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REPORTERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD AND NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

By

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ABSTRACT

REPORTERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD AND NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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The purpose of this study was to explore newspaper reporters' attitudes toward individuals with physical disabilities and to assess coverage of those individuals and of disability issues in prestige and high-circulation newspapers. Four attributes of news coverage of disability (roles of persons with disabilities, disability issues covered, story language and headline language referring to persons with disabilities) were evaluated in 363 stories gathered from 16 newspapers during the first three months of 1990. The reporters who wrote those stories were surveyed to ascertain their attitudes toward persons with physical disabilities, their contact with such individuals, the newsroom environment in which they work and demographic information.

The survey revealed that reporters have progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities; reporters who had more contact with disabled persons and a positive evaluation of that contact tended to have more progressive attitudes toward those individuals.

The content analysis showed coverage of disability issues, roles and headline language was somewhat traditional but that story language was moderately progressive.

Stories written in newsrooms with style guidelines regarding disability tended to have slightly more progressive roles and story language and moderately progressive headline language, but were moderately negatively associated with progressive issue coverage.

Reporters who had contact with a co-worker with a disability wrote stories with slightly more progressive roles and issues, but used more traditional language.

Reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities showed no meaningful relationship with whether news content was progressive or traditional. Female reporters had more progressive attitudes and wrote more progressive stories. Younger reporters had slightly progressive attitudes but age had no relationship with news content.

The study concludes that disability coverage in these newspapers is neither overwhelmingly traditional nor progressive. It suggests that disability activists and journalists should focus their efforts on factors such as style guidelines and increased hiring of journalists with disabilities to improve the state of newspaper coverage of persons with disabilities.

To my parents, Samuel and Ruth Clogston,

whose support has been constant

And to the late Jim Neubacher, whose writings

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Chapter I

Introduction and Justification

In a democratic society, equal opportunity to participate in all facets of that society should be a goal of government and of private and public institutions. In a democracy the majority rule, but one of the duties of the majority is to recognize the rights of those who are outside the majority.

In the past 30 years, the United States has begun to recognize that its citizenry extends beyond white males of Western European origin. Groups such as African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians and women have started to gain recognition, understanding, acceptance and positions of power in the public and private institutions of the United States.

But a smaller more diverse minority still struggles for recognition of its problems and acceptance in society. The group, known variously as disabled, handicapped, physically challanged or handicappers,[1] includes those with visual limitations (including blind and visually impaired individuals), hearing disabilities (those who are deaf or hearing impaired) and mobility impairments (wheelchair, crutch and cane users). Because of economic,

physical, architectural and attitudinal barriers, acceptance of these individuals has lagged behind that of racial minorities and women.

The mass media influence the visibility of minorities and can have some impact on the broad social recognition of the problems of these groups. Lazersfeld and Merton (1957) wrote that the media confer status on those whom they choose to cover. "If you really matter, you will be at the focus of mass attention, and if you <u>are</u> at the focus of mass attention, then you must be important." (pp. 461-62)

The importance of mass media in affecting attitudes is outlined in the concept of agenda setting. Agenda setting's proponents assert that the media influence public opinion by determining which issues and topics are most important (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; 1977; Stone & McCombs, 1981). Agenda setting predicts those topics which receive more coverage in the news media are considered by the public to be more important (Tardy, et al., 1981).

Other theorists postulate that the media serve as an enculturating or cultivating force--that they present uniform and consensual versions of social reality which influence the audience's perceptions of societal norms and values (Gerbner, 1967; Tan, 1982; McQuail, 1983).

Because of this pervasive aspect of media, any group which attempts to become socially accepted can go a long way in advancing its cause by enlisting positive support from media organizations. This support includes, but is not limited to, recognition of the group as legitimate via accurate depiction in the media and by more than accidental or token inclusion of the group's members in the organization's decision-making apparatus.

The Kerner Commission (Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968) noted that media, and television in particular, should work to condition the audience's expectations of what is "ordinary and normal" in society (p. 49). The Kerner Commission also stated that the schism between blacks and whites was perpetuated by the failure of the media to portray blacks as ordinary and normal, and by the tendency to portray blacks through white eyes. The commission added that recognition of blacks could be supported and enhanced by minority group members who are themselves part of the decision-making process (p. 383).

The Kerner Commission's points regarding African Americans are just as relevant now for this more diverse group of individuals with disabilities. While blacks, women and other minorities have achieved some degree of progress toward accurate portrayal in the media and fair

inclusion in the social and professional arenas in the past three decades, the estimated 43 million individuals with various disabilities still lack recognition that they too possess abilities and achievements (Bowe, 1978).

One way to achieve this recognition would be for persons with disabilities to gain entry into positions of responsibility in media organizations. From here, their input into programming and other decision-making processes could influence portrayals of persons with disabilities, what disability issues are covered and the language used to refer to those with disabilities. They might also influence policies regarding further hiring of disabled persons.

Portrayals of persons with disabilities and the hiring policies regarding them can be affected by the attitudes that media decision-makers hold toward these individuals. Measurement of these attitudes can be accomplished through the use of survey instruments. Additionally, an appropriate way of measuring <u>behavior</u> of those in media is through content analysis of a medium's output. While attitudes and behavior toward persons with disabilities have been measured separately, there is no published evidence of effort to measure both using the same theoretical bases.

The problems of acceptance, equal opportunity, access and employment for persons with disabilities in the 1980s are no less pressing than the situation of blacks in the 1960s (Stroman, 1982). These individuals remain ignored, or at least misunderstood, partly because of the lack of accurate portrayal in the media (Liebert, 1975; Hespenheide, 1988).

Much has been written about how the public views individuals with disabilities. The social psychology and rehabilitation literature are rich with such studies. But the mass communication literature has virtually ignored this issue. The mass communication literature does, however, include a number of studies on the media depiction of women and other minorities which point to theoretical linkage with the social psychology and rehabilitation literature paradigms on persons with disabilities. These studies will be reviewed and utilized in developing an instrument designed to evaluate portrayals of persons with disabilities in media content.

This study will measure the attitudes newspaper reporters have toward persons with disabilities and will also analyze newspaper story content and its portrayal of disability.

The research will seek to answer these general questions:

--What attitudes do newspaper reporters have toward persons with disabilities and how do these attitudes vary with differences in individual contact with such individuals.

--How do newspapers portray persons with disabilities?

--What correlations exist between newsroom organizational and accessibility factors and portrayal of persons with disabilities?

--Are there correlations between reporters' attitudes toward disability and portrayal of persons with disabilities in newspaper content?

This research can provide valuable additions to studies in both mass communications and disability areas as well as provide valuable insights to society in general.

While mass communications researchers have done many studies of media portrayals of blacks, women and other groups, they have virtually ignored portrayal of persons with disabilities. This research can begin to fill that gap by utilizing theoretically-based empirical methods to study newspaper treatment of disability. Because many of the mass communication content studies of other minorities have been either atheoretical or tied only tenuously to a theoretical base, this study can provide mass communication researchers looking at other groups with a rough framework for theory-based work in their own areas.

Although disability researchers have done several qualitative studies of media portrayal and a number of

non-theoretically based "headcounts" of persons with disabilities in various entertainment media (television, movies, literature), virtually none of the media content studies have been solidly grounded in theory and few have looked at daily news content. This research would expand knowledge in this area as well as in the already well-developed area of measurement of attitudes toward persons with disabilities. The survey of news reporters would add a new group of professionals to those already studied by disability researchers.

By coming up with a "snapshot" of reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities as well as an assessment of where media content stands in terms of portrayal of such individuals, this research can provide valuable insight into the status of disability in media today. If the goal is to meet the democratic ideal of equal opportunity to participate in society, knowledge of how far society, as reflected in the news media, is from this goal will be valuable and helpful to those who seek to meet these goals.

Footnote -- Chapter One

[1] In light of the fact that no one term is acceptable to all members of this diverse group, the terms "persons with disabilities" and "disabled persons (or individuals)" will be used throughout the text. The author recognizes that this term may offend some, but has decided on these to avoid confusion and enhance communication.

The study itself examines reporters' attitudes toward and coverage of persons with physical disabilities. Unless otherwise specified, this text will use the term disability to refer to physical rather than mental or emotional disabilities.

Chapter II

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter will first review two theoretical perspectives which have been applied to study of disability--deviance and minority group theory. The second section applies these theories to particular models of perceptions of disability. A review of studies of attitudes toward persons with disabilities comes next, followed by a review of studies of media portrayal of blacks, women and individuals with mental and physical disabilities.

Deviance vs. Minority Group Theory

Two perspectives which have been applied to the study of persons with disabilities and others not in the power centers of society are deviance and minority group theory. Although these perspectives come from different roots, Stroman (1982) noted that in the past 25 years, sociologists have studied some groups (including persons with disabilities) from both the deviance and minority group viewpoints.

Deviance theory is grounded in social psychology and is related to role theory. Roles have been defined as "the sets of expectations, rights, obligations, and patterns of predictable behaviors that persons employ when occupying particular positions." (Babad, Birnbaum & Benne, 1983, p. 211) Parsons (1951) defined deviance as behavior which fails "to fulfill the institutionally defined expectations of one or more of the roles in which the individual is implicated in the society." (p. 452) Other social psychologists have arrived at variations on this definition, resulting in different types and explanations of deviance.

A fairly simple conception of deviance is a departure or variation from the average standards of society (Becker, 1963). This statistical conceptualization attaches no value to deviance and can include characteristics ranging from left-handedness to tallness.

Another type, normative deviance, emphasizes behavioral or non-behavioral characteristics which violate social norms or group rules (Becker, 1963). A concept closely tied to normative deviance is stigma. Goffman (1963) noted that stigmatized persons possess an attribute considered discrediting and that these individuals are considered less than fully human because of it. Stafford and Scott (1987) defined stigma as "a characteristic of

persons that is contrary to a norm of a social unit." (p. 80) They equated stigma with deviance, adding it can consist of behavioral norm violations (eg. promiscuity where chastity is prized) and non-behavioral deviations (old age in a youth-oriented culture or paraplegia where physical mobility is emphasized).

Another aspect or definition of deviance comes out of labeling theory. Labeling theorists maintain people are deviant partly because norms are broken and partly because someone else calls them deviant because of it (Becker, 1963). Labeling can have a major impact on determining who in society is stigmatized as deviant. As Becker and Arnold (1987) noted, "[Deviance] is largely determined by the way the community interprets and codes the many details of behavior that come to its attention." (p. 47)

In his comparison of deviance and minority group theory, Stroman (1982) noted that most deviance theorists focus on groups or individuals whose *behavior* departs from normative standards (e.g. criminals, substance abusers, homosexuals) as well as those whose physical characteristics are different (short-statured individuals, obese persons, wheelchair users).

Minority group theory, while also studying those outside of the powerful mainstreams of society, has concentrated on individuals with racial or ethnic

distinctions. Dworkin and Dworkin (1982) wrote: "A minority group is characterized by four qualities: identifiability, differential power, differential pejorative treatment and group awareness." (p. 16)

Persons with disabilities qualify as a minority group in at least three of the four criterion qualities listed by Dworkin and Dworkin (1982). With a few exceptions (for example individuals with "invisible" disabilities such as some learning disorders), they are identifiable by the very characteristics which make them disabled. Facial disfigurement, prosthetic mobility aids, wheelchairs and leader dogs all identify a person's disability.

Persons with disabilities also have differential power. Stroman (1982) noted that this is the case in terms of numerical size of the group, property holdings, income level, years of education and political offices held. Another factor, noted by Gliedman and Roth (1980), is that when persons with disabilities do attain power, their disability may become "invisible" as this conflicts with the stereotypical image of such people as helpless and dependent. (They list examples such as Franklin D. Roosevelt, Beethoven, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Sigmund Freud. "We remember FDR's cigarette holder better than his wheelchair." [p. 29])

Those with disabilities must also deal with differential and pejorative treatment. Aside from obvious barriers to physical access and to communication imposed by society, persons with disabilities tend to suffer educational, vocational and attitudinal discrimination (Tenny, 1953).

Dworkin and Dworkin's (1982) fourth quality--group awareness--may not be as highly developed with persons with disabilities as with other minorities. In 1953, Tenny noted that they did not create social crisis threats. Part of this could be explained by the fact that a disability is not usually shared by the individual's family. But political activity by individuals with disabilities throughout the country since 1970 has begun to establish a sense of solidarity among individuals with various disabilities (Ablon, 1980; Anspach, 1979; Hahn, 1985; Haskins, 1976; Johnson, 1988; Krossel, 1988).

The focus of minority group theory is on the need of society in general to accommodate members of different groups. These political ramifications are also evident in the civil rights movement (need for white society to open up to and share power with blacks) and the feminist movement (need of male dominated society to share power with women and to accept feminist values). Deviance theorists on the other hand, focus on ways to either

change or control the deviant who represents a threat to society. It is this second approach which has most often been applied to physically disabled people.

Models of Perceptions of Disability

A set of models of perceptions of disability based on studies by Gliedman and Roth (1980) and Hahn (1982, 1985) springs from these approaches. This paradigm includes four models of disability. Two models based on deviance theory are the medical model and the social pathology (or what Hahn refers to as economic) model of disability. The minority/civil rights and cultural pluralism models reflect the tenets of minority group theory.

The medical model of disability considers a person with a disability deviant because that individual's body is an aberration from the "healthy" norm. Because of this, the individual is expected to assume the "sick role" (Parsons, 1951), which entails exemption from social and occupational obligations and from responsibility for his or her condition. In the sick role, the individual becomes a patient who gives up autonomy to a health professional and medical support network. It is considered to be a negative but temporary state, provided the individual puts him- or herself into the hands of a physician.

This model puts the focus of the "problem" of disability on the individual's disabling characteristic, treating it as a sickness which must be either cured or contained. Although the disability may affect only a part of the individual's ability to function, the entire person is drawn into the sick role. No blame for the individual's subsequent isolation is put on society.

The consequences of this mode of thinking for the individual with a disability can be passivity, gains (if any) limited to individual physical recovery or maintenance, and severe limits on, if not outright suspension of, social activities.

The second model is based on many of the assumptions present in the medical outlook. In the medical model the handicapping characteristic is thought of as a disease and the entire individual becomes the patient under the care of a medical "expert". In the social pathology model, the role of the individual with a disability is that of a stigmatized individual or deviant who is considered out of step with the rest of society. Again, the individual is labeled as inferior, this time as a "disadvantaged" client who must look to society for governmental or private economic support. (Hahn, 1982)

Bogdan and Biklen (1977) noted that this economic support is considered a gift or privilege, not a right.

Such support "demeans its recipients by supporting the prejudice that the handicapped are inferior people. Thus, the crippled child becomes a poor soul whose disability evokes pity and guilt and the spirit of giving, but also lessens the possibility that disabled people can be regarded as people with personalities, . . . with an interest in being perceived as ordinary people." (p. 23)

Both the medical and social pathology models result in what Bogdan and Biklen referred to as "handicapism" -- promotion of differential or unequal treatment of individuals because of physical, mental or behavioral differences. Handicapism is considered equivalent to racism and sexism in that persons without disabilities tend to stigmatize and avoid contact with persons with disabilities.

In these two models, the limiting aspects of a disability are considered to be located in the individual--in his or her inability to compete physically and/or economically in an environment designed for able-bodied people. In the models which stem from minority group theory, the "problems" of disability are those of a society's need to adapt its built environment, job structure and mindset to accommodate all members of the population, both those with and without disabilities.

Gliedman and Roth (1980) assert that able-bodied people blame these economic and social problems on the physical limitations of disabled persons, not on social oppression. They compared this to the racist or sexist who accounts for lack of economic success by blacks or women by attributing it to racial or sexual inferiority rather than to systematic discrimination in society.

The minority/civil rights viewpoint is politically-based. It puts the "blame" for limiting aspects of a disability not on the individual who cannot walk, see or hear, but on society's inability or even refusal to adjust to allow them to participate as do those without disabilities. Bowe (1978) noted that Americans with disabilities have suffered more economically than other minority groups and have been segregated from the rest of society in housing, education, transportation and public accommodation.

A goal of disability rights activists who espouse the minority/civil rights viewpoint would be a society based on a fourth model, referred to as the cultural pluralism model. Appleton (1983) defines a culturally pluralistic society as one which "boasts a diversity of racial, religious, cultural or ethnic groups that coexist and interact as roughly equal members of a common politic." (p. 22) Disability policy scholars (Vernon & Makawsky,

1969; Phillips, 1985) noted that many individuals with disabilities "seek to be regarded as a distinct group which functions to enhance the physiological diversity of the larger culture." (Phillips, 1985, p. 49)

Gliedman and Roth (1980) described this as a society in which markets would not ignore the millions of children and adults with disabilities, where politicians would woo the disability vote as energetically as they now woo black and female voters. In a society based on the cultural pluralism model, a disability necessitating use of such devices as crutches, canes, braces or wheelchairs would be treated much the same as is sub 20/20 vision requiring the use of eyeglasses or contact lenses in contemporary American society. The disability does not stigmatize individuals who wear glasses or contacts and there is a booming economy built around distribution of these devices. This type of society would treat a disability as something of no more consequence than eye color, toe length or height.

The goals of the minority/civil rights and cultural pluralism models are similar to the focus of minority group theory. Both concentrate on the need of society in general to accommodate members of different groups. On the other hand, the medical and social pathology models, like deviance theory, focus on the differences between

individuals and society. The definition of the deviant as being a flawed individual coincides with the medical model. The social pathology model also concentrates on the individual's differentness and seeks to solve problems caused by this differentness by funneling resources (charity, government aid, etc.) to allow persons with disabilities to survive in an arena separate from (and most likely unequal to) the rest of society.

This dichotomous view of disability is evident in studies of attitudes toward persons with disabilities. It is also an underlying theme of media content studies of persons with disabilities and other non-mainstream groups.

Review of Literature

The following literature review consists of two parts. The first section covers relevant studies in the development of scales to measure attitudes toward persons with disabilities. The second part is a review of media content studies of non-mainstream groups including blacks, women and persons with mental disabilities, followed by a detailed review of studies of media portrayal of persons with physical disabilities.

Studies of Attitudes Toward Persons with Disabilities

While many studies have attempted to measure attitudes toward these individuals using a variety of

experimental and survey instruments, most have operationalized the concept "attitudes toward persons with disabilities" dichotomously.

The construct known as attitude has been defined in various ways. Guttman (1950) referred to an attitude as a "delimited totality of behavior with respect to something." (p. 51) Wickens and Meyer (1961) distinguished attitude from behavior by defining the former as "a learned predisposition to react in a certain way to classes of objects, persons, or situations." (p. 740) Jordan (1968) connected attitudes more directly with behavior when he noted that attitudes toward something could be considered the totality of acts a person has committed or contemplated toward that thing (p. 4). Horne (1980) noted that the strong evidence of attitude-influenced behavior in education (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Kiesler, Collins & Miller, 1969; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) justifies investigating attitudes toward disabled persons.

The strength of the connection between what people say they think and feel in an attitude survey and how they actually behave has by no means been proven to be 100% (Yuker, 1965). Mueller (1986) noted that in many instances, attitudes may be poor predictors of single specific behaviors (such as story writing by reporters) but may be good predictors of behavioral patterns made up

of a number of single behaviors. Situational variables, such as social pressures or conflicting values, have also been shown to play a role in discrepencies between attitudes and behaviors (Mueller, 1986, Wicker, 1971). But some researchers have made connections between attitude theories and actual behavior of persons toward individuals with disabilities.

Goffman (1963) noted that societal attitudes toward stigmatized individuals (including persons with disabilities) result in behaviors which render social interaction awkward and uncomfortable. Studies coordinated by Kleck (Kleck, 1966; 1968; 1969; Kleck, Ono & Hastorf, 1966; Kleck, Buck, Goller, London, Pfeiffer & Vukcevic, 1968) measured behavior of non-disabled persons toward individuals perceived to have a disability. They found that the interactions generally supported Goffman's contention that encounters with persons with disabilities would be awkward. The subjects were found to act less spontaneously and less honestly, maintain a greater physical distance and terminate an interview sooner with disabled individuals than with interviewees who were not perceived to have a disability. Psychological theorists have speculated as to the origins of attitudes. These include opinions arising from actual contact with the thing in question (Amir, 1969); the attitudes of others,

both peers and role models (Wickens and Meyer, 1961); and the oftentimes negative attitudes toward the unknown (Becker, 1963; Snyder, Kleck, Strenta & Mentzer, 1979).

Operational definitions of attitude developed by researchers who have devised scales for measuring attitudes have adhered to the idea of attitude as a dichotomy. Mueller (1986) noted that there has been substantial agreement among social scientists that the attitude concept has a bipolar aspect, "an affect for or against something." (p. 3) Bogardus (1931) included in his definition of attitude, the "tendency to act toward or against some environmental factor." (p. 45) Thurstone (1931) defined attitude simply as "the affect for or against a psychological object." (p. 261)

While researchers have used a number of scaling techniques to measure attitudes toward persons with disabilities, the most widely used have been Likert-type scales (Horne, 1980). Most non-Likert scales used in this area have also operationalized attitudes dichotomously.

A number of studies used subjects' rankings of cards depicting children with and without various disabilities (Chigier & Chigier, 1968; Dow, 1966; Richardson, 1966; 1970; Richardson et al., 1961; Richardson & Royce, 1968). These measures gave a generalized rank-ordering of subjects' preferences.

Instruments utilizing semantic differential techniques have been used to form general positive-negative dichotomies (Comer & Piliavin, 1975; Hastorf, Wildfogel & Cassman, 1978), and of social acceptance of persons with disabilities (Strauch, 1970).

Studies using Likert scaling techniques have measured attitudes toward specific disabilities as well as toward disability in general. Cowen, Underberg and Verrillo (1958) developed an Attitudes to Blindness scale with 30 items which used four levels of response.

Lukoff and Whiteman (1959; Whiteman & Lukoff, 1962) built upon Cowen et al., developing four- and five- point summated rating scales to measure attitudes toward blindness (the A-B Scale). They also developed a scale to measure attitudes toward general physical disability. Their Physically Handicapped (P-H) Scale (Lukoff & Whiteman, 1959) simply substituted the words "physical handicap" for "blind" or "blindness" in the A-B Scale.

About this time, Roeher (1959) developed a 22-item, five-point Likert scale to measure attitudes toward general physical disability. Other Likert-type scales developed to measure attitudes toward general disability include Szuhay's (1959) Adult Attitude Toward the Physically Disabled Scale; Auvenshine's (1962) Attitudes Toward Severely Disabled College Students Scale; and

Yuker, Block and Campbell's (1960) Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scale (ATDP).

The ATDP was designed to measure the extent to which respondents consider persons with disabilities as different from or inferior to persons without disabilities (Yuker, Block & Younng, 1970). Forms A and B of the ATDP contain 30 statements; Form O contains 20 statements.

The ATDP has become the most prevalent instrument for measuring attitudes of adults and children toward general disability (Horne, 1980; Siller, 1984; Yuker, Block and Younng, 1970). Some of this research includes use of the ATDP to measure attitudes of persons in helping professions and those with varying amounts of contact with individuals with disabilities (Jordan, 1968); and to measure the effects of exposure to media experiences with handicapped persons (Donaldson, 1976; Donaldson & Martin, 1977). Although some studies (Yuker, Block & Younng, 1966; Yuker & Hurley, 1987) have noted that contact with persons with disabilities by medical and rehabilitation professionals has not resulted in positive attitudes, there are no reported connections between attitudes as measured by the ATDP Scale and specific behaviors toward those with disabilities.

Lazar (1973) modified the ATDP, creating a 30-item Attitude Toward Handicapped Individuals Scale (ATHI),

using the ATDP format and scoring, but replacing the term "disabled" with "handicapped." Lazar, Stodden & Sullivan (1976) used the ATHI to study administrator attitudes toward persons with disabilities and found it correlated highly with the ATDP. Simpson, Parrish and Cook (1976) also substituted "handicapped" for "disabled" to allow for better comprehension by second and third graders who responded by choosing among 6 smiling or frowning faces.

Linkowski (1969, 1971) constructed a 50-item scale to measure acceptance of disability (AD) by individuals who themselves have handicaps. This scale, based in part on the ATDP, was found to correlate significantly with its predecessor when administered to rehabilitation clients.

Richardson (1976) criticized the ATDP scale because it fails to differentiate between types of disabilities. Siller added specificity by measuring attitudes toward blindness, amputation and cosmetic disability (Siller & Chipman, 1964; Siller, Ferguson, Vann & Holland, 1967).

Subsequent work by Siller has resulted in the development of a multi-dimensional measure of attitudes toward disability. While the ATDP and other unidimensional scales derive a single score on a positive-negative progressive scale, Siller's Disability Factor Scales (DFS) measure different psychological dimensions to attitudes (Siller, 1984). Nevertheless, Siller noted,

"The ATDP has been and continues to be the instrument most used in relating personality to attitudes toward the disabled." (p. 205)

Antonak (1981, 1982) developed a Scale of Attitudes Toward Disabled People (SADP) to provide an alternative to Form O of the ATDP (Antonak & Livneh, 1988). The scale was designed to be used to investigate the formation, structure and methods of changing attitudes toward persons with disabilities. It has been administered to limited groups, but not to large, demographically diverse samples.

The Modified Issues in Disability Scale (MIDS) was developed in the late 1980s using input from persons with and without disabilities to better reflect what both groups consider positive and negative attitudes toward disability (Makas, 1988; Makas, Finnerty-Fried, Sigafoos & Reiss, 1988; Makas, 1991).

Research into attitudes toward persons with disabilities shows a strong tendency to measure attitudes in a unidimensional, bipolar way, either as progressive vs. traditional or positive vs. negative.

The following section on media portrayals of non-mainstream groups shows a similar tendency to measure in a dichotomous manner.

Studies of Media Portrayal of Non-Mainstream Groups

Media content studies of groups considered to be different have, in the past 25 years, tended to focus on blacks and women, with some other groups such as those with mental and physical disabilities receiving some attention. Studies of the last group, for the most part, have been conducted by rehabilitation and special education researchers rather than by mass communication scholars. With the exception of a few studies based in deviance concepts and minority group theory, these examinations of media portrayal of non-mainstream groups have not been grounded on explicit theoretical bases, but have sought answers to non-theoretically based questions or been based on previous research which itself had tenuous ties to formal theory.

An exception to this atheoretical trend in mass media studies is Shoemaker's (1985) comparison of various conceptions of the deviance construct with accepted definitions of newsworthiness. She postulated that most definitions of deviance (including statistical, normative, pathological and labeling) are incorporated to varying degrees in newsworthiness criteria such as novelty, conflict, sensationalism and prominence (p. 17). In such routine coverage areas as public meetings, elections and obituaries, Shoemaker noted that an event's degree of

deviance will affect the prominence of placement in the newspaper, magazine or newscast. "Deviant events make up much of the news content for any given day. In addition, the more deviant a person or event is, the more prominently he/it will be covered and the more space (or time) will be allocated." (p. 20)

Shoemaker differentiated between deviance from a labeling perspective (one is deviant because someone has labeled him or her as such) and the self-conception definition of deviance (where one's behavior is deliberately deviant regardless of how he or she has been labeled). This opens the doors for politically-oriented groups (or minority groups) to be considered as deviants by reporters and editors (Shoemaker & Chang, 1983; Shoemaker & Storey, 1983). In a test of these principles, Shoemaker (1984) found evidence that media coverage of political groups differed depending on how politically deviant a group was considered to be.

This newsworthiness-deviance-minority group labeling could explain, to varying degrees, patterns of media portrayal of non-mainstream groups such as blacks, women and those with mental and physical disabilities. A group which is considered worthy of media attention primarily because of its deviance from mainstream society may be more distant from full acceptance into society than a

group whose distinguishing characteristics are no longer considered the most important aspects of its members. In other words, the kind of media attention a group receives--not merely the presence of that group in the news--may indicate how accepted that group is.

Although most studies of media portrayal of blacks, women and other groups have not been grounded in theory as explicitly as Shoemaker's, these content studies have, for the most part, concluded that the media portray blacks, women and other groups in ways different from and more pejorative than portrayals of mainstream groups. Poindexter and Stroman (1981), for instance, noted that television portrayals of blacks showed a history of underrepresentation with later trends toward increased visibility (see also Dates and Barlow, 1990). But they also found a tendency to portray blacks stereotypically and with negative connotations. These qualities could also be said to apply to portrayals of women and other groups, in print and advertising as well as in television entertainment programs.

The following review of media content studies examines the depictions of blacks, women and those with mental and physical disabilities. For each group, those studies which test an explicit theory will be reviewed first, followed by those which seek to answer research

questions with at least a mention of a theoretical basis. These will be followed by studies which are primarily atheoretical.

Studies of Media Portrayals of Blacks

Most of the content studies of media portrayals of blacks were not explicitly theoretically based. Those studies which were theoretical primarily took social psychology tenets as bases, although some were grounded in political or minority group theory. The majority of black portrayal studies were quasi-theoretical, making passing reference to concepts related to the social psychology theories of deviance, labeling, stereotypes and roles.

Theoretically-based studies

Studies of media portrayals of blacks from a social psychology based deviance perspective have tended to be related to another area of deviance study--crime. In a case study of crime news in St. Louis, Rudwick (1962) noted the consequences of newspaper labeling of black suspects and offenders. He cited criminologists (Sutherland and Cressey, 1955) who observed, "The belief of the ordinary citizen that Negroes have a much larger number of crimes than have whites may well be based on the policy of many newspapers of inserting the word 'Negro'

after the name of all persons of that race who are accused of crimes." He added race labeling confirmed stereotypes and inflamed public opinion against blacks (p. 178).

Other studies of racial identification also were based on this deviance or labeling principle. Dulaney (1969) studied 1642 crime stories and found 10 cases of racial identification of blacks and none of whites or other ethnic groups. Baran (1973) found no significant differences in newspaper coverage of white student deaths at Kent State and black deaths at Jackson State and Southern University in 1970. However, Pritchard (1985) found that a homicide victim's race affected the fairness and completeness of newspaper coverage.

The visibility of blacks was studied by Johnson, Sears and McConahay (1971) from a deviance perspective. They found Los Angeles newspaper coverage of African Americans was actually diminishing prior to the 1965 Watts uprising (p. 698). This was immediately followed by an increase in coverage during and immediately after the disturbances (a deviant, therefore newsworthy event), followed by a return to pre-riot coverage levels.

Although the civil rights movement had political as well as social implications, only a few studies of black portrayals tested explicit politically-based theories. A content study by Martindale (1985) evaluated newspaper

coverage of blacks from both a deviance and a minority rights perspective. Stories were evaluated as to whether blacks were considered from a deviant (stereotypical), non-deviant (everyday life) or minority rights (civil rights-related, minority life) perspective. Martindale found increases in daily life and civil rights-related coverage, but a continued paucity of stories of minority concern during the time period covered.

Quasi-theoretically based studies

In a study of white newspapers in Texas in 1932, Bryant (1935) found negative stereotypes of blacks in both the urban and rural press. In a study of black news with a quasi-theoretical base in the principles of deviance, Gist (1932) found a tendency in white newspapers around the U.S. to minimize all types of black news to levels below amounts representative of the population.

Greenberg and Kahn (1970), found an increase in the numbers of blacks in Playboy cartoons from 1956-1969. Other studies examined roles played by blacks on evening newscasts (Roberts, 1975) and in entertainment programs (Hinton, Seggar, Northcott & Fontes, 1974; Northcott, Seggar & Hinton, 1975; O'Kelly & Bloomquist, 1977). These noted increases in the numbers of blacks on television, but noted that they were shown in stereotypical roles.

The racial unrest of the 1960s brought charges from the Kerner Commission on Civil Disorder that blacks were invisible in the American mass media (Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968). Stempel (1971) examined coverage of blacks by pre- and post- Kerner news stories. Poindexter and Stroman (1981) noted an increase in black visibility on television news following the Kerner report.

A series of studies of magazine advertising looked at occupational roles played by blacks (Shuey, King & Griffith, 1953; Cox, 1970; Colfax & Sternberg, 1972; Humphrey & Schuman, 1984; Zinkhan, Cox & Hong, 1986). These studies indicated an increased number of blacks in magazine ads but noted their consignment to stereotypical roles was changing slowly (Culley & Bennett, 1976).

Atheoretical studies

Atheoretical print studies simply looked at amount of coverage and placement of coverage in the newspaper (Chaudhary, 1980), or amount and fairness (Kelley, 1976; Poindexter & Stroman, 1980; Washburn, 1981). Studies of television content noted low numbers of blacks and their prominence in programs (Dominick & Greenberg, 1970), in commercials (Bush, Solomon & Hair, 1977) and introductory magazine ads (Reid & Vanden Bergh, 1980).

Studies of Media Portrayals of Women

Like studies of media portrayal of blacks, few examinations of portrayal of women test explicitly described theories. Most nod in the direction of some theoretical concept and others are simply tallies of gender differences.

Theoretically-based studies

Social psychologists Babad, Birnbaum and Benne (1983) explained gender-related theories as a continuum. At one end is the concept of sex roles, defined as "socially and culturally defined expectations that men and women are expected to fill." (p. 165) Further along the continuum are the politically-based concepts of sexism, or the prejudicial attitude which views women as inferior, and feminism, the political movement with the goal of freeing both sexes from the tradition of females being considered inferior and being subjugated by males. (p. 166)

Many studies explicitly testing sex role theory examined women's roles as portrayed in advertising. These included Goffman's (1979) study of pictorial print advertising, which he noted reinforced the gender hierarchies of traditional social structures. Mamay and Simpson (1982) found women played three roles in TV commercials--mother, housekeeper and object of beauty.

Skelly and Lundstrom (1981) found a decrease in male sex role stereotypes in magazine ads from 1959 to 1979.

Brabent (1974; Brabent & Mooney, 1986) found traditional sex roles were perpetuated in the Sunday comics. Others found traditional sex roles portrayed in children's television programs (O'Kelly, 1974), cartoons (Mayes & Valentine, 1979) and commercials (Macklin & Kolbe, 1984; Schwartz & Markham, 1985).

A few studies tested explicitly feminist or politically-based theories. Chavez (1985) combined a social learning perspective with the neo-Marxist view that male dominated society perpetuates and reinforces gender *in*equality in young people through the depiction of male dominance in daily newspaper comic strips. Newkirk (1977) tested a conflict theory-based hypothesis and found that publishers of traditional women's magazines selectively incorporated feminist views into their power structure, keeping magazine content changes gradual and to a minimum, thereby maintaining their original power structure.

Blum's (1982) case study of a television adaptation of The Women's Room concluded that network executives changed the novel's feminist themes to the liberal concepts of freedom of choice within structured limits.

In an essay on feminist attacks on the use of language by journalists and others, Ward (1975) noted

feminist theories which state "that language has the power to hold the mind in captivity, predetermining through its lexicon and its structure, certain key social and cultural outlooks." (p. 705)

Quasi-theoretical studies

A number of studies were based on quasi-theoretical notions of sex roles. These generally concluded that women were tied to or associated with traditional roles in general news and crime stories (Foreit, et al., 1980; Smith & Maitre, 1975), sports coverage (Reid & Soley, 1979) and advice columns (Smith & Levin, 1974). Quasi-theoretical role-based studies of comics (Palmer, 1979) and news photographs (Blackwood, 1983; Miller, 1975) yielded similar results.

Studies making passing reference to women's roles in television programs found stereotypical portrayals dominated children's programs (Busby, 1974), cartoons (Streicher, 1974), family shows (Long & Simon, 1974), prime time (Turow, 1974; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1977; Dominick, 1979) and programs on public television (Matelski, 1984).

Quasi-theoretical content studies of portrayal of women in the media based on feminism also dealt with roles. One such analysis of newspaper content (Morris,

1973) concluded that British and American newspapers witheld information about the emerging women's movement as a form of social control. Davis (1982) found newspaper coverage of women was sexist and stereotypical. Silver (1986), however, found feminist charges that the press ignored or trivialized women were not substantiated in coverage of male and female public officials when controlling for occupation and seniority of the officials.

Television studies based on a feminist perspective with quasi-theoretical underpinnings contained findings that depictions were extremely sexist (McNeill, 1975) to somewhat sexist but gradually improving (Seggar, 1975; 1977; Seggar et al., 1981; Seggar & Wheeler, 1973). Stocking, Sapolsky and Zillman (1977) found male domination of women was manifested in prime time humor, while other studies detected subjugation of women in magazine (Poe, 1976) and television advertisements (Marecek, et al., 1978; Venkatesan & Losco, 1975; Riffe, Goldson, Saxton & Yu, 1989).

Atheoretical studies

Studies with no theoretical perspective looked simply at gender differences in media portrayals (Singleton & Cook, 1982; Downing, 1974; Lemon, 1977; Benze & Declerq, 1985; Knill et al., 1981). The general conclusions of

these studies were that there were differences in portrayal of males and females, but attributed this to neither traditional nor progressive influences.

Studies Portrayal of Persons with Mental Disabilities

Studies of media portrayal of those with mental disabilities have tended to emphasize deviance and the stigma associated with these individuals.

Theoretically-based studies

Nunnally (1961, 1973) conducted a large scale cross media study of portrayal of mentally ill individuals from a deviance theory perspective. He found that what little information the media presented on the mentally ill was distorted by overemphasis on bizarre symptoms of mental disease, which occur infrequently (Scheff, 1963; 1984).

Steadman and Cocozza's (1978) results reflected Shoemaker's newsworthiness as deviance concept in their conclusion that selective news reporting appeared to have contributed to false perceptions of the criminally insane. Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorelli (1981) noted that those with mental disabilities, who had already been stigmatized as deviant, had added cultural images of unpredictibility, danger and sin attributed to them by television portrayals. Fruth and Padderud (1985) based

their study of daytime soap operas on the need to present less stigmatized images to alleviate discrimination against those who are mentally ill.

Quasi-theoretical studies

In a study with no explicit theoretical grounds, Wahl and Roth (1982) based their examination of television portrayals on the negative stereotyping of mentally ill individuals and on the need to recognize the rights of this minority group. In a study grounded in minority group principles but not theory, Bonnstetter (1986) noted changes in magazine coverage of mentally disabled persons between the 1950s and 1970s. She found that earlier coverage tended to be buried and used negative, stigmatizing terms. Stories from the 1970s were more positive, used more progressive language and received better news play.

Atheoretical studies

A number of studies (Cassata, Skill and Boadu, 1979; Gerbner, 1961; Taylor, 1957) were atheoretical and simply measured the frequency of appearances of mental illness in the media.

Studies of Portrayal of Persons with Physical Disabilities

Most of the content studies of media depiction of those with physical characteristics are without a formal theoretical basis. A majority of these come from rehabilitation literature. Like the studies reviewed of the other groups, some mention a theoretical idea. Others are atheoretical tallies or qualitative comments on media depiction of persons with disabilities.

The general trend of depiction of persons with physical disabilities was summed up by Gerbner, et al. (1981), who noted that on television, "Physically handicapped characters are few and tend to be older, less positively presented, and more likely to be victimized." (p. 902). In an interpretive essay, de Balcazar (de Balcazar, Bradford & Crawford, 1988) reflected Shoemaker's (1985) deviance as newsworthiness concept by noting, "The media portray people with disabilities in a negative and unrealistic way, preferring the sensational or pitiful to the everyday and human side of disability." (p. 34).

Theoretically based studies

In an analysis of television programming from a role theory perspective, Donaldson (1981) examined both visibility and the image portrayed by handicapped characters in 1979. Image categories were derived from

role models developed by Wolfensberger (1972) and Biklen and Bogdan (1976). Donaldson found the images portrayed were generally negative or stereotypically positive (e.g. valiant individuals who successfully overcame handicaps) "Absent were positive portrayals of handicapped persons in roles in which their disability is secondary." (p.414)

Leonard's (1978) examination of portrayals on television was based on Bogdan and Biklen's (1977) concept of handicapism (the rough equivalent of racism and sexism). She found that network television drama reflected a discriminatory view of persons with disabilities. In addition to finding low numbers of these invividuals portrayed on the screen, Leonard noted that persons with disabilities were more likely to be shown as excluded from desireable groups; two-thirds were depicted as being taken care of and three-fourths were shown as submissive. She found that in terms of physical and personality traits, persons with physical and mental disabilities were portrayed as uncultured, stupid, dependent, impatient and sloppy in dress.

Biklen (1987) based a qualitative assessment of newspaper coverage of disability issues such as the Baby Jane Doe and Elizabeth Bouvia cases on the handicapism concept. He concluded that press coverage of these issues was overridingly condescending and paternalistic.

Two recent empirical studies of newspaper coverage of persons with disabilities were based on handicapism, stereotyping and positive vs. negative portrayal. Yoshida, Wasilewski & Friedman (1990) found that the traditional topics of budget expenditures, housing and treatment in institutions were the most prevalent in five metropolitan newspapers representing geographic regions. Keller, et al. (1990) studied 12 newspapers at three different circulation levels and found that persons with disabilities were noted in feature stories rather than in hard news stories, and that these articles tended to present the negative impact of disability on people's lives.

A number of studies based on labeling perspectives looked at the language used to refer to individuals with disabilities (Boland, 1980; Boland Patterson, 1988; Kailes, 1985; Manus, 1975). Boland Patterson (1988) found that sensitivity to language regarding disability was not as well-developed as sensitivity to language referring to gender or race.

Liebert (1975) noted that positive and negative attitudes toward disability are related to observational learning (which includes watching television). Although this theory was used as a basis for an analysis of television and disability (Dillon, Byrd & Byrd, 1980;

Elliott & Byrd, 1982) their conclusion that use of the media (particularly video technology) can be effective in breaking down stereotypes was based on other effects research (Donaldson & Martinson, 1977; Sadlick & Penta, 1975) and not on their content analysis.

An historical-literary approach to disability and monstrosity was used in studies of reactions to persons with disabilities (Kent, 1987; Thurer, 1980; Park & Danston, 1981). Livneh (1980) outlined a number of psychological theories which could explain the tendencies to negatively label persons with disabilities in literature.

Zola's (1985) examination of disability as metaphor found disability tended to be associated with themes of pity, fear, menace and loathing as well as the "slightly more positive" images of innocence (the eternal child) and of wonderment at the special talents of "super crip" heroes (p. 5). Zola noted that media portrayals predominently showed persons with disabilities traditionally, as victims, patients and sufferers.

Quasi-theoretically based studies

Studies which noted but did not explicitly test stigma and deviance theory found stigmatized roles in literature (Kriegel, 1969; 1987; Zola, 1987), children's

comic books (Weinberg & Santana, 1978) and television (Elliott, 1983).

A number of quasi-theoretical qualitative pieces in the rehabilitation literature made passing reference to the ideas contained in minority group theory or the Minority/Civil Rights model. These noted inaccurate portrayal of persons with disabilities on television (Byrd, 1979; Longmore, 1987), and the mass media in general (Ruffner, 1987; Thompson, 1980).

Atheoretical studies

Studies which were not theoretically based include an early qualitative study of literature (Langworthy, 1930) which evaluated blind characters in fiction in terms of how accurate and how helpful these portrayals would be to blind persons trying to make it in a sighted society. A more recent albeit atheoretical analysis of literature (Byrd, Williamson & Byrd, 1986) counted disabled characters in literature and found an increase from 1550 to 1950. Other primarily quantitative studies found low numbers of persons with physical disabilities in feature films (Byrd, 1989; Byrd & Pipes, 1981) and television programs (Byrd, Byrd & Allen, 1977).

Summary of Media Content Studies

Media content studies of blacks, women and individuals with mental and physical disabilities have tended to approach the topic from either a social psychology perspective (deviance, labeling, role or sex role theory) or from a political viewpoint (minority group, civil rights perspective). There has also been a tendency to evaluate portrayal dicotomously (positive - negative, progressive-traditional, stereotypical-realistic). Studies of blacks and women have measured these concepts by evaluating descriptive language and depiction in news stories and photos; roles and prominence in television entertainment programs; and roles and relationship to others in television commercials and print advertising.

Many studies of blacks and other minority groups focused on the number of members of a particular group depicted. In these cases, invisibility was considered negative and visibility positive. In studies of women, the quality of the portrayal (or the quantity of women shown in certain roles) has been the major concern. This is not to say that studies of blacks and others have ignored the quality of portrayal. But invisibility has not been as great a concern for women.

Systematic studies of media content portrayal of persons with disabilities have not gone very far beyond the head-counting stage. Although many literary and anecdotal pieces have evaluated the content as either positive or negative, only a few quantitative studies of media depiction of persons with physical disabilities have included systematic evaluations of the depictions which were counted or have proceeded from a theoretical base.

Chapter III

Theoretical Structure, Hypotheses and Research Questions

Introduction

The first part of this chapter outlines the theoretical structure upon which the hypotheses and research questions are based. This is followed by a description of the seven hypotheses to be tested. The chapter concludes with outlines of two research questions which this study will seek to answer.

Theoretical Structure

Societal perceptions of persons with disabilities can be divided into two general types based upon society's willingness to accept participation of non-mainstream individuals in everyday life. The first group of perceptions is designated as traditional and is based on consideration of non-mainstream groups as deviants (Becker, 1963), or flawed or stigmatized individuals (Goffman, 1963; Stafford & Scott, 1987). The second group, called here progressive, views the non-mainstream individual as one who has the ability and the right to participate in all aspects of society (Stroman, 1982).[1]

The traditional perspective includes the medical and social pathology/economic models of perceptions of disability and what has been called the "supercrip" sub-model.[2] These consider persons with disabilities as dysfunctioning (or "overcoming" that dysfunction) in a medical and/or economic way. Because of an inability (real or perceived) to function in a physical, social and occupational environment designed by and for those without disabilities, those with disabilities are to be cared for (medically and/or economically) by society (Gliedman & Roth, 1980; Hahn, 1982), or looked upon in awe as "supercrips" when they perform workaday tasks "in spite of their disabilities" (Covington, 1989; Zola, 1985).

The progressive outlook consists of the minority civil rights and cultural pluralism perceptions of disability. These view the dysfunction as lying not within the individual with a disability but in society's inability or unwillingness to adapt its physical, social and occupational environments to accommodate all members of the population (Bogdan & Biklen, 1977).

The following hypotheses seek to determine whether newspaper reporters and the news stories they write can be best characterized as traditional or progressive.

Attitude-Related Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

Reporters will tend to hold progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities as measured by the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scale.

Both quantitative studies (Gieber, 1960; Garcia, 1967; Flegel & Chaffee, 1971; Johnstone, Slawski & Bowman, 1976) and qualitative reports (Epstein, 1973; Gans, 1979) have found that reporters tend to hold liberal attitudes. For the most part, the progressive perspectives toward disability are similar to other liberal attitudes on issues such as individual and civil rights.

Studies of other groups using the ATDP have found that professionals tend to score higher (more positively) than non-professionals groups (Yuker & Block, 1986). Additionally, high ATDP scores have been found to correlate positively with characteristics thought to be held by reporters and editors, eg. positive self concept, ego-strength and lack of prejudice. (Antonak & Livneh, 1988; Yuker & Block, 1986)

Hypothesis Two

Reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities will be more progressive when they have had a) more contact with such individuals; or b) that contact has been in a social or professional context; or c) that contact has been positive.

Allport (1958) concluded that "equal-status contact" between individuals from different groups tends to create more favorable attitudes when the contact is in pursuit of certain goals (such as co-workers in a newsroom).

Yuker, Block and Younng (1970) reported that attitudes of persons who have had close personal and social contacts with persons with disabilities score higher on the ATDP. They postulated that contact in employment settings correlates with higher ATDP scores because this type of interaction provides information about the capabilities and attributes of the individual with a disability. This contrasts with medical or family contact, which tends to focus on the limitations and inabilities of the individual.

Yuker (1988) noted that amount of contact with persons with disabilities and positive ATDP scores correlated positively 51 percent of the time in 318 comparisons. Ten percent of these studies yielded negative correlations and the other 39 percent resulted in nonsignificant correlations (p. 262). However, Yuker added that positive correlations between high ATDP scores and amount of contact increased when that contact involved working together toward a common goal or when the contact is between two persons of equal status (as would be the case with co-workers)

Hypothesis Three

Reporters who work in a newsroom which is physically accessible will tend to be more progressive in their attitudes toward persons with disabilities.

McCarthy (1988) and Stubbins and Albee (1984) cited the general inaccessibility of the workplace and reluctance to adapt job duties to different abilities as a reason for low employment of persons with disabilities. This would also influence working-relationship contacts with people with disabilities, and hence inhibit the growth of progressive attitudes.

Hypothesis Four

Reporters who work in a newsroom which is part of an organization with a less rigid structure will tend to be more progressive in their attitudes toward persons with disabilities.

Burns and Stalker (1961) characterized organizations as having mechanistic and organic structures. Mechanistic operations, which are most appropriate for stable conditions, include:

--specialization of tasks, broken down into distinct pieces with separate purposes for each task;

--coordination of these distinct tasks at each level in a rigidly rank-ordered hierarchy, which assures that each task is relevant to the specific part of the organization's overall task;

--importance attached to specific, local expertise rather than to general needs of the organization.

Organic forms are felt to be more appropriate to operations which deal with changing situations which cannot so easily be segmented and distributed. These organizations are characterized by:

--Non-rigid, less compartmentalized definitions of duties; tasks are adjusted and redefined to meet situations;

--Importance placed on general knowledge and experience as the individual works toward benefitting the total situation and goals rather than at a segmented level; and

--Communication is more lateral, consisting of networking among workers, information exchange and advice rather than orders from above.

Because a newsroom with a more organic structure has less rigidly compartmentalized job descriptions, it would be more amenable to making adjustments in job duties and descriptions which, in turn could result in better accommodation in order to introduce persons with disabilities into the organization.

Content-Related Hypotheses

Hypothesis Five

News stories generally will reflect traditional viewpoints toward persons with disabilities.

Although this may seem to contradict Hypothesis One's contention that reporters will hold progressive attitudes toward disability, it is based on what Mueller (1986) calls "situational variables [which] explain the discrepencies between attitude and overt behavior toward

an attitudinal object." (p. 65). Mueller cites factors such as social pressure and competing as causing individuals to act against their personal attitudinal preferences.

Journalism researchers have demonstrated that personal attitudes and values are often but a small component of the news decision-making process. Breed (1955) noted that reporters are socialized into accepting and conforming to newsroom policies and values. Others (Baily & Lichty, 1969; Dimmick, 1974; 1979; Ettema, 1978;) have shown that organizational, social, technical and professional values join with personal beliefs to influence the reporter's decision-making process.

As Shoemaker (1985) noted, deviance or differentness (of both events and individuals) is considered to be newsworthy. Since newsworthiness is highly regarded by newspapers and newsrooms (organizational), by readers (social), by journalism practitioners in general (professional), as well as by individual journalists (personal), an individual journalist's progressive attitude toward persons with disabilities may be superceded by the other influences in the news decision-making process. Thus the reporters may pursue the deviant (or sensational) aspect of a disability story rather than a more progressive approach.

Traditional viewpoints are hypothesized to be evident in three general areas: the roles persons with disabilities are portrayed in, the type of disability issues covered and the language used to refer to individuals with disabilities.

Although frequency of appearance or visibility in the media has been a common way of measuring the coverage and portrayal of non-mainstream groups over the past 30 years (e.g. Byrd, Byrd & Allen, 1977; Donaldson, 1981; Gist, 1932; Johnson, Sears & Maconohay, 1971; Leonard, 1978; Longmore, 1987), simply counting the number of stories dealing with disability would give only the roughest estimate of a newspaper's traditional or progressive portrayal. In some cases, identification of an individual as a member of a non-majority group has negative or traditional connotations. Studies of racial identification in crime stories are based on the concept that the media specified certain individuals (blacks) in connection with deviant acts (crime) when no racial identifications were made for non-blacks (Rudwick, 1962; Dulaney, 1965; Pritchard, 1985).

A similar case can be made for identification or at least emphasis of non-relevant information regarding a person with a disability who is associated with a crime (for example, a headline referring to a "One-Legged

Rapist"). This practice would be considered traditional because it calls attention to the individual's irrelevant differentness; whereas a person without a disability in the same situation would not be identified as able-bodied (e.g. "Two-Legged Rapist"). Therefore, other factors must be measured to adequately evaluate coverage of persons with disabilities.

The aspect of disability in the roles individuals with disabilities are portrayed in is an important element to be examined in terms of traditional -v- progressive portrayal.

Numerous content studies of African Americans (e.g. Hinton, Seggar, Northcott & Fontes, 1974; Roberts, 1975; O'Kelley & Bloomquist, 1977), and women (Goffman, 1979; Foreit, et al., 1980; Mamay & Simpson, 1982) have evaluated content in terms of whether or not the group in question is portrayed in stereotypical (traditional) roles.

Measurement of aspects of story emphasis was done by Martindale (1985) who utilized both deviance and minority-rights based categories in analyzing newspaper coverage of blacks. Bonnstetter (1987) used similar categories in evaluating magazine coverage of persons with mental disabilities.

Language used in a newspaper story and headlines can also be evaluated in terms of progressive or traditional viewpoints. Labeling theorists partially attribute the stigmatization of non-mainstream groups to society's coding the details of their behavior through the use of terms which negatively emphasize the differentness of individuals (Becker & Arnold, 1987). Terms such as polio "victim," "confined to a wheelchair" and "special" reinforce the stereotypical images of weakness, helplessness and separateness of persons with disabilities (Boland Patterson, 1988; Longmore & Piastro, 1988).

Limited analysis of language employed by media has been done in content studies of blacks (Bryant, 1985) and women (Ward, 1975). These researchers came to conclusions similar to that of Vash (1981) who noted that "Words have the power to shape images of the referenced objects and their choice is important in building or breaking down stereotypes." (p. 22), and Longmore and Piastro (1988) who stated that "All too frequently the terms used for people with disabilities perpetuate stereotypes and false ideas." (p.1).

Hypothesis Six

Presence of either formal or informal style guidelines regarding persons with disabilities will correlate with progressive viewpoints reflected in stories about disability.

Studies of media organizations have noted the influence of both formal and informal guidelines (Dimmick, 1974; Ettema, 1979; Johnstone, 1976)) and arriving at a group consensus.

Dimmick's (1974) "Uncertainty Theory" of news decision-making notes that news gatekeepers make their decisions of what to cover by accepting the organization's formal and informal policies of what is news and that they base their composition of news stories on organizational policy as well as news values such as timliness, proximity and unusualness.

Dimmick (1979) later cited formal and informal policies at the organization level as one of several layers of influence on decision-making for media organizations in general, as did Ettema (1979) in a study of television production and Johnstone (1976) in an examination of highly-bureaucratized newsrooms.

Hypothesis Seven

Presence of a person with a disability on the staff will correlate with progressive viewpoints reflected in stories about disability.

The presence of a co-worker with a disability on a news staff also should result in progressive disability coverage. Dimmick (1974) included peer group and co-worker influence as important factors in news decision-

making. The Kerner Commission (Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968) noted that media organizations needed the help of black journalists to comprehend and cover the black community adequately. "If the media are to report with understanding, wisdom, sympathy on the problems of the black man . . . they must employ, promote and listen to Negro journalists." (p. 386). A diverse news staff which includes journalists with disabilities could enhance the newspaper's overall disability coverage by using their own knowledge of the issues, roles and language and by passing that knowledge on to other reporters (Breisky, 1990; Dalton, 1989; Smith, 1991).

Therefore, it is hypothesized that style guidelines and peer influence which explicitly deal with persons with disabilities will result in more progressive coverage of such individuals.

Research Questions

Two research questions seek to explore the collective relationships among variables gathered from the reporter survey and the content analysis of their stories covering disability related topics.

Research Question One

What demographic factors contribute to progressive reporter attitudes toward persons with disabilities?

In their volume summarizing 25 years of work with the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons (ATDP) Scale, Yuker and Block (1986) presented normative data but recommended that other researchers develop their own norms. This research question is a start in developing such normative data on reporters' attitudes toward persons with physical disabilities.

Yuker and Block (1986) reported that ATDP scores have generally been higher (more progressive) when respondents are female, older and more educated (p. 20). Other demographic variables which can be correlated with ATDP scores are presence of journalism education and number of years on the job.

Research Question Two

What factors influence news stories written about disability to be progressive?

This question examines the relative importance of different factors on predicting whether stories written about disability will be progressive or traditional.

Studies (eg. Breed, 1955, Dimmick, 1974) have shown that while personal beliefs influence reporting behavior,

social and organizational factors weigh more heavily in influencing the decision-making process.

To answer this question, the effects of demographic factors such as age, sex and education can be compared with the influences of professional and newsroom factors. The relative influence of reporters' personal attitudes toward disability and contact experience with persons with disabilities can also be compared to each other controlling for the effects of the other factors.

Footnotes -- Chapter Three

[1]Use of the terms "traditional" and "progressive" is based on dictionary definitions of the words. "Traditional" (based on handed-down customs or beliefs) refers to the customary manner in which persons with disabilities have been thought of (as deviants or non-participants because of their physical characteristics). The concept of traditional news coverage is comprised of a number of customary practices of either ignoring individuals with disabilities, portraying them negatively or in legitimate but narrowly defined ways (such as the medical, social pathology and supercrip models). "Progressive" (moving forward or favoring reform) represents less restrictive concept of disability, a departure from the body-centered concept of disability into societal- and politically-based models (Guralnik, 1984).

[2]"Supercrip" is a term which has been used by both disability activist groups and disability scholars to refer to a role which is a variation of the medical model. George Covington describes supercrip as "... a character, usually struck down in the prime of life, who fights to overcome insurmountable odds to succeed as a meaningful member of society. Through strength of will, perserverance and hard work, the disabled individual achieves a 'normal life.' . . . Perhaps the most troubling aspect of the 'super crip' character is that the news media herald as 'super human' the achievement of a disabled person's life that would be considered normal, routine and completely unnewsworthy in the life of an able-bodied person. Too often, the news media treat a disabled individual who has attained success in his field or profession as though he were one of a kind. While this one-of-a-kind aspect might make for a better story angle, it perpetuates in the mind of the general public how rare it is for the disabled citizen to succeed." (Covington, 1988, p. 1.)

Chapter IV

Methods

Introduction

These hypotheses were tested by analyzing disability coverage in newspaper stories and by surveying the reporters who wrote those stories. This measurement of reporters' attitudes and media content based upon the progressive - traditional dichotomy consisted of three parts:

1) A coding instrument to evaluate newspaper content concerning persons with disabilities;

2) An objective, reliable and valid scale to measure media decision makers' attitudes toward persons with disabilities; and

3) Questionnaire items to measure reporters' contact with persons with disabilities, newsroom factors relevant to disability coverage and reporters attitudes toward persons with disabilities and reporters' demographic backgrounds.

Disability was defined as consisting of the physical characteristics of blindness (or visual impairment), deafness (or hearing impairment), mobility limitation

(conditions limitin ambulation or necessitating use of assistive devices such as wheelchairs, crutches, canes etc.) and conditions causing limited control of hands or speech. This definition did not include mental illness or retardation, substance dependency or Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome. While in many cases the situations and interests of these different groups are the same, inclusion of the the latter grouping was beyond the scope of this research.

Sixteen newspapers representing the prestige press and the highest circulation dailies in the United States (see list in Appendix A) were analyzed for three months.

The prestige newspapers were taken from lists compiled by Stempel (1961) and Merrill and Fisher (1982). These newspapers' coverage of issues is considered significant "because of both their influence on the public and their influence on other newspapers. These newspapers might be termed the opinion leaders of the newspaper industry. . . . Their performance is something of a gauge of the performance of the press as a whole because they represent the best in American journalism." (Stempel, 1961, p. 158)

The eleven prestige dailies were supplemented by five other newspapers from the top 10 circulation leaders (Editor and Publisher Yearbook, 1989). One of these, USA

Today, is distributed nationally; the other four are high circulation dailies distributed in the first and sixth largest metropolitan statistical areas. Because of their widespread distribution, it was felt that these newspapers are also influential in the newspaper industry.

The universe of reporters surveyed was derived from the bylines of disability stories analyzed.

Reporters who wrote articles on disability were surveyed because although editors play a big role in the news decision-making process, it is the reporter who makes contact with the story source and who makes most of the initial choices involving how a story will be covered and written (Dimmick, 1974).

A review of the measurement instruments used to gather the content and survey data follows.

Content Analysis

The content hypotheses, whether newspaper stories reflect traditional or progressive viewpoints in their portrayals of persons with disabilities were tested by analysis of newspaper stories. Only stories in which at least 50 percent of the paragraphs dealt with disability issues or persons with disabilities were included in the analysis. Only stories written by the newspapers' own reporters were analyzed. No syndicated or wire copy,

stories by stringers or freelancers, letters to the editor or unsigned editorials were analyzed. Hard news stories and features by the newspapers' own reporters were included.

Four variables indicative of media content's progressive or traditional tendencies were measured. These were roles persons with disabilities were shown in, the aspect of the issues covered in the story and language used to refer to individuals with disabilities in the stories themselves and in the headlines.

Roles of Persons With Disabilities

Roles of persons with disabilities were categorized in terms of five subgroupings of the traditional and progressive viewpoints (Gliedman & Roth, 1980; Hahn, 1982; 1985).

The traditional models view those with disabilities as malfunctioning in a medical or economic way. The source of disability-related limitations lies within the individual; society's role is to either cure or maintain the individual medically or economically. In extreme cases, the individual is considered to be deviant or less than human because of the disability.

In the medical model, the emphasis is on the individual's physical disability as an illness. The

individual is portrayed as dependent on health professionals for cures or maintenance. This also includes stories which focus on the physical aspects of an individual's disability. A story portrayal fitting this category could be about the medical ramifications of hearing loss or could cover the physical changes a high school athlete goes through after losing a leg.

The supercrip model is a subcategory of the medical model. Individuals in this role are also focused on because of the deviant nature of the physical characteristics of their disability compounded by the fact that they deviate from the traditional concept of "disabled person" by living normal lives "in spite of their disabilities." The individual with a disability is portrayed as deviant (either superhuman in the case of rock-climbing paraplegics and those pushing their wheelchairs across Canada or simply "special" in the case of a story about two teenage boys with cerebral palsy who live "regular" lives). This role reinforces the idea that persons with disabilities are deviant--that this person's accomplishments are amazing for someone who is less than complete. The emphasis on how unusual this is presents them in a deviant manner.

In the social pathology model, the person with a disability is portrayed as a disadvantaged client who

looks to the state or to society for economic support which is considered a gift rather than a right. The individual with a disability is portrayed as a passive recipient of government or private economic support. These portrayals often occur in coverage of telethons and stories about the impact of federal budget cuts on programs affecting persons with disabilities.

The progressive viewpoint places the major disabling aspect of a person's disability in society's inability to adapt its physical, social or occupational environment and its attitudes to accomodate those who are different.

The minority/civil rights model portrays people with disabilities as members of a minority group dealing with legitimate political grievances of persons with disabilities. The individual is more than simply a person with a disability, but is involved in disability rights political activities. Stories which cover actions demanding equitable bus service or anti-discrimination efforts by persons with disabilities fall under this model.

In the cultural pluralism model, a person with a disability is considered a multi-faceted individual, whose disability is just one aspect of many. No undue attention is paid to the disability. The individual is portrayed as are others without disabilities. These roles would be

found in stories about public figures with disabilities, such as Stevie Wonder, which emphasize aspects other than their disabilities, or a story about a mayoral candidate who happens to have an artificial leg.

To measure disability roles, each article was evaluated as being in one category. When one individual with a disability was the main focus of the story, the dominant aspect of the role was assigned. When there was no such individual, the predominant aspect of the roles of all of those with disabilities was coded.

One possible problem existed in the content analysis because some stories covered from the cultural pluralism viewpoint may not have identified individuals with disabilities as such. Except in cases of well-known persons with disabilities (e.g. Roy Campanella, Steven Hawking, Stevie Wonder), content analysis would not be sufficient to identify such stories as dealing with disability. Question 5 in the occupation-specific survey was designed to enlist the aid of the surveyed reporters in identifying such stories so they could be included in the content analysis. Although this identified few such stories (and was limited to those identified as such by responding reporters), the survey response and telephone contact with reporters (where necessary) attempted to include these stories in the study.

A more complex difficulty arose in cases where the motivation of the reporter or of the newsmaker for not mentioning the newsmaker's disability may be traditional rather than progressive. An historical example of this would be the press coverage of Franklin Roosevelt. Gallagher (1985) notes that the nation, the press and Roosevelt himself agreed to ignore the president's disability because "In a very real way a nation does not want a crippled man as its President; it does not wish to think of its leader as impaired." (p. 96).

While it is virtually unthinkable that any present-day public figure could divert attention away from his or her own disability as Roosevelt did, it is possible that non-public figures in the news could be covered without mention of a disability because a reporter held the attitude that a disability is something to be ashamed of.

Issues

The issues covered by the stories were categorized as either progressive or traditional as detailed in Appendix B (pp. 171-172). Issues were determined to be progressive or traditional based on how they intuitively fit the models used in determining roles. Specific issue topics were developed in a pilot study of newspaper content (Clogston, 1990). Traditional issues included medical,

government and private support for persons with disabilities, institutionalization, victimization, special education and employment. Progressive issues dealt with access, discrimination, consumer issues, independent living, mainstream education and general employment. Stories which did not deal with disability issues were coded as neither traditional nor progressive when they were personal accounts of an individual, focusing on his or her disability. Stories which dealt primarily with another issue but included an aspect of disability which was noted but not focused upon were also coded as neither progressive nor traditional.

One difficulty in determining whether coverage is traditional or progressive based on issues covered (and to a lesser extent roles) is that there is no way content analysis can evaluate the universe of news stories available to be covered on a particular day. A reporter does not necessarily ignore a progressive story to cover a traditional one. Therefore, this study is limited by the constraints of content analysis to evaluating what issues were covered and actually appeared in the newspaper.

Language

Longmore and Piastro (1988) list objectionable and preferable terms used to describe persons with

disabilities. They note that certain terms, such as "deaf and dumb", "confined to a wheelchair" and "cripple", are objectionable because they tend to apply stereotypical or traditional labels to persons with disabilities. Other terms (for example hearing and speech impaired, wheelchair user and person with a disability) are preferable or progressive because they do not categorize individuals as inferior, passive or helpless.

Using this and other language statements (Chestnut-Kobyra, 1987; Grein & Breisky, 1990; Michigan Department of Labor, 1988; 1989; National Easter Seal Society, 1989; Peters, 1984; The Research & Training Center on Independent Living, 1987) as guidelines (see also Appendix B, pp. 172-182) terms used to refer to persons with disabilities were counted and the percentage of traditional and progressive terms was computed.

The Headline Language variable was determined using the same criteria as the story language, except that only the headlines and sub-heads were evaluated.

Reliability for the content categories was assessed by pretesting a number of articles to determine intercoder reliability in assessing the aspects of disability covered and the language used. A total of 363 news stories were analyzed from the three-month sample of 16 newspapers (see details in Appendix B).

Attitude Scale

Of the major types of scales used to measure attitudes toward persons with disabilities, Likert-type rating scales have been the most widely used (Horne, 1980; Yuker, Block & Younng, 1970). This scaling technique quantifies respondents' responses to an object on a continuum ranging from "very positive" to "very negative."

The Attitude Toward Disabled Persons Scale (ATDP, Form O) was utilized to test the first hypothesis regarding reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities. Antonak and Livneh (1988) describe the ATDP as "the best known and most widely used of the scales purporting to measure attitudes toward disabled people in general" (p. 134). (A detailed rationale for use of the ATDP in this research is contained in Appendix C.)

Researchers have found that the three forms of the ATDP measure essentially the same thing (see reliability estimates in Appendix C). Form O (Appendix D) was used because its shorter length (20 items as opposed to 30 items in Forms A and B) better allowed it to be used as part of a longer survey instrument which contained other occupation-specific items.

The scale's authors note that too many items left blank can hurt the validity of the scores. They recommend that if more than three of the items are blank, that the

scores should not be considered valid. If three or fewer are omitted, the total score for the completed items should be used as this is the same as assigning a neutral value (zero) to those items (Yuker & Block, 1986, p. 6).

The Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scale provides a well-established instrument for measuring general attitudes toward persons with disabilities on a positive - negative continuum which coincides with the progressive - traditional dichotomy. The variable "attitudes toward persons with disabilities" was considered to be progressive when the scores are higher or more positive, traditional when corresponding to negative attitudes. The ATDP's tested reliability and validity and its extensive use in measuring the attitudes held by members of other groups and professions made it an appropriate instrument to measure whether reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities are progressive or traditional.

Occupation-Specific Questions

In order to test the hypotheses regarding the amount, type and quality of reporters' contact with persons with disabilities (Hypothesis Two) and the organizational and environmental factors affecting portrayal of and participation by such individuals (Hypotheses Three, Four, Six and Seven), a series of 16 additional survey questions was developed (Appendix E, pp.

202-204). These hypotheses deal with three aspects relevant to the reporters' contact with persons with disabilities: 1) Amount, type and quality of contact with these individuals; 2) The structure of the newspaper and 3) The physical accessibility of the newspaper's facilities to persons with disabilities.

Survey questions were designed to measure the type of contact (Question 2), the amount of contact (Question 3) and a positive-negative evaluation of that contact (Question 4). Question 10 also dealt with contact in an even more specific sense--whether a person with a disability has ever worked in the organization where the respondent is employed.

The next area dealt with aspects of the organization's coverage of persons with disabilities. Question 5 was designed to assist in identifying stories which do not obviously deal with disability. Reporters were asked to identify any stories they had written about persons with disabilities without identifying them as such, allowing these stories to be included in the content analysis. Question 6 was designed to ascertain whether the organization has a formal (written) or informal (unwritten) policy regarding style rules and language regarding persons with disabilities. Questions 7 and 8 asked about the existence of regular disability

coverage. Question 9 asked about the amount of structure present in the newsroom operations. Question 11 was designed to measure the extent to which newsrooms are accessible to individuals with disabilities. It should be noted that this was more a measurement of the respondents' perceptions of accessibility rather than a direct evaluation of each newsroom's physical layout. The results were expected to yield a rough approximation of the physical environment of the newspapers.

This part of the survey concluded with standard individual demographic items such as age, gender, level of education and job experience. This facilitated comparison of ATDP scores of reporters in various demographic categories with those of other groups whose attitudes have already been measured. It also provides baseline data for future research regarding reporters.

Following a pretest, the surveys were mailed to 257 reporters whose names were obtained from the bylines of stories included in the content analysis. 157 usable responses were obtained, a 61 percent response rate (details in Appendix E)[1].

Footnote -- Chapter Four

[1]The survey form and the accompanying letter were reviewed and given full approval by the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) on August 31, 1990 (IRB #90-328).

Chapter V

Findings

Introduction

The first part of this chapter discusses the characteristics of the data gathered from the survey of reporters and the content analysis of disability stories. The next section summarizes transformations performed on certain variables used to test the hypotheses and answer the research questions. The final two parts of this chapter go over the details of the results of the tests used to evaluate the hypotheses and research questions.

Characteristics of the Data

Information from the survey of reporters is presented first and includes information about their demographic characteristics, their attitudes toward persons with disabilities, their contact with those individuals and information about the reporters' news organizations. The content summary includes information on roles used in portraying persons with disabilities, the issues covered in disability stories and the language used to refer to individuals with physical disabilities.

Reporter Attitudes and Characteristics

Mail surveys were received from 61 percent (157 of 257) of the reporters who had written news stories about disability and whose bylines had appeared on the stories selected for the content analysis. The questionnaires included the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scale (ATDP) and questions about the reporters' individual contacts with persons with disabilities. The reporters were also asked for information about their news organizations and for minimal demographic information.

The 152 reporters who disclosed their age ranged from 21 to 70. The median age was 38. The mean age was 40.8.

Of the 155 respondents who gave their sex, 100 (or 65%) were male, 55 (35%) were female.[1]

All of the respondents graduated from high school. Twelve (8 percent) indicated they had attended college without earning a degree and 68 (44 percent) reported their highest level of education as a college degree. Twenty five (16 percent) of those surveyed indicated they had done some graduate work without earning a degree and 50 (32 percent) reported they had earned a graduate degree. Seventy-five percent of the respondents (117 of 156) reported having had some formal journalism training in school.

The number of years respondents indicated they had worked as reporters ranged from one to 50 (Table 1). The number of years reporters had worked at their current job ranged from one to 40 (Table 2).

Table 1

Number of Years Respondents Have Been Reporters

Number of Years	# Rptrs.	Pct.
1 to 5	19	12.2%
6 to 10	37	23.7%
11-15	40	25.6%
16-20	20	12.8%
21-30	23	14.7%
31 or more	17	10.9%
TOTAL	156	100%

Mean 15.8 Median 13.5

Table 2

Number of Years Respondents Have Worked for Current Employer

Number of Years	# Rptrs.	Pct.
1 to 2	21	13.5%
3 to 4	29	18.6%
5 to 10	48	30.8%
11-20	39	25.0%
21 or more	19	12.2%
TOTAL	156	100%

Mean 9.8 Median 7

Responses to the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scale (ATDP) Form O can range from zero to 120. The scores of the 146 reporters who completed usable ATDP forms ranged from 51 to 116 with a mean of 86.9. The mean ATDP score for females was more than ten points higher than scores for males (93.8 for females, 83.6 for males). Age and ATDP scores had a negative correlation (-.21) meaning that older respondents tended to have lower ATDP scores. The number of years respondents worked as a reporter correlated similarly (-.22) and years at present job had a similar though not as strong negative correlation (-.14) with attitude scores.

Many respondents indicated a variety of types of contact with persons with disabilities. Not surprisingly, 92 percent of these reporters who had written stories on disability topics reported having interviewed individuals with disabilities.[2] In the other type of professionally-oriented contact, 59 percent reported having experience with a boss or coworker with a disability.

In contact categories related to reporters' personal lives, 72 percent reported having had casual social contact with individuals with disabilities, 48 percent with a friend and 34 percent indicated that they had a family member with a physical disability.

Eighty-two percent reported having secondary contact such as through books, TV and films. Only five reporters (Three percent) said they themselves had a disability.

The amount of contact respondents reported having with persons with disabilities ranged from zero to 35 times in both the average month and the immediate past month (Table 3). However, two and a half times as many respondents said they had no contact in the past month as reported no contact in an average month.

Table 3

Amount of Contact Reporters Had with Persons with Disabilities

Contacts with Persons with Disabilities	Average Month No.	Pct.	Past Month No.	Pct.
None	16	10.4%	41	26.6%
One or Two	68	44.2%	46	29.9%
Three to six	46	29.3%	42	27.3%
More than six	24	15.6%	25	16.2%
TOTALS	154	100%	154	100%
	Mean	4.7	Mean	4.4

Four out of five reporters felt somewhat, quite or very comfortable during their experiences with persons with disabilities. Fewer than seven percent felt quite or very uncomfortable (Table 4).

Most respondents indicated a fairly high degree of organizational structure in their newsrooms (Table 5). More than 78 percent reported that their newsrooms were

Table 4

How Reporters Felt About Their Experiences with Persons with Disabilities

How They Felt	Percent
Very Uncomfortable	5%
Quite Uncomfortable	2%
A Little Uncomfortable	14%
Somewhat Comfortable	26%
Quite Comfortable	39%
Very Comfortable	24%
Total 155	100%

Table 5

Individual Reporters' Concepts of

Newspapers' Organizational Structure

Organization Structure	Cases	Percent
Very Highly Structured	37	25%
Somewhat Structured	59	40%
Slightly Structured	20	14%
Slightly Unstructured	5	3%
Somewhat Unstructured	19	13%
Very Unstructured	7	5%
Totals	147	100%

very highly, somewhat or slightly structured on a normal day. Slightly more than 20 percent indicated their newsrooms were slightly, somewhat or very unstructured.

Respondents from all 16 newspapers reported that a person with a disability worked on their news/editorial staff at the time or had within the past year.

All but 15 respondents worked in buildings which were accessible to persons with physical disabilities. Those 15 worked for two newspapers.

Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of the respondents noted the presence of style guidelines dealing with appropriate language regarding individuals with disabilities. More than a third of the 156 who responded

to this question reported having only written guidelines, while more than 20 percent reported getting style directions regarding disability both in writing and informally (Table 6).

Table 6

Presence of Style Guidelines Dealing with Appropriate Language Regarding Persons with Disabilities.

Guidelines	Cases	Percent
No Guidelines	45	28.8%
Informal Only	24	15.4%
Written Only	55	35.3%
Both Types	32	20.5%
TOTAL	156	100%

Story Characteristics

The content analysis examined 363 stories which appeared in 16 prestige and high circulation newspapers during the first three months of 1990.[3] To be eligible for inclusion, at least 50 percent of the stories' paragraphs had to deal with disability topics or persons with physical disabilities. The stories were coded as traditional or progressive in four ways: the Roles disabled persons were portrayed in, disability issues

covered, language used in the stories which refer to persons with disabilities and headline language.

The 363 stories contained bylines from 258 reporters. Thirty-five stories had no bylines.[4] More than three-quarters of the reporters wrote only one story in the sample (202 or 78.3%).[5]

Stories were coded as portraying persons with disabilities in one of five roles--three traditional (medical, supercrip and social pathology) and two progressive (minority/civil rights and cultural pluralism).

Slightly over half of the stories portrayed those with disabilities in traditional roles (Table 7), with medical roles predominating in 35 percent of the stories. Progressive roles predominated in more than 43 percent of the stories; cultural pluralism portrayals accounted for 36 percent of the stories. Persons with disabilities were not present in five percent of the stories.

Table 7

Roles of Individuals with Disabilities in News Stories

Role	Number	Percent
Individuals Not Present in Story	**19**	**5.2%**
Traditional Roles	**187**	**51.5%**
Medical model	127	35.0%
Supercrip model	20	5.5%
Social Pathology	40	11.0%
Progressive Roles	**157**	**43.3%**
Minority Civil Rights	26	7.2%
Cultural Pluralism	131	36.1%
Total	**363**	**100%**

The stories covered 16 different issue topics related to disability. Stories were also categorized as covering personality profiles which did not deal with issues (Personal--no issue) and as covering non-disability issues but included an individual with a disability in the story (Table 8). Less than 30 percent of the stories covered progressive issues and about 40 percent covered traditional issues.

Table 8

Disability Issues Covered in News Stories

Issue	No. Stories	Percent
Personal-No issue[a]	29	8.0%
Non-disability Issue[b]	83	22.9%
Traditional Issues	147	40.5%
Medical	50	13.7%
Government Support	28	7.7%
Private Support	25	6.9%
Victimization	32	8.8%
Other Traditional issues[c]	10	3.3%
Progressive Issues	187	51.5%
Access	37	10.2%
Consumer Issues	30	8.3%
Americans with Disabilities Act	13	3.6%
Discrimination	7	1.9%
Language & Portrayal	9	2.5%
Other Progressive issues[d]	8	2.2%
Total	363	100%

[a] Personal-no issue stories are generally feature stories which tell a personal story about a person with a disability. No societal issues beyond the immediate story are included.

[b] Stories covering issues unrelated to disability but including an individual with a disability

[c] Institutionalization, special education, special employment, right to die.

[d] Independent living, mainstream education, general employment.

Eighty-five percent of the stories contained language referring to individuals with physical disabilities (Table 9). Fifty-five stories contained no references. Of the 308 stories which did contain such language, more than 40 percent used Progressive terms all of the time and only about 19 percent of the stories used 100 percent Traditional language.

Table 9

Percent of Traditional Language Used to Refer to Persons with Disabilities

	All Stories		Stories with Disability Language	
100% Traditional Lang.	59	16.3%	59	19.2%
51% - 99% Traditional Lang.	56	15.4%	56	18.2%
1% - 50% Traditional Lang.	66	28.2%	66	21.4%
0% Traditional Language	127	35.0%	127	41.2%
No Disablilty references	55	15.1%	TOTAL 308	100%
TOTAL	363	100%		

Only 35 percent of the stories had headlines which contained language referring to persons with disabilities (Table 10). These were fairly evenly divided between those with all Traditional and all Progressive headline references; seven stories containing an even balance of traditional and progressive headline references to individuals with disabilities.

Table 10

Percent of Traditional Headline Language Used to Refer to Persons with Disabilities

	All Stories		Stories with Disability Headline Language	
100% Traditional Language	63	17.4%	63	48.8%
50% Traditional Language	7	1.9%	7	5.4%
0% Traditional Language	59	16.2%	59	45.7%
No Disablilty references	234	64.5%	TOTAL 129	100%
TOTAL	363	100%		

Variable Transformations

The second part of this chapter reviews the variables used in testing the hypotheses and answering the research questions. A number of these variables were transformed in order to use them in statistical analysis. All of the variables used in testing the hypotheses and answering the research question are reviewed with changes explained where applicable. The variables from the survey are reviewed first, followed by those from the content analysis.

Reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities were measured using the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons (ATDP) Scale, mailed as part of a self-administered mail questionnaire sent to 257 reporters whose bylines appeared in disability stories in selected newspapers. One-hundred fifty-seven reporters responded and 148 of the ATDP forms were usable for analysis. Higher scores are considered progressive, lower scores traditional.

Of the demographic variables used in the analysis, reporter *Age* in years was entered as it was reported. The number of *years at job* variable was made up of actual responses in years to the question "How long have you worked for your present employer?".[6] *Education* level was measured on a five-point scale with values ranging from 1 (completed high school) to 5 (have earned advanced

degree). *Sex* was coded as 1 (male) and 0 (female). *Journalism Education* was coded similarly, as 1 (had some formal journalism training in school) and 0 (had no formal journalism training).

Five contact variables were taken from the survey. Three were types of contact (family, friend and work), one measured the amount of contact and the fifth measured how the reporters felt about that contact.

The *Family Contact* variable combined responses to the second and third items from question two of the survey: "A member of my immediate family has a physical disability" and "Another relative has a physical disability" (Appendix E, p. 202). Respondents who checked one or both of these were coded as 1 (presence of family contact); those who checked neither were coded 0 (no presence of family contact).[7]

Work Contact also consisted of combined responses to two categories in question 2, "I have worked with a person with a physical disability" and "I have had a boss or supervisor with a physical disability." Respondents who checked one or both of these were coded as 1 (presence of work contact); those who checked neither were coded 0 (no presence of work contact).

For the *Friend Contact* variable, responses to "A friend of mine has a physical disability" (also in

question 2 of the survey) were coded as 1 (presence of friend contact) and 0 (no presence of friend contact).

Amount of Contact was taken from responses to the second part of survey question 3, "How many times in an average month have you talked, worked or in some other way had personal contact with persons with physical disabilities?". Because of a high degree of skewness, the variable was transformed logarithmically to make the distribution more normal.[8]

The *Felt about Contact* variable's values were made up of responses to a six-point scale asking reporters how comfortable they felt during their experiences with disabled persons (question 4, Appendix E, p. 202). The respondents' actual scores, which ranged from 1 (felt very uncomfortable) to 6 (felt very comfortable) were used.

The *Organizational Structure* variable was based on reporters' responses to question 9 on the survey (Appendix E, p. 204) which asked them to evaluate the amount of structure in their news organization on a six-point scale which ranged from Very Highly Structured to Very Unstructured. To get a more consistent estimate of the newspapers' organizational level, these individual scores were averaged for each newspaper and reporters were assigned a second value based on the news organizations' average on the same six-point scale.[9] When these averages

were figured, all newsrooms fit into the three "structured" categories with 66 percent of the reporters in eight "Somewhat Structured" newsrooms (see Table 11).

Table 11

Newspapers' Organizational Structure

	Cases	Percent	Newsrooms
LEVEL 1			
Very Highly Structured	25	16%	4
LEVEL 2			
Somewhat Structured	104	66%	8
LEVEL 3			
Slightly Structured	28	18%	4
TOTALS	157	100%	16

The *Style Guidelines* variable was taken from question 6 of the survey. It combined responses to the question asking whether there were formal (written) and informal style guidelines in their newsroom which referred to individuals with disabilities.[10] A value of one indicates the presence of one or both of the types of style guidelines; a value of zero indicates the absence of style guidelines regarding disability.

Four variables from the content analysis were used to test the hypotheses. *Roles* of individuals with disabilities were determined using item 6 of the coding protocol (Appendix B, pp. 170-171). This variable was

coded as 0 for traditional (Medical, Supercrip and Social Pathology) and 1 for progressive (Minority/Civil Rights and Cultural Pluralism). The 19 stories (5.2 percent) in which individuals with disabilities were not present were not included in the hypothesis testing for roles.

Issues, from items 7 and 8 of the coding form (Appendix B, pp. 171-172) were coded in the same way, 1 for progressive and 0 for traditional. The 29 stories (8.0 percent) which were coded as "Personal--No Issue" and the 83 (22.9 percent) coded as "Non Disability Issue" were not included in the hypothesis testing for issues.

The *Story Language* and *Headline Language* variables were constructed the same way. Story language was taken from item 12 of the coding protocol (Appendix B, pp. 172-174), Headline language from item 16. Both figured the percentage of traditional language referring to individuals with disabilities in each story. These figures were subtracted from 100 to get the percent of Progressive language. Stories were coded as progressive (1) if progressive terms were used 51 percent of the time or more. Traditional (0) stories were those which used progressive language 0 to 50 percent of the time. The 55 stories (15.1 percent) which had no story language references to persons with disabilities, and the 234 (64.5

percent) which had no headline references were not included in the hypothesis testing for language.

The *Cumulative Content* variable was constructed by adding traditional, progressive and neutral values for *Issues*, *Roles* and *Language*. Values on this seven-point scale range from zero (traditional in all three components) to 6 (progressive in all three components).[11] (Table 12)

Table 12

Distribution of Stories by Cumulative Content

(0) All Traditional Elements	54	14.9%
(1) Two Traditional, One Neutral	31	8.5%
(2) Two Traditional, One Progressive or One Traditional, Two Neutral	81	22.3%
Total 0-2 Primarily Traditional	**166**	**45.7%**
(3) Neutral {T-P-N}	33	9.1%
(4) Two Progressive, One Traditional or One Progressive, Two Neutral	70	19.3%
(5) Two Progressive, One Neutral	42	11.6%
(6) All Progressive	52	14.3%
Total 4-6 Primarily Progressive	**164**	**45.2%**
TOTAL	**363**	**100%**

Testing the Hypotheses

The next section of this chapter is devoted to an examination of data permitting assessments of six of the seven hypotheses. Each hypothesis will be restated followed by a review of how the variables used to test that hypothesis were manipulated. This will be followed by the results and whether or not the hypothesis was supported.

Attitude Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

Reporters will tend to hold progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities as measured by the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons (ATDP) Scale.

This hypothesis was based on studies which found reporters tend to hold liberal attitudes (eg. Epstein, 1973; Flegel & Chaffee, 1971; Gans, 1979; Gieber, 1960) and on research with the ATDP Scale which found that professionals score higher than do non-professionals (Yuker & Block, 1986).

The mean of the reporters' ATDP scores was compared to the scale's midpoint and to scores of other professionals.

Reporters who responded to the survey scored high (progressive) on Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scale

both in terms of the instrument and in comparison to other professional groups. Scores on the ATDP Scale (Form O) can range from zero to 120, with the midpoint being 60. The mean score of the 148 reporters who completed valid responses to the ATDP was 87 with a standard deviation of 13.7. The scores ranged from 51 to 116 and only four respondents scored 60 or lower.

The reporters also scored high when compared with scores of 13 other groups of professionals (Yuker & Block, 1986) tested between 1968 and 1983 (Table 13). Only Kelly's (1982) testing of college coordinators of disabled students and Dillon's (1979) study of teachers yielded higher ATDP scores. Yuker and Block (1986) noted that these professionals generally had higher ATDP scores than non-professionals, which places the reporters' attitudes more progressive than an already progressive group.

Hypothesis 1 is therefore supported as reporters scored nearly two standard deviations above the midpoint score and scored consistently higher than other professional groups.

Table 13

Reporters Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scores

Compared with Those of Other Professionals

Group	Year	Cases	Mean
Pediatricians	1980	96	72.1
High School Principals	1978	61	77.6
School Teachers	1978	197	77.7
Elementary Teachers	1968	434	78.6
Faculty Members	1983	20	79.0
Vocational Teachers	1980	288	79.4
Rehabilitation Professionals	1976	45	79.8
Teachers	1983	238	82.1
Rehabilitation Administrators	1973	148	82.5
Higher Education Faculty	1979	324	83.0
Elementary Special Ed Teachers	1968	30	83.1
REPORTERS	1990	148	87.0
College Coordinators of Disabled Students	1982	329	96.6
Teachers	1977	236	98.4

Adapted from Harold E. Yuker & J.R. Block, Research With the Attitude Toward Disabled Persons Scales (ATDP), 1960-1985.

Hypothesis Two

Reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities will vary according to type of contact, amount of contact and evaluation of contact.

The type of contact part of this hypothesis sought to confirm Allport's (1958) conclusion that "equal status contact" in pursuit of certain goals between individuals from different groups results in favorable attitudes, and Yuker, Block and Younng's (1970) statement that both social and co-worker contacts with individuals with disabilities correlate with more positive attitudes toward disability while family contact would correlate with more negative attitudes.

The amount and evaluation aspects of contact are based on Yuker and Hurley's (1987) statement that amount and quality of contact "is a major influence on attitudes and may account for a higher percentage of the variance than any other variable." (pp. 152-153)

The five contact variables and the ATDP scores were correlated with each other to determine the strength of their relationships and partial correlations were run on each variable to control for the effects of the others (Table 14).

How the reporters felt about their contact with persons with disabilities and the amount of contact they had with those individuals had moderate positive

association with their attitudes toward disability (.26 and .20 respectively). In other words, reporters who

Table 14

Correlations and Partial Correlations of Contact Variables With Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scale

Independent Variables	Correlation With ATDP*	Partial Correlation With ATDP**
WORK CONTACT	.09	.03
FRIEND CONTACT	-.02	-.13
FAMILY CONTACT	.04	-.02
FELT ABOUT CONTACT	.27	.26
AMOUNT OF CONTACT	.20	.18

*The degree of linear relationship between the two variables.

**The degree of linear relationship between the two variables controlling for effects of the other variables. Partial correlation squared expresses the unique independent variable as a proportion of R-squared. (Tabachnic & Fidell, 1983, p. 107).

had more experience with persons with disabilities and who had more positive experiences with them had more progressive attitudes toward them.

Work contact was correlated positively with attitudes but to a much lesser degree (r=.09). Family contact was slightly positively correlated (r=.04) and Friend contact slightly negatively (r=-.02).

Partialling out the impact of the other variables had little effect on the correlation between how the reporters felt about the contact and their attitudes toward disabled persons. Partialling had a slight effect on the connection between attitudes and amount of contact (from r=.20 to r=.18). But removing the influence of the other variables caused the correlations between attitudes and contact with disabled coworkers, family and friends to become less positive or more negative. (Work contact from .09 to .035; family contact from .04 to -.02; and friend contact from -.02 to -.12). This means that reporters who had contact with coworkers with disabilities were less likely to have positive attitudes toward persons with disabilities when the effects of family and friend contact, the amount of contact and their evaluation of that contact was not taken into account, and that having had family contact or friend contact meant that their attitudes were more negative.[12]

Hypothesis Two is supported for two of the three predictions. Reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities do correlate positively with amount of contact and how reporters felt about that contact.

However, correlation is trivial or negative in the type of contact categories. Friend contact correlates negatively with attitudes; work contact has a slight

Hypothesis Three

Reporters who work in a newsroom which is physically accessible will tend to be more Progressive in their attitudes toward persons with disabilities.

This hypothesis was based on contentions (McCarthy, 1988; Stubbins & Albee, 1984) that inaccessible workplaces were a reason for low employment of persons with disabilities. It was felt that accessible newsrooms would enhance the opportunities for reporters to work with persons with disabilities and could foster progressive attitudes.

Newsroom accessibility was attempted to be evaluated by asking reporters to select applicable accommodations that might have been made to their newsrooms. Completed responses varied considerably within newspapers and arriving at a consensus-based or even majority-based evaluation of accessibility for each newsroom was difficult. When the survey-based data was standardized within the newsrooms, there was virtually no variance in the accessibility variable.[13]

Because of the lack of reliability and variance in the accessibility variable this hypothesis was not tested.

Hypothesis Four

Reporters who work in a newsroom with an informal organizational structure will have progressive attitudes.

This was also predicated on the idea that organizational structures which were accommodating to individuals with disabilities would make it more likely that reporters would have had contact with a disabled coworker. McCarthy (1988) and Stubbins and Albee (1984) cited the reluctance and/or inability to adapt job duties to different abilities as a reason for a dearth of employed persons with disabilities. Oftentimes, adjustments in job responsibilities are needed to facilitate employment of a person with a disability. A newsroom with rigidly compartmentalized job descriptions would therefore be less likely to have persons with disabilities on staff and reporters working there would be unlikely to work with someone with a disability.

There was no clear pattern of either increase or decrease in ATDP scores means when computed against the individual organizational evaluations (Table 15). The correlation coefficient of .054 represented only the slightest of positive correlations.

When reporters were assigned the newsroom average organizational scores (Table 16), ATDP scores increased slightly as the organization structure decreased, but the

correlation coefficient was only marginally higher than for the individual evaluations (.06).

Table 15

ATDP Scores by Level of Individual Reporters' Concept of Newspapers' Organizational Structure

	Number of Cases	ATDP Mean
LEVEL 1 Very Highly Structured	36	87.6389
LEVEL 2 Somewhat Structured	57	85.3860
LEVEL 3 Slightly Structured	20	89.8000
LEVEL 4 Slightly Unstructured	4	97.5000
LEVEL 5 Somewhat Unstructured	15	89.1333
LEVEL 6 Very Unstructured	7	85.4286
Total Cases	139	87.3597

Correlation coefficient .05 (139 cases)

Table 16

ATDP Scores by Level of Newspapers' Organizational Structure

	Number of Cases	ATDP Mean	Number of Newsrooms
LEVEL 1 Very Highly Structured	22	84.5455	4
LEVEL 2 Somewhat Structured	102	87.3627	8
LEVEL 3 Slightly Structured	24	87.6667	4
Total Cases	148	86.9932	16

Correlation coefficient for ATDP and organization structure: .06 (148 cases)

Because there was such a tenuous connection between reporters' progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities and the amount of structure in the reporters' newsroom organization, Hypothesis four is not supported.

Content Hypotheses

Hypothesis Five

News stories will generally reflect traditional viewpoints toward persons with disabilities.

This hypothesis is based on the concept that reporters' progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities will be offset by organizational, professional and social forces when it comes time to write about disability. Breed's (1955) contention that newsroom socialization is a big factor influencing the news decision-making process is joined by others (e.g. Dimmick, 1974; Ettema, 1978) who note the impact of organizational and professional values. The equation of newsworthiness with deviance (Shoemaker, 1985) would mean that reporters with progressive attitudes would be pulled in the opposite direction toward the deviant or sensational or traditional approach when writing about disability.

The number of traditional to progressive stories was compared in the three content categories where reporters have considerable influence (Roles, Issues and Story Language) and in the category where they don't (Headline Language).[14]

In the Roles content category, the stories with Traditional roles outnumber those with Progressive roles

by about nine percent (Table 17). In the Issues category, stories covering traditional disability issues outnumber those covering progressive disability issues by more than 17 percent[15] (Table 18).

Table 17

Roles of Persons with Disabilities

	Stories	Percent
Traditional	187	54.4%
Progressive	157	45.6%
Totals	344	100%

Table 18

Disability Issues Covered

	Stories	Percent
Traditional	147	58.6%
Progressive	104	41.4%
Totals	251	100%

The two language variables exhibit opposite tendencies. Of the stories with language referring to persons with disabilities, 62.7 percent were Progressive and 37.3 percent were Traditional (Table 19). However stories with Traditional headlines outnumbered those with Progressive headlines 54.3 to 45.7 percent (Table 20).

Table 19

Story Language

	Stories	Percent
Traditional*	115	37.3%
Progressive **	193	62.7
Totals	308	100%

Table 20

Headline Language

	Stories	Percent
Traditional*	70	54.3%
Progressive**	59	45.7%
Totals	129	100%

---

* 0 to 50 percent Progressive language

** 51 to 100 percent Progressive language

When the three story content variables are combined into a cumulative content scale (see footnote 11, p. 128), progressive stories outnumber traditional stories by five percent (Table 21).

Table 21

Cumulative Story Content

	Stories	Percent	Stories	Percent
Traditional*	85	23.4%	85	47.5%
Progressive**	94	25.9%	94	52.5%
Mixture***	184	50.7%		
Totals	363	100%	179	100%

*All three content elements traditional or two traditional and one neutral

**All three content elements progressive or two progressive and one neutral.

***Stories with one of the following combinations of content elements: two traditional and one progressive; one traditional and two neutral; one traditional, one neutral and one progressive; two neutral and one progressive; or two progressive and one traditional.

Hypothesis Five is only partially supported. In two of the three content categories directly affected by reporters (issues and roles), the hypothesis that reporters will write traditional stories is supported. In the third category, story language referring to

individuals with disabilities, it is not supported as traditional stories outnumber progressive stories to a moderate extent. In the category that would be more illustrative of the news organization than of the reporter, headline language conforms to the concept that newspaper content will tend to be traditional. When the three story variables are combined to create the cumulative content variable, progressive stories outnumber traditional stories by a margin of five percent.

Hypothesis Six

Presence of either formal or informal style guidelines regarding persons with disabilities will correlate with progressive viewpoints reflected in stories about disability.

This hypothesis is based on studies which show that both formal and informal guidelines influence news decision-making (Dimmick, 1974; Ettema, 1979; Johnstone, 1976). It is hypothesized that reporters working in newsrooms which have some sort of organizational policy regarding coverage of individuals with disabilities would write more progressive stories.

The style variable (presence or absence of style guidelines) was crosstabulated with the four content variables and the percentage of progressive stories written where style guidelines were present was compared with those written where no style guidelines were present.

Style guidelines made a slight difference in whether disability roles were progressive or traditional (Table 22) as 47.1 percent of the stories written at newspapers style guidelines portrayed people with disabilities in progressive roles. Slightly less than 43 percent of stories written at newspapers with no style guidelines portrayed people with disabilities in progressive roles.

Table 22

Roles of Persons with Disabilities by Presence or Absence of Style Guidelines Dealing with Disability.

	TRADITIONAL ROLES	PROGRESSIVE ROLES	
NO STYLE GUIDELINES	67 57.3%	50 42.7%	117 100%
STYLE GUIDELINES	120 52.9%	107 47.1%	227 100%
	187	157	344

Cramer's V (Phi) Statistic .04186

But the presence of style guidelines appeared to have the opposite effect on disability issues covered (Table 23). The percentage of progressive stories written at newspapers with no style guidelines was higher than at newspapers with such guidelines by 49 to 36.8 percent.

Table 23

Disability Issues Covered by Presence of Style Guidelines Dealing with Disability.

	TRADITIONAL ISSUES	PROGRESSIVE ISSUES	
NO STYLE GUIDELINES	49 51.0%	47 49.0%	96 100%
STYLE GUIDELINES	98 63.2%	57 36.8%	155 100%
	147	104	251

Cramer's V (Phi) Statistic .12020

In the story language category, where style guidelines might be expected to have a considerable impact, (Table 24), about five percent more stories were progressive when written by reporters at papers with style guidelines than those written where there were no guidelines (64.5 percent with guidelines, 59.3 percent without guidelines).

Table 24

Story Language Referring to Persons with Disabilities by Presence of Style Guidelines Dealing with Disability.

	TRADITIONAL LANGUAGE	PROGRESSIVE LANGUAGE	
NO STYLE GUIDELINES	44 40.7%	64 59.3%	108 100%
STYLE GUIDELINES	71 35.5%	129 64.5%	200 100%
	115	193	308

Cramer's V (Phi) Statistic .05170

The biggest difference was in the Headline Language variable, where 51.3 percent of stories were progressive where guidelines were present compared to 37.7 percent where there were no guidelines (Table 25).

Table 25

Headline Language Referring to Persons With Disabilities by Presence of Style Guidelines Dealing with Disability.

	TRADITIONAL HEADLINE LANGUAGE	PROGRESSIVE HEADLINE LANGUAGE	
NO STYLE GUIDELINES	33 62.3%	20 37.7%	53 100%
STYLE GUIDELINES	37 48.7%	39 51.3%	76 100%
	70	59	129

Cramer's V (Phi) Statistic .13411

Hypothesis Six was supported to a slight extent for roles and story language and to a greater extent for headline language. But in the disability issue category this hypothesis was not supported as the percentage of Progressive stories was greater when there were no guidelines regarding disability coverage present.

Hypothesis Seven

Presence of a person with a disability on the staff will correlate with progressive viewpoints reflected in stories about disability.

This hypothesis had a similar theoretical background as that for Hypothesis Six, except that this one was designed to measure the effect of social and peer influence (e.g. Breed, 1955) on reporting about disability, with disabled individuals in the role of peer.

Originally, the presence of a person with a disability on the staff was to be measured by question 10 on the survey ("To the best of your knowledge, are there now, or have there been in the past year, any persons with physical disabilities working as news/editorial employees in your operation?"--Appendix E, p. 191). But because of a lack of variance in the responses,[16] it was determined that the work contact variable would be an acceptable proxy representing whether or not reporters worked with an individual with a disability.

The work contact variable (presence or absence of contact with a disabled boss or co-worker) was cross-tabulated with the three content variables upon which reporter has an impact (roles, issues and story language). The percentage of progressive stories where contact was present was compared with those written in situations

where the reporter didn't contact with a co-worker with a disability.

In the roles content variable, nearly 53 percent of stories written by reporters who had contact were progressive compared with 43 percent progressive stories when there was no reported contact (Table 26).

Table 26

Roles of Persons with Disabilities by Contact with Boss or Coworker with a Disability

	TRADITIONAL ROLES	PROGRESSIVE ROLES	
No Reported Contact With Boss/Coworker With Disability	45 57.0%	34 43.0%	79 100%
Reported Contact With Boss/Coworker With Disability	53 47.3%	59 52.7%	112 100%
	98	93	191

Cramer's V (Phi) Statistic .09499

The percentage of stories with progressive issues was nearly 15 percent higher when there was contact with a co-worker or boss with a disability (43.7 percent progressive with contact, 28.6 percent progressive without) (Table 27).

Table 27

Disability Issues Covered by Contact with Boss or Coworker with a Disability

	TRADITIONAL ISSUES	PROGRESSIVE ISSUES	
No Reported Contact With Boss/Coworker With Disability	40 71.4%	16 28.6%	56 100%
Reported Contact With Boss/Coworker With Disability	40 56.3%	31 43.7%	71 100%
	80	47	127

Cramer's V (Phi) Statistic .15518

But work contact with a person with a disability seemed to have the opposite effect on language used to describe individuals with disabilities. Seventy-five percent of the stories written by reporters without work contact used progressive language compared with 62 percent when there was work contact[17] (Table 28).

Table 28

Language Referring to Persons with Disabilities by Contact with Boss or Coworker with a Disability

	TRADITIONAL LANGUAGE	PROGRESSIVE LANGUAGE	
No Reported Contact With Boss/Coworker With Disability	17 24.6%	52 75.4%	69 100%
Reported Contact With Boss/Coworker With Disability	36 37.5%	60 62.5%	96 100%
	53	112	165

Cramer's V (Phi) Statistic .13587

This hypothesis is supported by two of the three analyses. In the issues and roles categories, the hypothesis is supported. The percentage of stories with progressive role portrayal of persons with disabilities and progressive issues is considerably higher for those who had contact with with disabled individuals at work than for those who didn't.

With the story language variable, however, Hypothesis Seven is not supported since stories written by reporters who did not have contact with coworkers with disabilities were somewhat more progressive than stories written those who did have such contact.

Answering the Research Questions

The final section of this chapter examines the two research questions. Each question will be restated followed by a review of how the variables used to answer the questions were manipulated. This is followed by the results, and where appropriate, explication of the relationship of research question answers to the results of the hypothesis testing. Discussion of the implications of the findings follows in Chapter VI.

Research Question One

What demographic factors contribute to predicting reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities?

This research question is a start in developing normative data on reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities in response to Yuker and Block's (1986) call for the development of norms for different groups' attitudes toward persons with disabilities.

Yuker and Block (1986) reported that considerably more studies have shown women scoring significantly higher than men than the other way around.[18] They found age to have a very slight positive correlation with ATDP scores and education level to have some positive correlation.[19]

These three variables (Sex, Age and Education), plus Years at Present Job and Presence of Journalism

Education[20] were correlated with the ATDP scores to determine the strength of their relationships and were entered as independent variables in a regression equation predicting ATDP scores.

Age and Sex had moderately negative correlations with attitudes toward individuals with disabilities (Age -.21, Sex -.34). Female reporters and younger reporters were therefore more likely to have progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities than male and older reporters (Table 29). When the variables were entered into a regression equation, the predictive value of gender (as measured by the standardized regression coefficients (Beta weights) was -.31 while the Beta weight for age was -.12.

Table 29

Regression Equation with ATDP as Dependent Variable

Independent Variables	Correlation With ATDP	BETAS	PCT VAR*
AGE	-.21	-.12	0.59
Education level	.02	.03	0.14
Journalism Edu.	.01	-.00	0.01
Sex	-.34	-.31	8.72
Years at Job	-.15	.00	0.01
		Total	9.47

*The unique contribution of the independent variable as a proportion of the total variance of the dependent variable (Tabachnic & Fidell, 1983, p. 107).

Years at current job and ATDP scores exhibit a weak negative correlation (-.145) which became almost nonexistent (-.0077) when the effects of the other four variables were partialled out. Education level and Journalism education had trivial or nonexistent relationships to progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities.

The regression equation revealed that of these demographic variables, only sex and age have prediction strength of any magnitude (Table 29). Even so, these variables accounted for only ten percent of the variance, with sex accounting for most of the demographics' proportion of variance (8.72 percent of total variance).

Thus, only sex seems to have a definite place as a predictor of ATDP scores. While age appears to have some impact, its effect as an explainer of variance is minor.

Research Question Two

What factors affect whether news stories written about disability are progressive or traditional?

This research question explored the relative importance of different factors in reporters' backgrounds, their experience with and attitudes toward individuals with disabilities and newsroom influences on the way reporters write about disability.

Eleven variables obtained from the reporter survey were entered into regression equations with three content categories as dependent variables. The independent variables included demographic factors (age, years at job, sex, amount of education and presence of journalism education), attitudes toward disabled persons (ATDP scores), contact with individuals with disabilities (felt about contact and amount of contact) and newsroom factors (presence of work contact with persons with disabilities, amount of organizational structure and presence of style guidelines). The dependent variables were the content variables which reporters have influence on -- issues, roles and language.

The appropriateness of using regression analysis on two of the dependent variables is debatable as issues and roles are barely ordinal-level data (containing three values, 0-traditional, 1-neutral and 2-progressive). However, regression allows for the effects of each predictor variable on the dependent variable to be isolated from the effects of the others, and also allows for an estimate of the relative impact of the predictor variables on the dependent variable.

While drawing conclusions based solely on the regression analysis of the issues and roles variables would be inappropriate, it is of interest to note where

the regression analysis confirms the findings of the less powerful but more appropriate methods used in the hypothesis testing.

Overall, these variables explained a small percentage of the variance. They accounted for six percent of the language variable, nine percent of the roles variable and nine percent of the variance in issues (of which nearly half was accounted for by work contact).

The standardized regression coefficients (beta weights) show a number of interesting but weak and generally inconsistent patterns (Table 30).

Table 30

Standardized Regression Coefficients (Beta Weights) from Regression Equation with Content Categories as Dependent Variables.

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables ISSUES	ROLES	LANGUAGE
Age	-.10	-.12	.15
Years At job	.03	.16	-.28
Journalism Education	-.07	-.12	-.01
Sex	-.11	-.12	-.02
Amt Education	-.01	.04	-.07
ATDP	.08	.03	.06
Felt about contact	-.01	.18	-.02
Amt of Contact	-.08	-.13	-.06
Work Contact	.22	.09	-.12
ORG Strcture	.03	.01	.03
Presence of Style	-.15	.04	-.10

Amount of education seems to have little effect on any of the content variables as does attitudes toward disability (ATDP) and newsroom organization structure. Organizational structure was shown to have little consistent connection with attitudes in Hypothesis Four so the lack of a relationship between attitudes, organization and content is not surprising.

Sex (presence of maleness) had a consistently negative relationship with the content variables, meaning that femaleness weakly predicts progressive story content. Age and years at job seem to weakly predict opposite types of content. Age predicts traditional roles and issues but progressive language, and years at the job predicts traditional issues but progressive language.

How reporters felt about contact with persons with disabilities weakly predicted progressive roles, but had hardly any prediction value on issues or language. Amount of contact weakly predicted negative content to varying degrees.

The relationship of style guidelines to the content categories as measured by the standardized regression coefficients was consistent with two of the findings in Hypothesis Six. Progressive issues showed a weak negative relationship with the presence of style guidelines in the hypothesis and with the Beta values (-.15), and a slight

positive relationship with roles (.04). However the weak positive relationship between progressive language and the presence of style guidelines found in the hypothesis test becomes a weak negative relationship (-.10) when the effects of the other independent variables are removed.

The relationship between contact with a disabled co-worker and content categories found in Hypothesis Seven was reinforced by the regression findings. A relatively strong relationship between work contact and progressive issues is maintained when the effects of the other variables are removed (.22). In addition, work contact accounted for 4.25 percent of the variance in the issue variable. The standardized regression coefficients also confirmed the weak positive relationship between work contact and progressive roles (.09) and the weak negative relationship between work contact and progressive language (-.12).

Summary of Findings

The first four hypotheses and the first research question dealt with reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities as measured by the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons (ATDP) Scale (Form O) administered as part of the survey.

Hypothesis One, that reporters will tend to hold progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities, as measured by the ATDP Scale, was supported, both in terms of the scale itself and in comparison to scores of other professionals (See Table 13, p. 98).

The second hypothesis predicted that reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities will vary according to type of contact, amount of contact and evaluation of contact. The first part of this hypothesis, that attitudes would vary according to type of contact, was not supported. Contact with a friend with a disability exhibited moderate negative correlation with attitudes, work contact a slightly negative correlation and family contact had virtually no correlation with ATDP scores (Table 14, p. 100). The other two parts of this hypothesis were supported as both amount of contact and how the reporters felt about that contact exhibited positive correlation with progressive attitudes toward individuals with disabilities.

Hypothesis Three, that reporters who work in a newsroom which is physically accessible will tend to be more progressive in their attitudes toward persons with disabilities, was not tested because of a lack of variance in the variable measuring accessibility of newsrooms.

The fourth hypothesis predicted that reporters who work in a newsroom with an informal organizational structure will have progressive attitudes. This hypothesis was not supported because virtually no connection was found between reporters' attitudes toward disability and the amount of structure in their newsroom organizations.

The first research question asked what demographic factors contributed to predicting reporters' attitudes toward people with disabilities. Of the demographic variables measured, age and sex were found to have the greatest amount of correlation with attitude scores, with younger and female reporter characteristics correlating with higher or more progressive scores. Sex was found to account for the greatest precentage of variance (8.7 percent) with Age, education level, presence of journalism education and number of years at present job accounting for very small percentages of the variance (Table 29, p. 120).

The fifth, sixth and seventh hypotheses and the second research question were based on the content analysis of articles about disability topics or individuals with disabilities.

Hypothesis Five stated that news stories will generally reflect traditional viewpoints toward persons

with disabilities. This hypothesis was supported in three of the four individual content categories. News stories tended to portray individuals with disabilities traditionally in roles and issues to a moderate extent and more stories' headlines used traditional language than progressive when referring to individuals with disabilities (Tables 17, 18, 20, pp. 107-108). In the other content category, story language, there were more progressive stories than traditional (Table 19, p. 108). When the three story content variables were summated, progressive stories outnumbered traditional by a margin of five percent (Table 21, p. 109).

The sixth hypothesis stated that the presence of either formal or informal style guidelines regarding persons with disabilities will correlate with progressive viewpoints reflected in stories about disability. This was supported to varying extents in three of the four content categories. In the issue category, more progressive stories were written by reporters at newspapers without style guidelines than by those at newspapers with guidelines referring to writing about individuals with disabities. In both the roles and story language content categories, the hypothesis was supported to a moderate extent as there were slightly more progressive stories where guidelines were present than

where they were not. Support was stronger in the headline language category, where a much larger percentage of progressive headlines were written at newspapers where reporters had indicated the presence of style guidelines regarding disability (Tables 22-25, pp. 111-114).

Hypothesis Seven, that the presence of a person with a disability on the staff will correlate with progressive viewpoints reflected in stories about disability, was tested using the work contact variable. This hypothesis was supported in two of the three contact categories. It was not supported in the language category as a greater percentage of stories written by reporters without work contact were progressive. The hypothesis was supported in the issues and roles categories, as the percentage of stories with progressive issues and progressive role portrayal of individuals with disabilities was considerably higher for those who reported contact with persons with disabilities at work than for those who didn't (Tables 26-28, pp. 116-118).

The second research question asked what factors affected whether news stories are progressive or traditional. In addition to supporting most of the findings of Hypotheses Six and Seven regarding the relationship between work contact and style guidelines on story content, exploration of this question indicated

there is little impact on content by attitudes toward persons with disabilities, amount of education or structure of newsroom organizations. Female gender and positive evaluation of contact with persons with disabilities were shown to be weak predictors of progressive story content. Age, years at job, and work contact had varying effects on content, with work contact accounting for 4.25 percent of the variance of the issues variable (Table 30, p. 123).

Footnotes -- Chapter Five

[1]The survey was sent out to 163 male reporters (63.4%), 88 females (34.2%) and to six (2.4%) whose gender was not able to be determined from the byline. This proportion is roughly equivalent to the gender breakdown of journalists in general reported by Weaver and Wilhoit (1986) of 66.2% male and 33.8% female (65.6% male, 34..4% female for journalists working at daily newspapers). (pp. 19, 21)

[2]Breakdown of the all of the contact choices is as follows:

Professional Experience	
Co-worker	59%
Boss	8%
Interview subject	92%
Personal Experience	
Immediate family	15%
Other relative	23%
Friend	48%
Other Social (at parties, clubs, etc.)	72%
Other Experience	
Education (teacher, classmate)	57%
Secondary (reading, TV, film, etc.	82%
Self has disability	3%

[3]A total of 199 stories were written by reporters who responded to the survey; 129 were by reporters who did not respond; 35 stories had no bylines.

[4]Six of these resulted from a byline strike at the St. Louis Post-Dispatch during part of the study.

[5]The breakdown of number of stories written by reporters follows:

Number of stories	Number of Reporters	Total
One Story	202 Reporters	202
Two Stories	38 Reporters	76
Three Stories	8 Reporters	24
Four Stories	3 Reporters	12
Five Stories	1 Reporter	5
Nine Stories	1 Reporter	9
29 Stories had no byline		29
Six Stories byline strike		6
	Total	363

[6]The value of 40 was transformed to 33, which is three standard deviations above the mean (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1983, p. 76). This reduced the skewness from 1.192 to .935.

[7]The consolidation of the two family-related items into the Family contact variable did not mask any appreciable differences between the effects of having an immediate or more distant family member with a disability on those reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities or how they felt about their contact with them:

Type of Contact reported	ATDP (mean)	How Felt (mean)
Immediate Family	89.3	4.5
Other Relative	87.3	4.8
FAMILY CONTACT	87.6	4.6

[8]The transformation was made by adding 1 to the original values and performing a logarithmic transformation on them. "For severe positive skewness, a logarithmic transformation is appropriate. . . . add a constant to each score so that the smallest value of the variables becomes 1." (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1983, p. 84) This reduced the skewness from 2.67 to .776.

[9]The mean scores from the organzational evaluations from the 147 reporters who responded to question 9 were calculated for each newspaper. Reporters were assigned the newspapers' score based on the whole interval above the value's number (eg. 1.0 - 1.99 = 1). The ten reporters who had not responded to this question were then assigned their newspaper's number. The revised totals of reporters appear in parentheses after the original number of reporters.

Organization	Mean Org. Score	Number of Reporters	Assigned Score
Newspaper 1	2.20	10 (11)	2
Newspaper 2	2.40	10 (10)	2
Newspaper 3	2.28	7 (7)	2
Newspaper 4	3.33	3 (3)	3
Newspaper 5	2.54	22 (23)	2
Newspaper 6	2.10	10 (11)	2
Newspaper 7	2.72	25 (26)	2
Newspaper 8	2.00	4 (4)	2
Newspaper 9	1.83	6 (6)	1
Newspaper 10	1.90	10 (11)	1
Newspaper 11	3.20	5 (7)	3
Newspaper 12	1.67	3 (5)	1
Newspaper 13	2.54	11 (12)	2
Newspaper 14	3.89	9 (9)	3
Newspaper 15	1.00	3 (3)	1
Newspaper 16	3.33	9 (9)	3
	2.53	147 (157)	2.02

[10]Presence of written style guidelines was determined by newspaper. If the majority of respondents from a particular newspaper indicated that there were formal style guidelines regarding individuals with disabilities, all reporters from that newspaper were coded as working in a news organization that had such formal guidelines present. Informal guidelines were coded as present only if the individual reported having them.

[11]The *Issues*, *Roles* and *Language* variables were recoded as 0 Traditional, 2 Progressive and 1 for neither. The values on the cumulative content scale are equivalent to the following possibilities:

Value	Combinations
0	{T-T-T} (All three Traditional)
1	{T-T-N} (2 Traditional, 1 Neutral)
2	{T-T-P} {T-N-N}
3	{T-P-N} {N-N-N}*
4	{P-P-T} {P-N-N}
5	{P-P-N}
6	{P-P-P}

*Mathematical possibility only. A story with no value in any of the three content categories would not have been included in the sample.

[12]The three types of contact all exhibited moderate positive correlation with amount of contact (Work contact .27, Friend contact .22, Family contact .27) which would be expected since having these types of contact would tend to increase the number of times the reporter had contact with disabled persons. Having a friend with a disability had a moderate positive correlation with positive evaluation of that contact (.22) and lesser positive association with co worker contact (.11) and family contact (.09).

[13]Only two newspapers (17 reporters) responded that their building was not accessible.

[14]Reporters at large newspapers seldom write the headlines which appear above their news stories. This task is generally performed by a copy editor or a headline writer. (See Brooks, et al., 1980, p. 34; Rivers, 1984, p. 307)

[15]However, when Personal, No Issue stories are included in the sample as Traditional stories (based on contentions by Johnson and Elkins [1989] and Krossel [1988] that stereotypical disability coverage has often focused on disabled individuals rather than on broader societal issues affecting disability) the Traditional category is raised to 48.5 percent of the stories.

[16]Only one newspaper responded that there was no person with a disability on the staff.

[17]In comparison, Family contact had a negative impact on all three content categories. Stories with Progressive content written by reporters without family contact outnumbered those by reporters with family contact as follows:

Roles	52.2%	No contact	40.0%	With contact	Phi .1106
Issues	55.9%	No contact	53.8%	With contact	Phi .0188
Language	69.2%	No contact	54.6%	With contact	Phi .0452

For friend contact, only stories with Progressive roles written by reporters with contact outnumbered those written by reporters without contact:

Roles	46.3%	No contact	51.0%	With contact	Phi .0473
Issues	57.5%	No contact	53.3%	With contact	Phi .0423
Language	74.1%	No contact	61.3%	With contact	Phi .1377

[18]Of 129 studies using one of the three versions of the ATDP Scale, ". . . results indicate that 44 percent of the studies of nondisabled Americans showed females scoring significantly higher than males, 5 percent showed males scoring higher, and 51 percent showed no statistically significant difference." (Yuker and Block, 1986, p 8.)

[19]The median correlation (based on 30 studies) between age and ATDP scores was +.01; for education level (11 studies, many of samples younger than the population of this study) the median correlation was +.11. (Yuker & Block, 1986, p. 20)

[20]The Years as a Reporter variable was omitted from this analysis because of its high correlation with Age (.88) and Years at Job (.72).

Chapter VI

Discussion and Conclusions

Introduction

The first part of this chapter will discuss the meaning of the findings reported in the previous chapter. Results of the testing of the hypotheses and the findings from the research questions will be discussed in terms of the general questions outlined in Chapter I. This will be followed by a section discussing the meaning of these findings for persons with disabilities and disability activists, for practitioners of journalism, for journalism educators and for mass media researchers.

The purpose of this study was to explore newspaper reporters' attitudes toward individuals with disabilities and to assess coverage of those individuals and of disability issues in prestige and high-circulation newspapers. Four attributes of news coverage of disability (roles of persons with disabilities, disability issues covered, story language and headline language referring to persons with disabilities) were evaluated in 363 stories gathered from 16 newspapers during the first

three months of 1990. The responding reporters who wrote those stories provided information on their attitudes toward persons with disabilities, their contact with such individuals, the newsroom environment in which they work and demographic information. The hypotheses and research questions provided answers to four general questions:

> What attitudes do newspaper reporters have toward persons with disabilities and how do these attitudes vary with differences in individual contact with such individuals?
>
> How do newspapers portray persons with disabilities and cover disability issues?
>
> What correlations exist between newsroom organizational factors and portrayal of persons with disabilities?
>
> Are there correlations between reporters' backgrounds, their attitudes toward and experiences with persons with disabilities and their portrayal of such persons in newspaper content?

The reporters surveyed and the stories included in the content analysis were chosen purposively, not by random sampling techniques. Because the findings are based on a universe of news stories, the projection of the results of this study to newspaper reporters and to news coverage of disability in general is purely speculative. However, because of the high-profile nature of the prestige and high-circulation newspapers chosen for the study, this universe can be considered to represent some of the best and most aspired to journalism in the country (Stempel, 1961).

Discussion of Findings

Reporters' Attitudes Toward Persons with Disabilities

The first general question deals with reporters' attitudes toward disability and factors which may affect those attitudes. In particular, what attitudes do these newspaper reporters have toward persons with disabilities and how do these attitudes vary with differences in individual contact with such persons?

Hypothesis One, that reporters would hold progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities, was strongly supported. This finding adds progressive attitudes toward disability to the other liberal attitudes reporters have been found to hold (Gieber, 1960; Garcia, 1967; Flegel & Chaffee, 1971; Epstein, 1973; Johnstone, Slawski & Bowman, 1976; Gans, 1979). Indeed, these reporters as a professional group hold one of the most positive attitudes toward disability as measured by the ATDP Scale (Form O) (Yuker & Block, 1986).

The second hypothesis stated that reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities would be more progressive when the reporters had more contact, certain types of contact (friend, co-worker and family) and a positive evaluation of their contact with disabled persons. Progressive attitudes were associated with

amount of contact and evaluation of that contact but not with the type of contact reporters had.

The fact that reporters who had more contact with persons with disabilities and who felt comfortable in that contact had more progressive attitudes toward disabled persons fits the pattern of previous research. Yuker (1988) reported that amount of contact and ATDP scores correlated positively in 51 percent of the studies reported and correlated negatively in 39 percent of them.

But the lack of support for social contact coinciding with progressive attitudes (indeed, there is a weak *negative* correlation with progressive attitudes)[1] goes against Yuker, Block and Younng's (1970) report that attitudes of persons with close personal and social contact with persons with disabilities score higher on the ATDP. The attitudes of this group of reporters are apparently not positively influenced by having a friend with a disability.

An explanation for this might be that the reporters had general social contacts with persons with disabilities, not necessarily *close* social contacts. Since most general social contact takes place in either public or private locations that are designed for non-disabled people, reporters might have interacted with disabled friends in an environment which calls attention

to the friends' limitations. This type of contact would put the friend-contact experience in a category similar to family or medical contact, which Yuker, Block and Younng (1970) found to correspond with negative attitudes because the focus is on the limitations and inabilities of individuals with disabilities.[2]

The nearly nonexistent correlations between contact with family and coworkers and ATDP scores provides no support for Allport's (1958) concept that "equal-status contact" creates favorable attitudes or for the contention by Yuker, Block and Younng (1970) that family contact, which tends to focus on the limitations and inabilities of disabled individuals, would correspond with traditional attitudes. Indeed, with the exception of the weak correlation between friend contact and negative attitudes, all of these correlations are so low as to approach meaninglessness.

One reason for this might be that reporters may feel it necessary to distance themselves personally from those they write about in order to maintain some objectivity. These reporters were surveyed because they wrote disability-related stories, and weak relationships between types of contact and attitudes toward persons with disabilities may reflect a real or at least stated aloofness from the type of individuals they cover.

The first research question asked how demographic factors affect reporters' attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. Of the five demographic variables examined, only sex, age and years at current job had even slight to moderate correlations with attitudes. Correlation between attitudes and education level and whether the reporter had journalism courses in school were almost nonexistent.

Only sex had any value as an explainer of variance in attitudes. Specifically, female reporters tended to have more progressive attitudes. This coincides with Yuker and Block's (1986) report that women have generally scored higher than men on the ATDP. While one is hesitant to attribute anything strictly to gender, other factors not accounted for in the survey (such as societal encouragement of men to place a higher value on physical strength and toughness than do women) may explain female reporters' higher attitude scores.

The moderately negative relationship of progressive attitudes with age does not reflect Yuker and Block's (1986) finding of a slight positive correlation between age and positive scores. But the younger reporters surveyed for this study grew up in the 1960s and 1970s, a time when the political and social climate was more sensitive to issues of discrimination. The younger

reporters also would have attended secondary school at a time when more children with disabilities were being integrated into general classrooms. This mainstreaming could have exposed the younger reporters to classmates with disabilities during their formative years, resulting in more progressive attitudes.

The third and fourth hypotheses were based on the idea that the presence of newsroom organizational factors which facilitate the hiring and inclusion of co-workers with disabilities would result in reporters holding more progressive attitudes toward such individuals. The hypothesis that reporters working in newsrooms accessible to persons with disabilities would hold more progressive attitudes could not be tested because of a lack of variance in survey responses. The hypothesis that reporters who work in a newsroom with an informal organizational structure will have progressive attitudes was not supported. Instead, amount of organizational structure showed a almost no correlation with progressive attitudes toward disability.

Disability policy analysts (McCarthy, 1988; Stubbins & Albee, 1984) reported a reluctance to adapt job duties to accommodate persons with disabilities in highly structured organizations. But this was not evident in this study as all of the newspapers surveyed had reporters

who knew of persons with physical disabilities who had worked as news/editorial employees in their newsrooms in the past year.[3] This would indicate that news operations with varying amounts of organizational structure have hired some individuals with disabilities.[4]

Other methods (different survey questions or examining different sources of information on organizational structure and hiring practices regarding persons with disabilities) would be required to better understand the connection between organizational structure and hiring workers with disabilities. But the interim factor with which these variables were thought to correlate, contact with a disabled co-worker, also did not have much of a positive correlation with attitudes.

This study found that reporters, like other professionals, hold progressive attitudes toward persons with physical disabilities. The study indicates that among these reporters, attitudes toward persons with physical disabilities are connected with sex and age, the amount of contact with persons with disabilities and how they felt about their experience with these individuals. None of the organizational factors had any meaningful relationship with attitudes with the possible exception of contact with a disabled coworker, which coincided marginally with progressive attitudes.

Newspaper Coverage of Disability

The other three general questions deal with the progressive or traditional nature of the newspapers' disability coverage and connections between that coverage and newsroom organizational factors, reporters' demographic backrounds and their attitudes toward and experiences with persons with physical disabilities.

While the ATDP Scale measured reporters' attitudes toward individuals with disabilities, the content analysis measured aspects of the reporters' professional behavior toward those individuals.

First, how do newspapers portray persons with physical disabilities?

It was hypothesized that reporters' progressive attitudes toward persons with physical disabilities would not manifest themselves in reporters' professional behavior, resulting in traditional story content. This was hypothesized because many of the attributes of newsworthiness coincide with traditional aspects of coverage (Shoemaker, 1985). Specifically, reporters would follow the dictates of their professional training reinforced by newsroom values and therefore write traditional stories. This was the case in two of the three content categories where reporters have influence -- roles of persons with disabilities and disability issues

covered. The hypothesis was also supported in the category of language in headlines, which are usually not written by reporters. The hypothesis was not supported in one of the content categories, story language[5], and was not supported in the cumulative story content variable which combined issues, roles and story language.[6]

The third general question deals with other factors which may explain the tendency of content to be traditional or progressive. Specifically, what correlations exist between newsroom organizational and environmental factors and portrayal of persons with disabilities?

It was hypothesized that presence of style guidelines would coincide with progressive content and that presence of a person with a disability on the newsroom staff would coincide with progressive content.

Presence of style guidelines coincided with progressive content most strongly in the headline language category, with much weaker positive relationships with roles and story language. In the issues category, however, presence of style guidelines exhibited a moderate negative relationship with coverage of progressive disability issues.

The strong association between presence of style guidelines and progressive headlines reflects the way

newsrooms use the stylebook. Headline writers and copy editors work most closely with the stylebook so it is no surprise that its influence was strongest in areas reflecting their work.

The weaker association with story language suggests that reporters may not pay as close attention to style guidelines as do the headline writers. The weak association with roles may reflect the makeup of the stylebooks used. Some style guidelines (Grein & Breisky, 1990; National Easter Seal Society, 1989; Research & Training Center on Independent Living, 1990) do address some of the aspects of the roles variable, but many reporters' survey margin notes cited the A-P Stylebook as their source of style guidelines for dealing with persons with disabilities. The A-P Stylebook and other general style guidelines usually deal briefly with some of the more blatant violations of progressive language referring to disability.[7] This raises the possibility that even if reporters' are using style guidelines, the guidance they get may be confined to the general style guidelines' limited references to language aspects of writing about disability.[8]

Part of the explanation for the negative relationship with issue coverage may be that reporters and editors will not usually refer to a stylebook when deciding what to

cover.[9] A more probable influence on determining issue coverage would be other reporters and those who assign stories.

The hypothesis that contact with a co-worker with a disability coincides with progressive content was supported most strongly in the issues category. The hypothesis was supported to a lesser degree in the roles category, but the relationship was quite negative with progressive story language.

This lends support to the concept that newsroom diversity (in terms of inclusion of those with disabilities) may have a positive or progressive influence on the type of issues covered in stories about disability.

These findings lend support to the supposition that the organizational factors of style guidelines and contact with disabled co-workers have a connection with progressive content, but it is complex and partially contradictory.

Finally, are there correlations between reporters' attitudes toward disability and portrayal of persons with disabilities in newspaper content? The second research question looked at this specific question and at the relative influences on news content of demographic and organizational factors as well as contact with persons with disabilities.

The value of attitudes toward persons with disabilities as a predictor of progressive content was negligible. This, taken in conjunction with the stronger correlations progressive content had with work contact and style guidelines supports the assertions (Breed, 1955; Baily & Lichty, 1969; Dimmick, 1979; Ettema, 1978) that newsroom and professional factors are greater influences on the behavior of writing news stories than are personal attitudes toward those who may be involved with the story's topic.

Some of the demographic factors, however may wield some influence on coverage of disability stories. There was a moderately strong connection between reporters' sex and progressive content, with women tending to write more progressive stories. These women reporters also tended to have more progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities although progressive attitudes were not a predictor to content when sex and other factors were controlled.

Having journalism classes in school had a weak negative association with progressive story roles, but very weak or nearly meaningless correlation with progressive issues and language. The lack of any evidence of a meaningful relationship between journalism education and progressive content may indicate an absence of

exposure to persons with disabilities and disability issues in journalism classes.

How reporters felt about contact with persons with disabilities exhibits a positive relationship with progressive story role portrayals, but showed little connection with issues or story language. Surprisingly, the sheer amount of contact the reporters had with disabled persons related negatively to progressive content, most strongly with the roles category. This may reflect prevalence of the type of contact which Yuker Block and Younng (1970) noted reinforces medical or social pathology stereotypes of disabled persons.

The joint analysis of all the story variables thus supported findings for the hypothesis that contact with a co-worker with a disability influences the writing of progressive stories. But a small positive connection between style guidelines and story language found in a bivariate analysis was reversed when controlling for other influences.

To summarize, femaleness, having had contact with disabled co-workers and positive evaluation of that contact are the strongest consistently positive predictors of progressive content. The amount of general contact with persons with disabilities and having had journalism courses in school are the strongest consistently negative

predictors of progressive content. Attitudes toward persons with disabilities, age, years at job, amount of education, attitudes toward disabled persons, organizational structure and presence of style guidelines either have no apparent influence or have an impact on content that varies inconsistently across the different contact variables.

Relevance of the Findings for Persons with Disabilities and Disability Activists

The findings of the content analysis indicate that disability activists whose goal is societal acceptance of persons with disabilities have not yet reached the point where they can describe newspaper coverage as thoroughly progressive in nature.

If media images influence the audience's perceptions of social norms and values by presenting consensual versions of social reality, as cultivation theorists postulate (Gerbner, 1967; Tan, 1982; McQuail, 1983), disability activists can be encouraged that stories portraying persons with disabilities in cultural pluralism roles comprised the largest single category (Table 7, p. 86). But less encouraging is the fact that stories in two traditional role categories (medical and social pathology) made up the next two largest categories and stories with

traditional roles outnumbered those with progressive roles by 52 to 43 percent.

If disability activists' concerns lie primarily in getting progressive disability issues high on the national agenda, media coverage of those issues is necessary according to proponents of agenda setting theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; 1977; Stone & McCombs, 1981). This theory predicts that those topics which receive more coverage in the news media will be considered by the public to be more important (Tardy, et al., 1981). By coming to a consensus on what issues they believe are paramount and presenting them to the news media in a unified and articulate manner, disability activists may be able to get those issues higher on the nation's social and political agendas.

Activists may have reason to be encouraged by the fact that this study shows that there were more stories covering progressive issues than stories which covered traditional issues (by 52 to 41 percent). Also, out of 16 issue categories, stories covering progressive access and consumer issues rated in the top six most covered (second and fourth respectively--Table 8, p. 87).

But less encouraging is the fact that more stories covered medical issues than any other and that stories covering traditional issues of victimization of persons with disabilities and government and private support

comprised the rest of the top six categories (third, fifth and sixth respectively).

Many individuals with disabilities and disability activists are concerned that media use of traditional language will reinforce stigmatizing stereotypes of those with disabilities as labeling theorists would assert (Becker & Arnold, 1963). The finding that nearly two-thirds of the stories used progressive language would, on the surface, seem quite encouraging (Table 9, p. 88). But the fact that only half of the stories used no traditional language would be cause for concern, as this indicates continued widespread use of traditional language by prestige and high circulation newspapers in news stories covering disability topics.

The findings regarding what factors affect whether content is progressive or traditional give those who want to improve newspaper disability coverage some idea of where to concentrate their efforts. This study indicates that they should not focus on changing reporters' already progressive attitudes toward disability, but should concentrate on workplace factors by offering input and assistance to improve style guidelines and pushing for the hiring of more journalists with disabilities.

Relevance of the Findings for Journalism Educators

The absence of a meaningful relationship between having had journalism courses and writing progressive stories points out a need for journalism educators to include more information on covering individuals with disabilities and disability issues. Educators may also want to expose students to the ramifications of situations when the news value of unusualness conflicts with fair and accurate coverage of those who may be considered unusual. Without resorting to the simplistic self-censorship of "political correctness", which proscribes using terms that may be perceived by some (but by no means all) members of non-mainstream groups as offensive, journalism educators should encourage students to think about the potential effects of what they write on those whom they write about. Journalism textbooks should include examples of progressive coverage of persons with disabilities as well as of other non-mainstream groups[10].

Because of the progressive effects on coverage of having a boss or a co-worker with a disability, it seems logical that encouraging more students and instructors with disabilities to become part of the journalism education process would improve the quality of those future journalists' coverage of disability issues.

Relevance of the Findings for Journalism

The findings of the content analysis of disability stories indicates that while the present state of disability news coverage by the 16 newspapers in the sample is not terribly traditional, neither is it particularly progressive. The fact that these newspapers, which are considered to be among the best in the country, contain a considerable amount of traditional coverage, indicates there is likely to be plenty of room for improvement in general newspaper coverage of persons with disabilities.

The question of what amount of traditional coverage is acceptable needs to be addressed differently for each of the content categories.

With language, it would seem that a case could be made for avoiding any use of traditional terminology to refer to individuals with disabilities. This practice has been followed for the most part in dealing with racial minorities. But the lack of consensus among disability activists and persons with disabilities themselves on what constitutes acceptable language makes reliance on rigid guidelines a risky proposition. Making journalists aware of the issues and ensuring that they avoid using some of the more offensive terms may be the most that can be hoped for in terms making newspaper language more progressive.

Roles are more difficult because there are individuals who fit into traditional roles who may warrant news coverage. It would be inaccurate and unethical for reporters try to portray individuals with disabilities in progressive roles which are inaccurate. The problem arises when reporters rely on traditional stereotypes to describe individuals with disabilities because they (the reporters) are not aware of the diversity of population of people who happen to have disabilities. Again, the goal of journalists should be awareness of the uniqueness of individuals rather than the sameness of their disabilities.

The toughest call is with issues. Not covering traditional aspects of disability when they are integral parts of a story would be bad journalism. But covering traditional disability issues with no awareness of non-traditional disability issues is just as bad. A goal for journalists would be an awareness of the variety and scope of disability-related issues.

The findings suggest what strategies may be effectively employed to make coverage more able to reflect the progressive aspects of disability stories.

Changing reporters' attitudes toward persons with disabilities would seem to have little impact on whether those reporters' write progressive or traditional

disability stories. Exposing them to more general contact with disabled individuals may result in more progressive attitudes, but also seems to translate into slightly more traditional content. Assigning reporters with more education, or those who have taken journalism courses would appear to make little difference or may even result in coverage which is more traditional.

While the findings indicate that assigning disability stories to female reporters would increase the liklihood of more progressive coverage, this would amount to biasing story assignments based on gender in order to lessen bias in coverage of another non-mainstream group.

The most effective way a news organization could make coverage more progressive involves factors in the working environment of the newsroom itself. The professional values which reporters learn in the newsroom need to be made more accommodating to acceptance of persons with disabilities. The findings indicate that two aspects of the newsroom environment, style guidelines referring to persons with disabilities and colleagues who themselves have physical disabilities, would have the biggest impact on content.

Newspapers should make an effort to include all aspects of disability coverage in style guidelines and to make sure that reporters are aware of those guidelines.

Since presence of style guidelines on covering disability was associated with traditional issue coverage, it might also be desireable for these guidelines to go beyond the "do's and don'ts" of language and to include a discussion of what disability topics, issues and roles are considered traditional or stereotypical and what ones are progressive.

Newsrooms might also want to examine the style guidelines they use in terms of whether they effectively deal with individuals with disabilities in a progressive manner. It may very well be that newsrooms have not progressed much beyond the cursory coverage of disability in the standard stylebooks, and that more comprehensive guidelines are needed. They might look to disability groups in their communities, such as independent living centers, to get input on language, roles and issues that concern members of the disability community.

It is unlikely (and undesireable) that this would affect coverage of breaking stories which deal with the medical or social pathology aspects of disability. But reporters who are more aware of the progressive issues and roles might be more likely to include them in non-breaking disability stories or might add a disability angle to stories which might otherwise not include the impact of an event or issue on those with disabilities.

Another way newspapers can improve disability coverage is to take the nearly 25-year-old advice on minority group coverage of the Kerner Commission, and hire more members of the group whose story is being told inadequately in many ways. Having contact with a disabled boss or co-worker with a physical disability was found to be one of the strongest predictors of progressive roles and issues. While the study did not support Allport's (1958) conclusion that "equal status contact" in pursuit of shared goals results in positive attitudes, it did indicate that this type of contact may result in positive or progressive behavior. Newspapers should make a concerted effort to hire staff members with physical disabilities, not simply to have a token "expert" to cover a particular beat, but to provide other reporters with a colleague who may, both overtly and subtly, influence the way reporters cover all stories, not just those which obviously involve persons with disabilities.

Implications for Research

Further research into news coverage of individuals with physical disabilities should expand the scope of inquiry beyond the prestige and high circulation newspapers to include a cross sample of newspapers of different sizes and varying quality, broadcast and other

print media, and to include other types of disabilities (such as mental and learning characteristics).

Content from a more representative sample of American newspapers is desireable. This would allow for more generalization than was possible from this study of a universe consisting of 363 news stories from the country's top 16 newspapers and the reporters who wrote them.

Because people spend more time watching television than reading newspapers (McCombs & Shaw, 1977), future research should examine both local and network news coverage of individuals with disabilities. In addition to studying language, issues and roles, researchers should evaluate the traditional and progressive nature of the visuals accompanying the stories.

Several improvements could be made in aspects of this study. A better measurement of newsroom accessibility is needed. Physical examination of the building would be the most valid and reliable. Getting a physical description of the premises from someone with knowledge of access issues would be less effective but better than what was attempted here. Organizational complexity could be measured differently, either through interviews with management personnel or through corporate documents. A detailed examination and comparison of newspapers' style guidelines regarding disability coverage (including

aspects of issues and portrayals as well as language) could add to understanding of what, how and whether reporters are being told to write about disability.

Future research into attitudes of reporters might consider other attitude measurement scales. The recently developed Modified Issues in Disability Scale (MIDS) was constructed with input from both persons with disabilities and nondisabled subjects (Makas, 1985; 1991) and might better reflect the traditional - progressive dichotomy than the ATDP Scale.

Researchers who study news coverage of persons with disabilities could examine the effects media coverage has on the audience. The power of the news media to set the agenda for public consideration of disability issues could be examined as could the cultivation effects traditional and progressive role portrayals have on an audience.

Researchers might also want to apply the progressive - traditional theoretical framework to the study of other non-mainstream groups such as women and other racial and cultural groups. It would not be inconceivable to apply the medical model's emphasis on physical differences, the social pathology model's focus on economic support, the minority civil rights' political perspective and the cultural pluralism goal of a more unified society to groups such as African-Americans, Latinos or women.

Finally, researchers could seek to find out how effectively those who actively espouse full participation of persons with disabilities in society are utilizing the mass media to spread their message. Johnson (1990) noted that activists who demonstrated in support of the Americans with Disabilities Act in Washington, D.C. in March 1990 missed an opportunity to focus coverage of their concerns with the legislation by failing to clearly articulate their goals to reporters covering the event. "Still, the event was covered more thoroughly than any disability event since the Gallaudet protest. It was evidence . . .that reporters were ready to cover the disability rights movement. . . .Much of the coverage that occurred . . . occurred in spite of the scarcity of facts or substance available to reporters from those at the actions." (Johnson, 1990, p. 30). Examination of the effectiveness of disability rights spokespersons might indicate that part of the problem lies in the articulation of the message, not just in the messenger.

Conclusion

This study represents a small step in the process of understanding newspaper coverage of individuals with physical disabilities. The content analysis revealed that disability coverage is neither overwhelmingly progressive

nor traditional. It found that while reporters have quite progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities, those attitudes have very little to do with whether the stories they write are progressive or traditional. Other factors, such as reporters' gender, their evaluation of their contact with disabled persons, presence of style guidelines dealing with disability and contact with a disabled boss or co-worker did have an effect on the content of stories about disability.

If the goal of this society is to allow for the equal participation and fair treatment of all of its members, this study shows that society, as reflected in the disability coverage of these 16 newspapers, is still a fair distance from that goal.

Footnotes -- Chapter Six

[1]The positive correlation between friend contact and reporters' evaluation of that contact (.22 [see ch. 5, Footnote 12, p. 134]) may indicate support for Sigelman's (1983) contention that evaluation of specific contacts may be more positive than attitudes toward persons with disabilities in general.

[2]Personal experience has shown that it is difficult to maintain a degree of dignity or respect when one must be carried up a flight of stairs to attend a social function or to dine in a restaurant. The initial impression of helplessness pervades the subsequent conversations and interactions and the limitations of the disability remain the focus, which fits in with the traditional concept of disability.

[3]Respondents from 15 of the 16 newspapers reported that they know of at least one news/editorial employee with a disability who had worked in their newsroom during the past year. The author spoke by telephone with one reporter from the remaining paper (who had been sent a survey form which ultimately was not returned) who disclosed that he himself had a physical disability.

[4]Respondents may have misinterpreted the intended definition of "news/editorial employee". Several reporters at one newspaper indicated in survey margin notes that the disabled employee they recalled was a receptionist.

[5]If one takes a "hard line" approach to the story language variable by coding stories with even a single traditional reference to persons with disabilities were coded as traditional, 68.8 percent of the stories would be traditional and the hypothesis would be supported in all four content categories.

[6]One reason for the partial lack of support may lie in the operationalization of the content variables. The definition of roles coincided most closely with the conceptual definitions of progressive and traditional. The issues were assigned traditional or progressive status based on logical extrapolations of these concepts and on issues covered by newspapers analysed in an earlier study (Clogston, 1990). Language, however, was based on guidelines from several disability advocacy groups which do not always agree on terms (Grein & Breisky, 1990). These guidelines generally divide language into appropriate or positive terms and those which are inappropriate or negative. Terms were considered negative because they were inaccurate, stereotypical or called undue attention to an individual's disability (fitting in with the general traditional concept). Terms were considered positive when they emphasized the individual person rather than the disability itself (roughly corresponding to the progressive concept). This still does not explain why headline language, which was based on the same style guidelines, was more progressive.

[7]In the section of their sourcebook on reporting on disability, "Beyond AP", Johnson and Elkins (1989) describe the AP Stylebook as "a start" to change the way reporters and editors write about disability (p. 19). Other standard newspaper stylebooks fall short of the comprehensiveness desired for disability activists. For example, *The Washington Post* Deskbook on Style (Lippman, 1989) devotes about one-third of a page to its entry under "Disabled", three lines to "Deaf" and no entry under "Blind". This contrasts with about a half page for "Race and racial identification" and nearly three pages devoted to "Sexism and sex-based language."

[8] Disagreement exists among disability advocacy groups. In Michigan, the term "handicapper" is part of the state constitution. Those who advocate use of the term define it as describing "one who competes with a handicap" (Michigan Department of Labor, 1989). Many outside of Michigan oppose (sometimes quite vociferously) use of the term, considering it inappropriate or cutesy. There is lack of consensus on use of the terms disabled and handicapped, with each term having its supporters and detractors.

[9]Because a disability issue is traditional does not necessarily mean that a news organization should not cover it. There is legitimate news value in some stories which would be categorized as medical or governmental or private support. The danger lies in when reporters limit their coverage of disability to traditional topics and neglect progressive issues or fail to consider the disability angle(s) of stories which don't fit the traditional or stereotypical pattern.

[10]Textbooks should, at the very least, avoid positive reinforcement to perpetuation of negative stereotypes. One such anecdote appeared in a recent journalism textbook which told of a young reporter getting a newspaper job because he was "perceptive" enough to use the following quote about two mayoral candidates, "One's an idiot and the other's retarded." The "joke" becomes funnier when one of the candidates complains that the story was "derogatory to those with mental handicaps." (Melvin Mencher, Basic News Writing. 1983, p. 17.)

Textbook publishers should also endeavor to seek out authors with disabilities or at the very least include them as reviewers. In this way, progressive disability angles might be included and inappropriate language avoided in the textbooks used by future journalists.

APPENDIX A

NEWSPAPER LIST

Appendix A

LIST OF NEWSPAPERS ANALYZED

Number	Newspaper	Source
1...	ATLANTA CONSTITUTION	1, 2
2...	BALTIMORE SUN	1, 2
3...	CHICAGO TRIBUNE	2, 4
4...	CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR	1, 2, 3
5...	DETROIT FREE PRESS	4
6...	DETROIT NEWS	4
7...	LOS ANGELES TIMES	1, 2, 4
8...	LOUISVILLE COURIER-JOURNAL	1, 2
9...	MIAMI HERALD	1, 2
10..	NEW YORK DAILY NEWS	4
11..	NEW YORK TIMES	1, 2, 3, 4
12..	NEWSDAY	4
13..	ST. LOUIS POST DISPATCH	1, 2
14..	USA TODAY	3, 4
15..	WALL STREET JOURNAL	1, 2, 3, 4
16..	WASHINGTON POST	1, 2, 4

Sources:

1. John C. Merrill and Harold A. Fisher, The World's Great Dailies: Profiles of Fifty Newspapers. (New York: Hastings House) 1980.

2. Guido H. Stempel III, "The Prestige Press Covers the 1960 Presidential Campaign." Journalism Quarterly 38:2, 157-163 (Spring 1961).

3. Nationally distributed newspapers

4. One of the top ten circulations as of September 30, 1988. 1989 Editor & Publisher International Yearbook (New York: Editor & Publisher Company), 1989.

Appendix B

Administration of the Content Analysis

Appendix B

ADMINISTRATION OF THE CONTENT ANALYSIS

The sixteen newspapers (Atlanta Constitution, Baltimore Sun, Chicago Tribune, Christian Science Monitor, Detroit Free Press, Detroit News, Los Angeles Times, Louisville Courier-Journal, Miami Herald, New York Daily News, New York Newsday, New York Times, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, USA Today, Wall Street Journal and Washington Post) were sampled from January 1 through March 31, 1990. The entire news holes were examined and stories dealing with disability or persons with disabilities were clipped and mounted.

Each day's edition of each paper was examined with the following exceptions:

Baltimore Sun -- missed 1/1-1/15, 2/16
Los Angeles Times -- missed 3/25
Louisville Courier-Journal -- missed 2/18
Miami Herald -- missed 1/29
New York Daily News -- missed 1/1-1/20, 1/30, 2/26, 2/27, 3/30
New York Newsday -- missed 1/1-1/15
St. Louis Post Dispatch -- missed 1/7-1/11
USA Today -- missed 1/9

The absence of 64 newspapers from the potential total of 1363 meant that 95.3% of the targeted papers were examined.

A total of 363 stories were selected based on the criteria established in Chapter 4 (p. 64).

A series of pretests were conducted to clarify the coding categories (pp. 169-182) and to establish intercoder reliability which was 100 percent agreement for ten of the 16 coding categories, 90 percent for four categories and 80 percent for two categories (p. 183).

The coding itself was done entirely by the author. An intracoder reliabilty check was done after approximately 28 percent of the stories had been coded. These figures were 100 percent agreement for eleven of the categories, 90 percent for two and 80 percent for three of the 16 categories (p. 184).

Coding Guidelines for Content Analysis of Coverage of Disability

Stories are to be coded if they deal primarily with individuals with disabilities or with disability issues. If the focus of the story is on something else, at least 10 percent of the paragraphs must deal with disability issues or with individuals with disabilities.

Disability is considered to be physical disability. Persons with physical disabilities include wheelchair users, crutch or cane users; people who are blind or visually impaired; individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired; and persons with limited control of hands or of speech.

1. Article Number: To be artibrarily assigned

2. Publication Number:

01	ATLANTA CONSTITUTION	09	MIAMI HERALD
02	BALTIMORE SUN	10	NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
03	CHICAGO TRIBUNE	11	NEWSDAY
04	CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR	12	NEW YORK TIMES
05	DETROIT FREE PRESS	13	ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH
06	DETROIT NEWS	14	USA TODAY
07	LOS ANGELES TIMES	15	WALL STREET JOURNAL
08	LOUISVILLE COURIER-JOURNAL	16	WASHINGTON POST

3. Date: Month--Date

4. Reporter Number: To be assigned and indexed for reference

5. Article's focus: 1. (PRIMARY)

Story deals PRIMARILY with some aspect (medical, economic, political) of disability or persons with physical disabilities. Persons with physical disabilities include wheelchair users, crutch or cane users; people who are blind or visually impaired; individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired; and persons with limited control of hands or of speech.

2. (SECONDARY)

Story deals SECONDARILY with disability. Story focuses on another issue or topic, but there is some mention of disability or individuals with disabilities in the story.

Borderline cases can be determined by number of paragraphs dealing with disability. 50 % or more of them deal with disability--it's PRIMARY (the disability does not have to be re-mentioned specifically each paragraph); less than half of the paragraphs deal with disability or an individual with a disability it's SECONDARY.

6. Roles of Individuals with Disabilities:

For each story, is the prevailing aspect of portrayal of individuals with disabilities:

(0) Individuals not depicted.

TRADITIONAL--persons with disability viewed as malfunctioning in a medical or economic way. The source of disability-related limitations lies within the individual. Society's role is to either cure or maintain the individual medically or economically. In extreme cases, the individual is considered to be deviant or less than human because of the disability.

(1) Medical model -- emphasis is on the individual's physical disability as an illness, individual is portrayed as dependent on health professionals for cures or maintenance. The individual is passive and is a patient who suspends regular activities for the duration of "illness." This also includes stories which focus on the physical aspects of an individual's disability.

(2) Supercrip model -- this is a subcategory of the medical model. Individuals in this role are also focused on because of the deviant nature of the physical characteristics of their disability, compounded by the fact that they deviate from the traditional concept of "disabled person" by "living a normal life in spite of their disability." The individual with a disability is portrayed as deviant (either superhuman in the case of rock-climbing paraplegics and those pushing their wheelchairs across Canada or simple special in the case of a story about two teenage boys with cerebral palsy who live "regular" lives.) This role reinforces the idea that persons with disabilities are deviant--that this person's accomplishments are amazing for someone who is less than complete. The story about the teenagers would be a cultural pluralism story except for the fact that their "normalcy" is presented in the context of "isn't it amazing that he can be so regluar <u>IN SPITE OF</u> his disability." The emphasis on how unusual this is presents them in a deviant manner.

(3) Social Pathology model -- person with disability portrayed as a disadvantaged client who looks to the state or to society for economic support which is considered a gift not a right. The individual with a disability is portrayed as a passive recipient of government or private economic support.

PROGRESSIVE--Views the major disabling aspect of a person's handicap as lying in society's inability to adapt its physical, social or occupational environment and its attitudes toward those who are different.

(4) Minority/Civil Rights model -- person with disability shown as member of minority group dealing with legitimate political grievances of persons with disabilities. Individual is more than simply a person with a disability, but is involved in disability rights political activities. In the case of political action demanding changes, individuals with disabilities who actively demand political changes would be coded as minority civil rights.

(5) Cultural Pluralism -- Person with disability considered a multi-faceted individual, whose disability is just one aspect of many. No undue attention is paid to the disability. Individual is portrayed as are others without disabilities.

Traditional breakdowns can be determined by combining categories 1, 2 and 3; Progressive by combining 4 and 5.

Overall dominant pattern will be determined by a) type of portrayal of individual who is the major focus of the story. If more than one type is evident, the role will be that which dominates in the most space; b) if there is no one major individual, that which predominates in the most space. If still undeterminable, consensus of coders will determine aspect of roles of individuals with disabilities.

7. Issue Covered:

Issues are things of concern to society in general. To be considered more than a "Personal--no issue" story, the story must link that which is being covered to something outside of the immediate story being told. If the story deals with more than one issue, that which takes the most space will be the one coded.

00-Personal-no issue emphasized

Traditional

01-Medical-- having to do with medical treatments, procedures etc. which relate to disability. Also stories which focus on physical aspects of a disability.

02-Govt. Support for PWD-- having to do with social service, medicaid-medicare type programs sponsored by federal of state government.

03-Private Support for PWD-- non governmental support programs, churches, charities, foundations etc.

04-Institutionalization-- dealing with individuals with disabilities who are kept in institutions with no hope of getting out--warehousing aspect.

05-Special Education-- special, separate school programs for pwd

06-Special Employment--Hire the handicapped, special or separate jobs for pwd

07-Right to Die--stories dealing with whether life support can be terminated (or active euthanasia performed) on individuals with disabilities who have expressed wish to terminate their lives.

08-Victimization--person with disability portrayed as victim of something such as a crime.

Progressive

41-Access-- physical access to buildings, programs, meetings, parking, transportation, recreation etc. Full participation in all that society offers.

42-Americans With Disabilities Act.

43-Discrimination--situations where access or participation is deliberately denied to an individual because of his or her disability.

44-Independent living-- A specific movement which seeks to keep pwd out of institutions living as much on their own as possible.

45-Mainstream Education-- referring to educational programs which integrate schoolchildren with disabilities with other students

46-General Employment--employment of pwd in mainstream jobs

47-Consumer Issues--where products services etc. used by pwd are evaluated, discussed, recalled OR where a general products use by pwd is featured. These can include new technology.

48-Language--dealing with terminology used to refer to disability or people with disabilities.

49-Non-disability issue--main issue covered in story is not related to disability, however pwd is involved or disability aspect is noted, but not the main focus.

OTHER ISSUES ARE SURE TO COME UP AND WILL BE EVALUATED AND ADDED BY AGREEMENT OF CODERS.

8. Issue Aspect:

Will be evaluated as No Issue (0), Traditional (1) or Progressive (2) by primary issue the story covers. The above listing is to be used as a guideline. Additional issues will be assigned Traditional or Progressive status by consensus of coders.

Story Language:

Language used to refer to persons with disabilities will be evaluated in the text of the story. Individual references will be coded as Traditional or Progressive based on criteria attached. Number of Traditional and Progressive references will be counted.

A- Photo captions are not considered part of the text.

B- Accurately reported official titles are not counted.

C- When a term is used (appropriately or inappropriately to describe something which is not a person (eg. handicapped parking, disabled seating) it is not included since it does not refer to persons.

D- Direct quotes <u>are</u> included.

E- References to body parts are coded the same as references to people (James' arm was disabled--PROG; John's legs were crippled--TRAD)

F- When language is referred to as terms (such as "Clogston dislikes the term 'wheelchair-bound'"), it is not counted. Only count them if they are used by the reporter as part of his or her story

G- Traditional language includes anything that is "The"-ed: The disabled, the handicapped, the blind, the deaf, etc. This makes what is an adjective (handicapped) which should modify a noun (person) into a noun which identifies certain individuals as nothing but that attribute.

H- Disability groups object to use of euphemisms. Terms such as handicapable, mentally different, physically inconvenienced and physically challenged are considered consescending. They reinforce the idea that disabilities cannot be dealt with upfront. (Research & Training Center on Independent Living, "Guidelines for Reporting and Writing About People with Disabilities," 1990) Language of this type is to be coded as Traditional.

I- Progressive language includes persons with disabilities (or handicaps or visual limitations) as well as disabled persons (or handicapped persons, or blind men etc.)

J- Also, look for a condition someone may have (such as polio).
"Roosevelt had polio" is Progressive.
"Roosevelt suffered from polio" is Traditional
"Roosevelt was a victim of polio" is Traditional

The operational thing here is the verb. "Suffered" and "was a victim of" are Traditional with negative connotations. Disability groups consider such terminology to be sensationalizing disability (focusing on such individuals' deviance). "Had" is more neutral and is to be coded as Progressive.

K- References to DISABILITY RIGHTS or DISABILITY MOVEMENT or DISABILITY BILL are considered progressive.

Example:

He would prefer to see the money spent on advertising or promotions to get people to work more closely with the physically challenged. That term -- along with

"handicapped" and "disabled" -- seems fine to him.

the physically challenged--counts as one Traditional for two reasons. First, it is a euphamism (H), the other is that it is used as a noun (G).
handicapped--does not count--it is a term, not referring to individuals (F).
disabled--does not count, same reason as above (F).
9. Presence of Story Language:

If there is language in the story referring to disability, code as 1.
No language, code as 0.

If this is coded as 1, go to 10, 11 & 12. If coded as 0, go to 13.

10. Number of progressive story references:

Enter number of progressive language references.

11. Number of traditional story references:

Enter number of traditional language references.

12. Percentage of traditional story references:

Enter percentage of traditional language references.

Headline Language:
Language of headline and subhead(s) evaluated same as story language.

13. Presence of headline language

If there is language in the headline referring to disability, code as 1.
No language, code as 0.
If this is coded as 1, go to 14, 15 & 16.

14. Number of progressive headline references.
Enter number of progressive language references.

15. Number of traditional headline references.
Enter number of traditional language references.

16. Percentage of traditional headline references.
Enter percentage of traditional language references.

"Crippled"

"Invalid"

"Disabled"

"Brain Damaged"

These words paint a picture of incapacity and inability when they are used to describe persons with disabilities. Fortunately, we have the opportunity to change the way handicappers are viewed, and there is an effort underway in Michigan to promote the independence and abilities of these competent, talented individuals.

The Michigan Commission on Handicapper Concerns (MCHC), with the cooperation of the Governor's Human Services Cabinet Council, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, and the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council, has compiled a list of appropriate terms and acceptable alternatives to use when writing or talking about people with physical or mental handicap characteristics.

We can help put an end to discrimination by paying more attention to how we communicate, and help reduce the 65% unemployment rate among handicappers. Together, we can change what it means to be a handicapper in America today by promoting independence through equality.

ABILITY ACTION LINE

The Michigan Commission on Handicapper Concerns serves as an advocate and information resource for the state's 1.5 million handicappers. For more information, call MCHC's Ability Action Line at:

1-800-729-2253 (voice or TDD)

or

1-800-SAY-ABLE (voice or TDD)

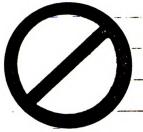
What's In A Name?

Michigan Department of Labor
Elizabeth P. Howe, Director

LABOR

Michigan Commission on Handicapper Concerns
Patrick D. Carrion, Executive Director

P.O. Box 30015
Lansing, Michigan 48909
(517) 373-8397 (voice or TDD)



TERMS TO USE WHEN WRITING OR TALKING ABOUT HANDICAPPERS

APPROPRIATE TERMS are listed first, immediately followed by the INAPPROPRIATE TERMS they replace.

- **Handicapper***
  Cripple, crippled, crip, gimp
- **Person with a disability**
  Disabled person
- **Person who has mental or physical disabilities or handicapping characteristics**
  Disabled victim, unfortunate victim, poor, pitiful, abnormal, deformed, invalid
- **Person who is not a handicapper**
  Non-disabled or non-handicapper
  Normal, able-bodied, healthy or whole
- **Person who has a mobility impairment, wheelchair user, or person who uses a wheelchair**
  Wheelchair bound, restricted to a wheelchair, confined to a wheelchair, or wheelchair victim
- **Person with quadriplegia, paraplegia, person who is paralyzed, or person who uses a wheelchair**
  Quad, quadriplegic, paraplegic
- **Person who uses crutches or cane**
  Cripple, gimp
- **"Person who has..." "Person who experienced..." "Person with..."**
  Victim of, suffers from, afflicted with, stricken with...
- **Person who has a disability resulting from or caused by...**
  Invalid, victim, afflicted with...
- **Person with a stroke characteristic**
  Person who has had a stroke
  Stroke victim, suffered from a stroke
- **Person with a congenital disability or congenital handicap**
  Birth defect
- **Person with mental illness or disability**
  Psychiatric disability
  Mental deviant or crazy, mentally deranged, insane
  Former mental patient
- **Person with mental retardation**
  Person who has mental retardation
  Retard, moron, feebleminded, mentally deficient or defective
- **Person with brain injury**
  Brain damaged
- **Person with traumatic brain injuries**
  Traumatically brain injured victim
- **Person with a closed head injury**
  Closed head injured victim
- **Person with arthritis**
  The arthritic
- **Person who has epilepsy**
  The epileptic
- **Person who is deaf, hearing impaired, hard of hearing, has partial hearing loss**
  Deaf mute, deaf and dumb
- **Person who has a speech disorder, a person withc speech, or a person with a speech impairment**
  Mute
- **Person of short stature, dwarf, little person**
  Midget
- **Person who is blind, visually impaired, has partial vision or loss of vision**
  Blink, blur, bluff, squint, or hard of seeing
- **Person with Down's Syndrome**
  Mongoloid
- **Person with cerebral palsy**
  Palsied or spastic
- **Person with learning disabilities**
  Retard, lazy, stupid

*"Handicapper" is a term generally accepted as being the appropriate term for referring to persons with mental or physical handicapping characteristics. Michigan is the first state to officially sanction the term "handicapper," which is a noun defined as "one who competes with a handicap."

A partial list of endorsees

Accent on Living Magazine, Bloomington, IL
Advocates for Children, New York, NY
Advocates for Persons With Disabling Conditions in Allied Health, Chicago, IL
American Association for the Advancement of Science, Washington, DC
American Society of Deaf Children, Silver Spring, MD
American Cleft Palate Association, Pittsburgh, PA
Arthritis Foundation, Atlanta, GA
Association for Children and Adults With Learning Disabilities, Pittsburgh, PA
Association for Persons With Severe Handicaps, Seattle, WA
Association for Retarded Citizens, Portland, OR
Association for Retarded Citizens of the U.S., Arlington, TX
Council for Advancement and Support of Education, Washington, DC
Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, Washington, DC
Disabled Ability Resource Environment, El Paso, TX
Disabilities Research and Information Coalition, Seattle, WA
Disability Focus, Inc., Washington, DC
Disability Rag
Epilepsy Foundation of America, Landover, MD
Gazette International Networking Institute, St. Louis, MO
Goodwill Industries of America, Inc., Bethesda, MD
Huntington's Disease Society of America, Inc., New York, NY
Kids on the Block, Columbia, MD
Mainstream Magazine
Mental Health Association of Colorado, Boulder, CO
National Amputation Foundation, Inc., Whitestone, NY
National Association of the Deaf, Silver Spring, MD
National Ataxia Foundation, Wayzata, MN
National CHALLENGE Committee, Washington, DC
National Down Syndrome Congress, Park Ridge, IL
National Down Syndrome Society, New York, NY
National Easter Seal Society, Chicago, IL
National Fraternal Society of the Deaf, Mt. Prospect, IL
National Head Injury Foundation, Framingham, MA
National Information Center for Handicapped Children and Youth, Washington, DC
National Mental Health Association, Alexandria, VA
National Organization on Disability, Washington, DC
National Spinal Cord Injury Association, Newton, MA
Prader-Willi Syndrome Association, Edina, MN
President's Committee on Employment of People With Disabilities, Washington, DC
United Scleroderma Foundation, Inc., Watsonville, CA
World Institute on Disability, Berkeley, CA

Partial list of appropriate terminology:

blind, visually impaired
deaf, hearing impaired
mentally retarded
nondisabled
physically disabled

cerebral palsy
Down syndrome
head injury
mental illness
paraplegia, quadriplegia
partial hearing loss
seizure disorder
specific learning disability
speech impairment

Guidelines for Reporting and Writing About People With Disabilities

Third Edition, 1990

Introduction

As professional communicators, educators, and human service providers, you are in a unique position to shape the public image of people with disabilities. The words and images you use can create a straightforward, positive view of people with disabilities or an insensitive portrayal that reinforces common myths and is a form of discrimination.

Here is a set of clear guidelines to help you make better choices in terms of language and portrayal. These *Guidelines* offer suggestions for appropriate ways to describe people with disabilities and explain preferred terminology. They reflect input from over 100 national disability organizations and have been reviewed and endorsed by media and disability experts throughout the country. Although opinions may differ on some terms, the *Guidelines* represent the current consensus among disability organizations. Portions of the Guidelines have been adopted into the *Associated Press Stylebook*, a basic text for media professionals.

Please use the *Guidelines* when you write or report about people with disabilities. If you would like more information, additional copies of the *Guidelines*, or an attractive 14 × 20 poster of disability writing style "do's" and "don'ts," contact: Media Project, Research and Training Center on Independent Living, Bureau of Child Research, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045. You can also phone: 913-864-4095 (voice/TDD).

The Research & Training Center on Independent Living

Funded in part by National Institute of Disability and Rehabilitation Research.

Portrayal Issues

Please consider the following when writing about people with disabilities.

1. Do not focus on a disability unless it is crucial to a story. Avoid tear-jerking human interest stories about incurable diseases, congenital impairments, or severe injury. Focus, instead, on issues that affect the quality of life for those same individuals, such as accessible transportation, housing, affordable health care, employment opportunities, and discrimination.

2. Do not portray successful people with disabilities as superhuman. Even though the public may admire superachievers, portraying people with disabilities as superstars raises false expectations that all people with disabilities should achieve at this level.

3. Do not sensationalize a disability by saying afflicted with, crippled with, suffers from, victim of, and so on. Instead, say person who has multiple sclerosis or person who has polio.

4. Do not use pejorative labels for disability groups, such as "the retarded," "the deaf." Emphasize people not labels. Say people with mental retardation or people who are deaf.

5. Put people first, not their disability. Say women and activists, children who are deaf, people with disabilities. This puts the focus on the individual, not the particular functional limitation. Because of editorial pressures to be succinct, we know it is not always possible to put people first. If the shorthand is positive and accurate, consider the following variations: disabled citizens, nondisabled people, wheelchair-user, deaf girl, paralyzed child, and so on. Crippled, deformed, suffers from, victim of, the retarded, lame, etc. are never acceptable under any circumstances.

6. Emphasize abilities not limitations. Consider uses a wheelchair/braces, walks with crutches, rather than confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair-bound, or is crippled. Similarly, do not use emotional descriptors such as unfortunate, pathetic, and so forth.

Disability groups also strongly object to using euphemisms to describe disabilities. Blind advocates dislike partially sighted, because it implies avoiding acceptance of blindness. Terms such as handicapable, mentally different, physically inconvenienced, and physically challenged are considered condescending. They reinforce the idea that disabilities cannot be dealt with upfront.

7. Do not imply disease when describing disabilities that result from a prior disease episode. People who had polio and experience aftereffects years later have a *post-polio* disability. They are not currently experiencing the disease. Do not imply disease with people whose disability has resulted from anatomical or physiological damage (e.g., person with spina bifida or cerebral palsy). Reference to disease associated with a disability is acceptable only with chronic diseases, such as arthritis, Parkinson's disease, or multiple sclerosis. People with disabilities should never be referred to as patients or cases unless their relationship with their doctor is under discussion.

8. Show people with disabilities as active participants of society. Portraying persons with disabilities interacting with nondisabled people in social and work environments helps break down barriers and open lines of communication.

Appropriate terminology

Listed below are preferred words that reflect a positive attitude in portraying disabilities.

Blind. Describes a condition in which a person has loss of vision for ordinary life purposes. *Visually impaired* is the generic term preferred by some individuals to refer to all degrees of vision loss. Use *boy who is blind, girl who is visually impaired, or man who has low vision.*

Cleft lip. Describes a specific congenital disability involving lip and gum. The term here lip is anatomically incorrect and stigmatizing. Use *person who has a cleft lip* or *has a cleft palate.*

Congenital disability. Describes a disability that has existed since birth but is not necessarily hereditary. The term birth defect is inappropriate.

Deaf. Deafness refers to a profound degree of hearing loss that prevents understanding speech through the ear. *Hearing impaired* is the generic term preferred by some individuals to indicate any degree of hearing loss—from mild to profound. It includes both hard of hearing and deaf. *Hard of hearing* refers to a mild to moderate hearing loss that may or may not be corrected with amplification. Use *woman who is deaf, boy who is hard of hearing,* or people who are *hearing-impaired.*

Developmental disability. Any mental and/or physical disability that has an onset before age 22 and may continue indefinitely. It can limit major life activities. Term includes individuals with mental retardation, cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy (and other seizure disorders), sensory impairments, congenital disabilities, traumatic accidents, or conditions caused by disease (polio, muscular dystrophy, etc.)

Disability. General term used for a functional limitation that interferes with a person's ability, for example, to walk, lift, hear, or learn. It may refer to a physical, sensory, or mental condition. Use as descriptive noun or adjective, such as *persons who are mentally and physically disabled* or *man with a disability.* Impairment refers to loss or abnormality of an organ or body mechanism, which may result in disability.

Down's syndrome. Describes a form of mental retardation caused by improper chromosomal division during fetal development. Mongol or mongoloid are unacceptable.

Handicap. Not a synonym for disability. Describes a condition or barrier imposed by society, the environment, or by one's own self. Handicap can be used when citing laws and situations but should not be used to describe a disability. Say *The stairs are a handicap for her.*

Hard inquiry. Describes a condition where there is temporary or long-term interruption in brain functioning. Use *persons with head injury; people who have sustained brain damage, women who has traumatic brain injury,* or *boy with a closed head injury.*

Learning disability. Describes a permanent condition that affects the way individuals with average or above-average intelligence take in, retain, and express information. Some groups prefer specific learning disability, because it emphasizes that only certain learning processes are affected. Do not say slow learner, retarded, etc. Use *has a learning disability.*

Mental disability. The Federal Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) lists four categories under mental disability: psychiatric disability, retardation, learning disability, and (physical) head trauma. Use these four terms for specific instances; otherwise, *mental disability* or *cognitive impairment* is acceptable.

Mental Illness. Words such as crazy, maniac, lunatic, demented, and psycho are offensive and should never be applied to people with mental health problems. Psychotic, schizophrenic, neurotic, and other specific terms should be used only in proper context and checked carefully for medical and legal accuracy. Acceptable terms are *people with emotional disorders, psychiatric illness, mental problems,* or *mental disabilities.*

Nondisabled. Appropriate term for people without disabilities. Normal, able-bodied, healthy, or whole are inappropriate.

Seizure. Describes an involuntary muscular contraction, a brief impairment or loss of consciousness, etc. resulting from a neurological condition, such as epilepsy. Rather than *epileptic, say girl with epilepsy* or *boy with a seizure disorder.* The term convulsion should only be used for seizures involving contraction of the entire body.

Small/dwarf stature. Do not refer to people under 4'10" as dwarfs or midgets. Use *person of small (or short) stature.* Dwarfism is an accepted medical term, but it should not be used as general terminology. Some groups prefer "little people." However, that term implies a less than full, adult status in society.

Spastic. Describes a muscle with sudden abnormal and involuntary spasms. Not appropriate for describing someone with cerebral palsy. Muscles are spastic, not people.

Special. Describes that which is different or uncommon about any person. Do not use to describe persons with disabilities (except when citing laws or regulations).

Speech disorder. A condition in which a person has limited or difficult speech patterns. Use *child who has a speech disorder.* For a person with no verbal speech capability, use *woman without speech.* Do not use mute or dumb.

Spinal cord injury. Describes a condition in which there has been permanent damage to the spinal cord. Quadriplegia denotes substantial or total loss of function in all four extremities. Paraplegia refers to substantial or total loss of function in the lower part of the body only. Say *man with paraplegia* or *woman who is paralyzed.*

REPORTING ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Suggestions from the Disabilities Committee of the American Society of Newspaper Editors

Since ink first was put down on newsprint, journalists have struggled to find appropriate terms to describe groups of people on the basis of race, national origin, sexual orientation, physical differences and the like. We've changed our minds often, as time, preference and sensitivities dictated.

Most of us are becoming increasingly sensitive regarding the descriptions we use for people with disabilities. For example: When, if ever, is it appropriate to write "disabled," "handicapped," "blind," "partially sighted," or "deaf and dumb"? Our sensitivities tell us not to use such terms as "crippled," but some still write that a person is "confined to a wheelchair," or "suffers from polio," or that a person on a life-support system is a "vegetable."

Part of the confusion stems from the fact that groups representing people with disabilities do not always agree on terms. For instance, there still is no firm consensus regarding the terms "handicapped" and "disabled."

One task of ASNE's Disabilities Committee is to seek some answers to this confusion, to develop a list of recognized terms to describe disabilities, and to point out some pitfalls. What follows in this booklet is a distillation of the preferences of the dozens of groups that represent Americans with disabilities, augmented by our collective judgment as a committee. It covers only the basics, however, and there are bound to be disagreements over some of the terms.

One important guideline: Choose terms that focus on the person, rather than on the disability -- "a person with cerebral palsy," rather than "a CP"; "people who are deaf," rather than "the deaf"; "he has seizures," rather than "he's spastic." We must do a better job of helping our readers recognize the personhood of people with disabilities.

There is, of course, more to reporting and writing about disabilities than just the proper use of terms.

Choose terms that focus on the person, rather than on the disability -- "a person with cerebral palsy," rather than "a CP"; "people who are deaf," rather than "the deaf"; "he has seizures," rather than "he's spastic."

For instance:

- Why mention a person's disability in a news story unless it is a relevant part of that story? Just because a person with a disability achieves success does not necessarily mean he or she has been successful because of, or in spite of, the disability.
- Avoid pity. People with disabilities are not helpless. Being courageous, brave and inspirational is a trait many people have; adapting to a disability does not necessarily require these traits.
- How do you interview a person with a disability? First of all, allow plenty of time. Treat him or her as a person who has many qualities in addition to a disability. Learn what the person can do -- try not to be amazed at his or her accomplishments.
- Maintain eye contact. And don't raise your voice unless you're asked to. Don't assume that a person with one disability also has many others.
- If the disability is a principal part of the story, you might try going somewhere with the interviewee, to become more aware of barriers he or she encounters.
- And don't worry about using expressions like "I'll see you later" to a person who is blind, or "Let's walk down to the restaurant" to a person who uses a wheelchair, or "Let's talk" to people who sign. They use these terms as well.
- And finally: Be sure to ask about disability issues of concern to your subject. That could lead you to another story.

Information for this booklet came from many sources, including Challenge International, The League of Human Dignity, United Cerebral Palsy, The Quill, National Easter Seal Society, The Research and Training Center on Independent Living, and Gallaudet University. The Disabilities Committee would like to thank all of them.

Thomas W. Grein
Bill Brelsky
Disabilities Committee

A Glossary of Terms

AFFLICTED: Connotes pain and suffering. Most people with disabilities do not suffer chronic pain. It is better to be more specific. For example, "He has muscular dystrophy."

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: A progressive, incurable, disabling brain disease leading to severe dementia. But by no means is it a synonym for dementia or senility. The disease is often misdiagnosed, and its name often is misused by lay people.

AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS (ALS): A rapidly progressive neuromuscular disorder in adults. ALS is caused by degeneration of the motor nerves in the spinal cord and leads to atrophy of the muscles. Also known as "Lou Gehrig's disease."

ARTHRITIS: Inflammation of the joints. There are two types: osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. Do not say, "The woman is arthritic," but rather "She has arthritis."

BIPOLAR DISORDER: A mental disorder caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain and characterized by severe mood swings. Also known as manic depression. People with this disorder generally are able to lead normal lives when the disorder is kept in remission by drug therapy. Some creative people with bipolar disorder have bursts of creativity during the so-called manic phase. (See MANIA and MANIC DEPRESSION)

BIRTH DEFECT: Try to avoid the term "defect" or "defective" when describing a person. "Congenital disability" is a reasonable synonym. (See CONGENITAL DISABILITY)

BLIND: Describes a person with a total loss of vision. Not appropriate for persons with partial vision. Use "partially sighted" or "visually impaired" in those cases. (See VISUALLY IMPAIRED)

CEREBRAL PALSY (CP): A condition caused by damage to the brain, most often during pregnancy or labor or shortly after birth. It is not a disease and is neither progressive nor communicable. Do not refer to a person as "cerebral palsied," or as "a CP." The term "CP" can be used to describe the condition but not a person who has the condition.

CHRONIC: Applied to a disease that lasts a long time, as distinguished from a short-term, or acute, illness. Beware applying it to mental patients in a pejorative way, however, implying that they are beyond rehabilitation.

CLIENT: A term often used in place of "patient" by health-care practitioners because it puts the service provider and the person receiving the service on a more equal footing. Increasingly, human service agencies are using the word "consumer" in the same way. (See PATIENT)

COMMUNICATIVE DISORDER: An umbrella term for speech, hearing and learning disabilities that affect the ability to communicate.

CONGENITAL DISABILITY: Describes a disability that has existed since birth. The term "birth defect" is not appropriate. (See BIRTH DEFECT)

CRIPPLED: Avoid this negative word when referring to a person. Say, "He has a physical disability."

DEAF: Describes a person with a total hearing loss. Not appropriate for persons with partial hearing. It is appropriate to say, "He is deaf." Do not say "He is profoundly deaf." Deafness is not a disease and is caused by accidents as well as disease. (See MUTE and HEARING IMPAIRMENT)

DEFECT: Avoid using this negative term to describe a disability. Bad examples: "She suffers from a birth defect" or "He has a defective leg."

DEFORMED: Describe the condition rather than using this general, negative term. (See DISFIGUREMENT)

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY: A severe mental or physical disability manifested prior to age 22 that is likely to continue indefinitely. The disability may substantially limit major activities such as mobility, learning, language and self-sufficiency.

DISABILITY: A lack of competent power, strength, or physical or mental ability – a limitation of function imposed by an impairment. The Americans with Disabilities Act defines "disability" as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major activities of an individual.

DISABLED: An adjective that describes a permanent or semi-permanent condition that interferes with a person's ability to do something independently, such as walk, see, hear, learn or lift. Example: "The amputation of his leg left him partially disabled." Do not say simply, "He is disabled" – because no one is totally disabled. And by all means do not use "disabled" as a noun – such as "The disabled will gather." It can be argued that every human being is disabled in one or more ways. (See HANDICAP)

DISEASE: A sickness; an active ailment. A disability itself is not a disease and does not indicate poor health.

DISFIGUREMENT: A scarred, injured appearance. Do not refer to people with disfigurements as "the disfigured," "victims of disfigurement," or "deformed." (See DEFORMED)

DOWN'S SYNDROME: Preferred over "mongoloid" to describe a form of mental retardation caused by improper chromosomal division during gestation.

DYING: About to die – a person near or at the time of death. Avoid saying someone is "dying of cancer" or "dying of AIDS" at a time when they are, in fact, living with those diseases.

DWARF: A medical term applied to some persons very short in stature and not normally proportioned. Dwarfism generally is hereditary, and there are more than 80 different types. Referring to a person of small stature as a "dwarf" or "midget" as general terminology is inappropriate.

EPILEPSY: A disorder marked by disturbed electrical rhythms of the central nervous system resulting in seizures. Do not call someone "an epileptic" but rather a "person with epilepsy" or "person with a seizure disorder." (See SEIZURE)

GUIDE DOG: A dog used by people who are blind or deaf to help guide them. Note that "Seeing Eye Dog" is a trademark; hence, all guide dogs are not Seeing Eye Dogs.

HANDICAP: Can be used to describe a condition that restricts normal achievement, but such usage has become less acceptable. Except when citing laws or regulations, avoid using "handicap" to describe a disability. The term should be used in reference to environmental barriers preventing or making it difficult for full participation. For example, people who have paralysis and use a wheelchair are handicapped by stairs. Also avoid the expression "handicapped access" – which implies that the access is handicapped. (See DISABLED)

HANDICAPPED PERSON: Use "person with a disability in most instances." A disabling condition may or may not be handicapping. (See DISABLED and HANDICAP)

HEARING IMPAIRMENT: Used to describe loss of hearing from slight to severe. Some people prefer the term "partial hearing." Hearing-impaired or hard-of-hearing people are not deaf. Some 14 million Americans are hearing impaired, while 2 million are deaf. (See DEAF)

HOMEBOUND: Means bound for home. Don't apply it to people who, as a result of their disabilities, spend a great deal of time at home.

IMPAIRED: Used when referring to physical impairment. But "a person with partial hearing" is preferable to "he is hearing impaired."

INVALID: Literally means "not valid." Do not use it to describe a person with a disability.

LAME: An old term used to describe a disability. Avoid it, as it is almost always seen as negative.

LEARNING DISABILITY: A general term that applies to physical or psychological problems that affect learning. Sometimes indicates the existence of minimal brain dysfunction (MBD).

MAINSTREAMING: The principle of integrating persons with disabling conditions into society at large.

MANIA and MANIC DEPRESSION: Mania is a type of mental disorder characterized by impulsiveness and intense craving. Manic depression is a type of psychosis characterized by mood swings from mania to depression. "Bipolar disorder" is the preferred term for manic depression. (See BIPOLAR DISORDER)

MENTALLY ILL: A person diagnosed as having a mental disorder. Terms such as "mentally deranged" or "crazy" are inappropriate. "Neurotic," "paranoid," "psychotic," "sociopathic," and "schizophrenic" are specific and technical medical terms.

MENTAL RETARDATION: Describes a person with significantly below-average general intellectual functioning, manifested during the developmental period. Can range from mild to profound. Terms such as "moron," "mentally deficient" or "feeble-minded" are very often misused and misunderstood.

MONGOLOID: Avoid this term. Rather use "a person with Down's Syndrome" or "people with mental retardation." (See DOWN'S SYNDROME)

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS): An unpredictable, progressive, potentially crippling condition of the brain and spinal cord that generally has its onset in young adulthood.

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY (MD): A generally hereditary, progressive condition that weakens the muscles.

MUTE: Preferred term to describe a person who cannot speak, or chooses not to. Terms such as "deaf-mute" and "deaf and dumb" are inappropriate. "Unable to speak" often is appropriate. Most people who are deaf have healthy vocal cords. If they cannot speak, it is because they do not hear the correct way to pronounce words. Most mute people have been deaf from birth or infancy. (See DEAF)

NON-DISABLED: Avoid using "non-disabled" or "able-bodied" to describe people without a disability. Such terms imply that persons with disabilities are generally less able.

NORMAL: A thing or trait that conforms to a standard or a mainstream pattern; approximately average in a psychological trait such as intelligence or personality. Better to describe the trait, rather than the person, as "normal." Avoid this term when describing a person without a disability.

PARANOID: Deluded, often to the extent of feeling persecuted. Generally, this term is regarded as a symptom rather than a diagnosis.

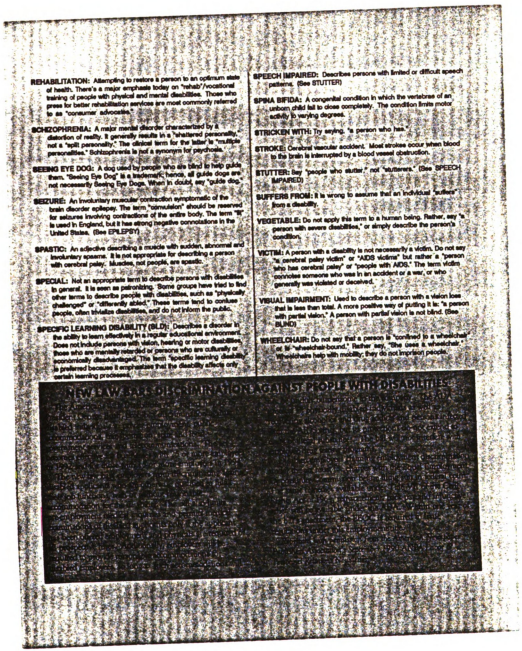
PARAPLEGIA: Total or partial paralysis of both legs. (See QUADRIPLEGIA)

PATIENT: Use this term only when referring to someone presently in a hospital or under a doctor's immediate care. Do not say "He was a polio patient," but rather "He had polio." (See CLIENT)

POLIO: Poliomyelitis. An acute infectious viral disease resulting in paralysis because of damage to the motor nerve cells of the spinal cord. Paralysis caused by polio is stable and not progressive once the infection is over. Do not say "polio victim" or "polios." Say "a person who had polio." (See POST-POLIO SYNDROME)

POST-POLIO SYNDROME: A condition that occurs in adulthood in people who had polio. It is characterized by fatigue and muscle weakness. Many people who had polio as children appear to have experienced post-polio syndrome. (See POLIO)

QUADRIPLEGIA: Paralysis of all four limbs. (See PARAPLEGIA)



REHABILITATION: Attempting to restore a person to an optimum state of health. There's a major emphasis today on "rehab"/vocational training of people with physical and mental disabilities. Those who press for better rehabilitation services are most commonly referred to as "consumer advocates."

SCHIZOPHRENIA: A major mental disorder characterized by a distortion of reality. It generally results in a "shattered personality, not a "split personality." The clinical term for the latter is "multiple personalities." Schizophrenia is not a synonym for psychosis.

SEEING EYE DOG: A dog used by people who are blind to help guide them. "Seeing Eye Dog" is a trademark; hence, all guide dogs are not necessarily Seeing Eye Dogs. When in doubt, say "guide dog."

SEIZURE: An involuntary muscular contraction symptomatic of the brain disorder epilepsy. The term "convulsion" should be reserved for seizures involving contractions of the entire body. The term "fit" is used in England, but it has strong negative connotations in the United States. (See EPILEPSY)

SPASTIC: An adjective describing a muscle with sudden, abnormal and involuntary spasms. It is not appropriate for describing a person with cerebral palsy; Muscles, not people, are spastic.

SPECIAL: Not an appropriate term to describe persons with disabilities in general. It is even as patronizing. Some groups have tried to find other terms to describe people with disabilities, such as "physically challenged" or "differently abled." These terms tend to confuse people, often titillate disabilities, and do not inform the public.

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY (SLD): Describes a disorder in the ability to learn effectively in a regular educational environment. Does not include persons with, vision, hearing or motor disabilities, those who are mentally retarded or persons who are culturally or economically disadvantaged. The term "specific learning disability" is preferred because it emphasizes that the disability affects only certain learning processes.

SPEECH IMPAIRED: Describes persons with limited or difficult speech patterns. (See STUTTER)

SPINA BIFIDA: A congenital condition in which the vertebrae of an unborn child fail to close completely. The condition limits motor activity in varying degrees.

STRICKEN WITH: Try saying, "a person who has..."

STROKE: Cerebral vascular accident. Most strokes occur when blood to the brain is interrupted by a blood vessel obstruction.

STUTTER: Say "people who stutter," not "stutterers." (See "SPEECH IMPAIRED")

SUFFERS FROM: It is wrong to assume that an individual "suffers" from a disability.

VEGETABLE: Do not apply this term to a human being. Rather, say "a person with severe disabilities," or simply describe the person's condition.

VICTIM: A person with a disability is not necessarily a victim. Do not say "a cerebral palsy victim" or "AIDS victims" but rather a "person who has cerebral palsy" or "people with AIDS." The term victim connotes someone who was in an accident or a war, or who personally was violated or deceived.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT: Used to describe a person with a vision loss that is less than total. A more positive way of putting it is: "a person with partial vision." A person with partial vision is not blind. (See BLIND)

WHEELCHAIR: Do not say that a person is "confined to a wheelchair" or "wheelchair-bound." Rather say, "She uses a wheelchair." Wheelchairs help with mobility; they do not imprison people.

NEWS WATCH: DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

INTERCODER RELIABILITY
February 6, 1991

For each news story:	Percent Agreement
1. ARTICLE NUMBER	100%
2. NEWSPAPER NUMBER	100%
3. DATE	100%
4. REPORTER NUMBER	100%
5. ARTICLE'S FOCUS	100%
6. ROLES OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES	80%
7. ISSUE COVERED	90%
8. ISSUE ASPECT	100%
9. PRESENCE OF STORY LANGUAGE	100%
IF YES (1)	
10. NUMBER OF PROGRESSIVE REFERENCES	90%
11. NUMBER OF TRADITIONAL REFERENCES	80%
12. PERCENTAGE OF TRADITIONAL REFERENCES	100%
13. PRESENCE OF HEADLINE LANGUAGE	100%
IF YES (1)	
14. NUMBER OF PROGRESSIVE REFERENCES	100%
15. NUMBER OF TRADITIONAL REFERENCES	90%
16. PERCENTAGE OF TRADITIONAL REFERENCES	90%

INTRACODER RELIABILITY
February 14, 1991

For each news story:

1.	ARTICLE NUMBER	100%
2.	NEWSPAPER NUMBER	100%
3.	DATE	100%
4.	REPORTER NUMBER	100%
5.	ARTICLE'S FOCUS	100%
6.	ROLES OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES	80%
7.	ISSUE COVERED	100%
8.	ISSUE ASPECT	100%
9.	PRESENCE OF STORY LANGUAGE	100%
	IF YES (1)	
10.	NUMBER OF PROGRESSIVE REFERENCES	80%
11.	NUMBER OF TRADITIONAL REFERENCES	80%
12.	PERCENTAGE OF TRADITIONAL REFERENCES	100%
13.	PRESENCE OF HEADLINE LANGUAGE	100%
	IF YES (1)	
14.	NUMBER OF PROGRESSIVE REFERENCES	90%
15.	NUMBER OF TRADITIONAL REFERENCES	100%
16.	PERCENTAGE OF TRADITIONAL REFERENCES	90%

Appendix C

Advantages of and Reliability and Validity of ATDP Scale (Form O)

Appendix C

Advantages of and Reliability and Validity of ATDP Scale (Form O)

No scale to measure attitudes toward persons with disabilities has been based exactly on the Progressive-Traditional model. Ideally, measurement of attitudes of media decision-makers would be accomplished by development of a valid and reliable instrument designed to measure attitudes specifically in terms of this model.

Development of a wholly new scale for this model would require extensive time, resources and commitment, however, and might not be advantageous. Antonak and Livneh (1988) note that construction of a valid and reliable 25-item summated rating scale would require, at a minimum, "700 respondents of various demographic characteristics . . . research support, . . . essentially unlimited computer access, and two years or more of time to invest in the process." (pp. 109-110)

While using an already established scale has the disadvantage of measuring aspects of attitude toward persons with disabilities which don't coincide exactly with the Progressive-Traditional dichotomy, use of such a scale has advantages aside from the lower expense of time

and resources. Use of a scale which has been administered to other groups during a 30-year period allows for comparison of the attitudes media decision-makers with those groups which have been surveyed.

The ATDP measures attitudes in terms of "perceived differences between disabled and nondisabled persons." (Yuker & Block, 1986, p. 6) High scores reflect respondents' perception of persons with disabilities as similar to those without disabilities; low scores indicate perception of persons with disabilities as "different from and inferior to nondisabled people." (p.1)

The differentness indicated by low scores corresponds to the Traditional viewpoint of persons with disabilities as deviant. In this case, the handicapping effects of a disability are perceived as being rooted in the individual, thus making him or her different. Researchers have found a high correlation between low ATDP scores and measures of prejudice (Yuker & Block, 1986) which Allport (1958) referred to as a "hostile attitude toward a person who belongs to a group . . . and is therefore presumed to have the objectionable qualities ascribed to [members of that group]." (p.8) Prejudice toward a group is considered equivalent to the stigma ascribed to a deviant (Becker, 1963). Therefore, perceiving the person with a

disability as different can be considered equivalent to holding some aspect of the Traditional perspective.

Similarly, high ATDP scores can be interpreted as a respondent's viewing persons with disabilities as essentially the same as nondisabled, but limited by a disability which is rooted not in the individual but caused by some outside force such as society or the environment. Thus the positive score, indicating perceived similarness between persons with and without disabilities, is equivalent to holding a Progressive attitude toward persons with disabilities.

Finally, the concepts of Traditional and Progressive attitudes toward persons with disabilities have face validity with Yuker's positive - negative dichotomy. When a respondent was instructed to answer the ATDP items based on the Traditional perspective, a distinctly negative score was obtained on the ATDP-0; a hypothetical Progressive response yielded a highly positive score.

Reliability and Validity of the ATDP:

In the nearly 30 years since the introduction of the ATDP, several tests of the scale's reliability and validity have been conducted.

Reliability is concerned with whether a respondent's score on a scale correctly measures his or her true

attitude toward persons with disabilities. The ATDP has undergone a number of reliability checks which are outlined below.

Test-retest reliability is a measure of the instrument's stability over time. Scores of the same group surveyed at either end of a time interval are correlated to arrive at this estimate. Test-retest stability estimates for Form O range from r=+.70 to r=+.95 with an interval of 5 weeks or less. Values range from r=+.67 to r=+.70 when the interval was 4-16 months. (Yuker & Block, 1986)

Alternate or parallel forms reliability estimates gauge how adequate the content of the scale is. This estimate is obtained by administering two parallel forms of the same scale within a reasonably short period of time. A significantly positive correlation between scores on the two forms indicates that the item content of the two scale forms represent the same thing.

Estimates of the parallel form reliability of the three versions of the ATDP range from r=+.57 to r=+.83. Form O's estimated equivalence with form A ranged from r=+.61 to r=+.69; with form B ranged from r=+.57 to r=+.77. (Yuker, et al., 1966; Yuker & Block, 1986)

Delayed alternate-forms or stability-equivalence reliability is a combination of the previous two

reliability estimates. It is designed to measure both changes in subjects' scores over time and changes due to unrepresentativeness of the scale's items, ranged from a median estimate of r=+.62 (Forms O and A over a 6-week interval) to r=+.83 (Forms O and B over six weeks). (Antonak & Livneh, 1988; Yuker & Block, 1986)

In order to establish content validity (how appropriate, complete and representative the scale items are in measuring attitudes toward persons with disabilities) during the scale's development, the authors of the ATDP conducted review of statements describing persons with disabilities. They then submitted their extracted items to several psychologists to review the items' relevance to what they intended to measure. An item analysis was conducted to get item discrimination between high- and low-scoring groups for each form. (Yuker et al., 1966; 1970; Antonak & Livneh, 1988)

Construct validity deals with how well the scale measures the theoretical construct or trait it is designed to measure. This was assessed by correlating ATDP scores with scores obtained by other instruments designed to measure attitudes toward persons with disabilities. Many of the correlations with scales to measure attitudes toward general disability were quite high, ranging from a median of r=+.98 (for ATDP with slight wording

modifications, including "person who has a handicap", Bates, 1969), r=+.80 (ATDP-O with handicapped instead of disabled, Lazar, 1973), r=+.57 (AD scale with ATDP, Linkowski, 1969), r=+.55 (Disability Factor Scales, Siller & Chipman, 1965) to r=+.54 (Scale of Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons, Antonak, 1982).

Validity estimates correlating the ATDP with scales measuring attitudes toward specific disabilities are not as high. These include correlations ranging from r=+.12 to r=+.21 (scales measuring attitudes toward muscular dystrophy and paralysis), r=+.10 to r=+.62 (deafness), r=+.19 to r=+.83 (blindness) and r=+.60 to r=+.61 (attitudes toward wheelchair users. Yuker and Block (1986) caution that these validity checks with scales measuring attitudes toward specific disabilities are from only two studies (Siller & Chipman, 1965; Bowman, 1979) and that additional data are needed to provide strong evidence of convergent results. (p. 18)

Concurrent validity is a measure of the extent to which a scale is associated with measurement of other related traits. Age was found to have little correlation with ATDP scores (median r=+.01 over 30 studies). Some gender differences were found, with females demonstrating slightly greater acceptance of physical disability than

males. Education level had a positive correlation with higher ATDP scores. (Yuker & Block, 1986)

Correlations were found between negative attitudes toward persons with disabilities and measures of prejudice (median r=+.43, 9 studies) and positive ATDP scores and measures of attitudes toward mainstreaming (median r=+.47, 3 studies). High positive ATDP scores were correlated positively with other characteristics such as low aggressiveness and hostility, self- and other-insight, positive self-concept and ego-strength. Low scores correlated with measures of authoritarianism, ethnocentrism and dogmatism. (Antonak & Livneh, 1988; Yuker & Block, 1986)

Since the ATDP is a self-reporting measure with obvious intent, the potential exists of respondents faking answers to create a favorable impression. Yuker and Block (1986) reported that when subjects were asked to fake positive responses to ADTP Form O, their scores did not differ significantly from their scores obtained earlier under standard conditions. Yuker et al. (1970) found that the ATDP measures did not correlate significantly with social desirability measures.

Appendix D

ATDP Scale (Form O)

ATDP - FORM O

No._____ 3-9/10/57

ATDP SCALE

Mark each statement in the left margin according to how much you agree or disagree with it. Please mark every one. Write +1, +2, +3 or -1, -2, -3: depending on how you feel in each case.

+3: I AGREE VERY MUCH	-1: I DISAGREE A LITTLE
+2: I AGREE PRETTY MUCH	-2: I DISAGREE PRETTY MUCH
+1: I AGREE A LITTLE	-3: I DISAGREE VERY MUCH

_____ 1. Parents of disabled children should be less strict than other parents.

_____ 2. Physically disabled persons are just as intelligent as non-disabled ones.

_____ 3. Disabled people are usually easier to get along with than other people.

_____ 4. Most disabled people feel sorry for themselves.

_____ 5. Disabled people are the same as anyone else.

_____ 6. There shouldn't be special schools for disabled children.

_____ 7. It would be best for disabled persons to live and work in special communities.

_____ 8. It is up to the government to take care of disabled persons.

_____ 9. Most disabled people worry a great deal.

_____ 10. Disabled people should not be expected to meet the same standards as non-disabled people.

_____ 11. Disabled people are as happy as non-disabled ones.

_____ 12. Severely disabled people are no harder to get along with than those with minor disabilities.

_____ 13. It is almost impossible for a disabled person to lead a normal life.

_____ 14. You should not expect too much from disabled people.

_____ 15. Disabled people tend to keep to themselves much of the time.

_____ 16. Disabled people are more easily upset than non-disabled people.

_____ 17. Disabled persons cannot have a normal social life.

_____ 18. Most disabled people feel that they are not as good as other people.

_____ 19. You have to be careful of what you say when you are with disabled people.

_____ 20. Disabled people are often grouchy.

Appendix E

Administration of the Survey

Appendix E

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SURVEY

Both the ATDP form and the occupation-specific survey were distributed in the form of a self-administered mail questionnaire. The questionnaire was pretested during July and August, 1990. An early version of the survey form (pp 195-198) and cover letter (p. 199) was mailed to 15 reporters at four newspapers (The Boston Globe, Denver Post, Hartford Courant and Philadelphia Inquirer) whose stories on disability had been studied the previous year (Clogston, 1990). Five responses were obtained from the first wave of mailings.

Four additional responses came in following telephone contacts and a second mailing (see accompanying letter, p. 200). Telephone conversations with reporters who had responded and further examination of the physical appearance of the survey form resulted in a number of cosmetic changes to the final survey form (pp. 201-204) and a streamlining of the accompanying letter (p. 205).

This letter and survey form were mailed to 257 reporters whose bylines had appeared in stories in the content sample. One of those reporters had died before the surveys were sent out and was not considered part of the targeted sample.

A number of telephone inquiries from targeted respondents indicated that several felt they were not the appropriate person to respond because disability issues were not their primary beat. This was taken into account in the letter which accompanied the second mailing to 165 reporters (p. 206) which began about four weeks after the initial mailing. This letter noted that responses were desired from reporters who may not regularly cover disability issues. The second wave letter also mentioned the specific story or stories about disability written by each reporter.

A total of 157 reporters returned the surveys for a response rate of 61 percent. Of these, nine ATDP responses were unusable because more than three of the items were left blank.

The following questions are about experiences you have had with persons who have physical disabilities. Persons with physical disabilities include wheelchair users, crutch or cane users; people who are blind or visually impaired; individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired; and persons with limited control of hands or of speech.

First, I'd like to know about some of your personal contacts with individuals with physical disabilities:

1. Please mark each statement in the left margin according to how much you agree or disagree with it. Please mark every one. Write +1, +2, +3 or -1, -2, -3: depending on how you feel in each case.

+3: I AGREE VERY MUCH	-1: I DISAGREE A LITTLE
+2: I AGREE PRETTY MUCH	-2: I DISAGREE PRETTY MUCH
+1: I AGREE A LITTLE	-3: I DISAGREE VERY MUCH

_____1. Parents of disabled children should be less strict than other parents.

_____2. Physically disabled persons are just as intelligent as non-disabled ones.

_____3. Disabled people are usually easier to get along with than other people.

_____4. Most disabled people feel sorry for themselves.

_____5. Disabled people are the same as anyone else.

_____6. There shouldn't be special schools for disabled children.

_____7. It would be best for disabled persons to live and work in special communities.

_____8. It is up to the government to take care of disabled persons.

_____9. Most disabled people worry a great deal.

_____10. Disabled people should not be expected to meet the same standards as non-disabled people.

_____11. Disabled people are as happy as non-disabled ones.

_____12. Severely disabled people are no harder to get along with than those with minor disabilities.

_____13. It is almost impossible for a disabled person to lead a normal life.

_____14. You should not expect too much from disabled people.

_____15. Disabled people tend to keep to themselves much of the time.

_____16. Disabled people are more easily upset than non-disabled people.

_____17. Disabled persons cannot have a normal social life.

_____18. Most disabled people feel that they are not as good as other people.

_____19. You have to be careful of what you say when you are with disabled people.

_____20. Disabled people are often grouchy.

2. Please place a check mark next to each experience that applies to your experience with persons with physical disabilities.

1_____ I have read or heard little about persons with physical disabilities.

2_____ I have learned a lot about persons with physical disabilities through reading, movies, lectures or observations.

3_____ A member of my immediate family has a physical disability.

4_____ Another relative has a physical disability.

5_____ A friend of mine has a physical disability.

6_____ I have had social contact with persons with physical disabilities (members of clubs, parties, etc.)

7_____ I have worked with a person with a physical disability.

8_____ I have had a boss or supervisor with a physical disability.

9_____ I have had contact with persons with physical disabilities in another professional context (eg. news source, interview subject, etc.)

10____ I myself have a physical disability.

3. How many times, if any, have you talked, worked, or in some other way had personal contact with persons with physical disabilities in the past month?

_____

a-How many times in an AVERAGE month? _____

4. How comfortable have you generally felt during your experiences with persons with physical disabilities?

_____ I felt very uncomfortable

_____ I felt quite uncomfortable

_____ I felt a little uncomfortable

_____ I felt somewhat comfortable

_____ I felt quite comfortable

_____ I felt very comfortable

Next, I'd like to find out about some of your professional contacts with persons with physical disabilities:

5. During the last four months of last year (from September to December, 1989) did you write any stories about persons with physical disabilities where you did not refer to that disability in the story?

_____ Yes _____No

5a. If Yes, please list the story(ies) and when they appeared:

_____

_____

_____

6. Does your news operation use a written stylebook or style guidelines or have unwritten policies which deal with appropriate language regarding persons with physical disabilities?

   a. Written?

   _____ Yes _____ No

   If Yes, what is their source?_____

   b. Unwritten guidelines?

   _____ Yes _____ No

   If Yes, how are you made aware of them?_____

   _____

7. Does your news operation have a regular beat which covers issues related to persons with physical disabilities?

   _____ Yes _____ No

   7a If Yes, who presently covers it? _____

8. Does your news organization have any regular columns/articles which deal with persons with physical disabilities?

   _____ Yes _____ No

   8a If Yes, who writes it? _____

9. On a normal day, are newsroom tasks, beats and responsibilities highly structured or do individuals tend to shift duties to meet the newsflow demands?

   a- _____ very highly structured
   b- _____ somewhat structured
   c- _____ slightly structured
   d-_____slightly unstructured
   e-_____somewhat unstructured
   f-_____very unstructured (responsibilities tend to shift)

10. To the best of your knowledge, are there now, or have there been in the past year, any persons with physical disabilities working as news/editorial employees in your operation?

    _____ Yes _____No _____Don't Know

11. What, if any, accommodations have been made which would allow persons with physical disabilities to enter and use the building in which your newsroom is located? (Please check all that apply)

a _____ Ramps or grade level entry (without steps) to allow wheelchair users to enter building.

b _____ Restrooms adapted for use by persons who use wheelchairs, canes or crutches.

c _____ Elevators installed or adapted for use by those who cannot climb stairs.

d _____ Braille markings or large sized type (on elevators, doors, equipment, etc.) to aid blind persons and those with visual impairments.

e _____ Visual fire alarms for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired.

f _____ No special accommodations made because these things were incorporated into the design of the building.

g _____ Building is not accessible or usable by those with disabilities because no accommodations have been made at this time.

h _____ Other (please explain)_____

_____

Finally, some questions on your background:

12. How many years have you been a reporter/editor? _____

13. How many years have you worked for your present employer? _____

14. What is your age? _____

15. What is your sex? _____ male _____ female

16. What is the highest level of education you have attained?

_____ completed high school _____ attended college, no degree

_____ graduated from college _____ some graduate work, no degree

_____ advanced degree

17. Did you have any formal journalism training in school?

Yes _____ No _____

Thanks again for participating in this research. If you would like to be informed of the results of the study, leave your name and address

_____

_____

_____

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
TELEPHONE (517) 353-6430

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1212

The Hartford Courant
285 Broad St.
Hartford, CT 06115

July 23, 1990

Dear Mr. :

As we enter the 1990s, newspapers are covering an increasing number of diverse groups, including individuals with physical disabilities. As part of research for my doctoral dissertation, I am trying to find out how newspaper reporters cover this segment of the population.

This survey is designed to find out what experiences you, a reporter, have had relating to those with physical disabilities.

Your newspaper was carefully selected to represent the most prestigious and highest circulation dailies in the country. You are being asked to respond because you have written about disability issues or about persons with disabilities.

If you could take ~~about 10~~ 6 or 7 minutes, we'd like to know about your experiences with persons with physical disabilities. These include those with mobility limitations (wheelchair users, crutch or cane users), sensory limitations (blind or visually impaired; deaf or hearing impaired) and persons with limited control or hands or of speech.

Participation in this survey is voluntary and your responses will be kept strictly confidential. There are no right or wrong answers, we just want to know about your experiences with disability. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this questionnaire.

Thank you for your help. You should find a stamped, addressed envelope to return the completed questionnaire.

If you are interested in the results of the survey, or have any questions regarding the study, please include a note with your response, or contact me at the telephone numbers listed below.

Sincerely,

John S. Clogston
517-353-9569/355-7947

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
TELEPHONE (517) 353-6430

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1212

The Boston Globe
135 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02115

August 23, 1990

Dear Ms. :

About a month ago I sent you a survey on newspaper coverage of persons with physical disabilities. With all of the activities of late summer, you might not have gotten a chance to complete it. The survey is part of research for my doctoral dissertation to find out how newspaper reporters cover individuals with disabilities.

The survey is designed to find out what experiences you, a reporter, have had relating to those with physical disabilities.

Your newspaper was carefully selected to represent the most prestigious and highest circulation dailies in the country. You are being asked to respond because you have written about disability issues or about persons with disabilities.

If you could take 6 or 7 minutes, I'd like to know about your experiences with persons with physical disabilities. These include those with mobility limitations (wheelchair users, crutch or cane users), sensory limitations (blind or visually impaired; deaf or hearing impaired) and persons with limited control or hands or of speech.

Participation in this survey is voluntary and your responses will be kept strictly confidential. There are no right or wrong answers, we just want to know about your experiences with disability. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this questionnaire.

Thank you for your help. You should find a stamped, addressed envelope to return the completed questionnaire.

If you already completed the survey and this crossed it in the mail, I thank you for your participation. If you are interested in the results of the survey, or have any questions regarding the study, please include a note with your response, or contact me at the telephone numbers listed below.

Sincerely,

John S. Clogston
517-353-9569/355-7947

The following questions are about experiences you have had with persons who have physical disabilities. Persons with physical disabilities include wheelchair users, crutch or cane users; people who are blind or visually impaired; individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired; and persons with limited control of hands or of speech.

First, I'd like to know about some of your personal contacts with individuals with physical disabilities:

1. Please mark each statement in the left margin according to how much you agree or disagree with it. Please mark every one. Write +1, +2, +3 or -1, -2, -3: depending on how you feel in each case.

+3: I AGREE VERY MUCH	-1: I DISAGREE A LITTLE
+2: I AGREE PRETTY MUCH	-2: I DISAGREE PRETTY MUCH
+1: I AGREE A LITTLE	-3: I DISAGREE VERY MUCH

_____ Parents of disabled children should be less strict than other parents.

_____ Physically disabled persons are just as intelligent as non-disabled ones.

_____ Disabled people are usually easier to get along with than other people.

_____ Most disabled people feel sorry for themselves.

_____ Disabled people are the same as anyone else.

_____ There shouldn't be special schools for disabled children.

_____ It would be best for disabled persons to live and work in special communities.

_____ It is up to the government to take care of disabled persons.

_____ Most disabled people worry a great deal.

_____ Disabled people should not be expected to meet the same standards as non-disabled people.

_____ Disabled people are as happy as non-disabled ones.

_____ Severely disabled people are no harder to get along with than those with minor disabilities.

_____ It is almost impossible for a disabled person to lead a normal life.

_____ You should not expect too much from disabled people.

_____ Disabled people tend to keep to themselves much of the time.

_____ Disabled people are more easily upset than non-disabled people.

_____ Disabled persons cannot have a normal social life.

_____ Most disabled people feel that they are not as good as other people.

_____ You have to be careful of what you say when you are with disabled people.

_____ Disabled people are often grouchy.

2. Please place a check mark next to <u>each</u> experience that applies to your experience with persons with physical disabilities.

_____ I have learned about persons with physical disabilities through reading, movies, lectures or observations.

_____ A member of my immediate family has a physical disability.

_____ Another relative has a physical disability.

_____ A friend of mine has a physical disability.

_____ I have had social contact with persons with physical disabilities (members of clubs, parties, etc.)

_____ I have had educational contact with persons with physical disabilities (teacher, classmate, etc.)

_____ I have worked with a person with a physical disability.

_____ I have had a boss or supervisor with a physical disability.

_____ I have had contact with persons with physical disabilities in another professional context (eg. news source, interview subject, etc.)

____ I myself have a physical disability.

3. How many times, if any, have you talked, worked, or in some other way had personal contact with persons with physical disabilities in the past month? _____

How many times in an <u>AVERAGE</u> month? _____

4. How comfortable have you generally felt during your experiences with persons with physical disabilities?

_____ I felt very uncomfortable

_____ I felt quite uncomfortable

_____ I felt a little uncomfortable

_____ I felt somewhat comfortable

_____ I felt quite comfortable

_____ I felt very comfortable

Next, I'd like to find out about some of your professional contacts with persons with physical disabilities:

5. During the first three months of this year (from January to March, 1990) did you write any stories about persons with physical disabilities where you did NOT refer to that disability in the story?

_____ Yes _____No

If Yes, please list the story(ies) and when they appeared:

_____

_____

_____

6. Does your news operation use a written stylebook or style guidelines or have unwritten policies which deal with appropriate language regarding persons with physical disabilities?

   a. Written?

   _____ Yes _____ No

   If Yes, what is their source?_____

   b. Unwritten guidelines?

   _____ Yes _____ No

   If Yes, how are you made aware of them?_____

   _____

7. Does your news operation have a regular beat which covers issues related to persons with physical disabilities?

   _____ Yes _____ No

   If Yes, who presently covers it? _____

8. Does your news organization have any regular columns/articles which deal with persons with physical disabilities?

   _____ Yes _____ No

   If Yes, who writes it? _____

9. On a normal day, are newsroom tasks, beats and responsibilities highly structured or do individuals tend to shift duties to meet the newsflow demands?

   a- _____ very highly structured
   b- _____ somewhat structured
   c- _____ slightly structured
   d-_____slightly unstructured
   e-_____somewhat unstructured
   f-_____very unstructured (responsibilities tend to shift)

10. To the best of your knowledge, are there now, or have there been in the past year, any persons with physical disabilities working as news/editorial employees in your operation?

    _____ Yes _____No _____Don't Know

11. What, if any, accommodations have been made which would allow persons with physical disabilities to enter and use the building in which your newsroom is located? (Please check all that apply)

_____ Ramps or grade level entry (without steps) to allow wheelchair users to enter building.

_____ Restrooms adapted for use by persons who use wheelchairs, canes or crutches.

_____ Elevators installed or adapted for use by those who cannot climb stairs.

_____ Braille markings or large sized type (on elevators, doors, equipment, etc.) to aid blind persons and those with visual impairments.

_____ Visual fire alarms for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired.

_____ No special accommodations made because these things were incorporated into the design of the building.

_____ Building is not accessible or usable by those with disabilities because no accommodations have been made at this time.

_____ Other (please explain)_____

_____

Finally, some questions on your background:

12. How many years have you been a reporter? _____

13. How many years have you worked for your present employer? _____

14. What is your age? _____

15. What is your sex? _____ male _____ female

16. What is the highest level of education you have attained?

_____ completed high school _____ attended college, no degree

_____ graduated from college _____ some graduate work, no degree

_____ advanced degree

17. Did you have any formal journalism training in school?

Yes _____ No _____

Thanks again for participating in this research. If you would like to be informed of the results of the study, leave your name and address

_____
_____
_____

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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TELEPHONE (517) 353-6430

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1212

September 28, 1990

The New York Times
229 W. 43rd Street
New York, New York 10036

Dear Ms. :

As part of research for my doctoral dissertation, I am trying to find out how newspaper reporters cover individuals with disabilities.

Your newspaper was carefully selected to represent the most prestigious and largest dailies in the country. You are being asked to respond because you have written about disability issues or about persons with disabilities.

If you could take 6 or 7 minutes, we'd like to know about your experiences with persons with physical disabilities. These include those with mobility limitations, sensory limitations and persons with limited control or hands or of speech.

Participation in this survey is voluntary and your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Although you have been assigned a code number to allow comparison with your news stories, no identifying information will be used in any reports on this research. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this questionnaire.

Thank you for your help. You should find a stamped, addressed envelope to return the completed questionnaire.

If you are interested in the results of the survey, or have any questions regarding the study, please include a note with your response, or contact me at the telephone numbers listed below.

Sincerely,

John S. Clogston

John S. Clogston
517-353-9569/355-7947

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
TELEPHONE (517) 353-6430

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1212

October 25, 1990

The Detroit News
615 Lafayette Blvd.
Detroit, MI 48226

Dear Mr. :

Last month I sent you a survey as part of research for my doctoral dissertation on how newspaper reporters cover individuals with disabilities.

You were selected because you wrote an obituary last January of News photographer Jim Varon. I am trying to survey two types of reporters; those who cover disability topics regularly and those who only occasionally write about persons with disabilities. Although you may be in the latter category, I'm still interested in your response.

If you could take 6 or 7 minutes, I'd still like to know about your experiences with persons with physical disabilities.

Participation in this survey is voluntary and your responses will be kept strictly confidential. No identifying information will be used in any reports on this research.

Thanks for your help. You should find a stamped, addressed envelope to return the completed questionnaire. If you have completed the survey and sent it back I thank you. There is no need to send this one in.

If you are interested in the results of the survey, or have any questions regarding the study, please include a note with your response, or contact me at the telephone numbers listed below.

Thanks again for your assistance,

John S. Clogston

John S. Clogston
517-353-9569/355-7947

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