ORGANIZATIONAL ORIENTATION AND

READERSHIP OF AIR FORCE BASE NEWSPAPERS

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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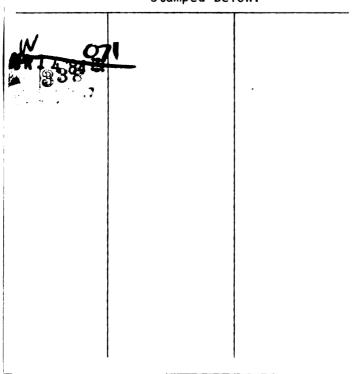1961

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by

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AN ABSTRACT

Submitted to the College of Communication Arts
Michigan State University in partial
fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of General Communication Arts

1961

Approved Malcolm S. MacLean, jr.

Donald MacDonald

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between reading of selected management messages in United States Air Force base newspapers and specified audience factors.

The independent variables in the study were: 1) orientation toward the USAF as indexed in the study, 2) age, 3) civil education, and 4) the military rank of the respondents. The dependent variable was reading behavior indexed by what respondents remembered having "looked at or read" in surveyed newspapers.

The hypotheses were that reading of management messages would be greater among respondents who: 1) are strongly USAF-oriented, 2) are older, 3) have more education, and 4) are of higher rank. It was also hypothesized that editorial matter perceived by coders as near-to-reader would be better read than material perceived as remote-from-reader.

Respondents drew pencil lines through items they remembered having looked at or read when first they saw the surveyed newspaper issues.

Editorial content of the newspapers was coded into thirteen subject-matter and six location-of-interest categories. Mean readership scores were computed and rank ordered for selected respondent groups. These rank orders were compared with the amount displayed within each category.

The homogeneity of the population was tested by the chi square statistic, for selected management message groups. These were: 1) health and safety, 2) ⟨illegible⟩ and 3) commanders' columns and editorials.

Questionnaires obtained demographic data on respondents as well as items used in constructing a Guttman scale of orientation toward the USAF.

Conclusions of the study were:

1. Editorials and commanders' columns are better read by USAF-oriented than by other-oriented respondents. The same is true for retention and training news. Readership of health and safety news follows this pattern only for officers, with other-oriented airmen reading slightly more than the USAF-oriented group. Local news is less well read than USAF or command news by both orientation groups.

2. Retention and training news is read about equally by all ages. Health news, and commanders' columns or editorials receive higher reader attention as age increases.

3. Aside from unexpected high readership of health and safety news by respondents with grade school education, most subject-matter categories were better read by more highly educated groups. Local base news was also about as well read by the lowest education group as by any others. Again, USAF news, command news, and--in one case--department of defense news are better read than local base news.

4. Airmen read more about retention and training than officers do. Readership of such things as sports

is about the same for all respondents, but officers read more of everything else in the base newspapers. This is true for location-of-interest as well as subject-matter categories.

When asked what would make base newspapers more valuable personally, readers asked for more: 1) base plans and policies, 2) USAF news, and 3) news of personalities at their own base. They also say they read most of base news, followed by USAF news and news of their command, in that order. The scoring used in this study does not support their stated reading habits, but does support their desires.

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vised by my wife. Without her arduous efforts the study
would have been seriously delayed.

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INTRODUCTION

This study describes a channel of military management communication and the audience of that communication, United States Air Force base newspapers and their readers. The gross message stimulus is divided into its component parts according to subject-matter and location-of-interest categories; a sample of the reader population is divided into categories by age, education, economic status and reference group orientation. Then, the study asks who in the audience attends to specified parts of the gross message stimulus.

A measuring device has been constructed to obtain a simple report of what USAF airmen and officers remember having looked at or read in the most recent issue of selected USAF base newspapers.

The assumption under which most internal publications are established is that these media offer channels for management to use in diffusing its plans and policies. Newspapers are not the only medium used, the list including bulletin boards, public address systems, employee mass briefings. letters. magazines. and counseling sessions. Such observers as Garth Bentley,[1] the Opinion Research

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[1] Garth Bentley, _Editing the Company Publication_ (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), Chap. 1.

Corporation,[1] and the National Industrial Conference Board, Incorporated,[2] agree in conceding primacy among these media to the internal organization newspaper.

The USAF manual prescribing base newspaper organization and operation states:[3]

> Readership is more than eighty percent of base personnel and sixty-seven percent of Air Force wives. . . . No other medium within the Air Force consistently has so large an audience. . . . .The commander and the information officer should use the base newspaper as the basic medium of the internal information program. They must make every effort to maintain the base newspaper as the major source of information on the base.

Such a description implies great communicative efficiency. Yet, analysis of response to questions on official USAF tri-annual sample surveys indicates that fewer than sixteen percent of today's USAF personnel regard the base newspaper as either the first or second most important source of their own information about the USAF. Data from one survey show other sources preferred.[4] (See Table 1)

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[1] Case Book for Industrial Editors (Princeton, N.J.: Opinion Research Corporation, 1953), p. 5.

[2] "Employee Magazines and Newspapers," Studies in Personnel Policy, No. 136 (New York: National Industrial Conference Board, Inc.), p. 10.

[3] USAF Manual 190-4, Information Services, Sect. B, par. 1.

[4] Analysis of the Air Force Information Program, USAF, Sept. 1960, p. 161.

It may be noted here that the local commander has rather full control of the commander's call, daily bulletin, and the base newspaper, and that the Air Force Times is a civilian publication not controlled by the Air Force. In each instance, the local media received lower ratings by officers than indicated in Table 1 for airmen, with an increase in reliance on official pamphlets and on the Air Force Times. Thus, we can see that the commander's call far outstrips the newspaper as a preferred first or second source of information about the base and USAF.

TABLE 1

SOURCE RANK (AIRMEN) FOR KEEPING INFORMED ON
USAF ACTIVITIES

	Best-1959	2d best	Best-1960	2d best
Commander's call	19.3%	13.3%	27.7%	14.5%
Airman magazine	4.5	10.4	5.1	9.8
USAF news review	5.7	7.9	5.0	7.5
Official pamphlets	2.2	3.4	1.9	2.8
Other official publications	4.2	9.8	4.2	8.9
Base newspapers	5.5	12.2	4.9	11.0
Air Force Times	45.0	17.7	38.0	21.2
Civil newspapers and magazines	4.8	8.9	4.6	8.7

For many years a newspaper axiom held that local news is read more than non-local news, and editors of internal publications--after which USAF base newspapers are patterned--have assumed this to be true among their "captive"

audiences. The present study submits that axiom to a test based on the military readers of USAF base newspapers. To do so, it tests reading differences of selected content categories. One hypothesis of the study derives from examination of similar relationships between messages and readers conducted by Merton[1] and by Gouldner.[2]

In brief, each observer proposed that the psychological orientation of a person toward the community affects the person's communications behavior. It should follow that those who are community-oriented will attend more to community-centered messages than will persons who are not so oriented.

A tentative hypothesis will be that organization-centered persons will tend to read local management messages more widely than will persons of different orientation.

Newspapers, even of this rather restricted sort, print stories about many things. What is printed is largely a matter of editorial judgment, although editors must work within limitations imposed by civil and military managements. (Knowledge of relative emphasis on subject-matter categories, and an index of the attention or interest given to each by a sample of the readers, should provide management and

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[1]Robert K. Merton and Alice S. Kitt, cited in Continuities in Social Research, ed. R. K. Merton and Paul F. Lazarsfeld (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1950), pp. 42-69.

[2]Alvin W. Gouldner, "Cosmopolitans and Locals: Toward an Analysis of Latent Social Roles--I," Administrative Science Quarterly, II (1957), 281-306.

editors with an indication of general effectiveness of the medium. After all, a message which is not attended to is not effective.

Conducting the study by correspondence has advantages, but it has more limitations. Since it is difficult to obtain verification of the reader attention to specific items when many items are being tested, a simple and internally consistent measuring device has to be used. A self-administered "reader interest" test was adapted for this study, based on a commercial survey method known as "Readex."[1] With the consultation of faculty members of the Michigan State University Communications Research Center, this method was revised for the present study and pretested on a small sample of military readers of the Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan, base newspaper.[2]

The study categorizes editorial content of several base newspapers by subject-matter, then relates personal characteristics of readers to the attention given to the categories. In other words, it asks "who reads what" in these publications.

The reference group orientation of the respondents was obtained from questionnaire data. Answers were dichoto-

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[1]Alfred Politz Research, Inc., A Study of Printed Advertising Rating Methods (New York: Advertising Research Foundation, 1956), pp. 1-5.

[2]The pretest was administered through the Selfridge AFB Information Office, with the cooperation of the base information officer, 2/Lt. Scott Walker, on March 18, 1961.

mized, then converted into a Guttmann scale of orientation toward the USAF. These mean scores, when used to indicate behavior of respondent groups, provide another index of "who reads what;" this is related to location-of-interest categories across all newspapers surveyed.[1]

Coding items into categories was conducted after reference to various studies of categorization, including those by Berelson,[2] Deutschmann,[3] and Freyschlag,[4] and considerable cut-and-fit testing. It was decided to utilize categories as broad as would fit the study, as the most practical means of obtaining coding reliability.

The significance of the study lies in its attempt to provide the management of a military organization with evidence of the success of certain messages, and to provide editors with a more accurate profile of the attention given to different items in their publications.

Definitions and explanations are presented in the study where they can be placed in perspective, but the

[1]_A Machine Method for Scaling as Many as Twelve Dichotomies._ Washington Agricultural Experiment Stations, Institute of Agricultural Sciences, State College of Washington (Circular 329, August, 1958).

[2]Bernard Berelson, _Content Analysis in Communication Research_ (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1953), Chap. 5.

[3]Paul J. Deutschmann, _News-page Content of Twelve Metropolitan Dailies_ (E. Lansing, Mich.: Communications Research Center, Michigan State University, 1959).

[4]Kedrick G. Freyschlag, "Categories for Analyzing News in Terms of Reader-Interest" (unpublished Master's thesis, Stanford University, 1953).

intent of the study can now be seen more clearly: it is
to index the subject-matter and location-of-interest, and
the readership, of a type of management communications
medium by indicators not now in general use among military
publications.

The study is presented in four sections. Chapter I
provides a theoretical background and rationale for the
study, and states the hypotheses. Chapter II explains
and describes the categories and measuring devices, and
discusses the survey design, administration, and analysis
procedures. Chapter III reports results of statistical
analysis related to the main hypotheses and other matters
of interest. Chapter IV briefly reviews the means and
ends of the study, presents conclusions, discusses what
was or was not supported by the findings, and makes recom-
mendations for further study. Additional raw data, toget-
her with samples of the instructions and test instruments,
are presented in the appendixes to assist in future
analysis.

CHAPTER I

Most humans who knowingly produce messages do so
with the intent of influencing someone who receives the
messages. Most messages have more or less specific in-
tended receivers, or audiences. If messages are produced,
transmitted, and made available to the intended receiver,
there still is no guarantee that the communication process
is complete. For, if the receiver does not have similar
meanings for the signs used in encoding the messages, he
cannot "make sense" of the messages. Or, if the subject
of the messages is not seen as relevant or important, he
probably will not bother to examine the messages very
long or very thoroughly. (What is important to the receiver
should be known to the message-source if messages are to
be produced which have a good chance of influencing the
receiver.)

Schramm's model of overlapping fields of experience
portrays this problem simply and effectively:[1]

No Communication Occurs   Communication Occurs

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[1]Wilbur Schramm, "The Communication Process," The
Process and Effects of Mass Communications, ed. Wilbur
Schramm (Urbana, Ill.: Univ. of Ill. Press, 1954), Chap. 1.

This is to say that the receiver generally must see the message as pertinent or he will not consciously attend to it.

The act of attending to a stimulus is an initial phase in perception, leading to interest, consideration, the assignment of meaning, and response. The mere fact of physical transmission of signs does not constitute meaning. If we can accept the analogy drawn by Berlo in describing how we learn meanings, we may arrive at ways of determining whether we are effective in winning attention to our messages. He writes:[1]

> We learn language, or through language, in the same way that we learn many other things. A person's responses must be rewarded if they are to be retained. Stimuli must be presented in terms of the receiver's own interest and exper- ience. . . .A stimulus is perceived (decoding), some internal response-stimulus pattern is set up (interpretation), which we will call mean- ings, and some overt response (encoding) is made.

Thus, a communication is successful only when the experience of the source and receiver are enough alike that they have similar meanings for the messages.

The process by which the source determines whether his receiver has a meaning for a message--feedback--is second nature to all of us. In face-to-face communication the source can see, feel, or hear the reaction to his mes- sage. Usually, he can determine lack of meaning as well;

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[1]David K. Berlo, The Process of Communication (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), p. 187.

if the receiver does not react visibly the most frequent

conclusion is that some aspect of the message must be

changed. Here, the communicator has several alternatives:

1. To ignore the non-response and change the subject. This implies that the whole thing was rather unimportant.

2. To recode, amplify, repeat, or change the intensity of the message stimulus.

3. To make use of other stimuli, and draw pictures, pantomine, or write the message.

4. To call in an authority to retransmit the message.

5. To query the receiver about the meaning of the message.

When one is not in a face-to-face communication

situation opportunity for feedback is greatly reduced.

The source can seldom see, feel, or hear the conse-

quences of his messages after they have been transmitted,

at least for a rather long while. Man is ingenious,

however, and has devised formal and informal ways of

compensating for this restriction of immediate feedback.

The Nielsen index,[1] Videodex,[2] and others all use reports

of message receivers to determine who was exposed to

specific groups of messages. The Pulse surveys[3] and

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[1]"Big Nielsen News: Instant TV Ratings," Sponsor, November 1, 1958, pp. 37-39.

[2]"Videodex Reports 141 Cities, Adds Score of New Markets in Last Quarter," Sponsor, October 11, 1958, pp. 40-41.

[3]"The Pulse--In Home Interviews," Sponsor, September 20, 1958, pp. 30-32.

Hooper reports[1] ask listeners what radio and television programs they have attended to. And newspapers receive letters to the editor as well as Audience Research Bureau data.[2]

Newspapers and magazines have spent much time and money in developing useful indicators of reader attention and interest, both for editorial matter and for advertising. In doing this, they have employed interviews, questionnaires, telephone surveys, and other techniques of assessing receiver responses. In addition, these studies have determined, story by story, advertisement by advertisement, and issue by issue, what kinds of people attend to what kinds of messages.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Of particular interest to the present study are the findings of a series of newspaper analyses. Schramm and Ludwig reported a 1951 study of weekly newspapers:[3]

1. The reader of the weekly newspaper typically reads about thirty-six percent of all the items in the newspaper, about forty-one percent of all news items.

2. The percentage of items read in a weekly tends to vary inversely with the number

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[1]"Hooper Riding the Big Radio Boom," _Sponsor_, October 18, 1958, pp. 42-44.

[2]"ARB Expands its Measurements," _Sponsor_, September 27, 1958, pp. 36-38.

[3]Wilbur Schramm and Merritt Ludwig, "The Weekly Newspaper and its Readers," _Journalism Quarterly_, XXVIII, No. 3 (1951), 301-314.

of pages or total columns in the news-
paper.

3. An item on page one is about twice as like-
ly to be read as an item on any other page
of a weekly newspaper.

4. Local editorials are better read, on the
average, than half the other content cate-
gories.

5. More than any other variable yet isolated,
localness and especially local names makes
for higher readership of a weekly newspaper.

Some of the relationships found by Schramm and Ludwig

may be seen easily in simple tabulations:[1]

TABLE 2

READERSHIP OF WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS BY PAGE

	Men	Women	All Readers
Page one	48%	52%	50%
All other pages	26	31	28

NOTE: Figures cited are mean percentages of all
items read. (N-1083) Average number of items on
front page was thirty-two. Average number for all
pages was eighteen.

From studies conducted with other newspapers,

Schramm and White made further observations about audience

attention:[2]

A substantial proportion of the news readers in
each community . . .are merely headline readers,

---

[1] Ibid.

[2] Wilbur Schramm and David M. White, "Age, Education,
and Economic Status as Factors in Newspaper Reading: Con-
clusions," The Process and Effects of Mass Communications,
ed. Wilbur Schramm (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois
Press, 1954), pp. 71-73.

TABLE 3

READERSHIP OF WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS BY SUBJECT-MATTER,
SHOWING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN READERSHIP
RANKING BY READER SUB-GROUPS[1]

Rank-order of categories by male readership	N of Items	Mean Percent Men	Mean Percent Women	Mean Percent All Readers
Local pictures	94	74.0%	80.1%	77.1%
Local columns	18	59.6	59.1	59.4
Human interest	31	43.8	56.6	50.2
Sports	91	42.5	26.1	34.3
Personals	129	42.3	67.1	54.7
General News	785	41.9	48.6	45.3
Local editorials	52	40.5	36.2	38.3
Society	384	24.0	51.8	37.9

NOTE: This includes only the eight categories most read by all readers. Seven more categories had lower readership.

[1]Schramm and Ludwig, pp 301-314.

passing on to the comics, sports, or woman's page where their true interest lies.

Allport noted that interest in public affairs news, which we may equate with some kinds of management communications, is rapidly exhausted, with readers quickly turning to news of more personal interest.[1] Robert Lane writes, referring to factors predisposing people to read about public affairs:[2]

> Surveys have regularly shown that from twenty to twenty-five percent of the population care only about immediate national issues and evince little interest in even the most important aspects of foreign affairs. Who those people are we do not know, but in general an interest in foreign affairs is associated with level of education.

So we may see that attention is quite broadly given to or withheld from news according to its salience. As the news is seen close to us, geographically, politically, or psychologically, we tend to become interested in it.

Schramm and White found that age, education, and economic status are associated with the attention or lack of attention given to certain kinds of news in general newspapers. They noted that higher education, age, and economic status tend to correlate positively with reading of _delayed_ _reward_ items. "Delayed reward" may be defined

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[1] Gordon W. Allport and Janet McFadden, "The Psychology of Newspapers: Five Tentative Laws," _Public Opinion Quarterly_, IV (1940), 702-703.

[2] Robert Lane, _Political Life_ (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1959), p. 138.

simply as that news which is not seen as having direct and visible effect on the reader, his purse, family, or activities. Its effect is either so hidden from view or so remote in the future that many readers do not perceive its relation to them.[1]

The relationships found by Schramm and White may be explained as a function of developing personality, in which youth has not yet internalized the concept of civic duty, being more interested in the here-and-now, while older and more educated persons, who would tend to occupy higher economic status, have internalized this concept so that "their duty is their pleasure."

INTERNAL PUBLICATIONS:

That readers of company publications do attend to news seen as personally and immediately rewarding is borne out by a report made by Walter Barlow of the Opinion Research Corporation:[2]

> Where the news was of universal or local interest, readership and retention figures were high. But if the news gimmick did not apply to the local area, the figures were likely to be disappointing.

Not all observers have arrived at the same conclusions; one editor engaged in research for industrial communications, James McCloskey, has noted other impressions,

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[1]Schramm and White, pp. 71-73.

[2]"In-Plant Communication: A Seminar Report," Cornell Conference Reports (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University School of Business Administration, 1953), pp. 68-69.

although he is not specific as to the source:[1]

> Insofar as questionnaires can be meaningful in
> so intangible a proposition as what employees
> want to read in their company magazines, the
> surveys indicate that most readers get as much
> if not more than they like of such staples as
> departmental notes, sports, woman's page, and
> gossip items. What many do want more of is news
> about the company's operations, and future plans
> and prospects. These are things that affect
> their livelihood.

Some previous surveys have indicated that "news
about the company's operations, and future plans and pro-
spects" has been thought by management to be in the
"delayed reward" category. At least, Whyte indicates as
much in writing of what he considers a colossal failure
by American industry in telling employees about business.[2]
Summarizing studies of employee communications
programs, the National Industrial Conference Board, Inc.,
reported these modal primary objectives:[3]

1. To promote unity in the organization.

2. To promote understanding, help employees
   become better acquainted.

3. To promote two-way communication--the inter-
   change of news and ideas among employees at
   all levels in the organization.

4. To recognize employees as individuals and as
   groups.

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[1]James McCloskey, Industrial Journalism Today (New
York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), p. 17.

[2]William H. Whyte, Jr., Is Anybody Listening? (New
York: Simon and Schuster, 1952).

[3]"Employee Magazines and Newspapers," Studies in Per-
sonnel Policy (New York: National Industrial Conference
Board, Inc., 1953), p. 11.

5. To give employees information about the
    company

6. To provide a vehicle for management phil-
    osophy.

The USAF and its commands have regarded base news-
papers as industry regards its "house organs," allotting
thirty percent of the total newspaper evaluation score to
their use as a "management tool," and another thirty per-
cent to the newspapers' support of "USAF information
objectives." It fully supports the dicta relating to
the power of "local" news in gaining attention to the
papers as a channel of management communication. Typical
instructions are:

> Strategic Air Command:[1] If it's worth page
> one, it certainly should carry the local angle.
>
> Air Training Command:[2] Everything appearing
> on the front page should be locally written
> copy or copy that has been localized.
>
> Air Defense Command:[3] Great emphasis is placed
> on localization of news service materials.

Other official directives concern various standard
practices used to increase the attention-getting qualities
of news items, pictures, and feature stories. These are
generally taken from journalism texts or from civil news-
paper style-books.

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[1] SAC Editor's File, SAC Press Service, July, 1960.

[2] "Spot Checking ATC House Organs," Air Training
Command, 1960.

[3] ADC Regulation 190-4, August 22, 1960.

Perhaps the best-known description of the uses of

the company publication is found in Bentley's primer for

company editors:[1]

> It is the sole channel of communication between
> management and employee which has won established
> acceptance and, as a result, is the most power-
> ful and influential that can be used. Such a
> publication should be planned with a fourfold
> purpose:
>
> 1. As the company's mouthpiece, it explains and
>   interprets policies simply, fully, reasonably,
>   thus making them understood and creating a
>   desire to cooperate with them. It explains
>   why certain steps are taken, enabling workers
>   to know exactly what is expected of them and
>   why.
>
> 2. The employee paper builds morale, preventing
>   friction among departments and individuals.
>   . . .It welds diverse employee groups into
>   one large 'family' by focusing attention on
>   common aims and purposes. . . .By humanizing
>   the employer, it creates better feeling
>   between officers and employees.
>
> 3. Since every comprehensive employee relations
>   program has social and recreational angles,
>   the employee paper is a spark plug. It an-
>   nounces coming events. It maintains enthus-
>   iasm while the events are in progress. It
>   gives credit publicly to winners and other
>   outstanding performers.
>
> 4. It encourages personal ambition by recog-
>   nizing and publicizing promotions and good
>   performance. It promotes obedience to rules
>   and regulations by pointing out the reasons
>   why conformity is essential. It is a spur
>   to safety programs, economy drives, sales
>   drives, courtesy campaigns.

Bentley then notes that the pages must include:

1) what the company wants printed and, 2) what the employee

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[1]Bentley, _Editing the Company Publication_, pp. 3-4.

wants to read. He then concludes that:[1]

>Unless readers read it regularly and thoroughly,
>all effort put into company promotion is lost.
>. . .Interestingly enough, the dividing line be-
>tween what employees want and what the company
>wants is not a sharp one. . . .The majority of
>employees--believe it or not--always show in-
>terest in good stories explaining company poli-
>cies, how products are made, and other promotional
>material.

AUDIENCE RESEARCH METHODS:

In all the cited studies, two principal methods were used to obtain employee feedback, or reader feedback, about what messages were attended to: interviews with persons presumed to have been exposed to the medium, and questionnaires to similar groups of "readers." The messages in the publications were not categorized by subject-matter in most cases, nor were they ranked by space or frequency emphasis and correlated with readership.

Ludeke reported on the editorial research program of the Curtis Publishing Company, which may be used to illustrate:[2]

>The backbone of our editorial research program is
>is a continuous series of surveys designed to
>provide us with specific information concerning
>each editorial item in the particular issue of
>the magazine being surveyed. This specific in-
>formation shows us the proportion of the persons
>exposed to the issue who:
>
>1. Recalled seeing the item.

---

[1]Ibid., pp. 23-24.

[2]Herbert C. Ludeke, Magazine Editorial Research (Philadelphia: The Curtis Publishing Company, n.d.), pp. 3-4.

2. Read at least some of the item's main body of text.

3. Read all of the item's main body of text.

4. Expressed enthusiasm for the item.

Finally, we get a rather complete record of the characteristics of the person providing the interview, ranging from age and sex through his, or her, occupation, education, and income. . . We begin to see the outlines of who reads what with what effect.

This is an accurate, if brief, summary of the conventional method of gathering news media feedback. But not all organizations have the time, money, or manpower to utilize this expensive method, so questionnaires are used.

The USAF uses questionnaires for very large samples of commissioned and enlisted personnel, obtaining feedback on attitudes toward the internal communications channels, and obtains an indication of retention for a few specific items. The sources of information about the USAF in general, weapons systems, and highly important personnel policies comprise a significant portion of these questions. The October, 1960, sample survey, for example, asked more than 10,000 persons, "What is your opinion of the Commander's Column in your base newspaper?" The breakdown of answers is contained in the table on the following page:[1]

Publishers of USAF base newspapers thus obtain

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[1]USAF Tri-annual Sample Survey, October, 1960.

TABLE 4

USAF ATTITUDES TOWARD COMMANDER'S COLUMNS APPEARING IN LOCAL USAF BASE NEWSPAPERS

Do not have a base newspaper 10.4%

Have a base newspaper, but:

      It does not have a Commander's Column 9.2

      I do not recall a Commander's Column, as
      I do not read the base newspaper regularly. .28.3

My base runs a Commander's Column, and I find it:

	Over-all of the Sample	Airmen reading and evaluating Commander's Column
Very good.	14.0%	27.0%
Good	24.4	47.0
Undecided.	9.0	17.0
Not good at all.	1.2	2.0

useful feedback, but do <u>not</u> know whether their reader pro-
files correlate highly with those indicated by research
on other publications. The question remains, "Who reads
what?"

The questionnaire method has been criticized, as
have all methods of obtaining response without specific
retention evidence, as being grossly inaccurate. The
method has, accordingly, been put to test. Frieberg as-
sessed the relative validities of unaided, partially-aided,
and aided recall questionnaires used to determine whether
subscribers to a group of semi-technical magazines actually
"looked into" the issues surveyed. The aided recall mail
questionnaire sample of 1296 subscribers was interviewed,
with an average report of having read ten percent less
than had been indicated by the mail questionnaire.[1]

Ludeke placed magazines in rooms with one-way win-
dows, then observed the actual page-by-page "reading"
behavior of subjects. Queried on their reading, most re-
ported having read or looked at somewhat less than was
actually true.[2] Both of these examples may be considered
as types of validity assessment for reader reports upon
their own reading behavior.

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[1]Albert D. Frieberg, <u>A Comparative Study of Mail
Questionnaire Techniques for Measuring Reading of Business
Publications</u> (Chicago: Putman Publishing Company, 1959).

[2]Ludeke, <u>Magazine Editorial Research</u>, p. 4.

Politz conducted a comparative study of three methods for rating the interest given to printed advertisements, including two interview methods and one aided recall mailed rating system. While the _patterns_ of attention were similar as indicated by reader response, the tests were not completed on the same magazine issues and cannot be carefully validated. The conclusions of the study, however, report confidence in the reliability of the mail method used.[1]

APPLICATIONS TO THE PRESENT STUDY:

The mail method tested by Politz is a _reader interest_ survey which reports the number of people whose previous reading of an advertisement left at least enough impression for them to remember--when they see it again--that it was of interest.[2]

This is the method which has been adapted for the present study, in combination with a questionnaire not relating to readership of a specific newspaper issue. The reading measurement device is self-administered, requiring the respondent to draw a vertical line through the middle of each editorial item which he remembers having looked at or read, _as far down as he remembers having read it_ when

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[1]Politz, _A Study of Printed Advertising Rating Methods_, p. 5.

[2]The commercial practitioner is _Readex, Inc._, St. Paul, Minnesota. The method was developed to serve publishers of smaller magazines and newspapers, and is used on advertising and editorial items.

he first went through the issue.

In addition, each respondent is asked to provide two sets of data about himself: 1) demographic information, and 2) answers to questions determining the intensity of his commitment to his unit and the USAF.

What may we expect to find from the resulting data? Our findings maybe divided into three areas:

1. The emphasis given to various subject-matter and location-of-interest categories, indexed by percentages of available editorial space displayed.

2. The degree to which age, education, and rank (economic status) among USAF military readers results in the same kinds of reading behavior as found by Schramm and White.

3. The relative readership of specific command messages by persons who are highly oriented toward the organization and by those who are less committed.

Since Merton described the "cosmopolitan-local" continuum among community influentials, and Gouldner applied a similar description to a college faculty, communications researchers have shown increasing interest in the implications for communication-generated behavior. From a purely practical point of view, it seems fruitful to attempt to determine a relationship between reference-group orientation and attending to certain kinds of messages. What the USAF describes as "management" items in its topical analysis of base newspapers encompasses a vast range of subject-matter, including: 1) editorials and columns by base and other commanders, 2) retention and training information, and 3) safety programs. Are these three attended

to differentially by those with a strong USAF orientation and by those with other orientations?

The same questions may be asked about readers along the age, education, and rank scales, both among enlisted and commissioned readers. Indeed, the conclusions of the USAF tri-annual information surveys indicate there are differences; as rank increases there seems to be a greater conviction that internal information media provide enough of the right kinds of news. There is, then, a possibility that military management is operating like the religious evangelist who preaches hell's fire and brimstone to the least needful of his congregation--those already in church.

Schramm's findings noted above, that age, education, and economic status are associated with reading of "delayed reward" news items such as editorials, government activities, and public service appeals, are of interest to military and industrial managers. In the USAF, whether first-term enlistees and junior officers read retention and training information or not is of paramount importance.

These considerations lead to two hypotheses: first, that attention to organization-centered messages will be greater among organization-committed persons than among those who have less strong, or out-group, commitment, and second, that attention of both groups will be greater to content categories perceived by coders as near-to-reader, and less for categories perceived as remote-from-reader.

THE MEANS USED--AN OVERVIEW:

The present study does not attempt to do more than establish in one situation a procedure for recurrent description and analysis of message presentation. |To evaluate newspapers we need to know what messages they contain and who reads the messages. Appraisal and evaluation have been largely based on subjective judgments of fellow message-producers, and on assumptions such as: 1) a house organ "captive audience" reacts to the publication just as it does to the city newspaper or country weekly, and 2) availability guarantees readership. Neither proposition seems supportable until tested.

The group administration of questionnaire and newspaper marking survey was chosen for use in this study in consideration of its relative similarity to previous feedback methods utilized by the USAF. There are other methods of obtaining reader reports about communication behavior, and some of those methods could provide more exact answers to the questions asked in this study; they all involve, however, much more cost in terms of time, manpower, and money. On the other hand, a simple questionnaire cannot garner the same amount and range of information for tabulation and analysis. This study seems to tread a middle way.

The reading measurement used here does not discriminate by percent read of individual items, nor does it demand evidence of retention of the subject-matter tested. It

does not, however, seem subject to systematic bias. It is
intended to provide an index of "readership" roughly as
follows:

1. Exposed: read at least one item in the
   newspaper, but not this item.

2. Glanced at: read any of this item.

3. Interested: read past the headline or
   lead of this item.

When one has measured "readership" of the content
categories in a periodical he is faced with the necessity
of deciding just what he measured. The usefulness of
measurement is contingent here upon the applicability of
the measure to editorial management; thus, the content of
messages must be categorized according to the purposes of
the investigation. As Berelson says, content analysis
stands or falls by its categories.[1]

The matter of devising categories has been studied
by journalists, psychologists, and others for at least
sixty years, with somewhat less than total agreement on the
criteria for categorization. Many of the attempts are
catalogued by Freyschlag, who arrives at a specification
of content categories based on reader interest.[2] Virtually
all investigators during the past decade have concluded,
as Berelson did, that a rigid set of categories cannot

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[1] Berelson, p. 88.

[2] Freyschlag, pp. 19-37

be found, and that content analysis should employ the categories most meaningful for the study at hand.[1]

This study deals with two types of categories: subject-matter and location-of-interest. Berelson describes content categories as comprising "what is said." He Believes that categories should be as broad as is consistent with the purpose of the investigation, to increase the reliability of the coding operation.[2] Freyschlag tried to steer clear of "general" categories, feeling that single-coded categories may have several sub-elements in them. I prefer the former view for two reasons. First, a study of this kind requires high coding reliability; while double coding may sometimes provide subtler data, broader categories may be equally useful. Second, as Markham and Stempel have found, such criteria as headline display serve quite adequately as indexes of category emphasis. Their study of twenty-four Pennsylvania daily newspapers resulted in the conclusions that:[3]

> It appears that the performance of the three different measures--space, issue frequency, and headline display--was nearly identical. . . .Space measurement is the best-known and most standardized content analysis technique. The findings of this study suggest that some

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[1]Berelson, Chap. 5.

[2]Ibid.

[3]James W. Markham and Guido H. Stempel, III, "Analysis of Techniques in Measuring Press Performance," Journalism Quarterly, XXXIV, No. 2 (1957), 187-190.

criticisms of space measurement are erroneous.
. . .Space represents not just the volume alone,
but symbols, issues and themes expressed.

Nafziger, MacLean, and Engstrom comment on division
of content into subject-matter, source, and type categories.
While they agree that newspaper reading is a voluntary
act and that reader interest must be aroused, they enumerate
significant cautions for interpretation of readership
scores. They posit that the reader's choices may depend
on a transient mood, available time, or the competition of
other stimuli. They further caution against concluding
that a single test is indicative of continuing behavior.
This, of course, proscribes confident ascription of reader
"interest" from results of a one-wave survey. As they
note:[1]

The fact is that we have little information
by which to judge how closely related are
readership and interest.

Application of theory to the present study, with
discussion of the choices made, are discussed in greater
detail in the following chapter.

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[1]Ralph O. Nafziger, Malcolm MacLean, Jr., and
Warren Engstrom, "Useful Tools for Interpreting Newspaper
Readership Data," _Journalism Quarterly_, XXVIII, No. 4
(1951), p. 456.

CHAPTER II

This chapter includes the survey design, description of the categories and measuring insturments, the sampling procedure, and a report on the survey administration.

VARIABLES:

The present study was designed to determine whether the readership of specified USAF management messages varies significantly with the reference-group orientation, age, civil education, and military rank of a sample of military readers of the newspapers.

The independent variables in this study are the respondent characteristics of age, education, rank, and reference-group orientation. The dependent variable is reader attention given to the management messages.

CATEGORIES:

The editorial content of eight USAF base newspapers was divided into thirteen subject-matter and six location-of-interest categories. Each editorial item in the newspapers was coded into one subject-matter and one location-of-interest category.

The procedure chosen for categorizing subject-matter was evolved from a topical analysis form used for periodic evaluation of USAF base newspapers, together with repeated applications of the categories to actual base newspapers. The major categories were broken down into sub-categories

for easier location and assignment in the course of content

coding. The list is included as Appendix C to the study;

however, the over-all categories are:

1. Health and safety.

2. New facilities, units, and equipment at this base.

3. Training and retention at this base.

4. Base management (a revised and limited list).

5. Military service and social clubs.

6. Education, culture, and religion.

7. Dependents' affairs and housing.

8. Military recreation, amusement, sports, and hobbies.

9. Promotion and recognition of military and civil employees.

10. Commanders' and others' messages, and editorials.

11. Community relations.

12. The "big picture" of command, USAF, and Department of Defense.

13. Miscellany, including military personals not otherwise codable, humor, and fillers not otherwise codable.

The location-of-interest categories were based on

certain characteristics of the items aside from subject-

matter. Virtually all studies heretofore cited suggest

that "localness" is a prime determinant of readership.

Starting with the most local area and proceeding to the

most general area, the categories used in the present

study are:

1. This base.

2. The adjacent civil community.

3. Air command or numbered air force in line above this base.

4. USAF in general, with no local application noted in the item.

5. Department of Defense, including NORAD, Army, and Navy.

6. Other.

An operational definition of the location-of-interest categories presented some difficulties, although Deutschmann's description of them as "where-to-reader" categories appears to be a happy solution in many respects.[1] As with subject-matter categories, the number of items, column inches, or percentage of editorial space could conceivably result in widely divergent pictures of content structure. To test this, a fourteen-page newspaper was analyzed, using a variant of the above location-of-interest categories.

Items were coded in four ways: 1) by frequency, 2) by column inches, 3) by percentage of available editorial space according to first theme expressed, and 4) by proportion of individual items containing discrete location category content. All except the last were coded with the criterion of having the desired characteristic present in the headline, lead paragraph, cutline, pictorial matter,

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[1] Deutschmann, p. 44.

or in the body of the item if there was no other indicator.
When all items were placed in discrete categories by the
above methods, the categories were ranked and put into
a table:

TABLE 5

EMPHASIS ON LOCATION-OF-INTEREST CONTENT CATEGORIES IN A
USAF BASE NEWSPAPER, ACCORDING TO FOUR MEASURING CRITERIA

	Rank-order of items in the newspaper				
Criterion	Base	Town	Command	USAF	Other
Number of items (N=71)	1 (n=39)	4 (n=4)	3 (n=11)	2 (n=14)	5 (n=3)
Column inches (N=504)	1 (n=319)	4 (n=29)	2 (n=77)	3 (n=63)	5 (n=16)
Percent available editorial space	1 (63.3%)	4 (5.8%)	3 (13.3%)	2 (14.4%)	5 (3.2%)
Percent available editorial space within items	1	5	2	3	4

This table lends credence to the use of item count
and percent of available space as adequate indicators of
category emphasis, as noted by Markham and Stempel.[1]

To insure coding reliability, a pretest was con-
ducted. Four USAF base newspapers, ranging in size from
fifty-eight to 103 editorial items, were coded into the
nineteen content categories. With no verbal instructions
to the coders, but using a list of representative topics

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[1]Markham and Stempel, p. 94.

subsumed under each content category, the following results
were obtained by four coders: 82.8 per cent coding agree-
ment for subject-matter categories, and 80.4 percent agree-
ment for location-of-interest categories.

When coders were briefed, and the words "at this
base" affixed to two subject-matter categories, the mean
percentages of agreement increased to 89.2 for subject-
matter and 91.1 for location-of-interest. Arbitrary
judgment of the author was used in four cases, but discus-
sion with two coders resolved all other differences.

Coding of the eight newspapers used in the survey
was accomplished by three coders, all familiar with USAF
command structure; this point had caused the majority of
non-agreements in the coding pretest. The mean percentages
of coding agreement were 87.9 for subject-matter categories
and 94.3 for location-of-interest categories.

READING MEASUREMENT AND SCORING:

The reading measurement used is simple to monitor,
easy to complete. Reading scores for individuals and
groups can be obtained quickly and objectively. The measure
was pretested in two ways. Four persons were asked to
read a base newspaper, and were administered the survey the
following day, with excellent results. Then, a small sample
of military readers was surveyed for their readership of
the front page of their base newspaper; there was no brief-
ing of the respondents, and only a single exchange of

letters with the base information officer, who supervised
the airbase pretest. Seventeen of the nineteen persons
to whom the survey was administered completed the test
adequately, although there were some minor variations in
"readership" marking. Two respondents returned blank
newspapers, but did not indicate whether they had seen any
of the survey issue of the newspaper.

Reading measurement was designed to indicate, for
those items a respondent remembered having seen when he
first examined the newspaper, approximately how much had
been seen or read. This measure has not been proven sus-
ceptible to interval scaling, so correlations were computed
using the Spearman rank order correlation coefficient.
This statistic has an approximate power index of .91 as
compared with the most powerful correlational measure, the
Pearson product-moment coefficient.[1]

Reader "attention" is defined as reading the headline
and/or the lead paragraph of an editorial item, or "seeing"
a picture. Reader "interest" is defined as reading beyond
the headline and/or lead paragraph of an item, or reading
a picture cutline.

To obtain an index of reader "attention" the fre-
quency of both attention and interest scores was summed for
every reader within each category, and then expressed as a

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[1]Siegel, Sidney F., Nonparametric Statistics for the
Behavioral Sciences (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956), pp.
213-23.

series of percentages of the total number of items displayed in each category.

To obtain a reading interest index the frequency of interest scores was summed within each category and then expressed as a series of percentages of items in each category. This approximates an index of depth of reading.

These percentages figures, summed over all readers of a category, and divided by the number of readers, provide mean reading attention or interest scores for all readers of each category.

REFERENCE GROUPS:

There remained the problem of indexing reader orientation. A questionnaire was administered to determine: 1) the respondent's attitude toward his supervisors, 2) his attitude toward the USAF as a career, 3) his feeling of "belonging" to his unit, and 4) whether he felt he is given a fair chance to express his feelings about base policies which affect his welfare. Frequency of questionnaire responses provided the data for a scale of orientation toward the Air Force, away from it, or "neutral." Questionnaires were administered to all respondents present for the survey, whether they had read the surveyed issue of their base newspaper or not.

HYPOTHESES:

Hypotheses considered were: 1) more attention will be given to certain management messages by USAF-oriented

respondents than by other-oriented respondents, 2) more
attention will be given to content perceived by coders as
near-to-reader by USAF-oriented respondents than by other-
oriented respondents, and 3) reading attention given to
specified management messages will increase with the age,
civil education, and military rank of respondents.

The message-groups chosen were: 1) health and
safety, 2) retention and training, and 3) editorials and
commander's columns.

As with all content coding for the present study,
placement criteria were that the desired characteristic be
present in the headline or lead paragraph of a news item,
or prominent in the cutline of a picture.

THE SAMPLE:

The sample of this study was devised and administered
under the supervision of the USAF Directorate of Data
Systems and Statistics, upon request of the Office of
Information analysis branch. The statistical services
officer at each of the eight bases selected for the survey
was instructed to choose about 150 airmen and 150 officers
for the sample, with a possible total of about 2400 respon-
dents. The method of selection required choosing every
nth card from base personnel files, varying the choice
interval according to the airman or officer base population.
For each base the initial card was chosen by lot. A com-
plete list of these instructions may be found in Appendix A.

Respondents for the survey totalled 1576; of that
number, 1059 reported having read the surveyed issue of
their base newspaper. The 852 persons reported as "not
available for duty" at the time of the survey could not be
tested for similarity to the group present for duty. There
is, however, some indication of possible bias presented by
the nature of the absentees.

At Otis AFB, for instance, the statistical services
office determined that while flying personnel comprised
only 37.8 percent of the base population, they comprised
47.0 percent of the total absentees. This sample bias
remained fairly constant among all the newspapers for
which there were many absentees. The officer-airman per-
centages at bases surveyed were close to the USAF popula-
tion: the USAF distribution as of November, 1960, was
15.9 percent officers and warrant officers, while the
bases surveyed were slightly under-represented by having
an officer-warrant officer population of about 14.8 percent.

The absence of flying personnel from the sample at
three bases introduced further bias. Members of flying
units have a higher civil education level than members of
the USAF as a whole. In addition, the fact that officers
of flying and medical units were least represented in the
sample surveyed provided a bias in reading about certain
units and topics. It was assumed that flying and medical
personnel will have more than the average reading interest
in health and safety items, and will have more than the

average reading interest in news of the base units to which
they are assigned.

At Otis AFB, again, flying officers accounted for
72.4 percent of the total officer absentees. Flying
squadron airmen, however, accounted for only 35.5 percent
of the total airman absences, perhaps reflecting the some-
what lower percentage of enlisted personnel assigned to
flying units.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SURVEY:

Respondents at each base were requested to meet at
central testing points under the supervision of statistical
services personnel. McGuire AFB apparently administered
the survey at each squadron, under the supervision of
squadron personnel. Other bases apparently complied with
the USAF instructions for survey administration.

Each respondent was provided with a survey kit:
1) a copy of the survey instructions for respondents,
2) a two-part questionnaire, 3) a copy of the base news-
paper issue being surveyed.

Survey instructions requested completion of the
data-gathering phase between eighteen and forty-eight
hours after initial publication of the newspapers. The
time limits were set to allow enough time for normal reading
by base personnel, but to preclude inordinate amounts of
forgetting.

It is probable that some bases could not comply
with the time requirements; most USAF base newspapers are

TABLE 6

READERS, NON-READERS, ABSENTEES AND UNSCORABLE
RESPONDENTS INDICATED BY NEWSPAPERS

Newspaper Surveyed	Total Sample	Absent or Unscorable*	Non Readers	Readers
Mather AFB	291	074	075	156
McGuire AFB	209	066	082	061
Eglin AFB	312	085	074	153
Dover AFB	300	182	023	095
Otis AFB	305	129	037	139
Shaw AFB	302	024	108	170
Lockbourne AFB	300	060	052	189
Barksdale AFB**	304	142	066	096

*Fourteen questionnaires were so incomplete they were
removed.
**Differs from number stated in letter of transmittal.

published on Friday mornings, which necessitates a Saturday

morning survey. Since many military organizations try to

use only skeleton staffs on weekends, this may have caused

further sample bias. I have no record of exact times of

survey administration, but received notice from one base

that Saturday morning administration caused some of its

rather large number of "non availables."

Persons not reading the survey issue of their base

newspaper were requested to complete the questionnaires,

and turn in a newspaper marked "did not read this issue."

The respondent instructions requested each reader

to draw a line vertically, top toward bottom, of each

editorial item he remembered seeing upon first reading the newspaper. If none of an item was seen, there would be no mark drawn; if the headline and first paragraph were read, the line would be drawn that far; if more was read, the respondent would draw a line down as far as he remembered having read.

When all newspaper-marking and questionnaire work was completed, the parts were stapled together, turned in, and mailed to the author.

TABULATION AND CODING:

As in most similar studies, the readership and questionnaire responses were coded onto International Business Machine (IBM) punch cards. The reading measurement device used here did not allow precoding, so a transcription method was devised. For the questionnaire answers, number values equivalent to the possible answers were assigned and then transferred to tabular sheets which corresponded to the eighty columns found on the IBM punch cards.

Newspaper coding sheets were dispensed with for this study. Instead, each newspaper editorial item was serially numbered on master-copies of each paper; then the reading score for each item in each newspaper was marked on the face of the item with a felt-tipped pen. A "1" was entered if the respondent had marked the headline and/or lead paragraph, or pictorial matter alone. A "2" was entered if the respondent had marked more than the headline and/or

lead paragraph, or the cutline for a picture. In the case of humorous cartoons and the like, any line was automatically interpreted as a "2."

Following this, tabulators transcribed the reading scores onto tabular sheets for later use in key-punching operations. All questionnaire responses were also transcribed to tabular sheets after being coded with the felt-tipped pen for high visibility.

Individual scores for reading attention or interest in each content category were obtained by use of a specially developed program in the "Mistic" electronic computer at Michigan State University. The percentage reading scores, at attention and interest levels, were then punched onto each respondent's IBM master data cards.

Since all editorial items in a newspaper were serially numbered, and were tabulated in like order, the items for a given content category were widely scattered over one or two IBM cards. This necessitated the preparation of special "input" decks of cards, gathering all item scores for a given category into one "field" which could be used in computing percent read of all items displayed in a category.

ANALYSIS OF CORRELATION AND DIFFERENCE:

To obtain correlations from the data punched onto IBM cards, mean reading scores for respondent groups within single newspapers were combined. Mean rank-orders were

computed, and the rankings tested for correlation with the amounts displayed.

Similarly, the mean reading scores served as cutting points for construction of chi-square tables to test for significant differences in reading behavior by subgroups of the sample population. Cards were sorted into groups based on reference-group orientation, age, civil education, and military rank; the number of respondents above and below the mean was determined, and the chi square tests applied.

GUTTMANN SCALING FOR REFERENCE-GROUP ORIENTATION:

This scaling technique demands that a large proportion of the respondents answer scale items consistently. Essentially it consists of finding a set of questionnaire responses in which:[1]

> Endorsement of a given item is accompanied by endorsement of all items that are less extreme and rejection of all items that are more extreme.

When the set of items is consistent enough in this way the scale can be assumed to be unidimensional. It then should provide a reliable measure of response to the relationship it describes. The relative consistency is indicated by a computed coefficient of reproducibility.

For the present study a set of scale items was chosen from the questionnaire administered to all respon-

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[1]"A Machine Method for Scaling as Many as Twelve Dichotomies."

dents. The items used were:

1. Do you think most supervisors are really interested in your ideas and suggestions?

2. Do you feel that you are a real part of your squadron or wing?

3. Generally speaking, how do you feel about the Air Force as a career?

4. Do you feel that you are given a fair chance to express your feelings on plans and policies which affect you here on the base?

These items formed a scale with a coefficient of reproducibility of .8862, slightly lower than expected, but serviceable. Respondents were trichotomized into groups labelled as high, neutral, or low in USAF orientation, based on their scores in this scale. The high USAF orientation group numbered 287 and consisted of those persons who made the desired responses to at least three of the four questions. The neutral group numbered 810 and consisted of persons who made one or two of the desired responses. The group assumed to be low in USAF orientation numbered 384, and consisted of persons who answered none of the questions in the desired manner. The three groups number less than the sample (1576) because any respondent not providing some response to all these questions was eliminated from the scale construction.

It was felt that persons scoring high on this scale would be more strongly USAF oriented than those who scored low. Thus the central hypothesis, that USAF-oriented persons will tend to read more of certain management

messages, could be tested. Rank order correlations and the chi square were the statistics used to test the sample population along the orientation continuum.

The USAF-oriented respondent, generally, said he: 1) will remain in the USAF as long as possible, 2) believes that most supervisors are sincerely interested in his ideas and suggestions, 3) feels he is a real part of his USAF unit, and 4) thinks he receives full opportunity to express his feelings about plans and policies which affect him on the base.

The other-oriented respondents are rather skeptical about their supervisors' sincereity, tend to feel that "I just work here," say they will retire as soon as possible--if they stay until retirement at all, and do not feel that management listens to, or answers, their suggestions and complaints about base policies.

The middle or "neutral" group of respondents is likely to fall anywhere between the two more extreme views. For purposes of this study it was desirable to separate definitely, the polar orientations, hence their relatively small Ns as compared with the middle group.

CHAPTER III

Air Force base newspapers are read about as well as the average civilian daily newspaper, and somewhat less than civilian weeklies. Military readers of base newspapers who remember seeing an item at all are more likely to remember having read a substantial portion of the item. And the fact that an item is "local" does not guarantee it high readership by the military audience.

The first difference is so pronounced that all readership percentages in this study were based on persons who "looked at or read" the items scored: there were almost no respondents who admitted to reading just the headlines. The second difference, the non-local material was read more than local, has implications for military management.

Management-centered communications fared very well in the Air Force base newspapers surveyed, bearing out the contentions of researchers in business and industrial papers and magazines.[1]

The variables of age, education, and military rank affect reading behavior about as expected--with one notable exception--but reference group orientation appears to have much less effect upon the reading of management communications than any other of the variables examined.

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[1]McCloskey, _Industrial Journalism Today_.

SUBJECT-MATTER:

Information concerning new units, facilities, and equipment on a base was the best-read of all subject-matter, although it ranked eleventh in percent (3.9) of available space occupied.

Least-read categories concerned: 1) education, culture, and religion, 2) dependents' affairs, and 3) sports, recreation and hobbies. As the latter two of these may be said to fall in "immediate reward" categories, the Schramm-White findings about newspaper reading and the variable of personal impact of news upon the reader are not entirely supported by the present study.[1] It is possible that inclusion of religious material with news of educational programs and opportunities and the like may have served to depress the reported readership of educational material. Likewise, the readership of miscellany, which in this study includes jokes and cartoons, may be biased by the inclusion of filler items--the odd facts and historical references used to fill small bits of editorial space. This study showed such material ranking no higher than seventh for any major respondent group.

Health and safety items were read more than items in five of the other thirteen subject-matter categories. Such news was most highly read by respondents who have only a grade school education (32.7 percent); only community

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[1]Schramm and White, pp. 71-73.

relations news was read more (34.4 percent) by this group.

Retention and training news was read as much or more than eight other subject-matter categories. The exceptions to this ranking included: 1) grade-school-educated respondents, who ranked this category as 9.5 among thirteen, 2) college-educated respondents, who read seven categories more than retention and training, 3) officers as a group, and 4) officers considered by reference-group orientation. Both of these last two groups gave eighth ranking to this news category. The mean readership for this subject-matter category was thirty-five percent. Reading of retention and training information varied with education more than with other variables, but the variance was not significant at the p.05 level (x^2=8.35).

Editorials and commanders' columns ranked fifth in over-all readership, varying from first ranking by respondents in the "28-33" age group to eighth ranking by those in the "less than 22" age group. Respondents who are less than twenty-two years old read 25.4 percent of the editorials category, while those over forty read 43.3 percent, supporting one of the Schramm-White findings.[1] Reading of editorials varied most with reader age, but the variance was not significant at the p.05 level (x^2=8.11).

The category "The Big Picture of USAF and Department

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[1] Ibid.

of Defense," including policy and interpretive news, was
ranked third or fourth in readership by most respondent
groups. This interest in the broader aspects of the mili-
tary organization, paralleling Barlow's findings,[1] may be
seen again in considering the content of location-of-interest
categories.

LOCATION-OF-INTEREST:

News of the command to which a base is assigned was
highly read by all respondent groups, although it ranked
fourth in percent of space occupied. Information about
the Air Force in general, without reference to a reader's
own base, was the next most highly read, varying from
second rank to fourth. Department of Defense information
and news of the home base alternated in holding third and
fourth readership rankings. The location-of-interest cate-
gory termed "other"--often an undefinable center of empha-
sis--was accorded fifth ranking by virtually all reader
groups. There were so few items about adjacent communities
that the bottom rank of this location-of-interest category
may not be justified. The only groups, however, who reported
reading more than twenty percent of this category were:
1) respondents with a grade school education, and 2) those
at least forty years old.

Virtually all respondent groups read at least 35.0
percent of the command news category, with a range from

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[1] "In Plant Communication; A Seminar Report," p. 68.

31.0 percent to 43.9 percent. The most local category,
"This Base," was read a maximum of 35.5 percent by "neutral"
oriented officers, with an average of 28.9 percent.

ORIENTATION:

Sixteen of the twenty-six possible response combi-
nations to subject-matter categories indicated a higher
readership percentage for "neutral" oriented respondents
than for either extreme of orientation. Among the airmen,
none of the management message categories focused on by
the present study was included, but "neutral" officers
read more of all three than did the officers rated as
USAF-oriented or other-oriented: 1) health and safety,
2) retention and training, and 3) editorials and com-
manders' columns.

The coefficient of reproducibility obtained in pro-
ducing a Guttmann scale from questions used to index
orientation (CR = .8862) is the highest obtainable with
the questions asked, and appears to encompass the logically
correct questions. Predictability was not increased by
reference to single questions about respondent attitudes
toward the Air Force, their supervisors, their units, and
their opportunities to speak and receive answers about
base policies.

Considering just the two extreme orientation groups
USAF-oriented persons read more than other-oriented persons
in most subject-matter categories. Relative readership of

TABLE 7

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF AVAILABLE EDITORIAL SPACE OCCUPIED BY SUBJECT-MATTER CATEGORIES WITH MEAN READERSHIP PERCENTAGES OF RESPONDENT ORIENTATION SUBGROUPS

Subject-Matter Categories	Percent Display	Rank by Display	All Readers (N=971) %	Rank	Airmen (N=615) U AF (N=286) %	Rank	Neutral (N=81) %	Rank	Other (N=214) %	Rank	Officers (N=413) USAF (N=231) %	Rank	Neutral (N=120) %	Rank	Other (N=47) %	Rank
Health & Safety	4.4	10	28.5	8	27.1	7	24.5	8	27.5	7	30.8	8	33.4	9	39.8	7.5
New Units, Facilities & Equipment	3.9	11	41.3	1	39.2	1	33.3	2	35.5	2	54.0	1	45.0	5	42.2	1
Retention & Training	4.6	9	35.0	3	36.1	2	42.4	1	33.4	4	30.6	9	35.4	9	37.8	7.5
Base Management	18.6	1	36.2	2	33.9	3	31.8	5	35.8	1	39.3	2	45.0	4	34.5	2
Military Clubs	1.4	13	23.0	10.5	23.8	10	26.0	7	20.0	11	22.5	11	24.7	11	29.7	6
Education, Culture, & Religion	5.8	8	18.9	12	19.1	12	13.0	13	18.0	12	20.7	13	22.9	12	16.6	11
Dependents Affairs	10.1	5	17.6	13	15.6	13	18.6	12	16.8	13	21.5	12	20.4	13	15.6	12
Sports, Recreation & Hobbies	14.9	2	23.0	10.5	22.3	11	22.1	9	24.6	9	24.1	10	26.4	10	24.5	10
Promotion & Recognition	6.0	7	29.8	6	27.5	6	29.3	6	25.8	8	31.6	6	36.9	6	27.3	9
Editorials, Columns, & Letters	8.0	6	34.1	5	32.7	5	33.4	2	27.8	5	37.6	3	47.0	1	31.0	5
Community Relations	2.3	12	26.8	9	25.8	8	20.8	10	23.6	10	33.2	5	42.6	5	15.2	13
The Big Picture	14.0	3	34.8	4	33.0	4	32.6	4	33.5	3	35.1	4	45.5	3	41.8	3
Miscellany & Personal Features	10.4	4	29.0	7	24.5	9	18.8	11	27.6	6	31.1	7	56.0	7	41.3	4

Correlations of reading ranks and display ranks

ρ = .000   ρ=-.085   ρ=+.349   ρ=-.132   ρ=+.059   ρ=... ρ=+.120

the three management communication categories previously noted may be seen in an extract from Table 7, which presents the readership percentages and ranks for all subject-matter categories:

| | Airmen | | Officers | |
Categories	USAF	Other	USAF	Other
Health and Safety	27.1%	27.5%	30.8%	27.8%
Retention and Training	36.1	33.4	30.6	27.8
Editorial Columns, and Letters	32.7	27.8	37.6	31.0

Considering location-of-interest categories, the USAF-oriented airman respondents read 27.5 percent of base news and other-oriented airmen read 28.5 percent. USAF-oriented airmen read 30.0 percent of USAF news while other-oriented airmen read 31.1 percent. However, USAF-oriented airmen did read 37.9 percent of command news, compared with 33.1 percent read by other-oriented airmen, and 25.4 percent of Department of Defense news to 24.6 percent read by other-oriented airmen.

USAF-oriented officers read more of every category except USAF news than did other-oriented officers. Considering all readers together, the command, USAF, and Department of Defense news topped the readership list, while base-centered news was only .1 percent behind the latter. Table 8 presents the readership percentages and ranking of all location-of-interest categories for both airmen and officers.

TABLE 8

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF AVAILABLE EDITORIAL SPACE OCCUPIED BY LOCATION-OF-INTEREST CATEGORIES WITH MEAN READERSHIP PERCENTAGES BY RESPONDENT ORIENTATION SUBGROUPS

Location-of-Interest Categories	Percent Rank by Display Display %	Rank	All Readers (N=971) %	Rank	Airmen (N=615) USAF (N=286) %	Rank	Neutral (N=81) %	Rank	Other (N=214) %	Rank	Officers (N=413) USAF (N=231) %	Rank	Neutral (N=120) %	Rank	Other (N=47) %	Rank
This Base	68.3	1	27.5	4	27.8	3	28.5	2	28.1	3	32.9	3	35.5	4	28.1	3
Adjacent Community	2.3	6	18.8	6	7.8	6	14.7	6	15.5	6	25.3	5	17.0	6	4.3	6
Air Command or Air Force Above This Base	5.9	4	37.3	1	37.9	1	38.3	1	33.1	1	39.0	1	43.9	1	31.0	1
USAF in General	10.5	3	30.3	2	30.0	2	25.5	4	31.1	2	28.4	4	41.0	2	30.4	2
Department of Defense	5.8	5	29.0	3	25.4	4	27.0	3	24.6	4	33.1	2	40.9	3	19.6	5
Other	13.6	2	22.2	5	19.7	5	15.5	5	20.2	5	24.3	6	31.3	5	22.8	4

Correlations of reading ranks and display ranks

$g=+.086$ $g=+.086$ $g=+.314$ $g=+.314$ $g=+.314$ $g=-.143$ $g=+.086$ $g=+.686$

AGE:

Readership of retention and training news, base management, education, culture and religion, sport and recreation, and miscellany was not significantly affected by respondent age-group. Readership of such subject-matter categories as: 1) health and safety, 2) new units, facilities and equipment, 3) dependents' affairs, 4) promotion and recognition, 5) editorials and columns, 6) community relations, and 7) the Big Picture did increase with respondent age, as seen in Tables 9 and 10.

When the age of respondents was considered, readership of management messages was no less than 25.0 percent in any case, nor greater than 47.0 percent. It will be seen in Table 10 that, while readership of health and safety news increased gradually as age increased, readership of retention and training news apparently was not affected by age, hovering close to 35.0 percent for all age groups. Editorials and columns, however, showed a constant and fairly large increase from each age group to the next older.

Readership of location-of-interest categories was ranked similarly when equated with respondent age. Generally, readership increased with respondent age, although by as little as 2.1 percent in the case of command news. The percentages and ranks may be seen in Table 11.

EDUCATION:

Previous research has indicated that attention to the mass media tends to increase with greater education.

TABLE 9

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF AVAILABLE EDITORIAL SPACE OCCUPIED BY SUBJECT-MATTER CATEGORIES WITH MEAN PERCENTAGE OF READERSHIP BY FIVE RESPONDENT AGE SUBGROUPS

Subject-Matter Categories	Percent Display	Rank by Display	Less than 22 (N=194)		22 - 27 (N=336)		28 - 33 (N=202)		34 - 39 (N=150)		40 and over (N=169)	
			%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Health & Safety	4.4	10	25.9	7	27.5	8	29.3	7	31.5	6	31.3	8
New Units, Facilities, & Equipment	3.9	11	34.8	3	42.2	1	35.7	2	47.0	1	43.5	1
Retention & Training	4.6	9	35.6	2	32.9	4	35.3	3.5	36.8	4	35.0	6
Base Management	18.6	1	37.0	1	34.5	2	35.3	3.5	36.4	5	39.4	3
Military Clubs	1.4	13	23.2	10	18.5	12	26.5	8	23.3	10	26.0	10
Education, Culture, & Religion	5.8	8	19.4	12	19.1	11	16.4	13	19.1	13	22.4	13
Dependents' Affairs	10.1	5	13.1	13	17.0	13	18.3	12	20.8	12	22.6	12
Sports, Recreation, & Hobbies	14.9	2	23.1	11	23.6	9	22.0	11	22.5	11	23.3	11
Promotion & Recognition	6.0	7	27.3	6	28.8	7	29.4	6	30.5	8	34.8	7
Editorials, Columns, & Letters	8.0	6	25.4	8	30.6	5	36.0	1	40.6	2	43.3	2
Community Relations	2.3	12	23.4	9	23.4	10	25.2	9	31.2	7	35.2	5
The Big Picture	14.0	3	31.5	4	33.1	3	34.4	5	37.4	3	39.1	4
Miscellany & Personal Features	10.4	4	27.3	5	29.1	6	24.6	10	29.4	9	28.9	9

Correlations of reading ranks and display ranks

$\rho = +.154$ $\rho = +.281$ $\rho = -.048$ $\rho = -.065$ $\rho = +.033$ $\rho = +.169$

TABLE 10

RESPONDENT AGE AND READERSHIP OF SELECTED MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION SUBJECT-MATTER CATEGORIES

Subject-Matter Categories	Less than 22 (N=194)	22-27 (N=336)	28-33 (N=202)	34-39 (N=150)	40 and over (N=169)
Health & Safety	25.9%	27.5%	29.3%	31.5%	31.3%
New Units, Facilities & Equipment	34.8	42.2	35.7	47.0	43.5
Retention & Training	35.6	32.9	35.3	36.8	35.0
Base Management	37.0	34.5	35.3	36.4	39.4
Promotion & Recognition	27.3	28.8	29.4	30.5	34.8
Editorials, Columns, & Letters	25.4	30.6	36.0	40.6	43.3
The Big Picture	31.5	33.1	34.4	37.4	39.1

TABLE 11

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF AVAILABLE EDITORIAL SPACE OCCUPIED BY LOCATION-OF-INTEREST CATEGORIES WITH MEAN PERCENTAGE OF READERSHIP BY FIVE RESPONDENT AGE SUBGROUPS

Location-of-Interest Categories	Percent Display	Rank by Display	Less than 22 (N=194)		22 - 27 (N=336)		28 - 33 (N=202)		34 - 39 (N=150)		40 and over (N=169)	
			%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
This Base	62.3	1	27.5	3	26.4	4	29.0	2	31.5	4	33.6	4
Adjacent Community	2.3	6	17.5	6	12.2	6	11.2	6	14.5	6	21.0	6
Air Command or Air Force Above this Base	5.9	4	36.3	1	36.9	1	37.3	1	37.1	1	38.4	1
USAF in General	10.5	3	30.5	2	28.0	2	28.4	3	33.3	3	34.1	2.5
Department of Defense	5.8	5	21.3	4	27.9	3	28.1	4	34.7	2	34.1	2.5
Other	13.6	2	18.8	5	21.7	5	19.8	5	24.8	5	25.2	5

Correlations of reading ranks and display ranks

$\rho = +.315$ $\rho = +.086$ $\rho = +.429$ $\rho = -.028$ $\rho = +.053$

While this is generally borne out by the results of the
present study, it is qualified by one deviation.

Respondents with grade school educations read _more_
news of several categories than anyone else: 1) health
and safety, 2) military service clubs, 3) dependents' af-
fairs, 4) sports, recreation and hobbies, and 5) community
relations. With regard to location-of-interest categories,
the grade-school-educated group read nearly as much news
of their own base, and more news of the adjacent community
and of their governing command than any other respondent
education subgroup.

Aside from these unexpected deviations, readership
of location-of-interest categories increased as respondent
education increased. Percentages and rankings concerned
are depicted in Table 12 for subject-matter categories,
and in Table 13 for location-of-interest categories.

AIRMEN AND OFFICERS:

Airmen reported reading more retention and training
news than officers, and almost as much about military
service clubs and sports. Otherwise, officer readership
of all subject-matter categories was greater than airman
readership, as seen in Table 14. When the mean readership
of the three selected management communication categories,
and the most local category, were computed for airmen and
officers, however, only two categories showed significant
differences. Health and safety news yielded such differences

TABLE 12

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF AVAILABLE EDITORIAL SPACE OCCUPIED BY SUBJECT-MATTER CATEGORIES WITH MEAN PERCENTAGE OF READERSHIP BY FIVE RESPONDENT EDUCATION SUBGROUPS

Subject-Matter Categories	Percent Display	Rank by Display	Grade School (N=20)		9-12 Grades (N=113)		High School (N=425)		Some College (N=271)		All College (N=222)	
			%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Health & Safety	4.4	10	32.6	2	25.1	7	27.0	8	30.1	7	31.0	7
New Units, Facilities, & Equipment	3.9	11	22.2	11	30.1	6	37.1	1	42.9	1	51.0	1
Retention & Training	4.6	9	23.5	9.5	36.6	1	36.0	2	36.5	4	30.3	8
Base Management	18.6	1	31.4	3	35.9	2	34.9	3	36.4	5	40.2	2
Military Service Clubs	1.4	13	27.5	6	19.3	12	23.9	9	22.7	11	23.1	10
Education, Culture & Religion	5.8	8	20.4	12	20.9	10	17.4	12	17.2	13	22.3	12
Dependents' Affairs	10.1	5	23.5	9.5	15.2	13	17.0	13	18.2	12	21.7	13
Sports, Recreation, & Hobbies	14.9	2	25.0	8	20.6	11	23.5	10	24.3	10	22.8	11
Promotion & Recognition	6.0	7	26.4	7	23.6	8	28.0	6	28.6	8	34.8	5
Editorials, Columns, & Letters	8.0	6	29.4	5	34.9	3	29.2	5	39.6	2	39.0	3
Community Relations	2.3	12	34.4	1	32.0	4	21.0	11	31.0	6	27.0	9
The Big Picture	14.0	3	30.8	4	30.5	5	34.3	4	36.8	3	36.9	4
Miscellany & Personal Features	10.4	4	17.0	13	23.5	9	27.4	7	26.4	9	31.9	6

Correlations of reading ranks and display ranks $\rho=-.081$ $\rho=+.053$ $\rho=+.094$ $\rho=-.016$ $\rho=-.155$

TABLE 13

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF AVAILABLE EDITORIAL SPACE OCCUPIED BY LOCATION-OF-INTEREST CATEGORIES WITH MEAN PERCENTAGE OF READERSHIP BY FIVE RESPONDENT EDUCATION SUBGROUPS

Location-of-Interest Categories	Percent Display	Rank by Display	Grade School (N=20)		9-12 Grades (N=113)		High School (N=425)		Some College (N=271)		All College (N=222)	
			%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
This Base	62.3	1	27.5	3	27.8	3	28.4	3	30.1	3	32.8	3
Adjacent Community	2.3	6	36.5	2	9.3	6	13.3	6	19.3	6	15.0	6
Air Command or Air Force Above This Base	5.9	4	39.4	1	34.9	1	37.3	1	35.0	1	38.9	1
USAF in General	10.5	3	23.5	4	28.4	2	30.3	2	32.1	2	30.3	4
Department of Defense	5.8	5	21.0	5	26.4	4	26.9	4	30.0	4	33.6	2
Other	13.6	2	12.5	6	17.7	5	20.0	5	23.0	5	24.2	5

Correlations of reading ranks and display ranks

$\rho = -.314$ $\rho = +.314$ $\rho = +.314$ $\rho = +.314$ $\rho = +.086$

$(X^2 = 14.55, p < .01)$, and readership of editorials, columns

and letters yielded significant differences also $(X^2 = 20.67,$

$p < .01)$. There appeared to be no significant difference

in reading of retention and training news, or that news

considered most local in interest.

Airman readership of health and safety news ranked

sixth, while officer readership of the same category ranked

ninth. Airmen were interested enough in retention and

training news to rank it second, but among officers it ranked

eighth in reading attention. Airman readership of editor-

ials and columns ranked fifth, while officers appeared

interested enough in such information to place it third

among all subject-matter categories in their reading atten-

tion.

Location-of-interest categories were better read

by officers in all instances. The only ranking difference

between officers and airmen was found in reversal of the

ranking accorded to USAF news and Department of Defense

news.

Tables 14 and 15 present the percentages and rankings

by these respondent groups.

CORRELATIONS:

No respondent subgroup ranked subject-matter or

location-of-interest categories significantly similar to

amounts displayed in the surveyed newspaper issues (when

$p = .05)$. Most correlations were so near zero that we may

TABLE 14

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF AVAILABLE EDITORIAL SPACE OCCUPIED BY SUBJECT-MATTER CATEGORIES WITH MEAN READERSHIP PERCENTAGES OF AIRMEN AND OFFICERS

Subject-Matter Categories	Percent Display	Rank by Display	All Readers (N=1028)		Airmen (N=615)		Officers (N=413)	
			%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Health & Safety	4.4	10	28.5	8	27.3	6	31.4	9
New Units, Facilities, & Equipment	3.9	11	41.3	1	36.0	1	51.0	1
Retention & Training	4.6	9	35.0	3	35.8	2	31.9	9
Base Management	18.6	1	36.3	2	34.0	3	41.1	2
Military Clubs	1.4	13	23.0	10.5	22.7	10	23.3	11
Education, Culture, & Religion	5.8	8	18.9	12	17.9	12	21.6	13
Dependents' Affairs	10.1	5	17.6	13	16.1	13	21.8	12
Sports, Recreation, & Hobbies	14.9	2	23.0	10.5	22.6	11	24.1	10
Promotion & Recognition	6.0	7	29.8	6	26.0	7	34.6	5
Editorials, Columns, & Letters	8.0	6	34.1	5	31.1	5	40.1	3
Community Relations	2.3	12	26.8	9	24.4	9	34.2	6
The Big Picture	14.0	3	34.8	4	32.6	4	38.6	4
Miscellany & Personal Features	10.4	4	29.0	7	24.6	8	32.4	7

Correlations of reading ranks and display ranks $\rho=+.120$ $\rho=-.093$ $\rho=+.165$

TABLE 15

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF AVAILABLE EDITORIAL SPACE OCCUPIED BY LOCATION-OF-INTEREST
CATEGORIES WITH MEAN PERCENTAGE OF READERSHIP BY AIRMEN AND OFFICERS

Location-of-Interest Categories	Percent Display	Rank by Display	All Readers (N=1028)		Airmen (N=615)		Officers (N=413)	
			%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
This Base	62.3	1	28.9	4	27.6	3	33.6	3
Adjacent Community	2.3	6	14.8	6	12.3	6	19.8	6
Air Command or Air Force above this base	5.9	4	37.3	1	34.6	1	39.6	1
USAF in General	10.5	3	30.1	2	29.5	2	32.1	4
Department of Defense	5.8	5	29.0	3	25.1	4	34.3	2
Other	13.6	2	21.7	5	19.3	5	26.0	5

Correlations of reading ranks
and display ranks

$\rho = +.086$ $\rho = +.314$ $\rho = +.086$

presume an absolute lack of relation between amount pre-
sented and amount read. Other-oriented officers' correla-
tion for location-of-interest categories was +.686, highest
noted for any personnel variable. Grade school education
provided greatest negative correlation, -.314.

THE DESIRED NEWSPAPER:

Of the 1576 respondents 1059 are known to have
"looked at or read" at least one item in the newspaper
issues surveyed. There were 517 who read nothing in these
issues.

To buttress information gained from scoring items
actually reported as seen or read in current issues of
base newspapers, several of the questionnaire responses
were examined. Cf the known readers, 11.3 percent (120)
stated that they do not usually read their base newspaper;
20.9 percent (108) of the known non-readers made the same
statement.

About 22.9 percent (243) of the known readers in-
dicated that they get most of their base information from
the newspaper. However, 68.6 percent (727) believe their
base newspaper is doing a good job in keeping them informed
about base affairs. Significantly, only 2.3 percent (12)
of the non-readers say their base newspaper does an out-and-
out bad job, and 24.3 percent of them believe the newspaper
does a good job in this area. The questionnaire, of course,
did not enable respondents to explain the latter opinion

when they do not usually read their base newspaper.

Of the 1059 respondents who read at least one item, 40.3 percent (427) reported that they do read and are interested in the commanders' columns and other items regarded as editorials. Of the 517 known non-readers, 36.3 percent (188) also reported interest in such items. Of the known non-readers, 19.0 percent (102) said they have no interest in such matters, while 38.2 percent said either that they usually read them but receive no help, or that they seldom read such things.

Fourteen readers crossed out the words "but they don't help with my problems" when asked about reading editorials and commanders' columns. These persons were unwilling to state high interest, but wished to be on record as reading anyway.

Of the known readers, 23.0 percent (244) say the columns are seldom read, and 24.1 percent (255) say they read the columns but are not helped by them. Also, 12.0 percent (127) of known readers indicate that they are not interested in such matters at all.

When known readers of surveyed issues were separated from known non-readers, their responses relative to current reading and desires for material in their base newspapers were compared.

The known readers indicated what would make their base newspaper more valuable to them personally: 24.6 percent (261) wanted more news of base plans and policies,

17.1 percent (181) wanted more USAF news, 12.1 percent (128) desired more human interest stories and news of personalities on their base, and 9.6 percent (102) said the paper would be more valuable to them if there were more major command news.

Similarly, those who stated that they do not usually read the base newspaper were asked what would make it more valuable to them. Uf the 228 responses related to the above or chosen most: 4.9 percent (10) asked for more news of base plans and policies, 7.5 percent (18) said they would like more USAF information, and 4.9 percent (10) requested news about personalities on the base. Only 5.1 percent (13) requested more sports and recreation news. Overwhelmingly, this group indicated that just as it did not read anything in the base newspaper issue surveyed, it does not usually read the newspaper at all. There were 140 such responses, or 61.4 percent of the known non-readers.

The responses to questions regarding reading habits and desires for newspaper improvement are contained in Appendixes D and E.

CHAPTER IV

This chapter includes a summary of the research, conclusions, discussion, and suggestions for further research.

SUMMARY:

The present study is an attempt to analyze the relationships between attention given to certain management messages in USAF base newspapers and the audience variables of age, civil education, military rank, and reference-group orientation.

Eight USAF base newspapers were selected, random samples of their airman and officer audiences were chosen, and a survey was made of all editorial items which each respondent remembered having "looked at or read" in the surveyed issues of the newspapers.

Demographic information was obtained which enabled the categorization of respondents according to age, education, and rank. A questionnaire relative to information sources and attitudes toward the USAF provided items for construction of a Guttman scale of orientation toward the USAF.

All newspaper items were coded into subject-matter and location-of-interest categories. The percent of available editorial space used by each content category was determined and rank ordered across all newspapers.

Scores were computed for each respondent's readership

of each category in his own base newspaper. These scores, indexed as percentages read of items displayed were summed across respondent categories, and mean reading scores were computed for each content category by respondent group.

CONCLUSIONS:

Being local does not guarantee readership of an item or a class of items in a base newspaper. Still, base plans and policies are reported by known readers as highly read, and more such information is desired. Readership of local items is weakest in such areas as education, sports, dependents' affairs, and club news.

As in business and industry, readers indeed appear to get as much or more than they want of sports, gossip, and chit-chat.[1] They want news about their jobs, their futures, their pocket-books.

These choices are not restricted to readership of locally-centered news, but extend to USAF and Department of Defense, where most personnel policies originate. Among persons who do not usually read the base newspaper, both current behavior and their statements about their usual reading behavior indicate they do not read and have no recommendations for newspaper improvement.

Generally speaking, as age, education, and rank increase, so does reading of management-centered news. The

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[1]McCloskey, and "In-Plant Communication; a Seminar Report," both make this point as the result of previous research.

principal exception appears to be retention and training information, where readership remains virtually constant with age, is low for the least-educated and most-educated, and is higher among airmen than among officers.

Commitment to the Air Force results in higher readership of most subject-matter categories, with the exception of health and safety news which is read equally by airmen who are USAF-oriented and other-oriented. With location-of-interest categories, it is a different story. Airmen who are other-oriented read more than USAF-oriented airmen in all except the command and Department of Defense categories.

Highest reading, in the location-of-interest categories, is usually by respondents indexed as "neutral." These are persons who did not evidence particular attachment to or rejection of the Air Force, their supervisors, their military units as such, and tended to be noncommittal about whether their suggestions and complaints are heard and answered.

In short, the hypotheses presented in the Schramm studies,[1] relative to age, education, and economic status are supported in general. The hypothesis that material perceived by coders as near-to-reader would be more generally read than material perceived as remote-from-reader is not supported. The hypothesis that organization-

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[1]Schramm and White.

centered persons would read more organization-centered
messages is supported, except that "neutral" persons ap-
peared to read more than those at either extreme.

DISCUSSION:

What was coded as "near-to-reader" in the present
study may not be viewed that way by the respondents.
Apparently, anything which can be seen as directly influ-
encing their careers and day-to-day conduct will be read,
and much of that sort of information is not geographically
local.

Even though commanders' columns, editorials labelled
as such, and chaplains' messages on such things as physical
fitness were lumped into one category, this area may be
considered to present as much or more of military manage-
ment's philosophy than any other category considered. Its
readership is higher than shown for many other types of
publication. The inference may be made that military
readers are interested in what their commanders have to say.

Retention and training information reaches relatively
more people in the enlisted grades than among officers.
The lowest-educated are lowest in readership of this news,
although they read more health and safety news than anyone
else. They also read less of such things as editorials
and commanders' columns than three of the four other groups.
Least reading, percentagewise, of editorials and commanders'
columns is done by respondents with a high school education.

Since this finding is so much at variance with expectation,
an unknown factor should be presumed at work. Perhaps
closer inspection of the data would reveal that the grade-
school-educated are not represented in the youngest and
lowest-ranking respondent groups. Recent USAF recruiting
policy would intimate that this is the case. If that were
found to be so, it would be seen that from high school edu-
cation to some college there is a considerable change in
reading of such editorial matter.

The very low rankings given to sports and dependents'
news may indicate that more efficient use could be made of
some editorial space in many base newspapers. The Lockbourne
AFB newspaper, which has won awards for its general excel-
lence, presents relatively less of both categories than the
mean of the other seven newspaper issues surveyed. The
Dover AFB newspaper, which has several pages of each, is
the least-read of all eight newspapers.

Space alloted to jokes, cartoons, and filler items,
varied in the surveyed newspapers from zero to 19.9 percent.
Many command-sponsored filler items went entirely unread by
any respondent group. The use of such items to fill large
parts of columns, without imaginative layout or logical
sequence, may be self-defeating.

Two front page pictures, each illustrating important
local stories, received very little attention. One is con-
fusing in composition, and so may not have been associated
with the story it illustrated, in the eyes of the average

reader. The other seemed to be clear and self-explanatory, and the story headline was simple and to the point. The outline for one picture of a missile being fired was so placed that almost no one could associate it with the picture, resulting in almost no attention for the outline.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:

What is local may depend on the length of time a person has been assigned at a given base. To a newly-arrived recruit, a base is anything but home. To an airman or officer who has been stationed at one base anywhere from two to ten years, base news may have greater significance, and base personalities may be objects of great interest. To the person who has moved from base to base for twenty or thirty years, the USAF itself may be more "local" than the base of assignment. It might be productive to assess what various reader groups view as "local" so that appeals to specific groups can "start where the audience is."

Since military readers apparently care little for dependents' news in their base newspapers, dependents' own readership might indicate similar surprising results. The estimates that "more than eighty percent of base personnel and sixty-seven percent of Air Force wives" look at the base newspaper seems highly unrealistic, and should be verified or revised.

As indicated in previous samples of Air Force readers, there seems to be considerable desire for news about Air

Force concepts and policy. It does not seem reasonable, considering the average educational level of today's Air Force members, that this news should be presented as excerpts from official documents, or even as quotations from speeches.

Rather, careful study should be made, perhaps by use of "split runs" in selected base newspapers, what language level and complexity of presentation is best absorbed by USAF readers of USAF publications. In overseas newspapers, at least, this should not be particularly expensive, especially if base-operated offset printing is used in newspaper production.

What is the information source for those who do not read base newspapers? Commander's Call does not cover the range of information which management would like USAF members to know and understand. Gossip, on the other hand, is hardly a reliable communications medium. Intensive study of selected groups of USAF members may point out possibilities for greatly extending the impact of management communication.

A simple and easily-administered program of self-assessment should be developed for use by lower-level information staff personnel. Such a suggestion is contained in Appendix E. The form outlined there has been used successfully by industrial information staffs, costs little or nothing to include in regular issues of employee publications, and can provide at least rule-of-thumb guidance as to readership and desires.

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APPENDIX A

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
Headquarters United State Air Force
Washington 25, D.C.

Reply to
Attn. of: AFASC-5P8   23 Mar 1961

Subject: Survey of Base Newspaper Readership

To: TAC   SAC   MATS
    ADC   ATC   ARDC

(Statistical Services)

1. The Office of Information, Office, Secretary
of the Air Force is interested in determining
items read by officers and airmen in base news-
papers. This is part of the Air Force's program
to increase the effectiveness of base newspapers
as a tool of command management. To obtain the
readership data, the Office of Information re-
quests support for a research study being accom-
plished by an Air Force graduate student at
Michigan State University.

2. Statistical Services Officers at the bases
noted below will survey approximately 150 officers
and 150 airmen.

      a. Barksdale AFB   e. Shaw AFB
      b. Dover AFB   f. Mather AFB
      c. Eglin AFB   g. McGuire AFB
      d. Lockbourne AFB   h. Otis AFB

A random sample will be obtained by selecting
from officer and airman files as follows:

Base Total	Officers Selection
800-899 or less	Every 6th card starting with 4th (4, 10, 16, etc.)
900-1099	Every 6th card starting with 5th (5, 11, 17, etc.)
1100-1199	Every 8th card starting with 7th (7, 15, 23, etc.)
1200-1299	Every 8th card starting with 2nd (2, 10, 18, etc.)
1300-1599	Every 9th card starting with 5th (5, 14, 23, etc.)

Base Total	Officers Selection
1600 or more	Every 11th card starting with 1st (1, 12, 23, etc.)

	Airmen Selection
3500-4999 or less	Every 24th card starting with 16th (16, 40, 64, etc.)
5000-5499	Every 34th card starting with 17th (17, 51, 85, etc.)
5500-5999	Every 37th card starting with 28th (28, 65, 102, etc.)
6000-6499	Every 40th card starting with 35th (35, 75, 115, etc.)
6500 or more	Every 44th card starting with 24th (24, 68, 112, etc.)

3. The survey will be accomplished within the period 7-10 April 1961. Respondents will be provided with a survey package within a period 18-24 hours after the most recent issue has been published. The survey package for each respondent will include a copy of the issue of the base newspaper being studied, a copy of the test instructions, and the two part questionnaire.

4. A zerox copy of the test instructions and questionnaire are attached for reproduction purposes.

5. Base Statistical Services Project Officers will notify the Base Information Officer immediately on receiving this instruction of the survey requirement for 325 copies of the base newspaper published on or about 7 April 1961.

6. Respondents will be called together in groups under the supervision of the Base Statistical Services Project Officer.

7. Respondents who report they have not read the issue being surveyed should write "not read" on the newspaper BUT still fill out the questionnaire.

8. Respondents who are absent from duty within the 18-48 hour survey period will have "not available for duty" written across their copy of the base newspaper by the Statistical Services Project Officer. The blank questionnaire will also be attached to the base newspaper.

9. The survey package--150 for airmen and 150 for officers--will be mailed with five unmarked

copies of the base newspaper to the following
address no later than 12 April 1961:

Major Donald MacDonald
314 Lexington Street
East Lansing, Michigan

10. Acknowledge receipt of this material by
mail. Upon completion of project, an information-
al copy of transmittal should be forwarded to
Directorate of Data Systems and Statistics.
AFASC-5P8, Attn: Mr. Mills, Washington, 25, D.C.

11. This requirement is exempt from the assign-
ment of an RCS (Reports Control Symbol) per para-
graph 7c(3), AFR 174-1.

FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF

/s/ Vasco E. Gulino
VASCO E. GULINO, LT. COL, USAF   2 Atch
Chief, Personnel Branch   1. Offset master &
Directorate of Data Systems   Printed cy
and Stat   (Base only)
                                  2. Printed cy
                                     (1) (Com'd
                                     only)

APPENDIX B

WHAT DID YOU LOOK AT IN THIS WEEK'S BASE NEWSPAPER

Your base newspaper aims to provide you and your family with information about the Air Force and your Air Force neighbors which you don't receive any other way. To meet your needs and interests--the editors must know what you read!

You are one of a small group of representative readers I am asking to help me, by showing what items interested you when you first looked at this issue of your base newspaper. By showing this interest now, you may help to provide all editors a better way to serve you in the future.

I assume you have by now looked through your regular copy of this issue about the way you usually do. If so, please follow the instructions below without reading the paper again, or without reading more of it!

1. Look at every item on every page (except advertisements). Include news stories, editorials, columns, feature articles and pictures. Start with the front page and work through to the back, item by item.

2. If you don't remember having looked at or read the item at all, leave it unmarked and proceed to another item.

3. If you do remember having looked at or read the item, start at the top and draw a line down the middle, to the point where you think you looked or read previously. Do this with a soft pencil or ball-point pen.

4. Don't read a story to find out if you have already seen it! Mark only the items which you looked at or read on first seeing this issue of the paper!

5. If you don't remember having looked at or read anything on a page, mark "DID NOT READ" where that applies, please complete the two short questionnaires attached to this page. This will not identify you personally, but is needed if I am to tell what kinds of people are interested in what! Then fold the newspaper once, insert the questionnaires into it, and hand both to the person monitoring this readership test.

Thanks for your help. You are cooperating in an important effort to improve your base newspaper so you will have the most interesting reading.

THIS IS ONE OF THE TWO QUESTIONNAIRES. YOUR ANSWERS WILL
NOT IDENTIFY YOU BY SQUADRON OR NAME. THEY WILL BE USED TO
HELP US DETERMINE "WHO READS WHAT." IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE
UNDERSTANDING ANY QUESTION, ASK THE MONITOR FOR HELP. THERE
ARE NO TRICK QUESTIONS--AND NO RIGHT ANSWERS EXCEPT THE FACTS.

All questions require ONLY ONE reply!
* *

1. Age at last birthday: _____

2. Years of active duty completed: _____

3. Marital status: Married ____; Single ____; Other _____

4. Residence:

  a. Barracks or BOQ: _____

  b. Base apartment or house: _____

  c. Off-base apartment or house: _____

5. Highest civilian education completed: (mark only one)

  a. Grade school (8th grade or less): _____

  b. Some high school: _____

  c. High school graduate: _____

  d. Some college: _____

  e. College graduate (or more): _____

6. How many on-base clubs and organizations do you belong
    to:

  a. None: _____

  b. Less than three: _____

  c. More than three: _____ (including three)

7. How many civilian clubs and organizations do you belong
    to:

  a. None: _____

  b. Less than three: _____

  c. More than three: _____ (including three)

8. Your present rank: _____

THERE IS ONE MORE QUESTIONNAIRE: BE SURE YOU HAVE MARKED
ANSWERS FOR EACH OF THE QUESTIONS ABOVE. INCOMPLETE
RETURNS MAKE IT VERY HARD FOR US TO ANALYZE THE FIGURES.
NOW TURN TO THE LAST PART OF THE TEST, WHICH HAS THREE
PAGES.

THIS PART OF THE TEST ASKS A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR FEEL-
INGS AND HABITS. YOUR ANSWERS WILL IN NO WAY IDENTIFY YOU
TO ANYONE IN THE AIR FORCE--AND THERE ARE NO RIGHT ANSWERS!
PLEASE ANSWER FRANKLY, SO WE CAN "DRAW A BETTER PICTURE" OF
THOSE WHO READ BASE NEWSPAPERS.

FOR EACH QUESTION, PLACE AN "X" BEFORE ONE CHOICE--OR FILL
THE BLANK PROVIDED

* *

1. Generally speaking, where do you really get the low-
   down on what is going on at your base?

   _____ Fellow workers.

   _____ My supervisors.

   _____ Base Newspaper.

   _____ Commander's Call.

   _____ Other (What?) _____

2. Do you think most supervisors are really interested
   in your ideas and suggestions?

   _____ Yes, definitely.

   _____ They have some interest.

   _____ They have little or no interest.

   _____ I have not thought about this, either way.

3. Do you feel you are a real part of your squadron or
   wing?

   _____ I feel I really belong.

   _____ I feel that I just work here.

   _____ Sometimes I feel one way, and sometimes the
           other.

4. Generally, are you interested in base newspaper editor-
   ials and the commander's column?

   _____ Yes, I am very interested.

   _____ I usually read them, but they don't help with
           my problems.

   _____ I seldom read them, unless my friends are talking
           about them.

   _____ I am not interested in such items.

5. Generally speaking, how do you feel about the Air Force as a career?

_____ I plan to stay as long as I can.

_____ I will probably retire as soon as possible.

_____ I will stay - providing I am kept in the right job/training area.

_____ I probably won't stay until retirement.

_____ I plan to get out as soon as possible.

6. With whom do you plan most for your job and training future?

_____ Fellow workers.

_____ My supervisors.

_____ Air Force people assigned to counsel about these things.

_____ Civilian friends.

_____ Other (Who?) _____

7. Do you feel you are given a fair chance to express your feelings on plans and policies which affect you here on the base?

_____ No, I get no chance to do this.

_____ I can speak, but they don't pay much attention.

_____ I am not qualified to speak about such things.

_____ I get some chances, but not enough.

_____ I get full opportunity to be heard--and answered.

8. Do you think your base newspaper does a good job in keeping you informed about base plans and policies?

_____ No, they never tell us anything.

_____ They give us some information, but don't make it very clear.

_____ The newspaper does a good job on this.

_____ I'm not interested in this kind of information.

9. Are you a supervisor?

_____ Yes

_____ No

10. Do you read your base newspaper?

_____ Seldom or not at all.

_____ Yes, fairly regularly, and the type of article I find most interesting concerns:

_____ AF wide and command policies and activities.

_____ Base policies and activities.

_____ News about AF personnel on the base.

_____ News about the civilian community.

_____ Squadron items.

_____ Entertainment, sports, and hobbies.

_____ Information of interest to dependents (Social, schools, chapel, scouts)

_____ Advertisements.

_____ Want Ads.

11. Which of the following comes closest to telling you how to make your present base newspaper more useful to you personally?

_____ Have a base newspaper, but I don't read it regularly enough to give you an opinion.

_____ More international news.

_____ More USAF news (e.g., Minutemen, Counterforce, personnel).

_____ More major command news (Policies, activities).

_____ More stories on base personnel, human interest.

_____ More sports and recreation news.

_____ Less stories about the brass.

_____ Less social news.

_____ More articles of concern to dependents (schools, chapels, social, scouts).

_____ Less advertising

_____ Less sports and recreation.

THIS IS THE END OF THE TEST. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP. TURN IN ALL PAPERS.

APPENDIX C

CONTENT CATEGORIES ARRANGED BY SUBJECT-MATTER OF ITEMS

1. Health and Safety:
   a. Air safety, safety discipline, traffic control, reporting.
   b. Ground safety, including auto, home, shop, fire, electrical, taxiing, weather.
   c. Accident reports, on ground, in air, driving, home, shop, athletic, and freak.
   d. Physical fitness, fatigue, weather cautions, use of facilities such as steam room, weight requirements, fitness tests.
   e. Immunization, pet shots.
   f. Medical cautions, self-care, drugs for fliers, fatigue, food cautions, weather care.

2. Facilities, units, and equipment at this base:
   a. New or remodelled buildings in progress or planned.
   b. Aerodrome expansion or modernization.
   c. Meteorological equipment installation or modernization.
   d. Alert facility development.
   e. New aircraft, major overhaul, or modification.
   f. New construction or maintenance machinery or equipment.
   g. Mobile training detachment arrivals, departures, or enlargements.
   h. Flying squads of mechanical, inspection, or clerical specialists.
   i. Activation, deactivation, or reactivation of units.

3. Retention and Training, applied to this base:
   a. Enlistment appeals.
   b. Enlistment campaign or progress reports.
   c. Requirements for enlisting or re-enlisting.
   d. On-the-job-training (OJT).
   e. Upgrading requirements.
   f. Frozen specialist categories.
   g. Retirement rules.
   h. Promotion rules.
   i. Officer retention news and appeals.
   j. Formal USAF schools, officer training school, academics and preparatory schools, including base level, clerical and management schools.
   k. Proficiency pay.

4. Base Management, at this base:
   a. Facilities use.
   b. Economy programs.

c. Uniform requirements and availability.
d. Courtesy campaigns
e. Military discipline.
f. Vehicle use and care.
g. Courts martial, AWOL, man-days lost from work, discrepancy reports.
h. Pay and personnel policies at the base, new administrative procedures.
i. Commanders' call.
j. Internal open houses.
k. New or shifted key personnel.
l. Base personnel assignment policies.
m. Processing on or off base.
n. Base unit activities, to include word or picture-stories on shops, offices, sections, and visiting VIP's.
o. Schedules of:

1) Base exchange.
2) Commissary.
3) Cafeteria and snack bars.
4) Working hours.
5) Uniform wear.
6) Service, NCO, and officers' clubs.
7) Sick call.
8) Theaters.
9) Chapels and religious organizations.
10) Busses.

5. Military Service Clubs:
a. Features on coming events
b. Elections.
c. Personnel.
d. Membership and eligibility.
e. Formation or dissolution.
f. Purchases or decoration.
g. Reports of social events already held.
h. Reports of official or quasi-official events held.

6. Education, culture, and religion:
a. Midnight oil.
b. Bootstrap.
c. Institute of Technology.
d. Extension Course Institute.
e. USAFI
f. Scholarships.
g. Qualification examinations.
h. Off-duty night classes.
i. Chapel affairs relating to military personnel, aside from schedules and meeting announcements.
j. Story or essay contests.
k. Library and bookshelf news.

7. Dependents' Affairs:

    a. School rules, eligibility, curricula, costs, transportation, lunches, honors.
    b. Wives' clubs.
    c. Youth clubs.
    d. Wives' athletics and games.
    e. Youth athletics and games.
    f. Boy and Girl scouts, CAP, etc.
    g. Vacation plans and reports.
    h. Dependents' Assistance Program news.
    i. Red Cross activities and awards: includes Grey Ladies.
    j. Food news.
    k. Teas, coffees, cocktail parties, luncheons.
    l. Personals.
    m. Columns by or about dependents.
    n. Dependents' activities in church groups.
    o. Tours.
    p. Cultural and/or recreational classes.

8. Recreation, Sports, Amusements, and Hobbies:

    a. Crafts and craft shops.
    b. Athletics; including all people except dependents.
    c. Special interest clubs.
    d. Variety and dramatic shows.
    e. Shooting programs.
    f. Columns about athletics, and about field sports.
    g. Travel news.
    h. Hobbies in the news.
    i. Model airplane contests and displays.
    j. Private flying, in and out of Aero clubs.
    k. USO activities for base service personnel.
    l. Auto repair, collecting, racing.

9. Promotion and Recognition at this base:

    a. People promoted.
    b. Monthly, quarterly, or annual awards for:

        1) Air crew.
        2) Ground crew.
        3) Crew chief.
        4) Airman.
        5) NCO.
        6) Squadron.

    c. Local safety awards.
    d. Local "heads up" awards.
    e. Cash, bond, or pass awards to military or civilians.
    f. Educational achievement awards to military.
    g. Civilian awards to military, and vice versa.

10. Editorials, Commanders' columns, Chaplains' messages, and guest editorials.

    a. Commanders' column.
    b. Chaplains' messages.
    c. Letters from senior commanders.
    d. Editorials, local and guest.

11. Community relations:

    a. Parades and festivals.
    b. Charity and community fund drives.
    c. Open houses.
    d. Kids' days.
    e. Expositions.
    f. Police and fire cooperation.
    g. Messages from civic officials.
    h. Guest tours.
    i. Business-industry-education days.
    j. Fire fighting assistance.
    k. Civil defense.
    l. Participation in such organizations as:

        1) Service clubs.
        2) Lodges and orders.
        3) Toastmasters (not base clubs).
        4) SPBSQSA, etc.

    m. Leaders in youth activities (not on base).
    n. Special displays.
    o. Church activities.
    p. Members of civic committees.
    q. Noise-abatement council.

12. The Big Picture:

    a. Army or Navy news.
    b. Weapons systems.
    c. Satellites and space systems.
    d. Registration and voting procedures.
    e. Bonuses.
    f. Retirement, and retirement employment.
    g. Department of Defense and USAF personnel policies in general terms, not applied to this base.
    h. Communism explanations and background material.

13. Miscellany:

    a. Cartoons and pin-ups.
    b. Bond slogans.
    c. Fillers about odd facts, including military history.
    d. Features not codable above.
    e. Personals about military people, not codable above.
    f. Local retirement ceremonies.

RESPONDENT REPLIES TO USAF-SPONSORED QUESTION INCLUDED IN
SURVEY PACKET: DO YOU READ YOUR BASE NEWSPAPER?

__297__ Seldom or not al all.

Yes, fairly regularly, and the type of article I
find most interesting concerns:

__600__ AF wide and command policies and activities.

__425__ Base policies and activities.

__193__ News about AF personnel on the base.

__071__ News about the civilian community.

__146__ Squadron items.

__182__ Entertainment, sports and hobbies.

__063__ Information of interest to dependents (Social, schools,
chapel, scouts, etc.)

__039__ Advertisements.

__010__ Want Ads.

The 1576 respondents made 2016 selections in their
answers to this question. IBM master cards indicate only
the initial choice of each respondent; totals above include
all other choices as well. The modal response by those who
report reading their base newspaper is "AF" wide and command
policies and activities," while news of base policies and
activities is chosen next most often. The question asking
respondent choices for material making base newspapers more
personally useful (see Appendix E) reverses this ranking.
The two questions do not elicit choices in a parallel

manner, so direct comparison is difficult. The findings of the study tend to support the choice of USAF policies and activities, with lesser but significant interest in items of local application.

APPENDIX E

RESPONDENT REPLIES TO USAF-SPONSORED QUESTION INCLUDED IN
SURVEY PACKET: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING COMES CLOSEST TO
TELLING HOW TO MAKE YOUR PRESENT BASE NEWSPAPER MORE USE-
FUL TO YOU PERSONALLY?

___222___ Have a base newspaper, but I don't read it regularly
enough to give you an opinion.

___176___ More international news.

___287___ More USAF news (e.g., Minuteman, Counterforce,
personnel).

___196___ More major command news (policies, activities).

___392___ More base news (policies, activities).

___202___ More stories on base personnel, human interest.

___088___ More sports and recreation news.

___099___ Less stories about the brass.

___052___ Less social news.

___036___ More articles of concern to dependents (schools,
chapel, social, scouts).

___037___ Less advertising.

___025___ Less sports and recreation.

The 1576 respondents made 1812 selections in their
answers to this question. Again, IBM master cares indicate
only the initial choice of each respondent, while the totals
here include all choices made. Here the modal response
by those who report reading their base newspaper is "more
base news," with "more USAF news" in second position, and
"more major command news" in fourth position by number of
choices.

The difficulty in analyzing by comparison can be seen in the different wordings used in the two USAF-sponsored questions. In the first, a respondent must choose command news if he desires to indicate USAF news, while these are made separate choices in the second question.

In view of this difficulty, and of the relatively large number of multiple choices made to both questions, the following suggestion is made. Respondents apparently do not feel one choice suffices; they might be allowed a three-way choice for <u>each</u> category in such question as these. The choices would be to indicate reading behavior, or desire for reading material, at low, medium, or high levels for each category.[1] In such a case, the latter question considered here might be presented in somewhat the following way:

FOR EACH ITEM LISTED BELOW, WHICH COLUMN COMES CLOSEST TO TELLING HOW TO MAKE YOUR BASE NEWSPAPER MORE USEFUL TO YOU PERSONALLY?

I don't read it regularly, and have no choice _____

	Want More	All Right Now	Want Less
International news.	___	___	___
USAF news (minuteman, Counterforce, etc.).	___	___	___
Major command news (policies, activities).	___	___	___

[1] National Industrial Conference Board, Report No. 136.

	Want More	All Right Now	Want Less
Base news (policies, activities).	____	____	____
Stories on base personnel, human interest.	____	____	____
Sports and recreation news.	____	____	____
Stories about the brass.	____	____	____
Social news.	____	____	____
Articles of concern·to dependents (school, chapel, social, scouts).	____	____	____

Further, since the present study has noted that many known non-readers report believing base newspapers do a good job and editorials interesting and useful, there is support for the hypothesis that anonymity must be assured even more than is guaranteed here, if completely frank replies are expected. In other words, there is a pronounced "halo" effect associated with answering questions seen as socially acceptable.

NOV 8 1954

DEC 7 1954

JAN 2 7 1955

JAN 2 7 1956