necessary to add depth and perspective to the news. Its news coverage is obviously expensive with a large budget for travel, special correspondents, and special wire services.

Hayden sees television as almost a tool to be used as best possible by newspapers. "Heavy TV coverage sparks newspaper sales," he says, recalling the weekend of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Television was given over to the assassination, but newspapers sold in record numbers.

"Many newspapers tried to pretend that television was not here. The News was the opposite," Hayden said. Early the News printed television schedules and he noted that the TV Magazine was the only newspaper editorial move of which he knew that had caused a noticeable and sustained jump in circulation. Within a year, in 1959 and 1960, some 100,000 subscribers were added to the Sunday News circulation.

It was a case of using television and the interest of the people in television to sell newspapers.

With the appearance of radio, the newspaper extra vanished. The speed of radio could not be matched. The extra and the dominance and monopoly it symbolized might be gone, "but I am convinced that it [radio or electronic media] did not hurt newspaper circulation."⁶

Television has shaped the coverage of events by the News. The News sports staff did not bother with American Football League game coverage before the games came to be carried on national television. But once there were numerous viewers there were numerous interested readers. Hayden noted that people are interested in what the sports writer or the critic have to say concerning the event they have recently watched. This phenomenon was not new to Hayden who recalled, early in his career, watching the final edition of the News held open with a baseball game story being set in type as the game was played. As the game closed, the final type would be dropped in place and the newspaper rushed to the press and then the papers, still sticky with ink, would be rushed to the nearby stadium where sales to those who had just watched the game would be brisk. Not all of the problems that television poses can be solved with such decisive strokes as applied with

⁶Hayden, Sept. 24, 1971.

the TV Magazine. The usefulness of the comics in newspapers is found to be declining, probably because television is satisfying the visual needs of would-be readers. Yet, Hayden explains, there is a high degree of residual adult readership. "We could eliminate a large cost by cutting the Sunday comics. There are two problems: comics have always been the wrapper of the Sunday paper and a lot of people read them."⁷

The News color comics are printed by an outside firm on contract.

The Business Side Dominates the News

"The size of the newspaper, the Detroit News, is controlled by the business side. We do not jump the paper here because the editor wants in jumped," James T. (Tom) Dorris, News general manager, says regarding the space allocation job. Dorris emphasized that this attitude did not create friction between business and editorial sides. He said he thought the "cooperation between business and editorial sides on this newspaper is the best in the industry, barring none."⁸

The editorial side activities are not designed to sell advertising but to meet reader needs and interests, he said, adding: "I believe very strongly that this is a

⁷Ibid.

⁸Tom Dorris, Detroit News general manager, interviewed Oct. 8, 1971.

newspaper and you have to give a lot of consideration to the news or you go down the drain."

The actual allocation of space is by the make-up supervisor who lays out the advertising for the paper according to minimum news holes and certain other gauges. Any space over these minimum quotas is a "gift from the advertising department, and the editorial department can command no additional space" although it can "dicker" for it and leeway advertising can be used to make adjustments.⁹

The allocation of space in the News between editorial and advertising is based on a formula that provides minimum editorial newsholes. For many parts of the paper these minimums are never exceeded. The space for the opinion pages and the space for the comics is the same each day, never more and never less--the minimum is the effective maximum, also.

On Monday through Friday the minimum news hole for general news is forty-five columns with the average about sixty-three columns, each twenty-two inches deep. The difficulties of making up pages with big advertisements leaves a significant amount of space for editorial to fill; the difficulties of advertisement make-up forces the make-up men to enlarge the newshole.¹⁰

⁹Hayden, interviewed Oct. 21, 1971.

¹⁰Albert Abbott, Detroit News assistant managing editor, letter, Nov. 11, 1971.

For the same Monday through Friday, the Metro news-hole minimum average for each zone is 17 columns, sports is 26 columns, finance 17, women's 13, editorial and opinion 16, comics and crosswords, etc., 10, the picture page 8, magazine page 6, radio and television logs 6, and amusements 3.

For four weeks, September 11 through October 8, the average general newshole Monday through Friday was 63.5 columns. The Saturday average for general news was 31.75 columns. An example of an approximately average week was the week of November 1. The general newshole on Monday was 51 columns, Tuesday 47, Wednesday 75, Thursday 88, and Friday 46, for an average of 62.5. The week of October 18 was exceptionally heavy with Monday 51, Tuesday 57, Wednesday 85, Thursday 108, and Friday 73, for an average of 75 columns per day.

For the Sunday edition, the minimum was 58 columns for the general newshole, but the average was between 65 and 75 columns. The typical minimum for Sunday sports was 45, but the actual space depends upon the season and varies from 32 columns to 60 columns. While entertainment has a minimum of 19 columns on Sunday, its average is about 25. Travel also deviates from the minimum. It has a minimum of 5 columns, but averages 10. Further, there are about 10 travel sections a year with up to 25 editorial columns in each.

Other Sunday minimums are finance 34, magazine page 8, women's pages 46, editorial and opinion 16, viewpoint 12, books 6, art 4, hobbies 6, homes and gardens 8, and cross-words, etc., 2. This does not include the TV Magazine or the Sunday News Magazine. For four Sundays, September 17 through October 8, the average general newshole was seventy-two columns.

The business side may be allowed to dominate the newsroom, but the backshop is not. Since Poorman's appointment as managing editor, he has arranged for the newsroom to have the freedom to makeover as many pages between editions as it desires--and the backshop can physically handle. Earlier makeover was limited to fifteen pages an edition; now as many as forty go through makeover in a single edition.¹¹

Organization of the Newspaper Outside the Newsroom

Newsroom operations are under the control of the editor. The remainder of the newspaper is under the general manager, Tom Dorris. The general manager's operations are broken into five departments--accounting, advertising, circulation, operations and building maintenance. About 1,300 are employed in the operations department, almost 700 in circulation, and about 200 in advertising, and 150 in accounting. The garage and fleet section of the operations

¹¹Abbott, interviewed Oct. 12, 1971.

department maintains 148 trucks and 156 automobiles. The employment figures in circulation must take into account the 11,900 paper carriers of which 48 percent are in the city and 52 percent in the suburbs. These paper boys are controlled by district managers who are members of the teamsters union. There are 112 districts in the suburban zone and 104 districts in the city zone. Seventeen "super-contractors" have responsibility for delivery and sales in the state. Each of these contractors has between one and twelve counties for territory.

Two-thirds of the entire accounting department concerns itself with classified advertising. The accounting department also services the other holdings of the Evening News Association, specifically WWJ-TV, -FM, and -AM, and the Commercial Marine Terminal.

Labor relations, make-up, and security are staff sections directly under the general manager. The make-up supervisor and his assistant are responsible for placing the advertisements in the newspaper and insuring that the appropriate space remains for editorial use. When space conflicts arise, they are handled through the general manager.

Promotion and personnel departments are under the executive vice-president and are available to serve, not only the Detroit News, but other holdings of the Evening News Association. Personnel is responsible for the personnel policy, recruitment and employe services. Services include

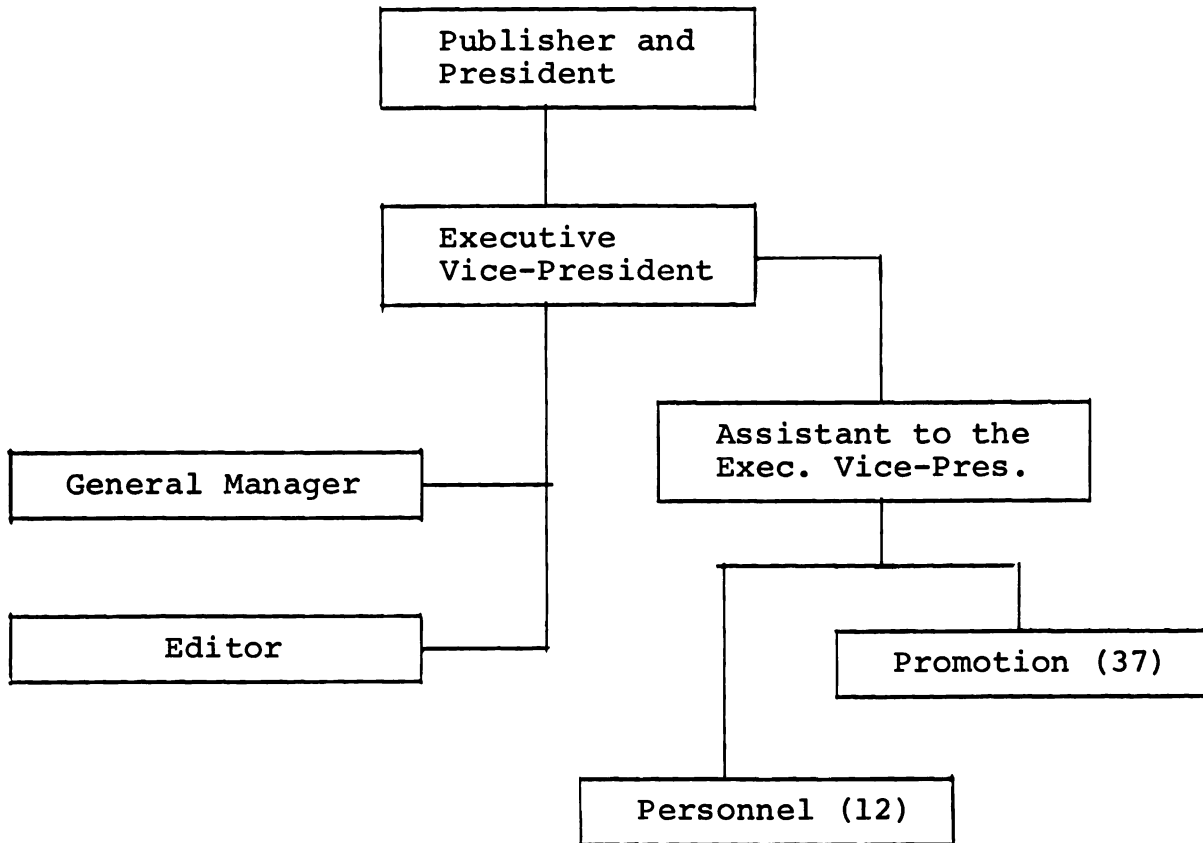


Figure 17. Chart of organization for the top management of the Evening News Association and the Detroit News.

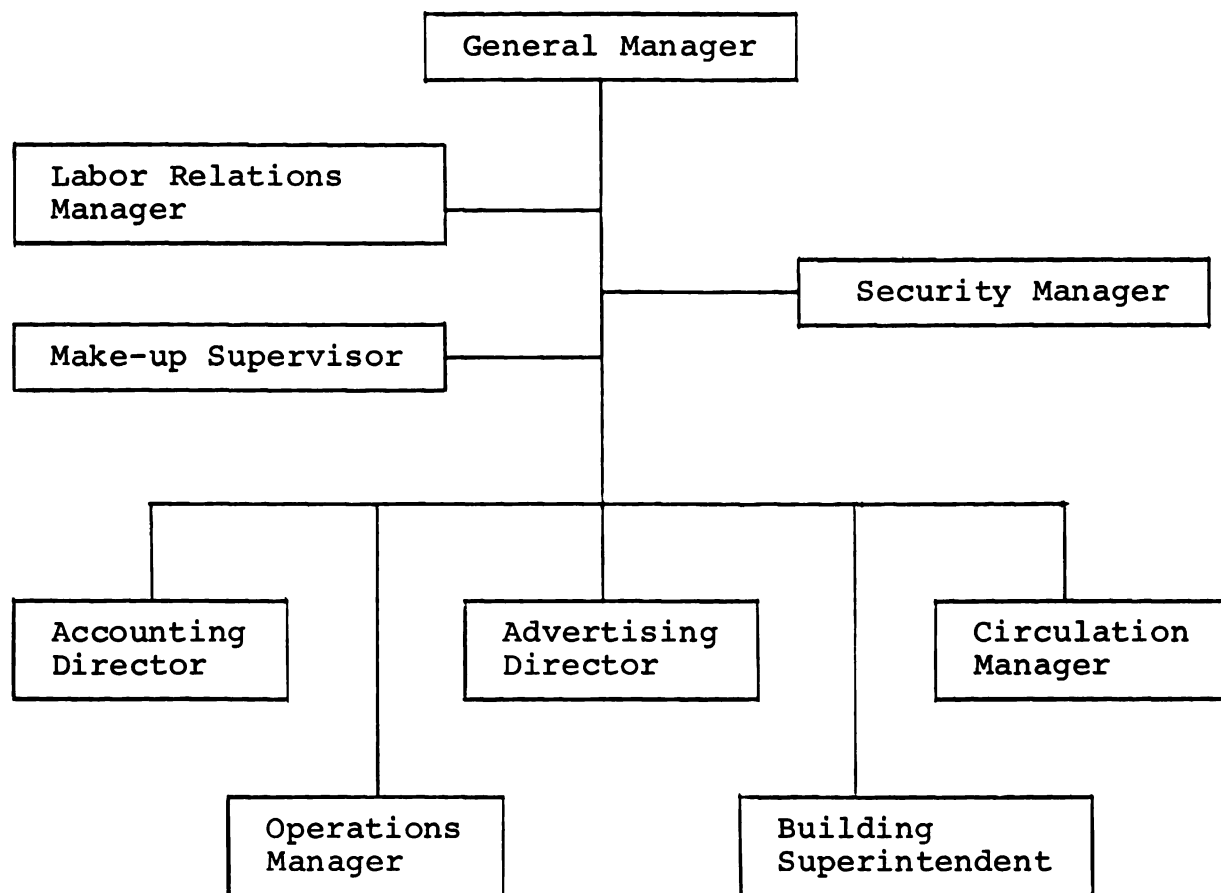


Figure 18. Organization chart for Detroit News operations outside the newsroom.

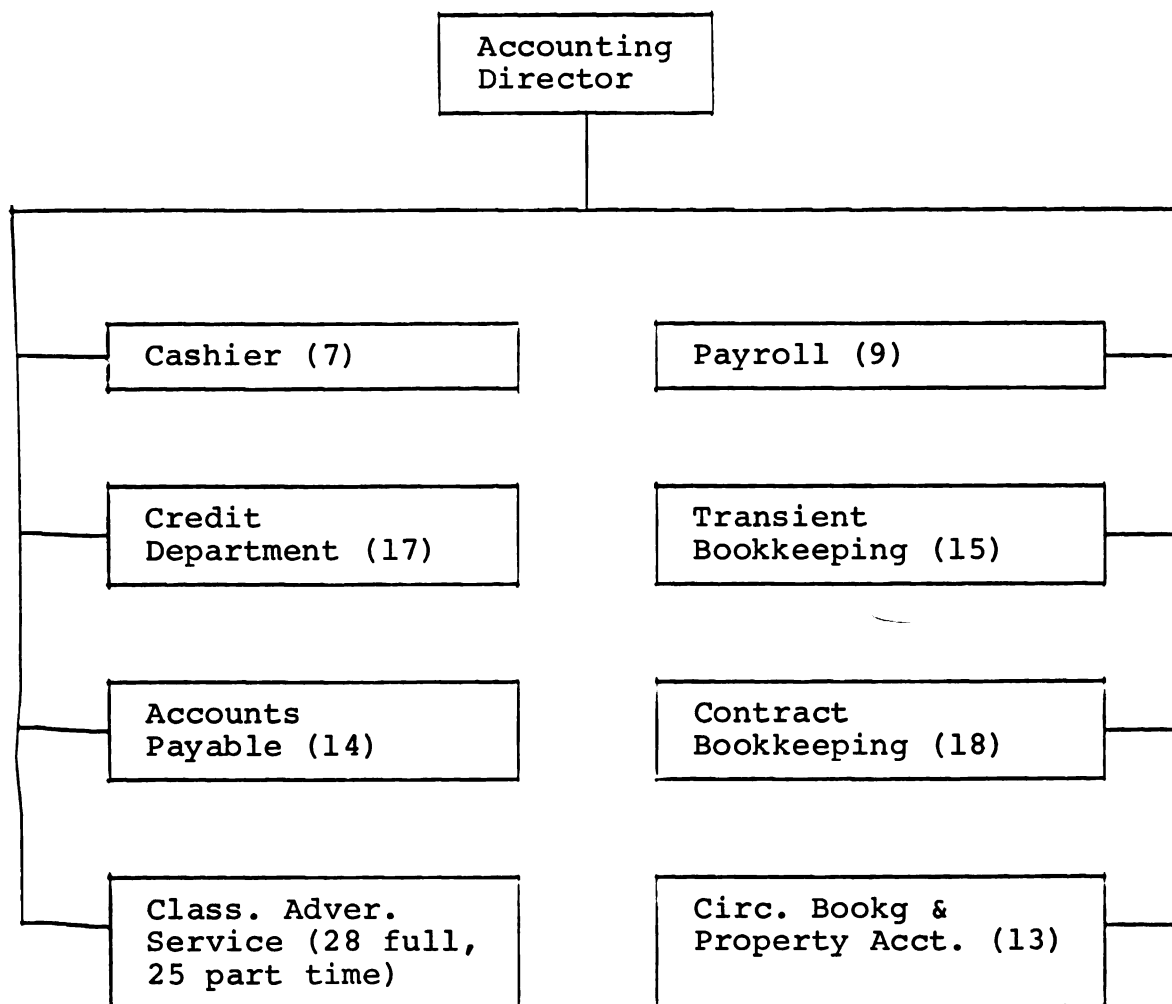


Figure 19. Organization of the Detroit News accounting department.

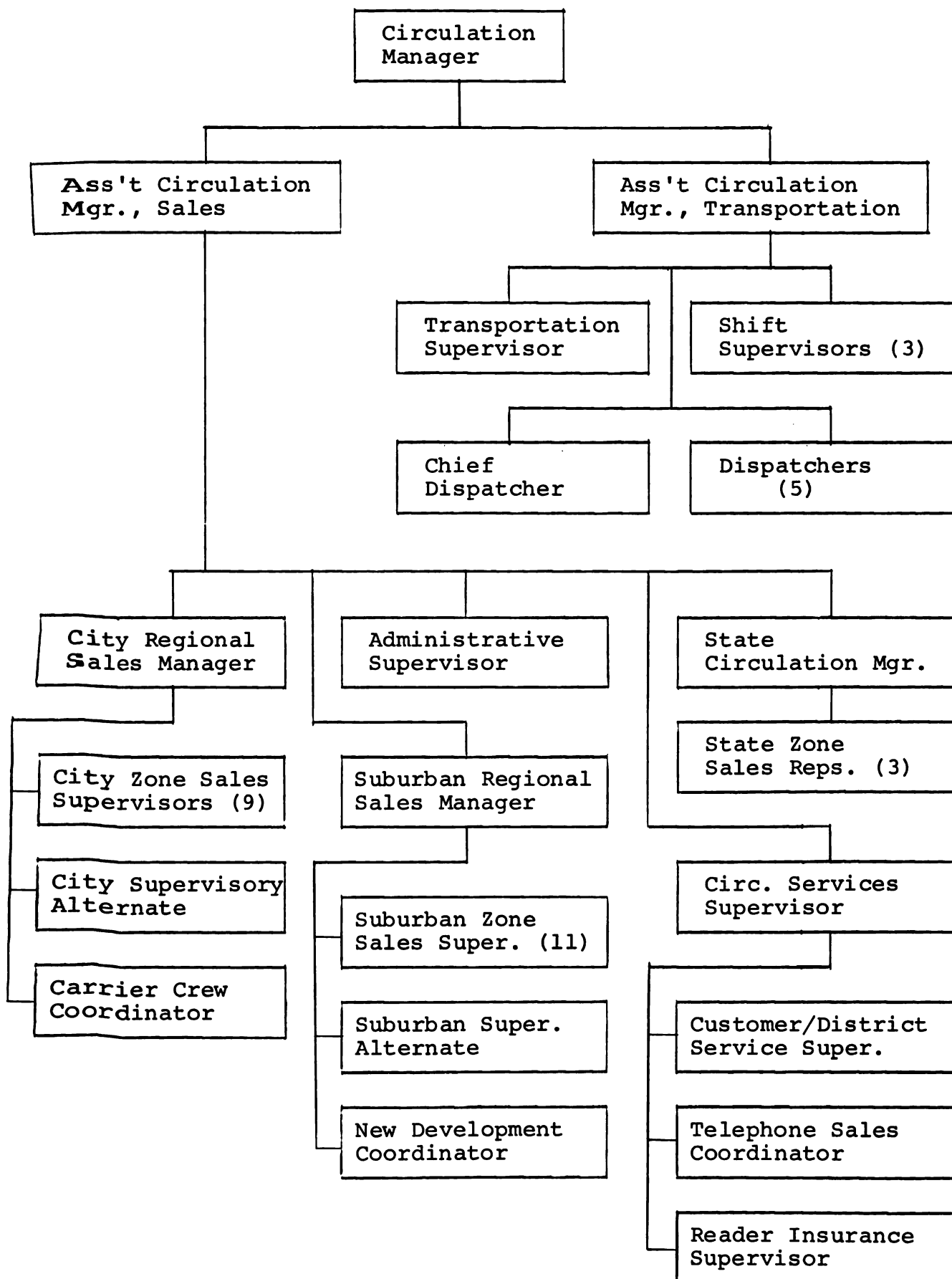


Figure 20. Organization of the Detroit News circulation department.

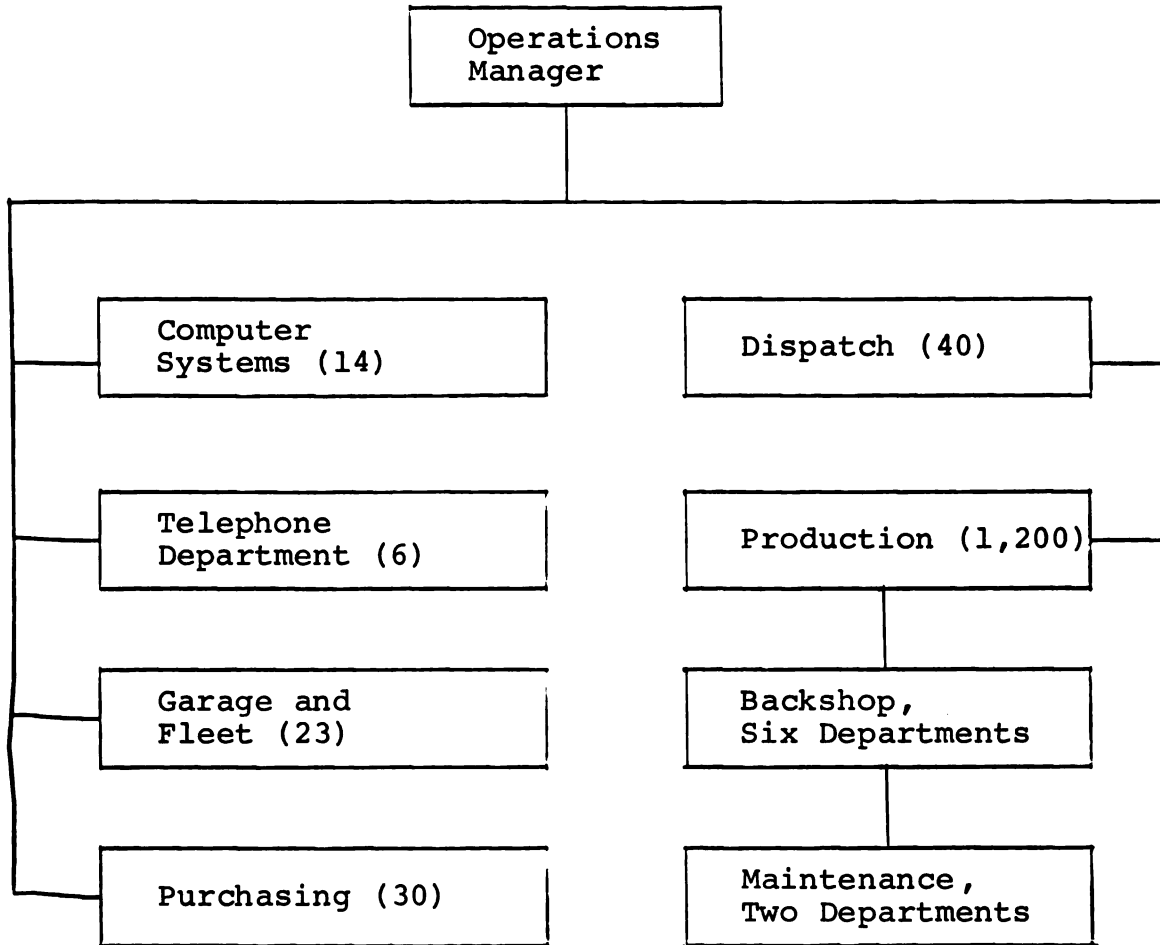


Figure 21. Organization of the Detroit News operations division.

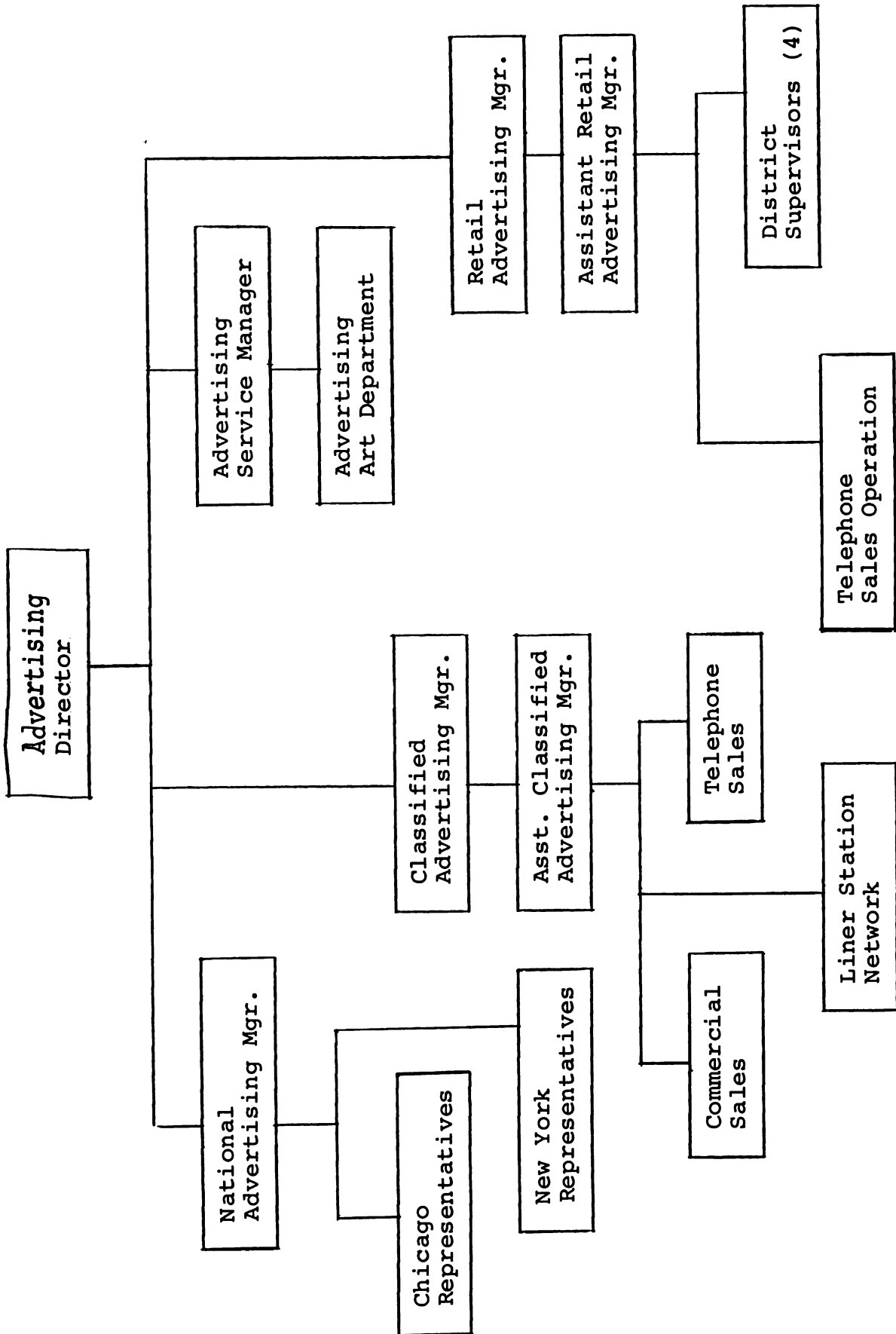


Figure 22. Organization of the Detroit News advertising division.

the fringe benefits such as pensions, death settlements, and medical/surgical and health insurance. The personnel department also supervises a three-nurse dispensary. A large portion of the union vacancies are filled through the unions. Production positions at the foreman level are filled in consultation with the unions. The personnel manager is at a level where he can influence policy as it may impact the operations of his department.¹²

¹²John H. Worthington, Detroit News administrative assistant, interviewed Oct. 12, 1971.

CHAPTER VI

GUIDEPOSTS TO IMPROVING NEWSROOM ADMINISTRATION

GLEAINED FROM OBSERVATION OF THE DETROIT NEWS

Take one of the finest newspapers in the nation, carefully remove its heart, the newsroom, dissect and consider the results for fundamental principles, qualities, and ideas that can be used generally by the industry to analyze and shape other newsrooms. The lab assignment appears to be simple, but the solution is virtually impossible to discover because of the complex element of human involvement.

Nine "guideposts" or general principles which can be used in the analysis of other newsrooms, however, have been found and are here discussed.

The first guidepost, unusual and possibly unique with the News, helps insure the best news gets prominent play, which normally means page one. Major stories that are generated by fringe departments such as women's, sports, finance, etc., are not taken for general news unless the story is worthy of prominent play in general news. Thus, there is incentive for the department to tell the city desk or other management of breaking news of a significant

nature. Implicit in full run, prominent play (page one, usually) is prestige for the initiating department. The News has learned by experience that nothing less than prominent play will make the system work. (This does not hold as firmly for Metro, for its stories commonly run on page three, "the little page one," or on another inside page. However, virtually any Metro story taken for general run gets better display than a story run in only a single zone.) Sports, for example, can give a story better play on the first page of the sports section than it can get on any inside page. Thus, extremely strong play will be necessary to provide a concrete and continuing motive for the fringe departments to volunteer to give up stories that might be desired for general run. Since news judgment is extremely flexible, it would appear that what is general run quality would come to be interpreted to the advantage of the fringe department in the long run.

Some stories generated by the fringe departments are of general interest and appeal to a wide group of readers. Regardless of the intensity of that interest, the News tries to get these stories into general news space, positioned according to the news value of the story. This type of story obviously gets more readership in general news than in the specialized departments that many readers might not review.

If any department should keep a story to itself for play on its own pages that might have been selected for prominent general news play, the meeting system allows for confrontation concerning the matter. Thus, the reward of prominent display and the "punishment" possible through being called to account improve the communications flow between the departments. Even if a relatively significant story is not desired for page one or three, the city desk or managing editor is notified of its existence.

One idea that will be called a guidepost is span of control and another, implicit in span of control, is communication.

No formula can be seen that can be used to determine how many reporters should be assigned to a city editor or how many sections or departments should be under the control of a managing editor. It is apparent that the capacity for control is not a significant problem at the News. That most of the reporters hired are veteran newsmen is probably the reason. Even the "mod squad" of Metro Editor Herb Boldt has significant reporting experience, mostly on smaller dailies.

Span of control is influenced by a number of factors. Besides the experience of the personnel to be controlled, the ability of the editor at controlling people must be considered. Also, it would appear that an editor can control a larger number of reporters when the reporters, like

Boldt's, have set beats from which most of the assignments are generated without the need for significant direction from the editor. The more guidance the editor must give his people, the fewer he should be assigned. Further, the more staff aid an editor has, the more people he can control. If the city editor did not have his eight assistants, it is probable his load would have to be adjusted.

The existence of fringe departments also serves to adjust the load of the city editor and news editor. The financial department and the existence of an editor in charge of features relieves the majority of the load for these areas from the general newsroom. However, the existence of fringe departments increases the need for coordination and interdepartment communication to bridge the vested interests that develop and to prevent isolation of the departments.

While the fringe department is a necessary solution to the span of control problem, communications must be carefully rationalized. Communications at the News appear to be conducted through meetings and memorandas. The most important of the meetings is the one held daily with the editor; questions are raised, problems pondered, and solutions considered. This meeting keeps the varied elements of the newsroom aware of their role in the news-gathering and processing team. It also allows questions to be raised as to the play of significant stories.

The meeting is used, in a sense, to handle the problems of the city desk. The meeting is not, however, a formal one, for it continues intermittently during the day among the city editor, his assistants, and the assistant managing editor. The key to making this intermittent meeting most effective is the promulgation of the "city desk job" concept as Assistant Managing Editor Stoddard calls his approach. Part of the reason for the reasonably frequent rotation between specific assistant city editor duties by these junior editors is to help promote the idea that no one of them is Sunday editor, but simply an assistant city editor currently manning the Sunday desk. Stoddard thus helps to promote a unity of purpose and, as a secondary benefit, obtains a significant flexibility from his staff.

The managing editor conducts some relatively formal meetings regarding the Sunday and Monday papers and there are also small meetings of the managing editor, assistant managing editor, and reporters in reference to project stories.

The editor controls the editorial page through a daily meeting with relevant staff members. Any influence of the publisher comes through the editor. The publisher calls a meeting once weekly of major department heads and problems and plans concerning the entire newspaper are considered.

The individual initiating a meeting may have any or all of three purposes in doing so. He may wish to convey

information, gather information, or generate and develop ideas. It must be recognized that the size of the meeting may vary with its purpose. Information can be disseminated to a large group, but five to seven are optimum for idea generation and decision making.¹

The News daily meeting has about fifteen in attendance. The editors report concerning both news stories and problems in their areas. The editor provides guidance in handling of news and solutions to problems and others offer suggestions. Miscellaneous ideas for improving the newspaper occasionally arise.

This major editorial meeting appears to serve its purpose well. The major failure in the communication system appears to be in its depth. While it is difficult to know how much information reporters need and what volume of ideas they have to offer, there is always a need to air gripes and discuss problems with middle management.² On many small papers this is automatically handled when reporters and editors periodically drift to the nearest bar where, over beer, they talk shop. This provides reporters and editors with a means of expression and has the further

¹Andre L. Delbecq, "The World Within the 'Span of Control,'" Business Horizons, August, 1968, pp. 46-58, passim.

²An attitude survey conducted among the News employees during the summer of 1971 had the effect of providing the staff with a means of expression. According to News editorial staff members, problems on the city desk figured prominently among the complaints.

advantage of allowing each to gain a deeper insight into the personality of the other. To some degree this mutual understanding appears to be lacking at the News, a matter which will be discussed later.

The ubiquitous memorandum is used copiously by the newsroom middle management. Memoranda are profusely used to inform the news editor of the status of stories. There is a time gap that is filled only by the memorandum and the news editor's news judgment. The night news editor (George Benge) comes to work at 11:00 P.M. and puts out the first edition. The news editor (Ray Thomas) arrives at 6:15 A.M. This means most of the production decisions have been made before the arrival of the city desk executives at 8:00 A.M.

A third guidepost is the reward system for writing considered to be well done. The News program is most generous. As much as \$100 may be awarded as often as once a week. The reward is not made for quality writing or reporting as measured against the total news product, but quality as measured against the past performance of the reporter. He is privately notified of his receipt of the award; there is no public form of announcement. No complaints were encountered regarding the program, although the restricted nature of the reward was not generally understood. The program is private because News officials believe there will be problems when mediocre reporters get awards for work that, while among their better efforts,

may not be as good as the average work of other reporters. There is, indeed, potential for problems here. However, it is difficult to think that an effective explanation--possibly a continuing explanation--could not clarify the goals of the program in the minds of the staff. All reward programs can be no better than their administration. While the News reward program is properly handled, it appears that the existing level of effort could be all that is required to expand the scope of the program to reward quality in some more general sense, yet retain emphasis on self improvement. This would allow the names of those gaining rewards to be appropriately announced in the newsroom. While a system of private rewards may work well, it is difficult to believe a reward system can be optimum until it uses the newsroom social system to intensify the value of the reward. Further, any program of this nature would appear to be a potential cause of morale problems if reporters' imaginations are allowed the free reign of inadequate information.

A fourth guidepost to newsroom organization is the requirement for planning and thus control capacity for middle- and upper-level management. Management must have sufficient surplus capacity that it has time to plan special events and develop ideas for major project stories.

This need has generally been filled on the News by the establishment of two assistant managing editors besides Stoddard. These are Boyd Simmons and Albert Abbott.

Simmons has a multitude of minor duties, but his major tasks are interviewing and hiring new employees and operating "Secret Witness" (see Chapter X). The staff position thus relieves personnel directly in the chain of gathering and processing news of two time consuming tasks. Abbott's major responsibility is coordination of the work of the editorial and production departments and planning changes in the editorial side necessary to successfully execute the move to the News North Plant in 1973. This includes establishing the pilot project for cathode ray tube editing. Abbott also has responsibilities in assisting Managing Editor Poorman in constructing the annual financial budget of the newsroom. There is also an assistant to the managing editor.

Each of the positions adds planning capacity and provides the managing editor and the subordinate editors additional free time to personally plan special sections and significant project stories. These three jobs did not exist in 1966. Such planning capacity appears to be a necessity if there is to be effective competition with electronic media, a form of competition requiring well-planned, thoroughly-researched project stories, background stories and sidebars.

The fifth guidepost has significant impact on the nature of news that is reported. Broadly stated, it is the issue of whether emphasis should be placed on writing or reporting, on specialists or generalists, on maximum or

minimum use of the beat system. Each of these is a separate area of concern, but all are connected. A move to generalists is likely to result in an emphasis on writing over reporting and the move away from specialists may well mean that the beat system loses importance--not in the number or size of beats, but in their overall value to the newspaper.

In its simplest form, the writers versus reporters issue dissolves into the elimination of nonwriting legmen in favor of writing reporters. But, it goes further and puts emphasis on polished, easy-to-read news copy and tends naturally toward depth and interpretive news reports.

That there has been a shift from emphasizing reporting to emphasizing writing is not to say that the quality of reporting has declined on the News. Excellent reporting remains the basis of all good writing. The depth or interpretive news story in many cases undoubtedly requires a higher level of reporting skill than even the more challenging institutionalized news reporting. And, yet, all of the superb reporting is of reduced value if the reporter is not able to communicate the sophisticated, possibly complicated information in a manner in which the reader will not only want to read but will comprehend both the meaning and the value of the message. The reporting of depth or interpretive news is as difficult, probably more difficult, than the reporting of demanding institutionalized news, but the writing skill required to effectively communicate the depth

report is vastly more demanding. The increased emphasis on writing is a means by which the News can better package its finest product--thorough, accurate reporting.

The move from emphasizing reporting to emphasizing both reporting and writing has been in response to the pressure of electronic competition; the depth report and project story are a sophisticated response to television coverage as depth is a type of news television cannot easily do.

The beat system bends somewhat under the changing emphasis. The beat system appears to pose two problems, the solutions to which appear to have been found by the News. First, the traditional beat requires extended reporter effort and leaves little time for any project story that does not closely coincide with the beat. Second, the traditional beat system is tied to certain institutionalized news channels. Social change has altered the pattern in which news is found, pushing more and more of it outside these institutional channels.

Although the sources of news have changed somewhat, the traditional beat system has not been scrapped. Many of these traditional beats still require full-time attention; however, coverage of many beats is established on a part-time basis.

While the traditional beat system receives somewhat less attention, thus freeing manpower, a new type of beat

is defined which is not tied to government or which concentrates on an aspect of the community's institutions not stressed by the traditional system. One of the new style beats of the News is "the problems of people living in the city" which considers such things as housing, zoning, and neighborhood organizations. In another area, the News has adapted to the changing source of news by enlarging traditional beat coverage. A reporter was added to the Detroit school beat so the News had the manpower to get past the offices of administrators and report school news from the perspective of not only the administrator but from that of students, teachers, and parents.

If the beat system is seen as reporters covering a geographically fixed piece of terrain, usually coinciding with a government activity or community institution, then the beat system of the News is shrinking in importance but still significant. If the beat system is seen as a sensory system designed to maximize the ability of the News to maintain contact with the changes and problems about which the community desires or needs to know, then the beat system is growing in importance. As news becomes less defined as the action of an institution, then increased emphasis must be placed on a finely-tuned, community-wide sensory system responding to new concepts of what the community needs and wants to know. A crime is easily defined as news; the struggle of a ghetto resident with a school system is not

as easily defined as news, not as likely to come within the scope of the traditional beat system, and considerably more complex than crime to gather as news and write in perspective. The struggle in the ghetto (for example) may be news, but it requires a new and more sensitive beat system manned by an able reporter who is a skilled writer.

The new beat system of the News is responding to the growing social and environmental consciousness of the modern and affluent society and responding to the resulting change in the public's definition of the news it desires in its newspapers. This has increased the demand on newsrooms and requires a staff of reporters organized for maximum flexibility and individually capable of almost any type of one-day story and team reporting.

The dependence of the newspaper upon the traditional beat system has tended to decline somewhat. Specialists are seen tied to their beats and unavailable for more general work. The desire of management is to increase flexibility. This flexibility is found in the general reporter with a speciality. The News cultivates the special interests of some reporters and tends to assign others to a pattern of stories that indicates the city desk may desire to give the reporter special education in the area selected. This has meant language training for one reporter and a lengthy seminar on government reporting for another. The goal is for the reporter to have an appropriate background in one

or two specialties, beats in a sense, yet be ready to quickly respond to general news events outside his specialties.

Thus, in regard to the complex fifth guidepost, the News has elected to move relatively in the direction of emphasizing reporting/writing over reporting, generalists with specialities are preferred to specialists, and the traditional beat system is altered by a new concept of a beat which provides increased flexibility in responding to news events. This move is not appropriate for all newspapers; the Detroit market is unique as are all markets and the News is a large metropolitan evening newspaper, a special category.

The sixth guidepost or concern is the problem of how to obtain bright, readable copy or, put another way, how to maximize the capacity of reporters. As with the above guideposts, there are no answers for all newspapers; it is simply a problem area identified. Is it a problem with the News? There is no answer for this question here, although the News reporters appear generally to feel their newspaper is dull or grey. This view may stem from staff dissatisfaction.

It would appear reasonable to say that on all newspapers the maximization of reporter potential lies with the city desk (or zone desk). Reporters who attempt bright, human interest oriented writing must be rewarded in some

manner. Probably allowing their copy to get into type unmauled is enough, with appropriate comments made as necessary depending upon the personalities involved.

It would appear there are other, more subtle matters that must be attended to maximize reporter output. The desk must thoroughly understand the motivations and purposes of its reporters. Good reporters are more than craftsmen, although they must effectively ply their writing skill. The quest of good reporters is purpose; they find significance for themselves if their writing, in their opinion, has significance for society. A city editor or managing editor will maximize the social significance of the newspaper's news product if he recognizes that the best reporters are fired by the fuel of this quest. This requires that city editors and managing editors have a reporter orientation or bias (concern for the reporter's motivations and reactions) rather than a desk (news-processing) orientation. The reaction of some reporters suggests that the News city desk leans toward a news-processing orientation.³

The problem of the city desk manifests itself in many ways with as many variations on the problem as there were reporters who would discuss it. Reporters and others in the newsroom repeatedly said that there are no truly

³Some reporters seem to think the attitude survey has made the city desk somewhat more sensitive to the attitudes and needs of the news writers. Others see no change.

good writers on the city desk (a matter stoutly denied by the city desk itself). It is not obvious why one would have to be a superb writer to recognize superb writing, but in all probability, editors who are good writers are more sensitive to the artistic drive of the reporter and recognize that ham-handed editing will discourage reporters and lower their production.

One of the more serious problems appears to be the rewrite ordered by the city desk, although it is difficult to know when rewrite is justified. According to some, the substance of the story--often a depth or interpretive piece--is changed; according to others, the story could have been easily (and relatively happily) redrafted by the reporter, thus avoiding the possibility of error while maintaining the reporter's sense of accomplishment. Avoiding this problem falls into the easier-said-than-done department, for the reporter is commonly not on hand when his material is edited or he may be too busy with other matters to have time to adjust his own story to the needs of the desk. Another aspect of the problem is that excessive editing is often merely trimming a story to fit available space. Regardless, the revision by the city desk may have contributed to a sense of futility on the part of the reporter.

A companion issue in the maximization of reporter effort--an issue in the maximization of any effort involving

people--is the personal leadership of the parties. Editors whose sharp tongues bruise egos or who lack the capability of inspiring and gaining the cooperation of reporters can introduce stagnation or low-level deterioration of morale into a newsroom. This stagnation must be considered critical. Its existence is subtle and will, in large measure, be overcome by the surplus capacity existing within the staff of any newspaper, but eventually the reporters will seek the route of least resistance around the problems inadequate leadership pose. This route may be resorting to a union or, more likely, an increase in disinterest in their job (semi-retirement, as one News staff member put it), which includes the possibility of shelving the search for social significance in favor of safely following orders so that conflict will be minimized and the paycheck not endangered. The desire of the writers of a newspaper to improve society will eventually show through the newsprint and ink, and a major leadership problem is the maintenance of this desire.

Whether the attitude patterns of a stagnant institution dominate the News newsroom is difficult to tell. These patterns are manifested by some reporters but it is difficult to gauge their overall intensity. Their significance depends considerably upon the problems of the Free Press, and to a lesser degree, upon the problems of the suburban dailies. Probably inadequate leadership is a sufficiently serious

problem at the competing papers that the skill and capacity of those hired by the News can easily maintain its present position as best available product. Regardless, the tendency toward stagnation is an inefficiency to be avoided if possible.

The seventh guidepost considers the issue of how to ensure that leadership is probably going to be the best possible. As long as humans must judge other humans, the question of who possesses leadership, ability, and charisma will never be solved; personalities never mesh perfectly. But, it appears from observing the News and other newspapers in the background of this writer that the most certain way to ensure that sooner or later the wrong person will get into the wrong job is to be excessively rigid in maintaining the concept of promotion from within.

There is no question that seniority must be observed, particularly at the lower echelons, but there is also a need to bring able people into jobs above the lowest levels. There is significant risk if a new man is brought in and, in effect, immediately promoted into a post above his proved ability. A technique that has been used on the News has been to bring the experienced, new man in for a job for which there is little question he is capable. Then, after a period of observation, if his capabilities appear to be desirable, he can safely be promoted. Thus, management has reduced the risk of placement, yet it has brought in new

blood at a high level, and because the employe has worked at a lesser capacity he has become experienced with the firm.

Paul Poorman, News managing editor, came to the News as assistant managing editor and worked for three and a half years before his promotion to managing editor. The method provided the check on competence that is a strong point of seniority, and additionally provided the newspaper with a man with a background outside the News from which he could draw fresh ideas.

Another common method of evaluating performance before committing an institution to the promotion of a person is the technique of filling a vacancy temporarily with what is believed to be the desired individual. At a future date, the person can either be confirmed in the promotion or a new individual hired or transferred from another job on the newspaper. Such temporary office holders can present some diplomatic problems that the organization must be willing to accept, but it does allow errors to be corrected. This technique has also been used at the News.

The eighth guidepost is a perspective used by Poorman to look at his newsroom. He evaluates his operation in terms of the ratio of reporters/photographers to editors, supervisors and other support personnel and seeks to push the ratio below 50 percent. The staff currently is about half reporters/photographers and half support personnel, weighted slightly toward support personnel. The lower the

number of support personnel to news gatherers, the more efficient the operation is--until the ratio is pushed so low that diminishing returns set in. At present, Poorman believes the ratio cannot go significantly below 50 percent and still retain quality processing. It is his opinion that electronic editing and make-up may alter the editing and processing methods in the direction of allowing a reduction of support personnel.

All newspapers are different and there is no reason to think the ratios should be the same, but in the process of the comparison, management should become aware of what it is doing and acquire a more clear understanding of why it is doing it. It is obvious that the newsroom management should not stop with using ratios of news-gatherers to support personnel. All other ratios that can be found should be analyzed and compared to those of other newspapers.

This relates closely to the ninth and last guidepost. It would appear that it would be beneficial if a newsroom had stated goals, missions, or purposes. A general observation concerning the News, where the goals are understood--e.g., the desire to shift from emphasis on reporting to emphasis on reporting/writing--the newspaper is doing an exceptional job of reaching these goals. It appears self-evident that efforts to clearly state the goals and purposes of the newsroom organization should clarify what management feels to be its problems, and if taken seriously, should

automatically result in orientation of staff action designed to solve the problems.

The above points are designed to aid middle management. The ultimate solution is not the careful utilization of guideposts such as those proposed, but the realization by editors at supervisory levels that it is possible to improve their handling of personnel and that this may result in an improved news product.

CHAPTER VII

MICROECONOMIC APPLICATION OF THE DEMAND CURVE TO THREE PRODUCTS OF THE DETROIT NEWS

Approach and Goals of Study

From Adam Smith's The Wealth of Nations, written in 1776, came the concept that all economic processes revolve around the interaction between buyers and sellers in the marketplace. The interaction is dominated by psychological beliefs and biases that are the result of experience patterns. In the newspaper market, the demand is for news contained in copies of the newspaper, and for classified and display advertising space. The supply of any newspaper might be limited for any one issue, but over a short period of time, and at existing prices, the publication can fill any probable demand simply by lengthening the press run.

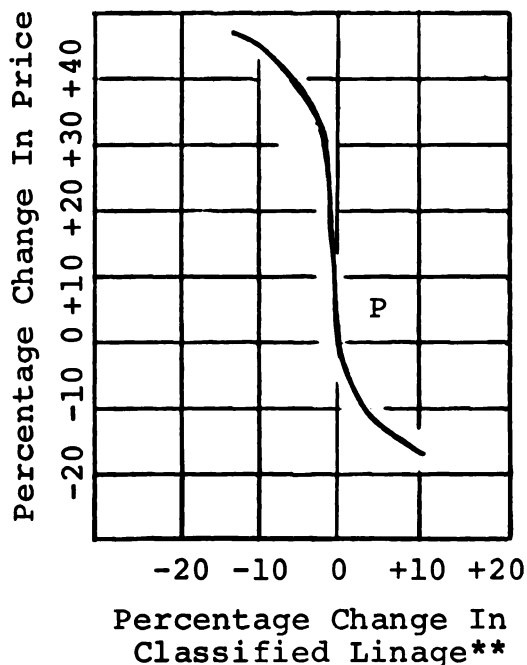
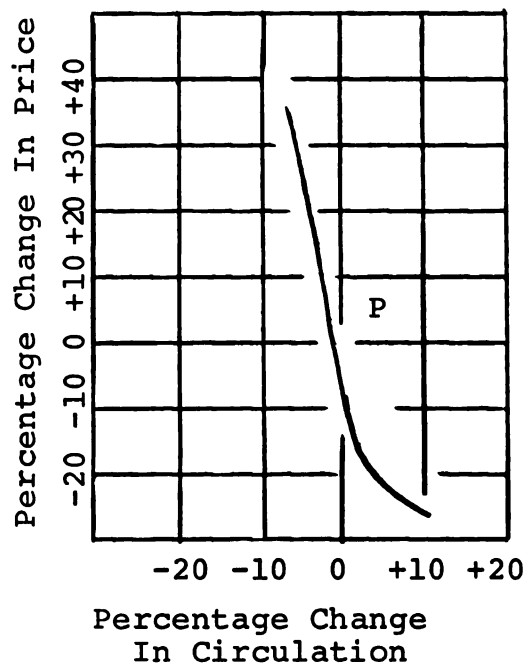
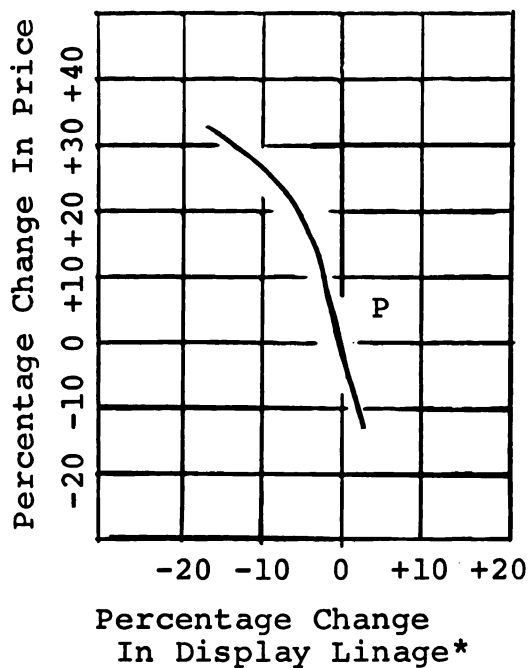
A newspaper is a joint product of advertising and news--defining advertising as space that people want to purchase and news as anything in the newspaper that people want to read (including the advertisements).

The demand by consumers for the product of any industry is normally portrayed by economists on a "demand

curve." The curve is a simple line on a graph, the left or vertical axis of which is scribed for price while the bottom or horizontal axis is scribed for quantity. The curve reflects the changes that would result in total revenue, or price multiplied by quantity, if either price or volume is manipulated. The curve, normally drawn from historical data or the results of past price changes, is a statistical projection of what might happen if price is raised or lowered in the immediate future. It suffers from all the weaknesses of statistical projections.

Three "subjective" demand curves have been drawn to reflect the relation between price and volume for circulation, classified advertising and display advertising. The curves are subjective because historical data was not used to construct them. Rather, a questionnaire was administered to a number of knowledgeable News employes, gaining their reactions as to probable percentage changes in volume as price is manipulated. Because historical data were not used in rigorous manner, the accuracy is questionable. This technique does not provide results that are sufficiently accurate to allow a competitor to make confident use of them. The curves are shown in Figure 23.

During the discussion that surrounded the estimates to complete the questionnaire, many of the complexities of applying this common economic tool became evident. These problems will be a large part of the concern of this chapter.



P is the existing price

*The rapid shift into the elastic range above a 20 percent rate increase is expected due to direct competition from television.

**Elasticity at the high rate shifts is due to advertisers moving to suburban dailies. For low rate shifts, elasticity results from an inflow of lineage to sell small value items.

Figure 23. Subjective demand curves representing the Detroit News.

The estimated curves are in what economists call the inelastic range. The demand curve normally slants downward and to the right. It can maintain this slant and yet have a full range of points the tangents of which range from nearly vertical or total inelasticity to nearly horizontal or total elasticity. In the elastic range of the curve an increase in price will result in a decline in total revenue (price multiplied by volume), while the same price increase in the inelastic range will result in an increase in total revenue. There is an intermediate position where the revenue gained by increasing price will equal the revenue lost from the decline in sales. It is called unitary elasticity. As long as the curve has a negative slope, sales will be lost when price is raised, but revenue will be lost only with price increases in the elastic range while it will be gained with increases in the inelastic range.

The inelastic slope of the curves indicates the News could raise price(s) and in the intermediate period (one or two years) would be earning greater total revenue--and, presumably, greater profit. Profit is maximized when marginal revenue and marginal cost are equal. But few firms evaluate themselves in these terms. The News appears to evaluate its effectiveness according to changes in its

total market share.¹ Total market share essentially means total revenue. The demand curve gives a clue as to the direction in which to move prices to expand total revenue and total market share.

These interpretations must be made with considerable caution. The demand curve does make a significant statement but does not consider the possibility of oligopolistic market tactics; e.g., what will the Free Press do if a price is raised and how will the action of the Free Press impact the total revenue possibility as suggested by the curve.

Problems Encountered in Interpreting The Display Advertising Demand Curve

What complexities arise as the price of display advertising is increased? A major factor is the economy. Inflation psychology allowed the News to make a 10 per cent rate increase in January, 1970, and a 9 per cent increase in January, 1971, without damage to display advertising lineage. The Free Press closely followed the News, its price leader, in the 1970 and 1971 price increases. The elasticity of

¹How can the marginal cost and marginal revenue theorem--or whatever terms a business firm might need to cover such ideas--be violated by substituting total cost as the determinant? Such action suggests that the firm is operating in the range prior to where marginal revenue and marginal cost curves cross. Thus, by increasing total revenue the firm either moves closer to the intersection of marginal cost and marginal revenue or shifts in the curves are such that they do not move the firm farther from the marginal cost-marginal revenue intersection.

demand for Free Press advertising space appears to be much less inelastic, however, for it lost about 5 per cent in advertising lineage while the News gained 1 per cent.²

If display advertising rates were raised 10 per cent there would be little impact after a year for the market to adjust. In the interim some small or "peripheral accounts" would be lost.³ These, however, may not be significant because such accounts are not heavy advertisers. There is apparently a tendency for advertisers to react at first to the rate increases by cutting back their lineage in an amount equivalent to the rate increase. This keeps their advertising expenditures the same; the rate increase is absorbed by decreased space. Advertisers eventually return to the size of advertisement they habitually use, however.

It was also suggested that modest rate increases stimulate merchants to seek cooperative advertising funds or money provided local merchants by national manufacturers if the local merchants will advertise the manufacturers' product. The cooperative funds can help relieve the impact of the rate increase on the local merchant.⁴ Apparently, however, in the longer period the merchants do not care

²Harry M. Stanley, Detroit News retail advertising manager, interview held Oct. 15, 1971.

³Bob Kurzawa, Detroit News retail advertising supervisor for east side district, interviewed Oct. 21, 1971.

⁴Stanley.

to be bothered with the problems of utilizing the cooperative advertising funds and boost their own advertising budgets.

If the News were to increase rates 25 per cent it could well run into direct competition with the relatively expensive television advertising.⁵ At this point, the demand curve for News display advertising space becomes considerably more elastic (note the tendency for it to bend toward horizontal). Again the economic health of the nation enters the picture, for such sizable rate increases would be more difficult to absorb by advertisers during recession periods than during boom periods. Accordingly, anyone interpreting a demand curve for the News must recognize that during good economic conditions, the curve is less elastic than during recession periods.

It also depends upon the activity of the competition. If television, the suburban dailies, and the Free Press were generally raising their prices during the period when the News made the large 25 per cent price increase, there would be little advertising lineage lost at the end of a year.

Regardless of economic conditions, the News personnel did not see lineage dropping by 25 per cent if rates were raised 25 per cent.⁶ Even with an increase this significant the News is in the inelastic range of the demand curve.

⁵Kurzawa.

⁶Eric Enholm, Detroit News retail advertising supervisor of west and north districts, interviewed Oct. 21, 1971.

Most of the experience on which these observations were made were gleaned in the numerous rate increases over the years by the News. Few were the years in which the rate did not climb 5 or 6 per cent, yet the News continued to claim a growing amount of the total market.

Rate increases for display advertising in the News have some impact on other media, which is a characteristic of an oligopolistic market in which there are few sellers. As a consequence, if the demand curve is drawn for a newspaper that is not a price leader (the News is a price leader), then the curve must also take into consideration the impact of rate increases by the price leader. The News has apparently proved its ability to sell the products offered by Detroit merchants better than most other media.⁷ A price rise by the News during a period of mediocre economic conditions might cause a scarcity of funds on the part of the merchant but his reaction may well not be to cut his advertising in the News because of this rate increase, but to cut his expenditures in other newspapers and electronic media that have not proved equal in ability to stimulate customers.

⁷ During the strikes of 1964 and 1968, retailers tried to use the suburban dailies and weeklies. It was found that even though they used the several suburban newspapers available, the advertisers could buy only 50 per cent of the circulation they could purchase with the News, and the cost was two and a half times greater than the cost of the News. Customer response was in line with circulation--about 50 per cent. James G. Allen, assistant classified advertising manager, Detroit News, interviewed Oct. 19, 1971.

Serious recessions have the same impact on the media as rate increases during normal times. The result is that the News, with its inelastic demand, usually weathers such economic storms without problems--it may even increase lineage--but the smaller newspapers and the small electronic media with more elastic demand curves suffer disproportionately. As the News management sees its position, the advertisers concentrate their money during difficult periods where they can see the results, which happens to be with the News.⁸

If, during bad economic conditions, both the News and Free Press raise rates approximately an equivalent percentage (Free Press rates are somewhat lower), the News, as a result, will take lineage away from the Free Press. If the lineage package was split 60:40 between the News and Free Press before the raise, the package could shift in the direction of a 65:35 adjustment after it.

When considering such problems as varied impacts of rate increases, good or bad economic conditions and price leadership, the major question in dealing with a demand curve is whether these matters make the market sufficiently complex that the demand curve becomes worthless. Probably not, but it is obvious that demand curves must be interpreted with due care because of the existence of these influences.

Display advertising rate increases can have other impacts. Since the Free Press and the suburban newspapers

⁸Enholm.

pattern their rate increases after the price leader, the News, it is possible that a price rise by the News can drive advertising to the other media, particularly radio, outdoor advertising and direct mail. This was not seen as likely to happen unless the rate increase was extraordinarily large--approaching the 25 per cent figure under consideration. But, even with such losses, newspapers as a whole were seen regaining their positions within the advertising market within a year after the increase.⁹

Would a decrease in price attract significant amounts of lineage? Probably there would be little significant increase in lineage for the News if rates were lowered 10 per cent. A few marginal advertisers would return to using the News, but the total lineage of these advertisers is not great. A drop in price was not seen as giving the News any great competitive edge. It was even suggested that the amount of advertising lost if rates were increased 10 per cent is greater than the amount gained with a 10 per cent decrease.¹⁰ This suggests that the demand curve for News retail display advertising is not smooth but bends or kinks somewhat at the existing price.

It should be noted that a price decrease might not be significant for the News, but might well bring

⁹Bob Oade, Detroit News retail advertising supervisor for real estate and amusements, interviewed Oct. 21, 1971.

¹⁰Ibid.

substantially more lineage to other newspapers that might have demand curves that are elastic or nearly elastic. The discussion of a powerful price leader cannot be applied directly to other members of the market for which the demand curve takes a different shape.

The media are not totally interchangeable. Some advertising situations that newspapers or radio handle well cannot be handled with equal efficiency by television. This has particular meaning for the local retailer. His tasks cannot be effectively handled by television where detail is time consuming and thus excessively expensive. Television is most efficient at conveying brand identity, a capability not greatly needed by the merchant with a diversity of products for sale.¹¹

Advertisers are not equally sensitive to price changes. Large retail stores that have carefully planned advertising budgets react quickly to price change. For the most part, amusements and builders do not respond to price changes at all. A contractor with a house for sale will advertise it at any likely rate. Likewise, nightclubs will advertise with little concern for cost during periods

¹¹Kenneth T. Carlson, advertising director, interviewed Oct. 8, 1971. Carlson also said the advertisement promoting brand identity is associated with national advertising. National advertising in newspapers is in a relative state of decline, he said, with the decline caused by the efficiency of television in brand promotion. The only newspaper in the nation for which national advertising is not in relative decline is the New York Times.

when business is excellent but when "business is down you couldn't give lineage away" to them.¹²

Readership Considerations Enter
Classified Advertising Analysis

As best it can be drawn, the demand curve for News classified advertising resembles that for News display advertising. The classified curve is somewhat less elastic over the intermediate period (about a year) for the relevant range of potential rate changes--about a 30 per cent increase. Above and below the relevant range the curve appears to slope rapidly into elasticity. Above the range of a 30 per cent increase, transient classified advertising such as would be placed by a housewife tends to move rapidly to competing media and below the range the insertion of lineage to sell small value items increases rapidly. Within the range, however, rate changes should have less effect on the purchaser than they have on employe morale.

Two major factors appear to influence classified volume, the national economy and employe attitude. The classified section is called a barometer of the economy, particularly the help-wanted section. Help-wanted advertising volume soars during good economic conditions and shrivels during poor times. News employes reported that some businesses and government agencies use movements in local

¹²Oade.

help-wanted sections as measures of local economic conditions.

The psychological impact of rate changes on advertising salesmen generally, including salesmen for classified advertising, is probably one of the most significant outside variables which must be taken into consideration in applying demand curves. The resistance of sales force employees to rate increases appears to be significant. In display advertising it became apparent that rate increases would cost the newspaper only the advertising offered by the marginal or "peripheral" accounts, but that these accounts were valued by the advertising salesman. Each salesman is given about twenty-five accounts. If the number of accounts declines, one could not but suspect that the result would be to eventually pare back the number of salesmen, retaining the account load approximately constant. The supervisors undoubtedly hesitate to lose any of their manpower. The idea may therefore become accepted that any loss of sales is bad; the attitude does not recognize the relationship between price, volume, and total revenue. It is probably a conditioned defensive measure. Nevertheless, it appears to be real and must be recognized.

The reality of employee dislike for rate increases may be most apparent in the sales of classified advertisements. About eighty women, many part-time, are hired to operate the classified telephone network at the News. There is

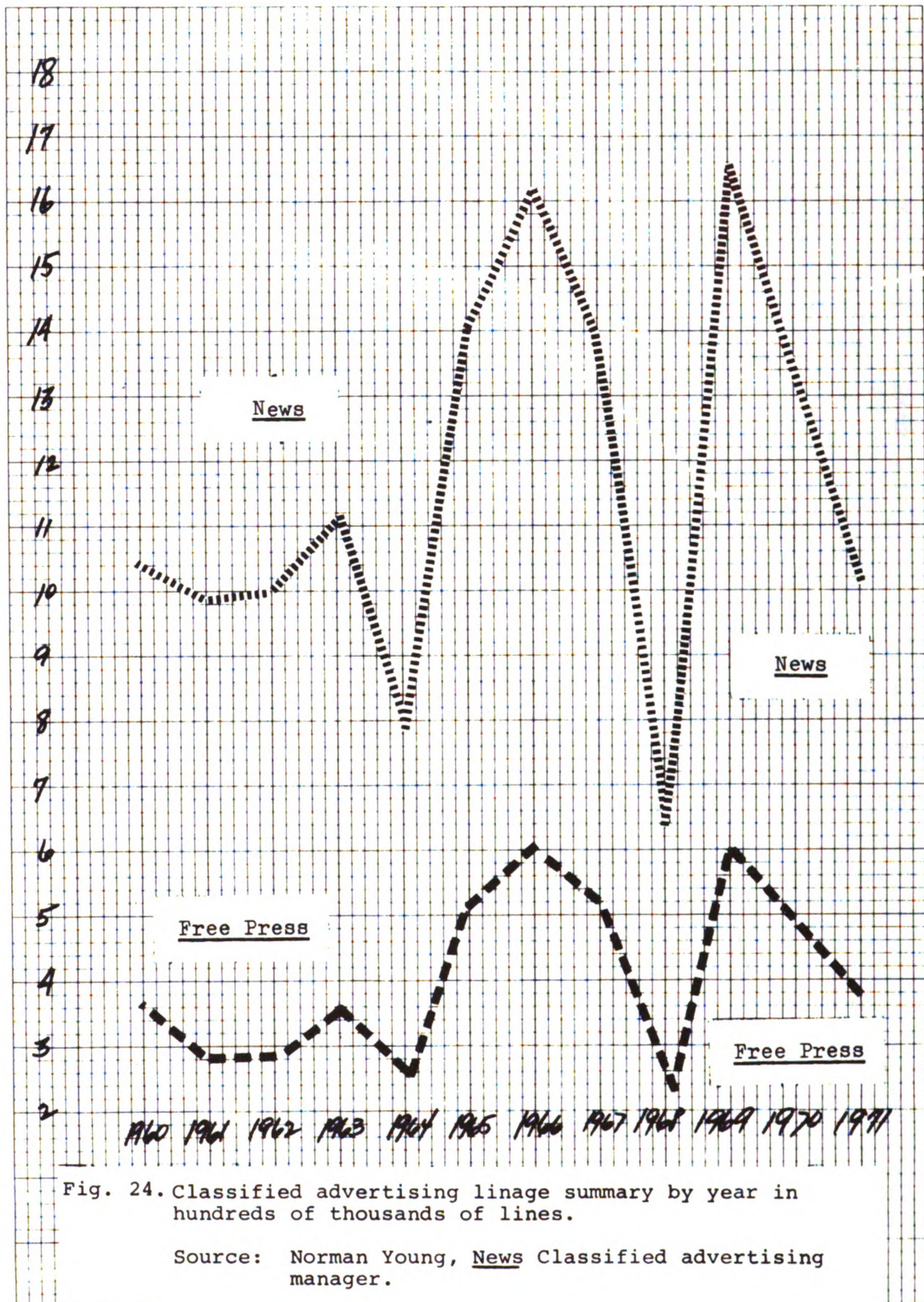
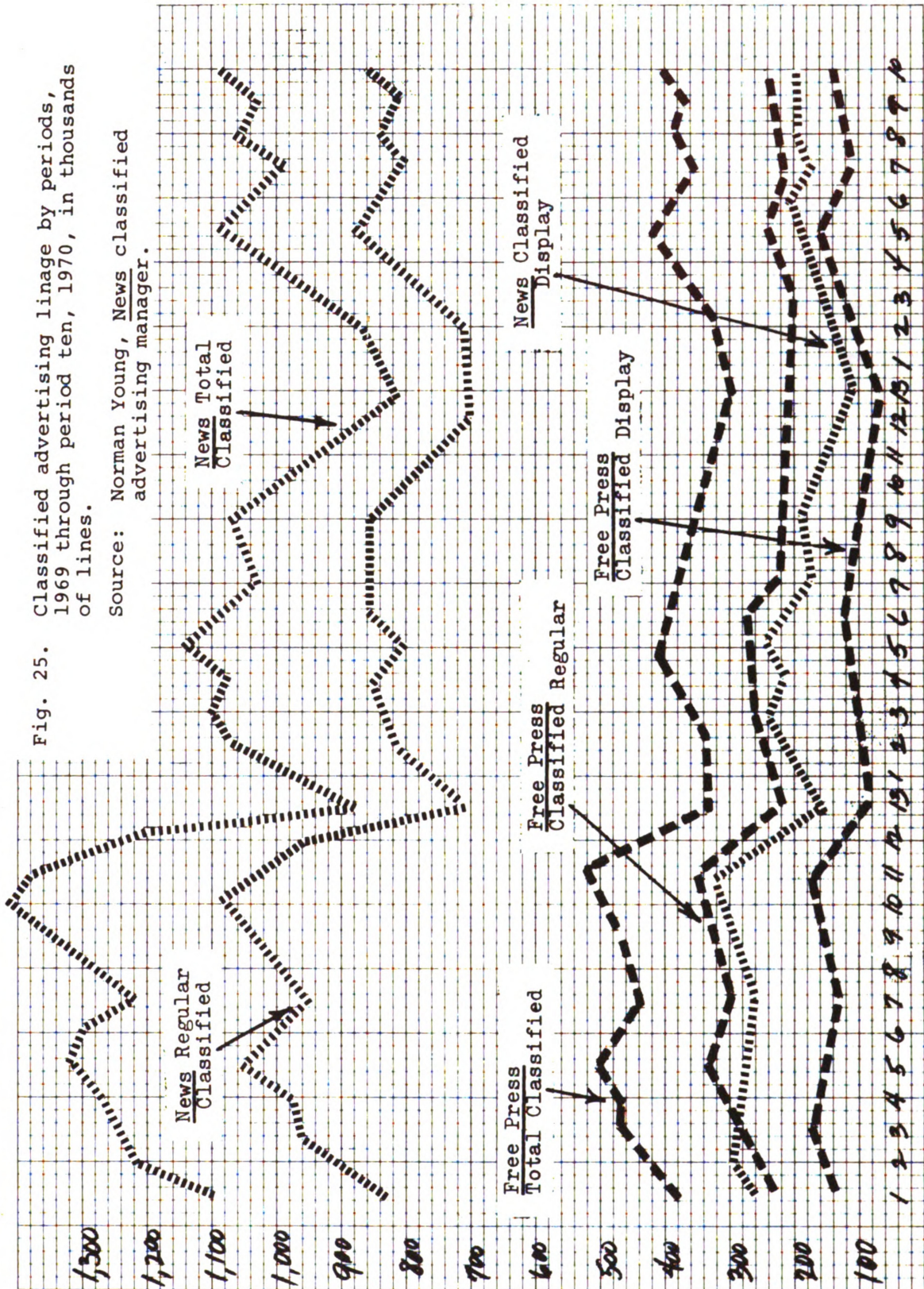


Fig. 25. Classified advertising linage by periods, 1969 through period ten, 1970, in thousands of lines.

Source: Norman Young, News classified advertising manager.



apparently a strong tendency for the women to see the rates as being high. It is easy to see that \$10 is a lot of money for three lines of agate run three days; it is not as easy to see the value of these three lines running in 650,000 or more copies daily. For a month or so after rate increases, the classified volume drops. It is believed that a major reason for this drop is the decline in confidence as reflected in the saleswomen's voices and therefore decline in efficiency on the part of the saleswomen.¹³ Nothing else explains well the short duration of the decline.

An equally difficult problem for those who would draw demand curves is that it becomes obvious that classified advertising assumes value as news--it has "reader pull"--and is part of the paper which the customer seeks for his ten cents.¹⁴ Classified advertising employees and others at the News are convinced that the newspaper with the largest classified advertising volume in a market will have the largest circulation in that market, too, and they believe this is true industry wide.¹⁵ Reader interest is believed to center primarily on the transient advertising, or that advertising placed by the regular consumer. Interest in

¹³Mary L. Mirasole, Detroit News supervisor of classified telephone sales, interviewed Oct. 19, 1971.

¹⁴Norman Young, Detroit News classified advertising manager, interviewed Oct. 15, 1971.

¹⁵James G. Allen, Detroit News assistant manager of classified advertising, interviewed Oct. 19, 1971.

classified advertising also centers on automobile and residential insertions, for here readers get a clue as to the value of their auto and home. The classifieds are also believed to be perused by those interested in the pay rates on the job market although they may have little real intention of changing jobs.¹⁶

These beliefs of the News employes are based on observations and day-to-day experience. With this reader-pull in mind, an evaluation must be made as to whether transient advertising can be placed on the same demand curve with commercial classified advertising. In the demand curve for classified shown here, the two have been merged. Since transient classified advertising appears to be strongly linked to circulation dominance because it has reader interest, and since the medium would be severely reduced in value as a commercial classified advertising outlet without the readership the transient advertising brings, possibly the long-run good of the newspaper requires that classified advertising be considered on a separate schedule that properly considers its joint product characteristics. There is no reason to think that classified advertising needs to be sold at unprofitable rates by the News.¹⁷ The present success with the transient volume at about 25 per cent

¹⁶Mirasole.

¹⁷This statement applies only to the News.

suggests that the News approach is approximately correct. The share of the classified market held by the Free Press is only one-third that of the News. In all probability the demand characteristics of the Free Press transient classified is somewhat different from the News. It is possible that it is more elastic and therefore might benefit from a rate reduction.

The dilemmas of improving classified lineage includes the necessity of increasing readership so that advertising will bring quick results. To get large numbers of readers the paper must have large numbers of transient classifieds.¹⁸ Unfortunately, to get large numbers of classified advertisements, one must have large numbers of readers. This poses a problem for the number two paper. Even if the Free Press charged half the rate the News charged, if it took more than six days on the average to sell what the News can sell in less than three, there will be no shift.

There is considerable promotion of both News and Free Press classified advertisements. There is no question that the perception of the ability of a newspaper to sell an item is susceptible to alteration through advertising. If the promotion were successful, it might increase both the number of insertions and the number of readers that would

¹⁸It is recognized that transient classifieds are not the only reader interest element on the classified pages, but it is apparently a primary one and is used here as an example.

move the number two newspaper out of the chicken-and-egg dilemma. Yet, by virtue of being the largest and most profitable newspaper, a market leader could well overpower the promotion of a market member of secondary status, and thus the dilemma remains.

Classified advertising staff members of the News appear generally to believe in the durability of the demand for their product. It was believed that even with large rate increases (50 percent) the demand for their advertising "would never fall apart."¹⁹ The total economy and the employment level were seen as having more impact on the volume of classified than rate changes--again within a reasonable range of increase. "If you raise when people aren't making any money, it is going to hurt you," says Norman Young, classified advertising manager.²⁰

Despite their confidence, it is apparent that the News classified department has little experience from which to anticipate reactions to large changes. Rates for classified have been raised each year. The small raises have not impacted lineage but neither do they provide the staff or researchers much guidance as to demand. The rate increases have been primarily designed to keep pace with inflation and increasing operating costs.²¹

¹⁹Mirasole.

²⁰Young, interviewed Oct. 19, 1971.

²¹Classified costs about as much to handle in the backshop per line as does display advertising. Allen.

While classified rate increases have normally been about 5 or 6 per cent, in 1970 the rate was increased 10 per cent. This was as much as display was increased. It was believed that the increase would impact classified lineage even less than it would display and although lineage dropped, there is little reason to think the rate increase caused it. The decline is generally attributed to the tight economic situation. Classified advertising reponds to the economy like a barometer to air pressure.²²

Prior to the wage-price freeze established by President Richard Nixon during the summer of 1971, Classified Manager Young had predicted that there would be a 5 per cent increase in lineage for the News during 1972, and included in his calculations was a 10 per cent increase in prices.

With modest increases in rates--about 10 per cent--past experience was of value, showing that there would be no decline in the intermediate period--about six months.²³ In the short run, one of two months, the rate increase tends to cause the number of lines to drop faster than the number of insertions drops. People find shorter ways of stating their advertisement. It also becomes more difficult to sell advertisements on a seven-day basis when the insertion runs for seven days unless cancelled first.²⁴ As the rates rise

²²Young, Oct. 19, 1971.

²³Allen.

²⁴Mirasole.

there is an increased tendency for customers to group items for sale; rather than advertise small items one at a time, they are grouped to save words and to increase the total value of the items offered in the advertisement. It is reported that there is a distinct tendency for there to be a greater proportion of grouped items among the transient advertisers of a metropolitan paper like the News than in a suburban daily where the rates are cheaper.²⁵

If rates were increased 25 per cent, a shift of advertisers to the suburban dailies and weeklies was seen. Even with the jump, though, transient advertisers were seen using the metropolitan paper for large value items such as automobiles and for situations in which the classified buyer could group items for sale. On the large items, the ability of the News to get buyers and sellers together quickly was seen as a major advantage and the cost of the classified, even with a rate increase, was such a small part of the product value that the classified would be purchased regardless of cost because of its efficiency.

Extremely large increases in rates--50 or 100 per cent--were seen as seriously damaging lineage unless justified by an increase in circulation.²⁶

It was generally agreed that a decrease in price

²⁵Allen.

²⁶Ibid.

would bring an increase in classified lineage and insertions. If the News reduced its transient rate 25 per cent, it was thought it could capture more than 90 per cent of the market (the rates of other newspapers held constant) for an increase of about 20 per cent over its present lineage.²⁷

There were few advantages seen to such reductions, because the cuts would have to be sufficiently large that total revenue would fall. The biggest problem is that "once you get the lower rates installed, you can't undo them," according to Young. This lesson was demonstrated in Chicago where the large metropolitan newspapers began to cut classified rates. Since price leadership is built into the metropolitan newspaper market, when one newspaper began cutting rates the other major paper followed and both ended with little more lineage than they started. Thus, it remains to the advantage of all within the market to maintain the price structure.

The day of the "babybuggy business" or low value items sold through classified advertising may be returning to the News when it moves in 1973 to the News North Plant. At that time it will be possible to zone classified and thereby reduce the price to a third of the present cost if the customer is willing to accept a zoned advertisement. When the News begins to zone its classified pages it should

²⁷Ibid.

draw a significant volume of low value items now being classified by the suburban dailies and even by the Free Press.²⁸

Classified sales for the News are handled not only by the eighty women who operate the phones at the News, but also by thirty-five outside salesmen who sell classified to commercial firms, primarily real estate, automobile sales, and help wanted. It is generally found that these three categories can introduce their products more effectively through classified advertising than through display advertising. Transient advertising is promoted through about 500 outlets called liner stations, which are generally located in drug stores. About 400 of these stations are in the Detroit area and the remainder are in the state circulation area.²⁹

Demand for Circulation is Inelastic Over Lengthy Range

Of the three demand curves drawn, the curve for circulation can probably be presented with the most confidence. Circulation has the most accessible historical data, but suffers somewhat from the same problem as classified advertising in that the price changes are not of sufficient size to give a researcher great confidence in what either end of the curve should look like. Generally speaking, the demand

²⁸Young, Oct. 19, 1971.

²⁹Young, Oct. 15, 1971.

for circulation is highly inelastic. Within the short relevant range of a 25 per cent increase, it is not as inelastic as that of classified advertising but probably somewhat more so than the curve for display advertising.

If the price of home delivery, presently sixty cents for the six weekday issues, were raised to seventy-five cents, it was estimated there would be a 5 per cent loss in the long run. The long run is a year and the increase to seventy-five cents home delivery was predicated on an increase in street price from ten to fifteen cents. If the weekday price were raised to ninety cents, or a 50 per cent increase, the long run loss would be somewhat less than 10 per cent on the 552,000 newspapers that are home delivered by the News.³⁰

It was seen as possible that a strong promotion program could overcome with a year any decline because of the increase to seventy-five cents. With an increase to ninety cents, the same promotion effort might bring recovery in two years.³¹

If the weekday price was taken to \$1.20 (twenty cents daily) or a 100 per cent increase, the decline was seen as being 15 per cent or 90,000 to 100,000 circulation, predicated

³⁰ Glenn P. List, Detroit News circulation manager, interviewed Oct. 19, 1971.

³¹ Jim Leonard, Detroit News assistant circulation manager, interviewed Oct. 19, 1971.

on a street price of twenty cents.

The shape of the demand curve is impacted by the time of year the price raise is effective and the state of the national economy at the time of the increase. The spring or early summer was seen as the best time to raise circulation rates because there is normally a large attrition of subscribers during the summer when families are moving and on vacation. These customers, in large measure, must be resold on the newspaper the following fall.³² The most recent circulation rate increase was for the Sunday News in July, 1971, when the rate went from thirty cents to forty cents per issue. (During the week the paper is the Detroit News, but on Sunday the name changes to Sunday News.) By late October, this 33 per cent rate increase had resulted in an overall circulation loss of 1.6 per cent as compared with the corresponding week in 1970. Home delivery in the Detroit area was actually up 1.6 per cent over the previous year. Most of the loss was in state sales which were off about 12 per cent, but the News only sells about 100,000 of its 87,000 Sunday circulation outside the Detroit area.³³

Part of the small decline in street sales in the metropolitan area for the Sunday News was ascribed to

³²List, Oct. 19, 1971.

³³List, Sept. 28, 1971.

problems with coin boxes. Only certain combinations of coins work in the boxes and the increase made the combination of coins necessary more awkward.³⁴

The condition of the economy also must be considered in constructing the demand curve. During a period of rising prices when inflation psychology is prevalent there will be little impact from an increase. The home delivery price was raised fifteen cents following the 1967-1968 strike, and while there was a decline in circulation, none of the decline was ascribed to the price rise.³⁵

The Free Press raised its daily circulation price to fifteen cents in February, 1971. In a strategy characteristic of an oligopolistic market, the News refused to allow the Free Press to lead in changing prices, but did opt to raise the Sunday price. The choice was made because the Sunday News has circulation of 200,000 more than the daily edition, thus there would be less damage to its overall circulation figures by taking its losses on Sunday. Second, no suburban daily prints a Sunday edition, leaving only the two metropolitan newspapers. Thus, the demand for Sunday newspapers would be relatively less elastic and the News was able to maintain the local price structure in its competition with the suburban dailies, leaving it to compete

³⁴Leonard.

³⁵Ibid.

with only the Free Press on Sunday.³⁶ (Here, again, the News is found viewing the suburban dailies as real competition.) Third, by raising the Sunday prices a dime, almost as much clear revenue is made for the News after payments to vendors, etc., as an increase of a nickel an issue for the daily paper.

Would a price decrease significantly increase the number of News subscribers? If the News discount programs are any demonstration, it would. On occasions, the News offers a twenty-five cent discount a week for ten weeks to acquaint the customer with the newspaper. In one such effort, 51,000 subscriptions were written within six weeks. Not all of these subscribers keep the paper after the ten-week period. Part of the reason may well be that ten weeks is not long enough at thirty or forty minutes a day for some customers to assimilate the potential of the News package and to acquire a habit of reading it.³⁷

There is little question but that demand is somewhat more elastic below the present price. From the experience with the discount programs, however, it is difficult to know how elastic the price is. In all probability, virtually everyone in the Detroit market that will read a newspaper is now buying one. If this is true or approximately true--and

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷List, Oct. 19, 1971.

the News circulation people do not see large numbers of potential newspaper customers waiting--then the News must either displace a suburban daily in a home or become a second paper. Readers are probably somewhat reluctant on the average to switch papers. This reluctance would mean that demand in this area is relatively elastic. It probably also means the News is limited to a growth rate that is not much ahead of the population growth rate.

While Detroit population is up 12 per cent for the decade ending 1970, News circulation is up 30 per cent. While there were too many cataclysmic occurrences during the decade to allow a completely reliable comparison of population growth and newspaper circulation growth, a rough comparison is informative. In 1960, the metropolitan evening circulation in Detroit and suburbs was almost 850,000. In 1970, it was slightly more than 600,000. When the population growth rate of 12 per cent is factored in, evening circulation has declined about 50 per cent over the decade.

In the Detroit market, an anomaly of an inelastic demand for the News, yet a nearly saturated consuming public is found. Before any final statement can be made, the shape of the demand curves of the Free Press and the suburban dailies would have to be considered.

The price increase for the Free Press was 50 per cent or 25 per cent, depending upon whether the newspaper was sold on the street at fifteen cents or home-delivered at 12.5 cents.

A decline in circulation of more than 3 per cent has resulted because of the price rise. This decline may impact the ability of the Free Press to compete with the News in the long run, but in terms of loss, the demand curve for the Free Press remains in the inelastic range. On September 30, 1970, the daily circulation of the Free Press was 593,369. Eight months following the price rise, on September 30, 1971, the daily circulation had declined to 574,431, or a drop of 3.2 per cent which can probably be ascribed to the price rise. The problems of applying the demand curve to an oligopolistic market again become evident, for while the Free Press may well be gaining more in total revenue from its circulation price increases than it is losing in circulation, it may be impairing its long run competitive position in the Detroit market. It is further evidence that the number two firm in an oligopolistic market is vulnerable if it attempts to become price leader. Circulation personnel at the News recognize this principle.³⁸ As the News management sees it, the price leader sets the prices, takes the initial thumping, and then the suburban papers and smaller metropolitans assume the pattern. Normally, the suburban papers charge a small differential less than the larger papers, which would suggest a somewhat more elastic demand.³⁹

³⁸List, Sept. 28, 1971.

³⁹Leonard. He added that the News has been called by newspapers across Michigan asking when the News was going to raise circulation prices.

Why did the Free Press raise price? It is generally believed that the motivation was revenue. Because of the less than buoyant economy and rising labor costs, the profit rate apparently got below what the ownership of the Free Press, Knight Newspapers, Inc., believed was necessary. It has been observed that whenever economic conditions are difficult, the Free Press is sufficiently marginal that it suffers.⁴⁰

In its state sales, the News is quite often the price follower. When local newspapers raise their prices the highly elastic nature of the demand for the News in competition with the local daily shows. In its state circulation, the News is commonly the second paper in a household; you need the local paper to get local news. Since something must be trimmed to meet a local price increase, the News is canceled.

Part of the mystique surrounding circulation rates says that, in the terms of the economist, there is a kink in the demand curve at the one-dollar-a-week level for home delivery. At this rate it has been anticipated there would be a customer rebellion and a severe decline in circulation. However, when the News raised its Sunday price, it thrust the total price from ninety cents to one dollar. No anguished

⁴⁰ Ibid.

outcry rose from the consumers. As a result, the News is convinced that one dollar is no barrier to circulation rates; apparently there is no kink in the curve.⁴¹

Promotion is considered an integral part of the News circulation operations. It is viewed as giving the customer who has, for one reason or another, quit buying the News, a face-saving excuse for bringing the newspaper back into his home. The paperboy seeking a trip to Washington, D.C., or the telephone salesman are seen as offering the consumer an opportunity to do what they may wish to do anyway. If it is true that promotion does meet a need of the customer, and it quite likely does, then promotion costs must be considered a fixed cost of maintaining circulation.⁴²

Demand Analyses of Newspapers As Seen in Available Literature

The literature of journalism and economics virtually ignores demand for the products of newspapers. One study of demand elasticity was made by Malone in 1959. He considered the elasticity of circulation demand for Chicago and New York newspapers.⁴³ During the 1950s, both Chicago and New York newspapers raised prices. In 1957, almost all Chicago

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³John R. Malone, "A Study of the Elasticity of Demand for Metropolitan Daily Newspapers," Studies in Public Communication, Summer, 1959, pp. 31-39.

newspapers raised price from five cents to seven cents. All New York evening newspapers had gone to ten cents by 1958, while the morning publications remained at five cents.

Adjustments were made by Malone for population growth and for changes in the value of money and a ratio of change was computed. It was found that an increase of 10 per cent in the circulation price of Chicago newspapers resulted in a decline of only 2.9 per cent in circulation. The same 10 per cent increase would result in a decline of 3.6 per cent in the New York market.⁴⁴

The subjective demand curve determined for News circulation showed that an increase of 10 per cent in circulation would result in a decline of 2.3 per cent in circulation. It cannot be argued that a subjective demand curve is accurate, and there is no way to allow for population and money value changes. It is best to visualize the demand curve, therefore, as indicating approximate magnitudes. Considering display and classified advertising, an increase of 10 per cent would result in a 2 per cent reduction of display lineage and a 1 per cent reduction of classified lineage, with the same shortcomings.

It must be remembered that the News is but a single firm in its market while the Malone study of demand considered the entire market. The demand curve drawn for

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 34-35.

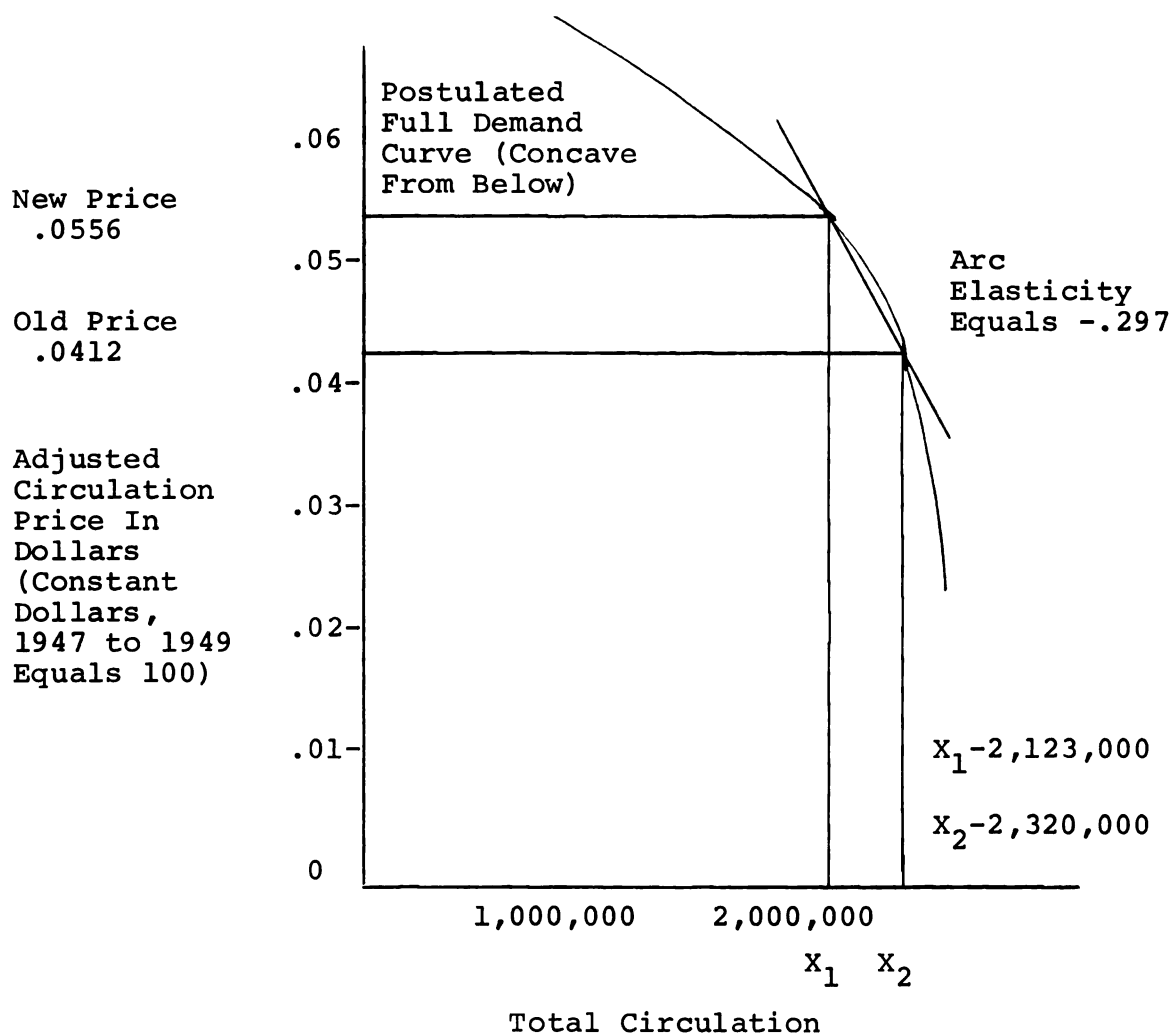


Figure 26. Newspaper circulation elasticity as calculated by Malone.

Source: John R. Malone, "A Study of the Elasticity of Demand for Metropolitan Daily Newspapers," Studies in Public Communication, Summer, 1959, pp. 31-39.

Note: This curve specifically shows the demand for metropolitan daily newspapers in the Chicago Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area before and after a price change from five cents to seven cents.

the study (see Figure 26) shows the bottom end of the curve to be ever less elastic--the demand curve retains its concave shape in reference to the axis of the graph. It is suggested that the demand curves for the News--and possibly for the Detroit market--are S-shaped, or the bottom ends grow increasingly elastic as prices are lowered for circulation and classified advertising. Within the range that could be estimated, there was no increase in elasticity for the bottom end of the demand curve for display advertising. Likewise, the upper end of the circulation demand curve did not move in the direction of increased elasticity as drawn for the News.

The only other piece of literature directly concerned with demand elasticity used the subjective approach for deriving the demand curve, similar to the approach used with the News, but on a larger scale.⁴⁵ In large measure, the author Julian Simon, was reacting to a dissertation which had argued that the national advertising rate should be more elastic than the local retail rate and thus the national rate should be less than the local rate. The local rate is always significantly lower than the national rate, sometimes half the national rate.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Julian L. Simon, "The Cause of the Newspaper Rate Differential: A Subjective Demand Curve Analysis," Journal of Political Economy, October, 1965, pp. 536-539.

⁴⁶ The News national advertising rate is 17 per cent above the local retail display rate when compared against the 20,000 line retail category. The 17 per cent is net to the News after agency fees are paid, probably 10 to 20 per cent more.

Simon provided several arguments why the demand for national advertising was less elastic than that for local retail advertising. His most telling point was that local

retailers can measure the sales produced by particular ads run in particular media more accurately than can national advertisers. It seems obvious that the better the ability of a buyer to estimate profitability, the more sensitive will be the buyer to a change in price.⁴⁷

Simon surveyed about 175 midwest daily newspapers in reference to perceived changes in lineage with a change in price. His major query concerned a rate increase of 10 per cent. He refused to give an estimate of demand elasticity for display advertising:

I will not report mean elasticity estimates, because they might be misleading. Even if we disregard no-change estimates--which would not be justifiable--I believe that the mean elasticity estimates are far below objective reality, on the basis of the body of objective demand studies of other commodities. Perhaps more important, the estimates are too low because they are not in accord with pricing practices.⁴⁸

Simon provides a table of results from his survey from which a general idea of elasticity can be determined. The structure of the table is such that it does not allow totally confident mathematical interpretation, but it appears national display lineage would decline about 1 per cent for the 10 per cent increase in price, and local display lineage would decline about 4 per cent. It was apparent that his

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 537.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 538.

respondents felt that national was less elastic than local display advertising, thereby supporting Simon's thesis.

A mistake was made when Simon concluded that simply because other industries do not have demand curves shaped like those of newspapers, his respondents had given him inappropriate estimates of demand. The results of Simon's survey are consistent with Malone's findings (although Malone was concerned only with circulation) and with the above findings of this paper.

Simon also made the mistake of thinking newspapers price in the same manner as other industries. Most newspapers are in oligopolistic markets whether in competition with other newspapers or with electronic media. The oligopolistic market structure means that product demand is not the only influence in product pricing. In addition, the newspaper puts out at least two joint products--perhaps many more depending upon one's analysis. These two are advertising and editorial content. The latter is the major influence in the circulation pattern. Advertising and circulation interact upon each other and a change of price of one impacts the price or volume of the other. A rise in circulation price decreases the number of copies demanded and since advertising value is a function of circulation, the demand for advertising at existing prices falls. To an extent, advertising has reader interest and increases in its price which result in a decrease in lineage may have a

small effect on the demand for copies of the paper. Also, large circulation allows fixed costs to be spread further, ensuring a more stable profit rate.

Newspapers have other special characteristics not seen by Simon. Their advertising and business office personnel object to price increases that reduce volume, thereby building into the newspaper management opposition to such changes. And, on the whole, newspapers do not know why they win and lose public acceptance which makes management cautious about changes (note editor Hayden's comment about the unknowns in newspaper management, page 145). All of these forces operate against newspapers looking at themselves in the same manner as do other businesses.

CHAPTER VIII

DETROIT NEWS MODIFIED SATELLITE PLANT OPERATION DESIGNED TO MEET COMPETITION

Existing Presses Slow, Lack Capacity

"They were going to build this plant in Sterling Heights and it was going to cost a huge pile of money and part of it was because we were going to stay ahead of the Free Press in circulation and were willing to spend any amount of money to stay ahead of the Free Press in circulation." Such is the summary view of one veteran News employee who was privy to the initial round of briefings concerning the new satellite plant of the News currently being constructed in the suburb of Sterling Heights. It is called the News North Plant.

The News has long seen the need to expand and remodel its physical facilities. Martin Hayden, the editor, said the existing building on Lafayette Boulevard and Second was the first newspaper plant in the nation to be designed especially for the production of newspapers. It was completed in October, 1917. There was, however, no way to anticipate color printing and the structure left no way to "deck" the

existing presses or otherwise expand press capacity for color. Currently, when full color, such as Spectacolor, is printed, it normally must be handled at the Times Square plant, four blocks from the existing plant. Color must either be printed in an advance run or in a small paper.¹

In the late 1950s, before the purchase of the Times, the News considered construction of a second plant on the Detroit River shore. Land was acquired and prepared for construction. Architects had even made the rough drawings. The new plant was needed to increase press capacity. The purchase of the Times assets on November 7, 1960, altered plans; the Times plant solved the press capacity problem.

During the 1960s, it was decided that the News should build a structure to house modern production facilities across from the existing News building. The land needed was in the Detroit urban renewal program and was purchased for \$1,180,000. After the land was acquired, it became apparent that the potential circulation growth was on the perimeter of the city and that the suburban dailies, all afternoon papers, were the competitors for this circulation. The five acres on Lafayette Boulevard remains an

¹Martin S. Hayden, editor of the Detroit News, interviewed Sept. 28, 1971. At one time the Sunday News Magazine and other full color, less than broadsheet printing was done on presses located at the Lafayette plant. These have since been removed to allow expansion of the large presses. While Spectacolor must be handled at Times Square, a maximum of eight pages of spot color can be printed at Lafayette with sixteen pages of spot color possible at Times Square.

undeveloped parking lot for News employes.²

The problem was getting fresh newspapers to the suburban perimeter to compete with the suburban dailies with their 12:30 P.M. deadlines, and the desire to locate the new plant on a railroad spur led to the selection of Sterling Heights as the location for the plant. The rail spur allows the News to economize in the transportation of newsprint by bringing it by railcar load directly to the plant. Trucks presently move newsprint from the News Corporate Marine Terminal to Times Square and Lafayette Boulevard.³

While the News currently has as many reporters in Oakland County as each of the two major suburban dailies, the big metropolitan newspaper is vulnerable by virtue of the six hours of press time necessary to publish.⁴ This means an early edition must be delivered to the suburbs. Two serious problems result from the early deadline for home-delivered news. First, the suburban dailies with their later press time have the advantage on breaking news. Second, it makes it possible for the suburban dailies to obtain an appropriately zoned copy of the News and literally

²Hayden.

³Each year the News uses about 167,000 tons of newsprint--more than one million miles if it were stretched out.

⁴Burdett C. Stoddard, assistant managing editor of the Detroit News, interviewed Sept. 30, 1971.

rewrite the News for any story the suburban paper might have missed. When the move to the satellite plant is made in 1973, the Times Square plant will be kept in operation, printing Metro Detroit and western Wayne County Metro editions. Almost half the circulation will be printed at Times Square. It is more than twenty miles to the News North Plant from the downtown site, twenty miles that newspapers now must be trucked. The satellite plant is located in the suburbs which cuts transportation distance and the reduction of rush hour traffic crush of downtown Detroit should improve transportation speed. The shorter distance and freer movement are expected to move the deadline on all home delivered copies up to 11:30 A.M.

All composing room operations will be at Sterling Heights with mats trucked to the downtown Times Square plant. The new presses at Sterling Heights will have the capacity for using offset plates and plastic printing surfaces, but cast lead printing surfaces will be used for as long as existing plans can project.

Hot-lead typesetting may be phased out, however. Most display advertising currently is set cold type, many of the Sunday pages and sections and some of the advanced pages are also composed without the use of metal casting.

The News began setting stock market quotations in cold type on September 10, 1971. At this time New York was on daylight savings time and the market closed at 2:30 P.M.

daily, Detroit time. This allowed the News to run the closing markets in a final edition that went to press at 3:30 P.M., and permitted the composing room time to handle the engraving necessary in the cold-type operation. With the end of daylight savings time, the New York market closed at 3:30 P.M. Detroit time. The final could not go to press until about 4:30 P.M. This resulted in a survey to determine how many of the approximately 25,000 copies printed in the final edition were being purchased for the closing markets. It was concluded that closing the final at 3:00 P.M. without the complete closing stocks would cost about 3,000 circulation. On January 3, 1972, the News moved to the earlier deadline and dropped the closing markets, running the same tables as used in the 1:00 P.M. makeover. Cold type is used for all market tables.

News North Plant To Be Costly, Modern

The decision to construct the News North Plant was announced December 24, 1969. At that time the decision had been made to maintain the newspaper's corporate offices and its editorial, advertising, and business operations at the existing plant on Lafayette Boulevard. Subsequent to the completion of the North Plant in 1973 and the commencement of publication from that plant, the interior of the Lafayette plant will be remodeled to accommodate the remaining operations.⁵

⁵"News to Build Satellite Plant," Detroit News, Dec. 24, 1969, p. 3.

The total cost of the North Plant will exceed \$35 million. This includes everything from the cost of the land to the sophisticated equipment that will go into the plant. The plant site is forty-two acres, which has cost the News \$1 million.

A Denver, Colorado, architectural and engineering firm has been working on the plans for the project since September, 1969. The blue prints, that will cover all aspects of design, will cost approximately \$1,200,000. Site improvements, including grading, fencing, drainage systems, a railroad spur, fire water tank, and landscaping will cost about \$2,500,000.⁶ The plant will be two stories plus a basement and will be of steel and concrete. The plant and the separate truck maintenance garage will cost \$17 million.

The first floor of the North Plant will house a paper warehouse, lunchroom, truck loading dock, and an area to prepare the rolls of newsprint to be placed on the press. The second floor will contain the composing room, pressroom, stereotype department, and a second lunchroom. The basement will house service equipment and supplies.⁷ The maintenance garage will have ten drive-through lanes, a semi-automatic

⁶"Ground Broken for North Plant," Newsfolks, Summer, 1971. Newsfolks is the Evening News Association house organ.

⁷"News to break ground for North Plant next April," Sunday News, Dec. 20, 1970, p. 3.

and electronically-controlled car and truck wash, body shop, paint room, four hoists, a fueling point supplied by two 15,000 gallon tanks, plus other accessories necessary to a modern garage.

The plant will house \$13 million in new Goss presses. This is the largest order for presses ever placed.⁸ It includes fifty-four press units, nine folders, eighteen color couples and twelve color cylinders, all capable of turning out 70,000 impressions an hour, with a maximum of 144 pages and organizing them into a two-, three-, four-, six-, or eight-section newspaper as desired. Apparently this will be the first metropolitan newspaper installation of an entirely integrated press drive, which means that computer-like controls will drive and regulate each press unit. The press will be equipped with automatic web compensators and a computer-controlled ink adjustment with a color capacity four times that of the plant on Lafayette (not including Times Square).⁹ The capacity of News presses currently is ninety-six pages and 45,000 impressions an hour.

The handling of the massive rolls of newsprint will be automated in the new plant at a cost of about \$1 million. The mail room will be equipped with a Cutler-Hammer

⁸"Ground Broken."

⁹"Setting Sights on Sterling Heights," Newsfolks, December, 1970, p. 4.

Traymatic system which, through a circular series of moving trays, delivers tied bundles of newspapers in the correct quantity to any truck position at the dock--all by computer. This will cost \$1,600,000. Additional basic plant machinery includes a fifty-ton master stereo remelt pot and plant conveyors, both costing about \$130,000.

Internal and external air, water, and noise pollution have been considered. To keep equipment and people clean, the plant will have a sophisticated air-conditioning system and special suppression equipment to reduce any ink mist in the air. Other environmental control equipment includes an acid neutralization system for the nitric acid used in photo engraving (only two other newspapers are known to use this system), an oily waste-holding tank, and a centrifugal air cleaner that will separate and collect lead fumes and solids from the hot-air flue serving the stereotyping remelt operations. There will also be measures taken to control acoustics.

About a thousand people will work at the North Plant and print 50 to 60 per cent of the total circulation. The remaining 1,800 News employes will continue to work at Times Square or Lafayette Boulevard.

In March, 1970, the News contracted to purchase the \$13 million worth of press equipment. It is expected the first press units will be delivered in April, 1972, along with other equipment. Testing of the equipment will start

in September, 1972, with completion of installation by June, 1973.

The first actual press run is expected to be on a Monday sometime in July or August, 1973. If the time schedule is maintained, the News will celebrate the 100th anniversary of its founding on August 23, 1973, printing in its new plant.

Once the News determined that its major problem was competition with suburban dailies, there was little question the next plant would be constructed in the suburbs. The precise location was determined by the railroad pattern in the suburbs. The primary rail arteries run along the Detroit river and Lake Erie lakefront where commerce is heavy. Sterling Heights is not the most central possible location in the Detroit suburbs. To meet the requirement of building on a railroad spur, optimum location had to be sacrificed.

Peter B. Clark, the publisher, said considerable thought had been given to the construction of another satellite plant in the western Wayne County area, south and west of Sterling Heights about thirty miles.¹⁰ This area currently is agricultural. Members of the editorial staff project a population as large as four million people in the area by 1990, and anticipated that it would be a good location for another satellite plant controlled from Sterling Heights in

¹⁰ Peter B. Clark, publisher of the Detroit News, interviewed Oct. 13, 1971.

a manner similar to the control Sterling Heights will hold over the Times Square plant.¹¹

The publisher makes it clear that the North Plant is not being built simply because of a satellite philosophy. The basic News plant is nearly worn out at present and is too small. The question was how to optimally replace it. The capacity for satellite operations from Sterling Heights is unquestionably one of the reasons the particular move was selected.¹²

Copy Transmission Is a Critical Problem

Possibly the biggest question in the move to the North Plant is the transmission and control of copy between Lafayette and Sterling Heights.

The News has made the decision to use cathode ray tube (CRT) editing and writing exclusively when it moves to its North Plant.

Experiments with CRT editing began in late March, 1972, by processing local and wire copy and classified advertising. Training will also be conducted, but is expected to require only a few hours for each individual. By mid-1973, more than 100 CRT units are expected to be in use. About

¹¹Stoddard.

¹²Publisher Clark is watching the success of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch in its move to a series of satellite plants, each using offset presses.

sixty of these will be used by the editorial department, the remainder being used by the classified advertising department.

The cathode ray terminal is a television-like screen on which news copy is displayed after it is entered into the small computer, part of the CRT unit. Depending upon the complexity of the unit and auxiliary computers, an editor can erase or add words to a sentence, insert sentences or remove them, and alter, delete, or change the order of paragraphs. These changes are made on a keyboard similar to the keyboard of a typewriter; there is no editing pencil and the process is considered somewhat slower than nonelectronic editing. The information storage capacity of the CRT unit itself is generally limited--probably 500 words or less. After a story is edited, it may be transferred to a central computer where it can be picked up by other editors or transmitted to the composing room where it would be typed out on a high speed print-out device ready for punching into tape for the linecasters or cold-type-setting devices.¹³ It can also simply be left stored in the computer.

The News management believes that only modest storage capacity is needed in the CRT unit as the main storage

¹³The computer could just as easily transmit the story directly to a tape punch, bypassing the teletype phase, or feed it into both punch and teletype. The International Typographical Union, however, maintains a firm stance against automation that will result in lost jobs and the CRT has the potential for eliminating a large number of News punch operators.

computer is expected to provide this capacity. The computer screen will accommodate 500 words. The story is "scrolled" upward across the face of the screen as it is written. As it moves off the screen it is held by a central storage or "drum" computer capable of holding two million characters. Stories that are "overset" or filed for future use can be held in the drum storage unit or in a "disk" storage computer capable of holding twenty-nine million characters.

While reporters are expected to write their stories on the CRT, it would also be possible for them to type their stories on special electric typewriters that can be read by a scanner or optical character recognition (OCR) system. The OCR system could enter the data into the editor's computer, but the News has no plans to use OCR.

Unless the reporter writes on the CRT, entry of his story into the system poses a problem. It is anticipated that after the move to CRT,⁶ some news copy will be processed by typists until the reporting staff becomes proficient on CRT.

The make-up editors at Sterling Heights will be depended upon to guide the proofreaders in correcting typographical errors. The computer will provide two copies of each story at Sterling Heights. One copy will go to the punch operators to be prepared for the linecasters and later proofread, and the other copy will go to the make-up editors. This is all based on the premise that in transmission and

reproduction by a teletype form of printout there is a negligible error rate.

Initially the thinking of management was that the news desk would have to be reorganized on a "modular" basis with several clusters of editors and copy readers. Each cluster would handle a specific kind of news--international, local, hobbies, Metro, or some such division. However, it has been concluded that CRT is sufficiently flexible that the present news desk arrangement can be maintained.

The news desk will have available to it from the computer a close estimate of the length of each piece of copy. This is expected to make dummies more accurate than those currently prepared for each page and thereby present fewer problems for the make-up editors.

One of the earliest methods of copy transmission to be given consideration was facsimile. The News may obtain enough facsimile capability to back up its CRT system in case of some failure on the part of CRT. The News currently uses nineteen Xerox Telecopiers to bring in copy from the Metro zone offices.¹⁴ Large scale use of facsimile would allow the operation to remain undisturbed; instead of sending the copy to the backshop by vacuum tube, it is put on facsimile. The methods of punching and proofing are unchanged; the original copy exists for the proofreaders

¹⁴Regardless of disenchantment experienced by other publications, the News has found the Telecopiers to be highly dependable.

to scan and it need only be punched once and punched in the backshop.

Facsimile will be required for photography whether CRT or some other copy technique is used to transmit copy. There appears to be some concern about the quality loss in the transmission of photographs. It is possible that facsimile will be used for only about half the art used in the News, with other means found to transport the remainder. The editorial office will receive some page proofs by facsimile. Page proofs and dummies will serve in large part in place of actual copies of the paper for marking the paper for makeover.

The transmission of dummies could either be by facsimile or by CRT. Presently, there is no commercially available CRT with capacity to transmit a page dummy, but this type of capacity is expected in time for use by the News.

CHAPTER IX

THE EFFORTS OF THE DETROIT NEWS IN RESEARCH AND ADVERTISING

Marketing and advertising supported by research are among the hallmarks of modern, progressive, and competitive firms. Newspapers, like other businesses, are not exempt from a need for this kind of effort.

A staff of thirty-eight works to accomplish four general goals in promotion and research for the Detroit News: Promotion of advertising and circulation, internal and external public relations, collection and analysis of market-int data for external use by advertising and circulation, and research directed toward aiding internal administrative decision making.¹

A primary function is that of promotion of the News as an advertising medium and the promotion of circulation. Circulation is generally promoted by use of radio, television, outdoor billboards and such, including carrier contests. Trade magazine advertisements serve as one means of attracting

¹E. J. (Ted) Grofer, Detroit News promotion and research director, interviewed Sept. 9, 1971. The basic source for this chapter is the Grofer interview.

national advertising, and direct mail is used to further local display advertising. Classified advertising is promoted through radio and in-paper advertising.

When the News promotion department goes after national advertising, it targets on specific industries that generally use newspaper advertising, primarily food, liquor, travel, appliances, and general merchandise, which includes clothing fashions. When the department promotes local display advertising through its direct mail program, it is commonly supporting the special sections produced by the editorial department, such as skimobile, boating, travel, Kitchen Talk, etc. Some direct mail is aimed at national advertisers whose products are closely related to the special section or department.

A six-man art department and a six-man copy-writing staff create the in-paper advertisements and other promotional art and copy. Trade paper and television advertisements are produced by an advertising agency. The department makes most of its own radio commercials.

When the research section is serving its marketing function--the provision of information that aids the News advertising salesmen gain acceptance in the marketplace--its objective is to segment the market in any meaningful way and to describe the coverage of the newspaper in those segments. In the long run this provides the advertiser with information needed to make his advertising successful--and thus the News

successful.

Two specialists with advanced college degrees in marketing and communications set the specifications when sampling is involved in the research. The sampling is always contracted, but the News staff does its own analysis of the results.

W. R. Simmons and Associates Research, Inc., (known as Simmons) has done survey work in the Detroit area that the News uses. Simmons conducts its research based on the ten-county area of dominant influence (ADI) of which Detroit is the core. Simmons ten-county data is generated for the large national advertiser. The firm, which handles similar studies in thirty other large metropolitan areas, provides data for these markets that make it possible for a national advertiser to compare the markets. Local research using different bases and techniques of analysis often is not comparable between newspapers.

Simmons research is syndicated; it is not conducted at the request of the News or any other newspaper. Once the research firm has completed its study of the market area, the information can be purchased for use, but Simmons does not sell the ownership of the data and can disclose the results at will. One of the considerations in purchasing Simmons data is that it exists, to be used as best benefits the News. It also has valuable third-party objectivity.

Detroit area retailers are more interested in the

three-county area (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area or SMSA) for which Detroit is the core than they are in the ten-county ADI. Thus, the market research conducted by the promotion and research department concentrates on the SMSA.

If there is any serious void in knowledge facing the American newspaper industry, it is its lack of information about its readers. Work has gone into determining the strengths and weaknesses of the News as seen by its readers and non-readers--to find out what people like. Recent reader analyses of columnists of the News, cartoon pages, sports section and such have been made. There also have been studies to determine how the public views the News on a liberal to conservative scale, and how the public sees the Free Press on the same scale. The News has gone so far as to analyze each suburb on this conservative to liberal scale.

Although the above testing is progressive, there is no reason to think it is unique. What may be unique is that one of the several kinds of research being conducted is on a continuing basis. The continuous survey is a quarterly study. The information desired is established, specifications are written for the survey firm, the survey is conducted and the findings analyzed, all within about three months. The results of the studies are analyzed in terms of individual departments. The department head is provided with a written summary describing significance of the data and a researcher reviews the material with him.

Research for the editorial side is conducted both at the request of the editors and at the suggestion of the researchers who offer ideas they think could aid in editorial decision-making. The research for editorial is almost exclusively decision-making oriented; it is only for internal use.

The surveys are tuned to search for a wide variety of information. In a recent survey it was found that the Free Press had significantly increased its promotion of circulation by telephone in the inner city.

The sample size for the quarterly survey is generally 300 or 400, although on certain issues the sample size is increased as much as three times.

The research element of the promotion and research department played a major role in the decision to launch the Metro editions. Fourteen months of work went into exacting analyses of readership habits, competitive newspaper saturations, etc. The usefulness of local research in making editorial decisions may have had its most effective demonstration in the studies for the Metro edition.

Surveys were not the only part the promotion and research department played in launching the Metro editions. "We started promoting the Metro sections a month before they hit the street. We were able to determine that during that month there was a definite awareness increase that the Detroit News did more to cover local events than any of its

competition. It was primarily the promotion that caused people to be aware of the News local coverage. When the Metro editions hit the streets, people were receptive," says E. J. (Ted) Grofer, promotion and research manager.

The research section also has the ability to derive a reach and frequency statistic. The reach and frequency statistic is not unique--Simmons can provide it for publications. But, Simmons is not willing to provide more than the general formula for how it arrives at the statistic. Rather than buy the statistic from Simmons, the News took the general formula and learned how to apply it to the Detroit market.

The reach concept is a powerful sales tool for the News. Recent computations indicate that one issue of the News reaches more different people than five issues of the Free Press. An advertiser would have to purchase advertising in five issues of the Free Press to present his message in newspapers that would be read by as many different people as will one issue of the News. The reach statistic also provides the advertiser with the number of times his message will be in a newspaper read by the same person, thus it gives a measure of redundancy.

The reach statistic is calculated in terms of the ten-county area of dominant influence. As such, it may not properly consider the long but thin reach of the Free Press across Michigan. In the three-county area, 4.2 million of

the 8.9 million people in Michigan are found and it is in this concentration that the News dominates.

It should be noted that the reach and frequency statistic does not tell about the approximately 45 per cent of the News readership that cannot be reached in the Free Press, Sunday or weekday, or the 30 per cent of the Free Press readers that cannot be reached through the News.

The widespread circulation of the Free Press may account for the strong tendency for the national advertiser to split his advertising dollar equally between the News and Free Press. Presently the News gets about 59 per cent of the national advertising package it must share with the Free Press. This is up from 54 per cent in the last few years. The national advertiser may seek the state-wide circulation of the Free Press.

The research section also keeps a day-by-day count on advertising and editorial lineage that tells how each issue compares with the past performance of the News and the Free Press.

The promotion and research department also provides a store site location analysis free to Detroit businessmen. A computer program has been developed using data of the three-county area. This data has been derived by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments and other sources. When census data become available they will be used to update the program. At a cost of about \$8 to the News, the

department can take a site location a business might be considering, code the information for computer and transmit it to Chicago by phone. The News leases computer time in Chicago. The computer then provides a projection of probable productivity of the site from existing conditions and past trends placed in the computer program. More than 400 analyses were made between August, 1970, and September, 1971. Grofer estimated such an analysis would cost an advertiser in excess of \$1,000 if made by an outside firm.

A merchandising function of the promotion and research department supports the advertising sales department by providing certain benefites to large, national advertisers for using the News as a medium. Merchandising generally consists of notification letter, games, and promotion devices sent to the local retailers of the national advertiser's product.

Ongoing public relations activities must also be tended. A public relations specialist writes articles for national trade magazines and the public relations section plans and coordinates sixty to sixty-five public service events each year.

A separate section of the public relations group handles what is called educational services. A primary ingredient of educational services is the newspaper-in-the-classroom program, but it also handles such activities as scholastic writing and art awards.

High school teachers interested in the newspaper-in-the-classroom program are provided with a free paper for each student for two weeks. If the teacher wishes to continue the program after two weeks, the papers must be purchased at half price or five cents. The number of papers being purchased on the half-price basis is rising. In October, there were about 2,350 papers being purchased daily, up almost 100 per cent from the spring. If the News can sell its papers for half-price for classroom use, it can count these as sales, according to Audit Bureau of Circulation rules.

The duty of producing the two News house publications also falls on the promotion and research department. Both are produced quarterly with about a dozen 8-1/2 by 11 inch pages per issue. One is titled Newsfolks and is the employe house publication. The second is the Detroit News Salesman, designed for carrier boys and filled with their pictures and laudatory comments about their activities.

The promotion and research department has been in existence for almost twenty-five years. It was designated the best such department in the Midwest last year at the central region competition which includes newspapers from the north central United States and part of Canada.

CHAPTER X

"SECRET WITNESS": THE NEWS JOINS THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME

Social critics have been warning for a decade that newspapers are losing credibility with their readers. If the Detroit News has lost credibility, it has not lost it in all quarters. An example of strong credibility can be found in its "Secret Witness" which provides a reward to an anonymous informant to a crime, provided he can supply convicting information. While the tipster is often interested in the money offered by the News, he must literally put his life in the hands of the newspaper, for if his anonymity is broken it could mean his death in what may well be America's most violent major city.¹

The concept of credibility loss is generally used in discussion of lack of faith in news columns. It is never used to refer to lack of faith by tipsters seeking rewards.

¹Detroit homicides are six times the national average. One out of every 2,000 Detroit residents will be a homicide victim during 1971. Detroiters are slain at a faster rate than any of the nation's nine largest cities, including infamous Chicago, New York, or Houston. Stephen Cain, "The myths and facts on city's soaring homicides," Detroit News, Sept. 12, 1971, p. 3.

Despite monetary considerations, it is unlikely that there would be faith in a "Secret Witness" program if the news columns are found to be engaged in duplicity.

The current "Secret Witness" program began February 1, 1967, when the News established a \$100,000 reward fund. The target of "Secret Witness" is those crimes of violence committed by strangers against persons going innocently about their private lives at home, on their jobs, or in the streets. The News drew upon the lessons learned between 1949 and 1954 when such a plan was less than successfully conducted with regard to unsolved sex murders.²

Undoubtedly a major factor in the success of the program, which to date has paid \$85,000 in rewards and solved nineteen murders, is the veteran newsman, Boyd Simmons, an assistant managing editor who single-handedly operates "Secret Witness." Why Simmons' success? His secret is secrecy. "One casual remark could get someone killed."³

Simmons was active in the "Secret Witness" type reward program when it was started in 1949. He said the News did more of its own investigation then and credits the current success to leaving investigation to police. Also, the current program carefully avoids putting pressure

²Boyd Simmons, personal interview, Sept. 28, 1971. All of the information on "Secret Witness" was gathered through interview or through handout material Simmons had prepared.

³Ibid.

on the informant and the informant deals with a single individual--Simmons. Further, police now find that the efforts of the News are not merely useful, but needed. The enthusiasm of police has given "Secret Witness" a climate of acceptance.

Simmons finds two major worries with "Secret Witness"--leaving the tipster vulnerable and being part of a situation in which someone is falsely accused or wrongly convicted of a crime. In Simmons' opinion, either an injured tipster or an unjustly damaged reputation could end the effectiveness of the program. The vulnerability of the informant is a particular problem since "Secret Witness" deals exclusively in major crimes.

How does Simmons avoid false accusation? "Frankly, I pray a little," Simmons says. But it appears to be more a hypothetical problem than a real one. The problems with "Secret Witness" tips do not differ greatly from other tips police receive. It is easy to visualize a tipster dropping hints in such a manner that the informant himself becomes a witness at the trial of the victim, either to collect the reward money or for some vengeful reason. The informant would have to testify to validate this hypothetical situation. Although a voluminous number of tips have crossed Simmons' desk in the five years the program has been active, only one of the informants eventually became a witness at the trial of the accused.

Safeguards against the possibility of convicting an innocent person exist with Simmons and with the police who must investigate the crimes. Tips that appear to have been the result of questionable motives never get past Simmons' desk; he passes on only statements that appear candid and give concrete facts or make unequivocating assertions of guilt. He adds that the police are too busy to check out tips that do not contain significant facts and that their approach is a wary one, quietly investigating the tip, avoiding procedures that might damage reputations until they are certain the tip is sound and are willing to move aggressively. He credited much of the success of the program to the recognition by Detroit police of the value and limitations of the program, a recognition not always accorded "Secret Witness" by less friendly suburban police departments.

If the newspaper suspected its program was resulting in the prosecution or conviction of an innocent individual, the editorial staff would immediately be committed to investigate and rectify the situation, he adds.

The most critical relationship has been with police. When the program was launched, rules were established in which the police agreed to make no attempt to determine the newspaper's source of information and to keep the newspaper confidentially informed of progress of the investigation. The News conceded the right to publish stories on the

investigation until a warrant has been issued or an arrest made. It also agreed to post rewards only with police approval and not to investigate on its own any of the matters that come under the "Secret Witness." This bargain limits the reportorial role of the News at the beginning of the investigation, but as the case develops, it results in exclusive background material.

By its own decision, the News does not print details received from the tipster; all information printed about a crime must be gleaned from police. Simmons believes this practice prevents potential slander and prevents rumors that might result from incomplete, partially accurate information.

Simmons refuses to run police sketches of criminals. In Simmons' absence, the News has printed sketches. A deluge of indefinite responses resulted, which were unusable by an overworked police department.

Simmons is also cautious of convicts. He has found that the convict tends to become a key part of a case and there is significant danger that the program could appear to be buying testimony.

The technical procedure for both newspaper and informant is simple. At the request or approval of the police, the News, either from its own reward fund or from money provided by some interested firm or organization, announces the reward for information that will lead to a conviction

with regard to a specified crime. The News does all in its power not to buy testimony, an element that may be as much a key to the success of "Secret Witness" as secrecy. As a major step toward this goal, the name of the tipster is not sought; Simmons acts to prevent the identity of the informant from becoming known even to him. Rather, at the conclusion of the telephone conversation or at the bottom of the informant's letter containing the information, the tipster reports a six digit number of his own choosing. This reduces the possibility of the prosecutor building his case around the testimony of the informant.

A special telephone is provided for receiving the tips. It does not go through the News switchboard. A reporter or deskman who might take a "Secret Witness" tip on the telephone writes a memorandum putting the identifying number where it can be torn off before the memorandum is forwarded to police. If there is urgency, the tip is phoned to police immediately and the memorandum passed to Simmons. If not, the memorandum goes to Simmons, who files the original in a locked file and passes copies to the police reporter and the police bureau with jurisdiction. The original letters or memoranda are filed.

The police then report their action on the tip to the News. While this information may eventually become background in a news story, its most immediate use is likely to be in keeping the tipster informed. After arrests are

made, the tipster usually calls to see if he is the one that turned in the right information. After he identifies himself by way of the number, Simmons answers the question. After a conviction, it takes about two weeks for a committee composed of a bishop of the Episcopal church and two Detroit lawyers to certify the tipster and clear him for payment.

While dalliance in maintaining the anonymity of the informant may be the major threat to the "Secret Witness" program, attack has also come through the courts. On June 4, 1971, Boyd Simmons was summoned to a pretrial hearing in the case of three young adults on trial for the bombing on March 8 of a biology laboratory at Oakland Community College near Detroit. The News had offered a \$5,000 reward in the bombing, and the three were eventually convicted as a result of a "Secret Witness" tip.

Simmons was called as a defense witness and asked if he knew the identity of the informant on the bombing charge.⁴ He refused to answer this and subsequent questions. Southfield District Judge Clarence J. Reid, Jr., ruled that the News need not tell if it knows the identity of the "Secret Witness" or to what police officer the information was delivered or the form in which the information was delivered.⁵

⁴Simmons did not know the name of the tipster; consequently, he said, it was an ideal test case.

⁵"'Secret Witness' anonymity upheld," Sunday News, June 6, 1971, p. 24A.

While Simmons refuses to testify as to the name of an informant, he said that if the tipster, while a trial witness, becomes identified as the tipster, then he will testify as to the circumstances that surrounded the tip. This is consistent with keeping "Secret Witness" from being used to buy testimony or convict innocent people.

One of the dangers of "Secret Witness" is Simmons' own involvement. He reports that in about twenty cases, he "got quite involved," and that this most often happened when the crime occurred in the jurisdiction of the smaller police agencies that have not fully accepted the program. He saw such involvement eventually leading him into some obscure but serious legal difficulties. "But, sometimes [he has] to do it" to satisfy his own mind that the tip is accurate or to provide sufficient information to police that the tip, by its nature, will not identify the informant. Although Simmons' goal is to never learn the identity of the informant, the complexity of cases often prevents this.

During a lull in the pace of activity of "Secret Witness" in 1970, it was suggested that the program might only be a fad, that interest in it had expired. Simmons himself apparently considered that this might be the case. Its activities soon renewed with accelerated vigor, and Simmons now believes that the program has demonstrated its values and has become an established, trusted institution.

Has "Secret Witness" reduced crime? Simmons says

there is no way to tell. He noted two instances in which gangs of muggers had been captured because of "Secret Witness" involvement and the result had been an immediate reduction in muggings, but on the whole, the crime rate continues to rise.

The success of "Secret Witness" has brought donations by outside firms and organizations. Joining this growing list is the city of Detroit. On September 17, 1971, the Detroit City Council unanimously approved \$25,000 to be used through the "Secret Witness" program as rewards for information leading to conviction in cases of unsolved murders. It especially will be used to solicit tips in unsolved cases of murdered policemen.⁶

Simmons and the Detroit News have pioneered "Secret Witness" and their program is being widely copied--and with success. Simmons names a half-dozen major metropolitan daily newspapers that are successfully operating their own reward programs, all patterned closely after that of the News. A number of smaller dailies are also supporting such programs. But it is not limited to newspapers. Chambers of commerce commonly support such programs with the aid of cooperative local newspapers. Many do not limit their activities to major crimes, becoming active in helping solve such police problems as car thefts and fights.

⁶"City enters 'Secret Witness' program," Detroit News, Sept. 18, 1971, p. 3A.

There is also interest in "Secret Witness" outside the United States. Simmons has replied to request for information from Nairobi, Kenya, Johannesburg, South Africa, and Hong Kong.

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