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THE INFLUENCE OF FUNDING SOURCES ON EDITORIAL PAGE CONTENT IN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENT NEWSPAPERS IN MICHIGAN

By

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ABSTRACT

THE INFLUENCE OF FUNDING SOURCES ON EDITORIAL PAGE CONTENT IN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENT NEWSPAPERS IN MICHIGAN

By

Daniel O. Myers

While all media are vulnerable to external pressures on content, reports of censorship and recent court decisions on press freedom at the high-school level indicate student newspapers may be especially vulnerable. This study attempts to discern whether funding sources for college and university newspapers in Michigan affect the content of editorial pages. Starting with Herbert Altschull's economic model of media behavior, it is hypothesized that college media will follow the interests of the media paymaster--in most cases, the college administration.

The study consisted of a survey of college newspaper advisors and an analysis of the newspapers' editorial pages. Attempts were made to reach the 33 Michigan daily and weekly college student newspapers listed in the 1990 Editor and Publisher Year Book. Issues from 18 papers were obtained; 13 surveys were returned. Results found some correlation between administration control of funding and coverage of on-campus issues, but the data were not conclusive.

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INTRODUCTION

College and university student newspapers are often a part of a journalist's education. Students learn the elements of the newspaper business, including reporting, editing and production. Sometimes they also learn about censorship.

While all media are vulnerable to external pressures on content, reports of censorship and recent court decisions on press freedom at the high-school level indicate student newspapers may be especially vulnerable. Administrators may also be able to use persuasive measures more subtle than simple censorship, such as instituting an editorial board sympathetic to administration interests. In the case of newspapers run as part of the school's journalism program, grades may be used as a means of insuring a docile school newspaper.

Administration attempts to control student newspaper content often take the form of an assertion that the university has a right to control content if university funds are used in the newspaper's production. College administrators may assert that they function as the publisher of the student newspaper, and thus have the right to censor content.

This study attempts to discern whether funding sources

for college and university newspapers in Michigan affect the content of editorial pages. Starting with Herbert Altschull's economic model of media behavior, it is hypothesized that college media will follow the interests of the media paymaster; in most cases, the college administration.

I. PROBLEM AND CONTEXT

College newspapers, despite their claims of editorial independence from the institutions which create them, are far from financially independent. In a survey of the editors of all college dailies in the U.S., Atkins[1] found only nine of the papers to be completely independent. One of the major ties between college newspapers and the institution they cover is funding. Atkins found that, on average, 15 percent of the newspaper's budget came from the university in the form of mandatory student fees or direct grants.[2] Under this figure are subsumed arrangements including mandatory fees designated for the support of the paper, student activity fees collected and disbursed by the administration and activity fees collected by the administration and disbursed by the student government.

[1]Paul A. Atkins, The College Daily in the United States, (Morgantown, W.Va.: Communi-Tech Associates, 1982), p. 3.

[2]Id., p. 16.

Despite the legal protection offered to public schools, administrators may attempt to censor, chill, or suppress college level publications. One way they can go about this is by cutting back or suspending funding. A recent case in Minnesota illustrated this when the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota changed the newspaper's mandatory student fee funding to allow students to obtain a refund in response to a spoof issue many people found offensive. The Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals held the board had acted unconstitutionally.[3]

Protection for student publications arises from the First and Fourteenth amendments. The First Amendment guarantees religious freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and freedom to petition.[4] The Fourteenth Amendment extended the protection of First Amendment rights to all levels of government.[5] Because administrators at state colleges and universities are considered part of the government, the constitution prevents them from acts of censorship.[6]

In Papish v. University of Missouri Board of Curators,[7]

[3]Stanley v. Magrath, 719 F.2d 279 (1983).

[4]U.S. Constitution, amend. i.

[5]see Gitlow v. New York 268 U.S. 652 (1925).

[6]see Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U.S. 503.

[7]410 U.S. 667 (1973).

the court clearly stated that the First Amendment applied to college campuses. The court stated a graduate student could not be expelled for her part in the distribution of an underground newspaper featuring four-letter words and an editorial cartoon depicting police officers raping the Statue of Liberty and the Goddess of Justice.

This principle extends to the cutting off of funds in order to affect content. In Antonelli v. Hammond,[8] a Massachusetts court stated, "[w]e are well beyond the belief that any manner of state regulation is permissible simply because it involves an activity which is part of the university structure and is financed with funds controlled by the administration." In the case of Joyner v. Whiting,[9] the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against the president of a black college who took funding away from the student newspaper because of an editorial against allowing whites to attend the school. The court ruled that "[t]he state is not necessarily the unrestrained master of that which it creates and fosters....If a college has a student newspaper, its publication cannot be suppressed because college officials dislike its editorial comment." Other cases support the view that funding cannot be used as a weapon to suppress the

[8]308 F.Supp. 1329 (D.Mass. 1970).

[9]477 F.2d 456 (4th Cir. 1973).

college press.[10]

Publications at private colleges and universities are not as protected. While not conceding that newspapers at private colleges are unprotected, Inglehart[11] states that private college administrators are not prevented from acts of censorship by the constitution, nor do the courts seem prepared to assert protection for publications using other points of law. Theoretical grounds advanced for the protection of private college student publications have included the use of the college catalog as a contract or that the student newspaper is a public forum. So few cases have reached the courts in this area that there is no clear direction in the courts. A student who distributed publications on the private campus of Princeton University without permission won the right to do so on appeal.[12] Despite this case, the courts still seem to favor the private colleges.[13]

One recent public school case which has caused

[10]For example, see Stanley v. Magrath, 719 F.2d 279 (1983), (cited above) and Veed v. Schwartzkopf, 353 F.Supp. 149 (Neb. 1973), aff'd. 478 F.2d 1407 (8th Cir. 1973), cert. denied 414 U.S. 1135, (1973), (court denied student's request that funds be cut off from campus newspaper because of editorials with which he disagreed).

[11]Louis E. Inglehart, Freedom for the College Student Press, Contributions to the Study of Mass Media and Communications, Number 3, (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 65.

[12]State v. Schmid, 84 N.J. 535, 423 A.2d 615, 619 (1980).

[13]Inglehart, op. cit., p. 69.

controversy is that of Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier,[14] which involved the suppression of a high school newspaper by the school principal.

Before Hazelwood, free-speech cases at the high school level were based on the case of Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District,[15] where the Court held that student First Amendment rights could not be abridged unless their expression would "materially and substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school."

The Court in Hazelwood distinguished between two types of student speech: school-sponsored and incidental expression. For school sponsored speech, Hazelwood states that "educators do not offend the First Amendment by exercising editorial control over the style and content of student speech in school-sponsored expressive activities so long as their actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns."[16]

Despite the controversy this case has raised[17], it does not specifically apply to college publications. The Court expressly stated this: "[w]e need not now decide whether the

[14]484 U.S. 260 (1988).

[15] 393 U.S. 503 (1969).

[16]484 U.S. 260 (1988), 273.

[17]see, for example, Nancy J. Meyer, "Assuring Freedom for the College Student Press after Hazelwood," Valparaiso University Law Review 24 (1989): 53-76.

same degree of deference [to a school administrator's decisions regarding content] is appropriate with respect to school-sponsored expressive activities at the college and university level."[18]

However, some college administrators have apparently decided that Hazelwood opens the door for them to restrain the college student press. The Student Press Law Center reported receiving calls from college students and advisors concerned about the impact of Hazelwood decision on the college press. Some reported threats of censorship from administrators who saw the case as "an excuse to begin censoring."[19]

In addition, in its decision the Court referred to Papish, which dealt with a campus speech issue, stating Hazelwood was consistent with the earlier case in its differentiation between speech that is sponsored by the school and speech that is not. The Court stated Papish "involved an off-campus 'underground' newspaper that school officials merely had allowed to be sold on a state university campus."[20] The Court seemed to be asserting that the distinction between school-sponsored and unsponsored expressive activities can be applied at the college level. This assertion may lead to a broader interpretation of

[18]484 U.S. 260 (1988), note 7.

[19]Student Press Law Center, Law of the Student Press (Washington, D.C.: Student Press Law Center, 1988), p. 90.

[20]484 U.S. 260 (1988), note 3.

Hazelwood, extending it to the college level.

In his dissent, Justice Brennan noted the previous absence of a distinction between school sponsored and unsponsored speech and the relation to free speech cases on college campuses. Citing both Papish and the case of Healy v. James[21], Brennan wrote:[22]

> Particularly telling is this Court's heavy reliance on Tinker in two cases of First Amendment infringement on state college campuses....In neither case did this Court suggest the distinction, which the Court today finds dispositive, between school-sponsored and incidental expression."

The Student Press Law Center also notes another disturbing fact. The Court qualified the statement that Hazelwood does not apply to state colleges in the very same sentence in which it appears:[23]

> It is of some significance that the Supreme Court said it need not rule "now" on the rights of college students. One could infer that the Court might be willing to examine the extent of college student's rights in the future and perhaps even extend the Hazelwood ruling to them. For the Court to do that, however, it would have to ignore or overrule some important decisions it has handed down in the past 20 years.

But the Court may be willing to make that leap. That it is willing to limit student speech rights on college campuses can be seen in the decision of Board of Trustees of SUNY v.

[21]408 U.S. 169 (1972). The court ruled a student could not be prevented from forming a chapter of the SDS at a state college merely because college officials disagreed with the organization's political message.

[22]484 U.S. 260 (1988), 282.

[23]Student Press Law Center, op. cit., p. 90.

Fox,[24] where the Court limited a student's right to hold "Tupperware parties" in his dorm room. The Court based this decision on the commercial nature of the speech, but it showed a willingness to limit student speech at institutions of higher education that is troubling. Commercial speech, that is, speech involved in the solicitation of a transaction, most notably advertising and sales pitches, is less protected than "core" speech, such as political debate and discussion. In SUNY, the majority opinion characterized the university's interest in "promoting an educational rather than commercial atmosphere on SUNY's campus"[25] as substantial; presumably, then, it would pass as a "legitimate pedagogical concern." Although Tupperware parties are far removed from campus newspapers, the willingness of the court to find educational atmosphere a substantial reason for curtailing speech is troubling. It would seem that college students are no longer assumed to be younger adults; rather, they are older children.

The college press, at least at public institutions, enjoys constitutional protection under the First and Fourteenth Amendments. The bulk of case law, despite some troubling exceptions, supports the right of the student to free speech. Prior restraint, censorship, restriction of funds and harassment of student reporters and editors is also prohibited. Only legitimate time, place and manner restraints

[24]109 S.Ct. 3028.

[25]Id., 3032.

can be imposed.

"All of this is very reassuring to the student journalist in the state college," writes Inglehart, "except that from time to time college officials ignore the legal restraints and case precedents and fire, punish, censor, restrain, chill, or destroy a campus newspaper, yearbook, or magazine."

It is the object of this study to examine how college administrators may influence content, even if their attempts do not lead to the courts.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Altschull found journalists to be "cavalier" about the influence of money on their livelihood. Although they were cognizant of costs and their own salaries and expenses, Altschull found little attention given to details of financing the news product:[26]

> The advertiser is often held in contempt: he and his kind are not welcome in the newsroom, and the reporter or his editor would cheerfully go to prison rather than allow his news judgment to be influenced by the crass commercial world of the advertiser...beyond the surface of reality he does not permit himself to go--for in the shadows...lies the verity that would surely explode the comforting folklore of the independence of the press.

Altschull states "the content of the press is directly

[26]J. Herbert Altschull, Agents of Power, (New York: Longman, 1984), pp. 253-254.

correlated with the interests of those who finance the press."[27] Sometimes it is easy to determine the media paymasters, such as in the case of the Soviet Union. In other cases, it is more difficult to trace who the media financiers are.

Altschull found four basic patterns in the relationship of media and media financiers. He identified them as official, commercial, interest and informal:[28]

> In the official pattern, the content of the newspaper, magazine, or broadcasting outlet is determined by rules, regulations and decrees....No nation is free of official controls; the variations come in the degree of autonomy that is permitted. In the commercial pattern, the content of the press reflects the views of advertisers and their commercial allies, who are usually found among the owners and publishers....In the interest pattern, the content of the medium echoes the concerns of the financing enterprise....In the informal pattern, media content mirrors the goals of relatives, friends, or acquaintances, who supply money directly or who exercise their influence to ensure that the tunes of the piper are heard.

Altschull notes these patterns are often overlapped. He also states that it would be a grave error to assume they function at a purely national level. Although it is possible to argue the press is subject to less control in one country than another, press control varies from publication to publication within a country's borders.

Nor does Altschull claim that the boundaries set by the media paymaster for the functioning of media outlets are set

[27]Id., p. 254.

[28]Id., p. 254.

in stone. They vary over time, depending on the needs of the financier. Nevertheless, Altschull states, "No newspaper, magazine, or broadcasting outlet exceeds the boundaries of autonomy acceptable to the paymasters."[29]

Shoemaker[30] has identified five separate "pre-theories" of influence on media content which she harmonized with Altschull's assertion. These are that the media are a channel ("mirror") conveying an exact picture of social reality to an audience with little or no distortion; content is a function of media routines; content is influenced by journalists' socialization and attitudes; content results from social and institutional forces; and content is the result of ideological positions and a tool of the status quo (the "hegemony" or "mass-manipulative" approach).

Shoemaker reviewed more than 100 studies of influences on mass media content and grouped them under these classifications. With the exception of the "mirror" theory, which she rejected, she found that the approaches were related to each other and to Altschull's economic approach:[31]

> These approaches may form a theoretical hierarchy, from the routines of newsgathering approach at the media task level of analysis, to the ideological approaches at the macro level: Why is the news gathered in ways which may at times result in distortion? Because media employers

[29]Id., p. 255.

[30]Pamela J. Shoemaker, with Elizabeth K. Mayfield, "Building a Theory of News Content: A Synthesis of Current Approaches," Journalism Monographs 103 (June 1987), p. 2.

[31]Id., p. 21.

> and employees make decisions about how the job should be done. Why do they make such decisions? Because of economic, cultural, and technological imperatives. Why are these imperatives effective in controlling the media? Because the media are part of the status quo and have been influenced by the ideology of those in power to conform.

In preparing a theory of news content, Shoemaker postulates that media paymasters influence content. The different ideologies of financing interests will interact to influence content. These interactions will exert both direct and indirect influence on all aspects of the mass communication process:[32]

> The influence of financier ideology on content is not necessarily direct. It operates through the process of gathering, shaping and transmitting news, with differing patterns of competition, interaction with social and institutional sources, journalists' orientations, and newsgathering routines resulting from each unique mix of financing sources.

Often, these ideologies will conflict. Shoemaker theorizes that in these cases, content will reflect the strongest ideological position. The position will be mediated by other, opposing viewpoints.[33]

In the college setting, funding comes from both "interest" sources--the administration and campus community--and from commercial sources. As mentioned before, Atkins[34] found 15 percent of the funding for college dailies came from student fees or directly from the campus administration;

[32]op. cit., p. 23.

[33]Id., p. 24.

[34]op. cit., p. 16.

however 80 percent came from advertising revenue. Commercial sources, even though they may account for a large proportion of funding, may have their ideological influence weakened by the special position of college newspapers. Atkins discovered 84 percent of the dailies said they had no serious competition on campus. He noted that campus dailies are difficult to compete against because of high readership among the student population.

Shoemaker theorizes "[t]he more a media vehicle is funded by 'commercial' sources, the more its content will reflect the ideologies of audiences and advertisers."[35] Media seek profits by increasing advertising revenue. Because advertises seek both specialized and diverse audiences, media will serve these audiences. College newspapers serve the needs of the campus community. Often, various factions within this community will be in ideological conflict with each other.

An illustration of this can be seen from the late 1960s, when the University of California, at that time organized into one system with several campuses, convened a special commission to examine the "nature, role, and quality" of the student newspapers. The commission was convened in response to student unrest at Berkeley, UCLA and the other University of California campuses. In the commission's report, a journalism professor pointed out the conflict between the ideologies of campus groups inevitably led to occasional

[35]op. cit., p. 24.

conflicts between the college papers and administrators:[36]

> The professional journalist's task is to serve his readers, not the news source. And this is the cause of much of the consternation on the campus. The student journalist sees his readers as students....The nonstudents are the people whose activities he scrutinizes, particularly administrators....On the other hand, the administrator sees the student press much as he views other service groups.

Campuses may no longer be torn like they were in the 1960s, but one legacy of those times is a more independent student press. Campus dailies, to avoid censorship problems, cut ties to the administration and student governments.[37]

Advertisers will seek to place advertising in papers that can deliver a large audience of college students. In the case of large campus dailies, which are able to limit or sever financial ties to the administration, the commercial ideology will probably dominate. Shoemaker hypothesizes that media vehicles financed by commercial sources will use graphic devices more extensively and feature less complex, more readable content.[38]

In the case of smaller schools, commercial sources will probably not make up the majority of the newspaper budget. Because papers at smaller schools have smaller circulation, they will be less attractive to advertisers. More funds will

[36]The Student Newspaper: Report of the Special Commission on the Student Press to the President of the University of California, Norman E. Isaacs, chairperson (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1970), p. 20.

[37]Atkins, op. cit., p. 17.

[38]op. cit., p. 24.

come from the administration rather than advertising. The administration will then function as an "interest" group in its influence on content. Shoemaker hypothesizes that content in media vehicles funded by interest groups will be more specialized, reflecting only topics of direct interest to the group.[39]

The administration, as the form of government for the college environment, also may function in an official control pattern. This may take the form of an administrative advisor or board of control which exercises some authority over the newspaper content. In some cases this authority will be strong, in others weak. It may be that the advisor has no formal authority, and only advises student editors. However, despite the informal nature of such advice, the source (a person or board delegated authority by the administration) may tend to result in influence on content. This may be due to the implied or actual threat of censorship or removal of funds, or no threat at all; merely self-censorship on the part of students who are aware that their funding is partially in the control of the administration.

If the administration can be seen as a media paymaster in the case of college newspapers, we can also see how Shoemaker's theoretical hierarchy can be applied to the college setting: Media routines, which affect content, are affected by budgets, which in turn are under at least some

[39]op. cit., p. 25.

control by the administration. Student newspaper employees may make decisions to accept or institute routines because they are socialized in a particular manner, whether because a certain type of student chose to attend a college because of the school's reputation or by administrative pressure to conform. Administrative actions, taken because of the ideological position of the administration, will affect the socialization of the student body.

College newspapers, like national media systems, do not fit neatly into one niche. Interest, commercial and official patterns of media control may intertwine. Even informal effects on content may occur if a newspaper is funded by student or alumni donations. Despite this mingling of interests, we may expect to see campus media, like the professional media, follow Altschull's basic rule: media content will reflect the ideology of the media paymasters.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Few studies are conducted on the operation of college newspapers, and evidence of censorship is largely anecdotal in nature. Few content analyses of college newspapers exist.

Atkins[40] study of college dailies, mentioned above, is a useful portrait of the elite college press. Atkins surveyed

[40]op. cit.

all college dailies across the U.S. to determine their organization, independence from college administrations, budget and operations. He achieved a response rate of 78 percent. Fifty-five percent of the papers had circulations of more than 10,000. Although Atkins did not report specific budget data, it is clear that more than 90 percent of the papers had budgets of more than $100,000.

Atkins found that of the 80 newspapers surveyed, only nine were completely independent of the college they served. Atkins defined a newspaper as independent if it met the following criteria: it could receive neither student fees nor grants from the college or student administration, it had to rent or own the quarters it occupied and pay for utilities, it had to pay for equipment and supplies and pay any salaries of its student staffers.[41] Four newspapers were found to be independent except for utilities.

Atkins found advertising made up 80.5 percent of the average dailies revenue. Grants from the college administration and direct and indirect student fees made up 15.1 percent. As discussed above, the high percentage of advertising revenue may offset the influence of the administration on content.

Competition on campus includes campus radio and television stations, weeklies, and minority publications. None of these competitors threaten the existence of campus

[41]Id., 17.

dailies. Campus papers with large budgets are often as well-produced as commercial papers, and often may be in competition with them. Seventy-eight percent of the dailies noted competition from off-campus sources in bringing news to students, although such competition did not threaten the paper's existence.

It is possible that this competition, however, may not extend below the level of the large campus dailies. If smaller papers specialize in campus news, it is likely they will not be in competition with professional media vehicles.

The study found relatively little censorship. Seventy-five percent of the newspapers surveyed had no non-student reviewing copy. Fourteen editors out of the 16 interviewed in the follow-up to the survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "This daily is free of non-student censorship, even when controversial stories or editorials are involved." Only two indicated censorship problems occurred on their campus. Atkins did not examine whether student publications were "chilled" by threats or fear of administrative disapproval.

The dailies surveyed included some of the largest college newspapers in the nation. Such large operations can use their size as leverage if censorship problems occur. For example, The Minnesota Daily fought a successful legal battle to restore student fee funding cut by the board of regents of the University of Minnesota.[42] Atkins reported the Minnesota

[42]Stanley v. Magrath, 719 F.2d 279 (1983).

Daily to be the second largest college newspaper in his study, with a budget over $1.5 million in 1982. These papers, more financially independent of the colleges they serve than smaller papers, may not reflect the status of the majority of college papers, many of which are weeklies and not included in this study's sample.

In a content analysis of laboratory papers and independent papers, Wilson[43] found no clear margin of superiority for either type of publication. An independent paper was defined as "a student produced news periodical published at least once per week during regular academic sessions that maintained no curricular or instructional relationship to the academic journalism unit of its host institution, or to any faculty members." A laboratory paper was defined as "a student produced news periodicals published at least once per week during regular academic sessions that maintained a curricular or instructional relationship to the academic journalism unit of its host institution." Wilson used Associated Collegiate Press Guidelines to analyze content of 12 California university student papers. Papers were analyzed in five areas: category and content; writing and editing; editorial leadership and opinion; physical appearance and visual communication; and photography, art and graphics. Independent papers scored higher than laboratory papers in

[43]Clint C. Wilson II, "Independent v. Laboratory Papers," College Press Review 20 (Spring 1981): 10-13.

every category except graphics and photography, however, the margin of difference was only statistically significant in editorial leadership and opinion.

A survey and case study by Holmes[44] found censorship to be a problem at campus papers. The study consisted of a survey of all 337 public university newspaper editors and advisors. Responses were received from 129 advisors and 98 editors, a response rate of 38 percent and 29 percent respectively. From data obtained in the survey, follow-up visits were made to 18 campuses where "serious censorship" had occurred. From the survey, Holmes identified "censorship at the advisor level" in newspapers where public relations advisors supervised the papers. Thirty-nine percent of the advisors were found to have newspaper backgrounds.

Despite assertions that there was censorship at college newspapers, Holmes presents little evidence. It is unclear how he determined the existence of censorship at the advisor level. Holmes assumed low response rate was due to "many advisors with a public relations philosophy [feeling] threatened by the instrument." The presence of an advisor with a public relations background does not necessarily mean censorship. Nor did Holmes define what constituted "serious" censorship.

[44]Ivan Holmes, "Censorship Dragon Remains Alive, Well at Campus Papers," Journalism Educator 42 (Summer, 1987): 11-13.

Kopenhaver[45] found in a 1979 survey of the 400 members of the National Council of Publications advisors that 50 percent of the advisors always or usually read paper copy before publication, and 62 percent said advisors should correct spelling and fact errors before publication. The study found advisors at two-year public and private schools to be more likely to respond that advisors should usually or always read copy prior to publication, while four year public institutions were more likely to reply seldom or never. Kopenhaver's study did not indicate the return rate or statistical significance of her results. Nevertheless, the findings suggested the possibility that advisors were ill-informed about First Amendment principles and what constituted prior restraint.

In a more recent study of the attitudes of college newspaper advisors, Ryan and Martinson[46] found advisors to be overwhelmingly against censorship. The study surveyed members of the College Media Advisors membership list who were newspaper advisors. Two hundred surveys were sent out, 123 were returned for a response rate of 61.5 percent. Over 90 percent agreed with the statement that the student newspaper should be allowed to print a story it could prove was true

[45]Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver, "Advising Practices," College Press Review 20 (Spring 1981): 16-21.

[46]Michael Ryan and David L. Martinson, "Attitudes of College Newspaper Advisors Toward Censorship of the Student Press," Journalism Quarterly 63 (Spring 1986): 55-60.

even if printing the story might embarrass the college or university. Eighty-one percent placed student press freedom over protection of the institution from potentially damaging stories.

Despite this majority, Ryan and Martinson found it troubling that a sizeable minority of college advisors were willing to accept restraints. They found 26 percent of the advisors willing to accept controls if the newspaper was given a "privileged position" on the campus marketplace, and 21 percent who agreed or strongly agreed the college should have some say in what was printed if the institution paid some portion of the bills.

Although a minority, one would expect advisors to be hostile toward censorship because of their position as teachers of First Amendment principles. Unfortunately, the survey did not investigate the attitudes of administration officials or students to find whether content control would be supported by the college as a whole.

One interesting fact is that the survey found advisors whose publications were at least partially funded by the institution disagreed more strongly with the statement "the institution should have the authority to prohibit publication of articles it considers harmful." These responses may indicate that advisors whose newspapers are partially funded by the administration are more aware of and more resentful of administration pressures.

Because of the scarcity of content analysis of college newspapers, it was determined to look at studies of the effect of media financiers on the content of commercial newspapers.

Studies of presidential endorsements show a tendency for newspapers to make such endorsements based on the ideology of media owners rather than that of the editorial staff.

In a survey of editorial page editors, St. Dizier[47] found that, although editorial page editors voted for Democrat Walter Mondale by a 55 to 34 percent margin in 1984, endorsements from the newspapers went 57 to 33 percent in favor of Republican Ronald Reagan. Editorial page editors at daily newspapers with circulations of more than 50,000 were surveyed to determine editorial page positions and newspaper endorsement patterns. The sample was selected randomly from listings in Editor and Publisher Year Book. St. Dizier found newspapers were more likely to support Democratic platform positions than Republican positions, regardless of who the newspaper endorsed.

Editors described the owner of their newspaper as a Republican 49 percent of the time; 17 percent were labeled Democrats and 34 percent independent. Seventy percent of the editors said their publishers were more conservative than they were. St. Dizier hypothesized that the reason day-to-day editorials followed Democratic positions while the newspapers

[47]Byron St. Dizier, "Republican Endorsements, Democratic Positions: An Editorial Page Contradiction," Journalism Quarterly 63 (Fall 1986): 581-586.

endorsed the Republican candidate was due to interference by the publisher. Editors may be allowed to determine the day-to-day positions of the editorial page, but, when presidential election years come around, publishers decided who to endorse.

Chain ownership also may influence editorial pages endorsements, although the evidence is conflicting. In a separate study, St. Dizier,[48] in a study using the same data as the study above, found significant indications that publishers were more likely to be Republican and less likely than to be Democrats at chain-owned newspapers than at independent papers, and chain-owned newspapers more likely to endorse Ronald Reagan in 1984. Independent newspapers were found to be evenly split on their endorsements.

St. Dizier notes these data raise questions about the independence of editorial page editors at chain newspapers. "Apparently...taking a stand against the publisher's candidate for president is an exception," he wrote.

In an analysis of presidential endorsement data gathered by Editor and Publisher, Wackman, Gillmor, Gaziano and Dennis[49] found that chain endorsements in presidential election years were homogenous from 1960 to 1972, despite the

[48]Byron St. Dizier, "Editorial Page Editors and Endorsements: Chain-owned vs. Independent Newspapers," Newspaper Research Journal 8 (Fall 1986): 63-68.

[49]Daniel B. Wackman, Donald M. Gillmor, Cecilie Gaziano and Everette E. Dennis, "Chain Newspaper Autonomy as Reflected in Presidential Campaign Endorsements," Journalism Quarterly 52 (Fall 1975): 411-420.

insistence of chain spokesmen that newspaper's endorsement policies were independent of the chain. The authors speculated editors might be free in terms of formal controls, but informal practices such as hiring, management procedures and "peer pressure" could push chain newspapers toward uniformity.

Homogeneity was defined as 85 percent or more of the papers in a chain endorsing the same candidate. Homogeneity was found to be 80 percent in 1960 (Kennedy v. Nixon), 64 percent in 1964 (Johnson v. Goldwater), 76 percent in 1968 (Nixon v. Humphrey), and 91 percent in 1972 (Nixon v. McGovern). Data showed some difference in homogeneity for large v. small chains, but the differences were not consistent. Homogeneity was found to be less prevalent in chains which had newspapers in more than one region.

Despite this evidence, some questions remain. The size of the chains studied raises the question as to whether 85 percent was a sufficiently high threshold for homogeneity. The chains studied were mostly under 10 newspapers in size (81.5 percent in 1971).

A later study by Busterna and Hansen[50] contradicted the findings of the Wackman study. Busterna and Hansen examined Editor and Publisher data from the elections of 1976 to 1984.

[50]John C. Busterna and Kathleen A. Hansen, "Presidential Endorsement Patterns Within Daily Newspaper Chains," paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Washington, D.C., August 1989.

The study found no evidence of homogeneity in chain-owned endorsement patterns. This contradiction may be largely based on the difference between the studies' definitions of homogeneity. Busterna and Hansen stipulated that all newspapers within a chain had to endorse the same candidate to be counted as homogenous. Using the criteria from the earlier study, they authors found 65 percent homogeneity compared to 85 percent in the Wackman study. The authors speculated that real changes may have occurred in the organization of chains since 1972 to lead to less homogeneity. As chains become more heterogenous and expand in size, the authors believed chain control of editorial pages may have decreased. Further, the authors state that the tendency for newspapers to endorse Republican candidates overall may distort findings of homogeneity.

Wagenberg and Soderlund[51] studied the seven newspapers of the Canadian Free Press chain during the Canadian election of 1972. Taking the theme of editorials as their coding unit, the authors found no evidence of partisanship or collusion to "push" certain issues. No uniformity of thematic selection or partisanship was found.

The editorial page serves as more than a forum for election issues, however. One question that remains is whether ownership affects the day to day service a newspaper

[51]Ronald H. Wagenberg and Walter C. Soderlund, "The Influence of Chain-Ownership on Editorial Comment in Canada," Journalism Quarterly 52 (Spring 1975): 93-98.

offers its readers as a information source on local issues.

Thrift[52] studied "editorial vigor" in chain and independent newspapers to determine whether editorial coverage of local controversial issues declined after a newspaper was acquired by a chain. He defined editorial vigor as consisting of four ingredients: an editorial on a local topic, in argumentive form and controversial in nature and containing mobilizing information. Twenty-four West Coast dailies were read and coded for two different periods between 1960 and 1975. Thrift compared the proportion of editorials which fulfilled the requirements for a particular operational definition of vigor in papers between chain-acquired papers and independent papers in the periods before and after chain acquisition. He found vigor did decline significantly in newspapers after they were acquired by chains. It is possible that local topics may have become less important to chain owners, who presumably are removed from local concerns.

In a later study of 28 dailies, however, Hale[53] found no significant differences in editorial pages of newspapers before and after they were acquired by a chain. Hale was searching for diminished commitment to editorial pages due to

[52]Ralph R. Thrift, Jr., "How Chain Ownership Affects Editorial Vigor of Newspapers," Journalism Quarterly 54 (Summer 1977): 327-331.

[53]F. Dennis Hale, "Editorial Diversity and Concentration." in Press Concentration and Monopoly: New Perspectives on Newspaper Ownership and Operation, ed. Robert G. Picard, James P. Winter, Maxwell E. McCombs and Stephen Lacy (Norwood, N.J.: Ablex, 1988), pp. 161-176.

"greed" and lack of local commitment. The newspapers published about the same number of editorials, syndicated columns and cartoons, letters to the editor, local columns and cartoons, local art, and advertisements under both local and chain owners. The only measure Hale found a significant difference in was the publication of miscellaneous items on the editorial page, a category that included much non-editorial page material. Hale noted this could be considered an improvement under in papers chains.

In reviewing the literature, it is obvious the evidence for the influence of ownership on editorial page content is mixed. This does not mean, however, that Altschull's basic assumption, that the media reflect the interests of the media financiers, is wrong. Different relationship among financiers my mask the effects of media paymasters on content. For example, chain owners and independent owners are likely to have similar interests in the production of the newspaper. The profit motive will be similar. While an independent owner may take more of an editorial interest in local affairs, both chain and independent owners will often have their interests allied with advertisers. Thus the effects of chain ownership will be masked by a congruency of interests.

Further, the socialization of journalists may mask the influence of media financiers. It was discussed above how Shoemaker has pointed out the effect of media financiers on

newsroom socialization and routines. Gans[54] noted that journalists, because of their values, do not usually search for stories with which to antagonize advertisers.

In the case of college newspapers, the major media financiers are advertisers and the college administration. Students may also have some influence on funding, through student government or student groups. It may be that the interaction of these groups offset influence from any one source. Essentially, the greater funding from any one source, the more that group's ideology will be represented.

IV. HYPOTHESES

Because of their position in a protected market, college newspapers are not as beholden to advertisers as their commercial counterparts. Atkins found that most campus dailies were not threatened by off-campus competition for advertising revenue.[55] In the case of smaller campus media, or those which rely less on commercial sources for revenue and accept more funding from interest groups like the campus administration, the effect on content of administrative control of funds should be more obvious. We therefore can

[54]Herbert J. Gans, Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time, (New York, Pantheon Books 1979), p. 253.

[55]op. cit., p. 4.

expect to find Altschull's economic assumptions apparent in the microcosm of the college and university system.

The hypothesis of this study is that the percentage of a student newspaper's operating budget that is controlled by the university or college newspaper is inversely related to the amount of editorial page content that will be critical of the administration. Simply put, student newspapers will be reluctant to bite the hand that feeds them. If supported, this hypothesis will lend credence to the assumption that the ideology of media financiers influences media content.

The independent variable to be used in testing this hypothesis is the percentage of newspaper funding which is controlled by the college or university. Control is defined as funding disbursed from university general funds or supported by tuition, including fees and grants from the college or university.

The dependent variable to be used will be criticism of the university or college administration on the student newspaper editorial page. Administration will be assumed to include members of the college or university who are involved in making policy decisions for the institution; for example the provost, president, vice-presidents or deans.

The hypothesis is formally stated by two primary hypotheses and five secondary hypotheses. The primary hypotheses are:

> (1) The greater the percentage of newspaper funding controlled by the administration, the less editorial page

content will be critical of the administration.

(2) The greater the percentage of newspaper funding controlled by the administration, the more administration sources will be quoted in editorial page content.

In addition, because Altschull states that media financiers often mask their influence, an alternate hypothesis is proposed:

(3) The greater the percentage of newspaper funding controlled by the administration, the less on campus issues will be covered in editorial page content.

The data collected will allow us to test some additional hypothesis. These are:

(4) The lower the percentage of student employees who are journalism majors, the less critical editorial page content will be of the administration.

A frequent complaint of those who criticize the student press is lack of professionalism of student journalists. However, many commentators point to the importance of the college press as an education tool. "Administrators should recognize that a student gains education and experience by working on the campus newspaper," wrote one commentator.[56] Journalism majors involved in campus papers are presumably involved in that education in both classroom and "real-world" experience at the newspaper. While Journalism departments at many colleges and universities may have few or no formal links with the college paper, these programs are educating students

[56]Patrick Siddons, "The Frustrations and Rewards of College Journalism," in Enhancing Relationships with the Student Press, ed. John H. Schuh, New Directions for Student Services, no. 33 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1986), p. 58.

in the principles of the First Amendment. As an educator wrote in the mid-1960s, "We may turn out well-trained craftsmen from close control. But we want more than this--we want journalists, and they are bred only in the context of full liberty."[57]

(5) Newspapers which have faculty advisors with newspaper experience will be more critical of the administration than those papers with advisors without such experience.

Ryan and Martinson[58] found no significant variation in the responses given to their questionnaire when analyzed by media experience. Despite this, there seems to be an assumption that newspaper experience ensures less censorship.[59] Gans[60] found journalists to be ready to assert their moral and legal rights under the constitution to fight censorship. It is probable that the professional values of freedom of the press are carried from the newsroom over to the new role as educator.

(6) Public institutions will have a higher percentage of editorial page content critical of the administration than private institutions.

Publications at public institutions are protected by the First Amendment from administrative intervention. Because of

[57]Charles E. Barnum, "The Student Newspaper: Activity or Laboratory? The Modified Segregated Approach," in Freedom and Censorship of the College Press, eds. Herman A. Estrin and Arthur M. Sanderson (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Co., 1966), pp. 35-37.

[58]op. cit, pp. 57-58.

[59]see, for example, Holmes, op. cit.

[60]op. cit., p. 268.

the mass of case law and legal decisions upholding the rights of the college press at public institutions, administrators will be less likely to intervene in the operation of these newspapers.

> (7) Independent newspapers (not run as part of the college journalism department or as part of a class curriculum) will have more editorial page content critical of the administration than non-independent papers.

Wilson's[61] finding that laboratory papers lagged behind independent papers in editorial leadership and opinion supports this assumption. Staff at independent papers need not fear receiving a poor grade as a punishment for critical newspaper content. Further, a paper that is funded as part of the curriculum will probably receive more funding through administrative sources.

V. METHODS

The study consisted of two parts. The first part was a content analysis of the editorial pages of 18 daily and weekly college-level student newspapers in Michigan. Attempts were made to reach the 33 Michigan daily and weekly college student newspapers listed in the Editor and Publisher Year Book[62] for

[61]op. cit.

[62]Editor & Publisher International Year Book, (New York: Editor & Publisher Company, 1989), p. II-85.

1990. Twenty five papers were reached.[63] Samples were obtained from 18 papers. Although not a random sample, the 18 papers which responded did represent a reasonable mix of colleges and universities in Michigan. Responses were received from both two-year and four year institutions, as well as large public universities and smaller, private colleges.

The analysis was intended to gather data on the percentage of editorial page space devoted to campus issues and the characterization of the administration in editorial content. Data was obtained on type of editorial page content, sources used, groups mentioned in editorials and authors of editorial material. Five editorial page items were coded by two different coders to test of inter-coder reliability. Coders agreed on coding decisions 87 percent of the time. A second five articles were tested using the test-retest method found that over time coding decisions remained stable 86 percent of the time. The test examined 115 separate coding decisions. Each editorial page item consisted of 23 separate coding decisions.

Editorial pages were chosen because of the nature of the information sought. The study sought to evaluate opinions expressed about administrators. It was decided that opinions

[63]Campus newspaper offices were contacted by phone in April and early May of 1990. Many schools had already ended session for summer and newspaper offices were closed. In these cases, where possible, advisors were contacted through their campus offices.

would be more likely to be found on the editorial pages, rather than in news content, where reporters would be expected to strive for more objectivity.

Because of the variation in publication schedules of the papers involved, editors were asked to supply a minimum of eight copies to be used as two constructed weeks taken randomly from March and April, 1990. A total of 135 papers were obtained. The average number of issues per newspaper consisted of 7.5 papers. A total of 371 editorial page items were analyzed, ranging from 0 items in the lowest case to 54 in the highest. The average number of items analyzed was 20.

Only editorial material dealing with on campus issues was analyzed. An on-campus issue was defined as one which has an impact on the campus, such as tuition or student unrest. Positions of on-campus groups or persons on off-campus issues were counted if the primary focus of the article was the on-campus effect of the position. Each item was measured in square inches, not including headlines, graphics or photographs. Editorial cartoons were not used.

Independent variables were operationalized as follows to facilitate testing of the hypothesis: Favorable items were items which a reasonable person would consider favorable to the administration. If the conclusion was unclear, an item was favorable if more than 60 percent of statements about the administration are statements a reasonable person would find positive. Balanced items were items where neither favorable

nor unfavorable statements made up more than 60 percent of statements about the administration. Unfavorable items were items a reasonable person would consider unfavorable. If the conclusion was unclear, an item was unfavorable if more than 60 percent of statements about the administration were statements a reasonable person would find negative. Neutral items were those where statements about the administration were neither positive nor negative. Independent papers were those papers without a formal, curricular connection to a school's journalism program. Curricular papers were those papers which were produced as part of a journalism class or program. Funds controlled by administration included all funds directly or indirectly granted to the paper through the institution, including student activity fees. Public school referred to schools supported by state or local governments. Private school referred to schools supported by private organizations.

Appendix A contains the coding instrument and coding sheets. Complete definitions for the coding process will be found there.

The second part of the study was a questionnaire mailed to the advisors of all 25 newspapers contacted. Thirteen advisors responded, for a rate of 52 percent. The survey was designed to elicit the percentage of the budget controlled by the college or university administration, the advisor's perception of the newspaper's relationship with the

administration and advisor's newspaper experience.

In addition, advisors were asked whether there had been instances of censorship in the past year at their paper. Censorship in this case included stories or editorials pulled because of administration reaction or for fear of that reaction. Two papers reported instances of censorship, three cases at one and one case at the other. Advisers were not asked whether students modified stories or editorials for fear of administrative pressure.

The questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

Low response rate in this study can be ascribed to timing. Contacts were made in April and early May of 1990. Most colleges in Michigan follow the semester plan; therefore, many papers were closed for the summer and many advisors on vacation. The difficulty of gaining response limited the effectiveness of the survey.

Correlations were used to find the relationship of funding sources to material concerning the campus and the administration. Correlations were evaluated using guidelines suggested by Guilford and Williams. As reported in Weaver, these guidelines state that a correlation of less than .20 is almost negligible, a correlation of from .20 to .40 is considered to be a definite but small relationship, a correlation of .40 to .70 is a moderate correlation, .70 to .90 is considered a high correlation, and correlations of more

than .90 are considered to have a very high correlation.[64] Because the sample used was not a probability sample, statistical significance was not used. Means were calculated to measure differences between independent and curricular papers, advisors with newspaper experience and those without, and public and private schools. The standard error, a measure of variance among the results, was used in those tests to assess the strength of the means in measuring differences between the groups.

VI. RESULTS

Thirteen newspapers returned the survey form. The average budget was $236,500. However, the range was from less than $10,000 to more than $1 million. One advisor declined to give the budget total. Smaller campuses, those with enrollments of less than 8,400 students, averaged more funding under the control of the administration than larger schools. Sixty-eight percent of the funding for the newspaper at the smaller schools came from student fees or administration grants on average, while for larger schools the average percentage was 44 percent. The standard error was 8.4 and

[64]David H. Weaver, "Basic Statistical Tools," in Research Methods in Mass Communication, 2d ed., eds. Guido H. Stempel III and Bruce H. Westley (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1989), p. 78.

12.1, respectively. The large standard error in the case of larger schools is due to one school which reported a budget of more than $1.75 million. This was more than twice the next highest reported budget. The average sources of funds showed 28 percent from student fees, 26 percent from grants by the college or university, and 46 percent from advertising. Subscriptions accounted for less than one percent of newspaper income. See Figure 1 for the average percentage of funding sources.

Of the 18 papers sampled, 12 were from public and six from private colleges. Seven of the advisors responding had been employed in newspapers previously. The average editorial space per issue was 295 square inches. Of that space, 19.8 percent was devoted to campus issues.

The overwhelming majority of items was letters to the editor. The average number of letters to the editor per newspaper was 13. Two papers had no letters about on-campus subjects, while the maximum was 41, which occurred in one case. The next closest category was newspaper editorials, with 73 items. The average number of editorials was four. Four papers had no editorials about on-campus subjects. The maximum was eight, which occurred in three cases.

The administration was mentioned in 139 items, averaging eight per paper. Two papers never mentioned the college administration on the editorial page. Student groups appeared 246 times, averaging 14 times per paper. Two papers never

mentioned student groups on the editorial page. See Figure 2 for a percentage breakdown of groups mentioned in editorial page items.

The greatest number of sources cited were individual students, who were quoted either directly or indirectly 61 times, averaging three times per paper. Administrators and student group officials were each quoted 35 times, averaging twice per paper.

The majority of authors were student individuals, who were the authors of 199 items, averaging 11 per paper. Student group officials accounted for 72 items (averaging 4 per paper), and 57 authors were not identified (averaging 3 per paper). Administrators were the authors of only 5 items.

Of those items dealing with the administration, the statements about the administration were favorable 16 time, balanced seven times, unfavorable 89 times, and neutral 58 times.

Figure 1: Funding Sources

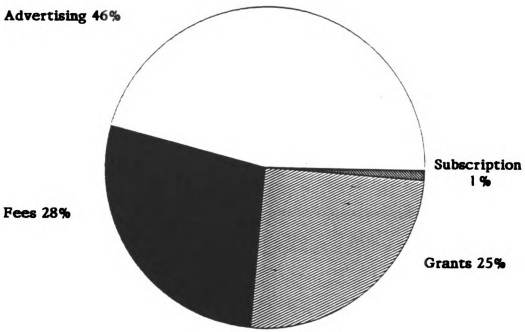
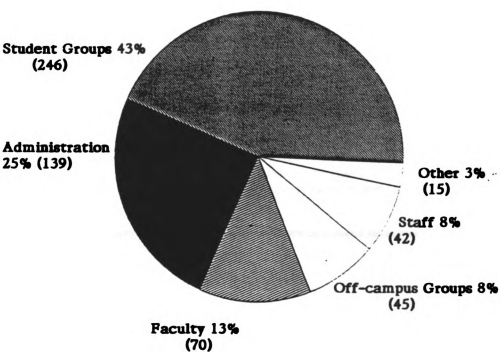


Figure 2: Groups Mentioned



When examining the data in light of hypothesis 1, the correlation was found to be too small to support the hypothesis. There is no evidence that administrative control of funding sources results in fewer unfavorable statements about the administration. Table 1 shows a correlation of -.06. There was a stronger positive correlation between funding and favorable statements, +.30.

Table 1: Correlations

	CON	FAV	NEU	UNF	ADM	PER	MAJ
CON	1.00	0.31	-0.06	-0.59	0.01	0.30	-0.42
FAV		1.00	-0.03	-0.02	0.12	0.58	-0.11
NEU			1.00	0.86	0.95	0.07	-0.24
UNF				1.00	0.96	-0.02	0.01
ADM					1.00	0.15	-0.15
PER						1.00	0.01
MAJ							1.00

n = 12

LEGEND:
CON = percentage of funds controlled by administration
FAV = number of items favorable to administration
UNF = number of items unfavorable to administration
ADM = number of items mentioning administration
PER = % of editorial page space devoted to campus issues
MAJ = % of journalism majors on newspaper staff

Hypothesis 2 was completely unsupported. There was almost no correlation between the number of times the administration was mentioned and administrative control of funding. The correlation shown on Table 1 of +.01 fell far short of the threshold for a relationship to be supported.

Hypothesis 3 was similarly unsupported. As seen on Table 1, there was a correlation of +.30 between control and the percentage of editorial space devoted to on-campus issues, but in contrast to what was hypothesized, the correlation was positive.

Hypothesis 4 was also unsupported. Table 1 shows the correlation between the percentage of majors and unfavorable statements about the administration was +.01, and favorable statements were negatively correlated with the percentage of majors at -.1. It is interesting to note, however, a correlation of -.42, a low moderate correlation, between control and the percentage of majors. This may reflect a tendency of papers at schools with journalism programs to shy away from funding with administrative strings attached.

Table 2 shows data used to test hypothesis 5. The mean number of items classified as unfavorable to be seven for papers with advisors with newspaper experience, compared to 3.7 for those with advisors without such experience. However, the standard error is so high as to call into question the significance of these findings. Favorable items were found to be similar with both types of advisors.

Table 2: Effects of Advisor Newspaper Experience

	No Newspaper Experience n=6		Newspaper Experience n=7	
	mean	std. error	mean	std. error
favorable to administration	0.83	0.40	0.71	0.42
neutral to administration	5.83	2.59	2.57	0.48
unfavorable to administration	7.00	3.12	3.71	1.06
administration mentioned	14.33	5.40	7.29	1.57
percentage of editorial page devoted to campus issues	18.15%	5.42	22.39%	2.88

Hypothesis 6 was found to be somewhat supported as well. As can be seen from Table 3, public institutions averaged 0.5 items favorable to the administration while private institutions averaged 1.7. Again, however, the high standard error made it difficult to be certain the effect was not the result of random chance.

Table 3: Public v. Private Schools

	Public n=12		Private n=7	
	mean	std. error	mean	std. error
favorable to administration	0.50	0.19	1.67	0.67
neutral to administration	2.33	0.47	5.00	2.77
unfavorable to administration	4.50	1.05	5.83	2.91
administration mentioned	7.67	1.48	13.00	5.42
percentage of editorial page devoted to campus issues	20.70%	3.10	18.18%	5.75

In the case of hypothesis 7, an adequate test could not be conducted. Only two papers reported an affiliation with journalism courses; of those two one was an award-winning junior college paper which the advisor felt was supported by the administration for that reason. Table 4 shows the data for this hypothesis.

Table 4: Independent v. Curricular Newspapers

	Independent Newspapers n=11		Curricular Newspapers n=2	
	mean	std. error	mean	std. error
favorable to administration	0.82	0.32	0.50	0.50
neutral to administration	4.18	1.47	3.50	1.50
unfavorable to administration	5.00	1.68	6.50	5.50
administration mentioned	10.54	3.05	10.50	7.50
percentage of editorial page devoted to campus issues	21.54%	3.30	14.35%	1.25

VII. DISCUSSION

Because of the small size of the sample in this study, the results are far from conclusive. No hypothesis was supported strongly enough to conclude administrative influence. It is clear, however, that within this sample there was some correlation between funding sources and content

on editorial pages. Whether this is due to administrative pressure or other reasons is unclear.

Papers from larger campuses may also have skewed the results in such a small sample. Two of the largest papers had the most independent funding; one received 97 percent of its funding from advertising and the second 88 percent. The advisor at the first of these schools felt that the funding base of the paper was a prime reason it was free of censorship:

> I have never had a high ranking administrator or Trustee ask to pull a story or to preview one--and I don't expect to have it happen
>
> The paper has a sound financial base--which is the best way to have strength. There is NO threat of cutting funding if you have that base to work from.

Legal considerations may also have an effect. First Amendment protection and court decisions which prevent administrations and students from cutting funding may make college papers immune to the interests of the paymaster. Laws protecting newspapers at public institutions apparently are working. The standard errors reported in Table 3 show public schools to be relatively stable compared to private schools. This suggests that public schools are consistent because of legal guidelines, while private schools may vary in the freedom granted to school publications.

It is also possible that Altschull's economic model does not fit the college press. Other factors may be affecting content that have little to do with administrative actions. Students often will bring pressure on the paper themselves.

This is hardly surprising, given the prevalence of items dealing with student groups this study found. Atkins[65] reported several examples of college newspapers clashing with black students and groups over alleged incidents of racism. At the University of Virginia in 1981, the president of the Black Student Alliance called for the shutting down of the campus papers because of "institutionalized racism." More recently, minority student employees at Michigan State University's State News staged a ten-day walkout over alleged racial and sexual harassment.

Students may function as media paymasters. Student fees collected by the administration may be seen by the student body as "their" money, going to "their" paper. Thus, Altschull's model may apply, but administration ideology may not dominate.

Socialization may play a more important role in affecting student content. The negative correlation between journalism majors and administrative control of funding sources indicates journalism majors may seek more independence from the institution. This may reflect a social attitude on the part of journalism majors that values newspaper independence.

Further evidence of the effects of socialization can be seen in Table 2. Newspapers with advisors with newspaper experience were more consistent than those with advisors without such experience, as reflected by the standard error.

[65]op. cit., p. 52.

This may indicate the socialization effects of the advisor's newspaper experience. Such an advisor may be expected to communicate professional news values, while an advisor without such experience could not do so.

Looking back to Shoemaker's theoretical hierarchy,[66] we can link this socialization to Altschull's theory of media controlled by financiers. The socialization may be considered as a function of the financing system of the media vehicle. Nevertheless, when diffused through socialization, Altschull's theory will undoubtedly lose some of its impact. If socialization is the proximate cause of media content effects, then the link to media financiers becomes more tenuous.

This may be apparent in cases where the student ideology and the administration ideology may be congruent, thus minimizing unfavorable statements. This may be especially true in the case of private schools. Students may choose to attend a school due to its reputation, a reputation fostered by the university or college administration. In the case of one religiously affiliated school in this study, the advisor indicated that this was indeed the case:

> [This] is a different place in that student leaders, like faculty, must subscribe to a particular understanding of Christian doctrine and life, but within...that framework are allowed--even encouraged--to explore, debate, and criticize. Thus student editors are allowed more freedom than at most evangelical protestant colleges, but less...than at state universities.

Altschull's economic theory of news content may not be

[66]see note 31 above, with accompanying text.

very useful for measuring content effects at the college level. Because of the clash of ideologies and the myriad of funding patterns, clear-cut demonstrations of media financiers influencing content may not be seen. Student fees may be distributed to the newspapers through student government, directly by the administration, or may pass directly from the student's pockets to the newspaper's coffers. How much control does the administration actually have over these funds? For this study, it was assumed that control had only one dimension, but the results may indicate different kinds of control are in play.

Most of the past studies have focused on administrators and advisors to explain college media content. The literature largely ignores the effect of the student on content. This may be due to a biased perception on the part of researchers that students are unimportant or that students, being temporarily in control of the newspaper, cannot establish long-term socialization effects.

However, students are the newspaper's audience, producers and financial supporters. They also can, in effect, 'pass the torch' to those who come after them, establishing some long-term socialization effects. Future studies of this field should consider the students. The high number of items which mentioned student groups indicates they may be an important factor in the determination of content. This study has found no conclusive evidence that administrators influence newspaper

content. Perhaps they don't. Perhaps the student press has been a student press all along.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CODING INSTRUMENT

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CODING INSTRUCTIONS:

The following definitions are to be used when analyzing the content of editorial pages. Results are to be recorded on the coding sheet.

Read each item. If an item does not deal primarily with on-campus issues, draw a line through it. Do not code those items. An on campus issue is on which has an impact on the campus, such as tuition or student unrest. Positions of on-campus groups or persons on off-campus issues can be counted if the primary focus of the article is the on-campus effect of the position. Each item being coded should be measured in square inches, not including headlines, graphics or photographs. Do not use editorial cartoons.

Classification

1 Type of Content.
- 1.1 Editorial. Editorial written by the editors of the newspaper or the editorial board. No byline. Often in columns entitled "Our view" or similar title.
- 1.2 Staff columnist.
  - 1.2.1 Regular columnist. Column written by writer featured regularly in paper. Identified by notation such as "Smith's column appears each Wednesday," or by title indicating editorial is regular feature. Always with byline.
  - 1.2.2 Other staff columnist. Column written by a staff member which is not a regularly occurring feature. Always with byline.
- 1.3 Syndicated columnist. A columnist distributed by a national syndicate. Examples include Mike Royko, Carl Rowan and Joseph Sobran.
- 1.4 Guest column. Column not written by newspaper staff and not a syndicated columnist. Always with byline.
- 1.5 Letters to the editor.

2 Groups identified in editorial. If an individual is identified as a member of a group, or a group as a whole is mentioned, mark a 1 in the appropriate space. Mark all mentioned groups.
- 2.1 Administration. This group is composed of university personnel who are engaged in making policy decisions for the university or college. Examples include college deans, university presidents, provosts, vice-presidents, etc.

2.2 Faculty. Professors or teachers not engaged in administrative decision making whose primary responsibility is education or research.

2.3 Staff. Persons involved in operations of the university who are not faculty or administrators. Examples include secretaries, maintenance or grounds workers. Also includes unions representing these people.

2.4 Student groups. Organizations composed of students. May be university registered organizations or ad-hoc organizations. Affiliations such as "African Americans" or "homosexuals" are acceptable. The newspaper is a student group.

2.5 Off-campus groups. This includes city, state or federal governments or government departments (eg. city police), associations of persons not on campus (eg. chamber of commerce), or off-campus organizations. Loose associations such as "area homeowners" or "local merchants" do not count; organizations must have some formal structure to be included in this area.

2.6 Other. Groups neither off-campus nor strictly on campus, such as alumni, or national organizations not directly involved in campus issues go here.

3 Source's identity. Identify sources quoted in the item by marking total in the appropriate space. Mark for each quote. Mark for both direct and indirect quotations.

3.1 Administrator. These persons are engaged in making policy decisions for the university or college. Examples include college dean, university president, provost, vice-president, etc.

3.2 Faculty member. Professors or teachers not engaged in administrative decision making whose primary responsibility is education or research.

3.3 Staff member. Persons involved in operations of the university who are not faculty or administrators. Examples include secretaries, maintenance or grounds workers. Also includes union representatives of these people.

3.4 Student.

3.4.1 Student group official. These persons are identified as officials of student groups, eg. president of the student chapter of the NAACP. They must be identified as such to be counted here.

3.4.2 Student individual. A student acting on his or her initiative, not speaking for any group.

3.5 Other. Include here off campus sources or other sources.

4 Author's identity. Identify the author by marking the appropriate number in space 5.

4.1 Administrator. These persons are engaged in making policy decisions for the university or college. Examples include college dean, university president, provost, vice-president, etc.

4.2 Faculty member. Professors or teachers not engaged in administrative decision making whose primary responsibility is education or research.

4.3 Staff member. Persons involved in operations of the university who are not faculty or administrators. Examples include secretaries, maintenance or grounds workers. Also includes union representatives of these people.

4.4 Student.

4.4.1 Student group official. These persons are identified as officials of student groups, eg. president of the student chapter of the NAACP. They must be identified as such to be counted here. A signed editorial is counted here, since it is assumed the editor is speaking for the newspaper (a student group).

4.4.2 Student individual. A student acting on his or her initiative to write the editorial piece. Includes student columnists.

4.5 Not identified.

4.6 Other.

5 Informational Item. The item is primarily intended to give information about a subject and does not advance any views or opinions. Mark a 1 if the item is informational. An item should be either informational or position.

6 Position on campus issue. Primary focus of editorial is the statement of a group or person's position on a campus issue. Enter the appropriate number in space 7. An item should be either informational or position.

6.1 Administration position (1)

6.2 Faculty position (2)

6.3 Staff position (3)

6.4 Student group position (4)

6.5 individual position (5)

6.6 newspaper position (6)

6.7 no position stated (0)

7 Conflict. An item contains conflict if it is about groups in opposition. Mark a "1" if editorial involves conflict. Mark "0" if item is not about conflict, and mark "0" in each of the following boxes for question 8.

7.1 Groups involved in conflict. Mark a "1" if group is involved in conflict.

- 7.1.1 Administration
- 7.1.2 Students
- 7.1.3 Faculty
- 7.1.4 Staff
- 7.1.5 Student groups
- 7.1.6 off-campus group

8 Opinion expressed of administration.

8.1 Favorable. Conclusion of editorial is such that a reasonable person would consider it favorable. If conclusion is unclear, an item is favorable if more than 60 percent of statements about the administration are statements a reasonable person would find positive. (1)

8.2 Balanced. Not more than 60 percent of statements about the administration are either favorable and unfavorable statements. (2)

8.3 Unfavorable. Editorial is such that a reasonable person would consider it unfavorable. If conclusion is unclear, an item is unfavorable if more than 60 percent of statements about the administration are statements a reasonable person would find negative. (4)

8.4 Neutral. Statements about the administration are neither positive nor negative.

8.5 No statements about administration. (0)

CODING SHEET

NEWSPAPER CODE NUMBER _____

DATE _____
DATE CODED _____ CODER _____
ITEM TITLE: _____
ITEM SPACE: _____ sq. in

Classification

1 Type of Content. Enter the appropriate number. _____

1.1	Editorial.	(1)
1.2	Staff columnist.	
1.2.1	Regular columnist.	(2)
1.2.2	Other staff columnist.	(3)
1.3	Syndicated columnist.	(4)
1.4	Guest column.	(5)
1.5	Letters to the editor.	(6)

2 Groups identified in item. Mark a 0 or 1 in each space.

2.1	Administration.	_____
2.2	Faculty.	_____
2.3	Staff	_____
2.4	Student groups.	_____
2.5	Off-campus groups.	_____
2.6	Other.	_____

3 Source's identity. Enter 0 to n for each space.

3.1	Administrator.	_____
3.2	Faculty member.	_____
3.3	Staff	_____
3.4	Student.	
3.4.1	Student group official.	_____
3.4.2	Student individual.	_____
3.5	Other.	_____

4 Author's identity. Enter the appropriate number. _____

4.1	Not identified.	(1)
4.2	Administrator.	(2)
4.3	Faculty member.	(3)
4.4	Staff member	(4)
4.5	Student.	
4.5.1	Student group official.	(5)
4.5.2	Student individual.	(6)
4.6	Other.	(7)

5 Informational Item. Enter 0 or 1. _____

6 Position on campus issue. Enter appropriate number. _____

6.1	Administration position	(1)
6.2	Faculty position	(2)
6.3	Staff position	(3)
6.4	Student group position	(4)
6.5	individual position	(5)
6.6	newspaper position	(6)
7.7	no position taken	(0)

7 Conflict. Enter 0 or 1. _____

7.1 Groups in conflict.

7.1.1	Administration. Enter 0 or 1.	_____
7.1.2	Students. Enter 0 or 1.	_____
7.1.3	Faculty. Enter 0 or 1.	_____
7.1.4	Student groups. Enter 0 or 1.	_____
7.1.5	off-campus group. Enter 0 or 1.	_____

8 Opinion expressed of administration. Enter number. _____

8.1	Favorable.	(1)
8.2	Balanced.	(2)
8.3	Unfavorable.	(3)
8.4	Neutral.	(4)
8.5	No statements.	(0)

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

code:____

College/University newspaper advisor questionnaire

I. Please fill out completely. All responses are confidential.

Position title: _____ Is your position tenured? ____Yes ____No

Years in position? ____ Is your position supervised by an administration official? ___ Yes ___ No

Education: degree _____ major field of study? _____

Experience: Years in newspapers____ Years in public relations____

other experience (specify):_____

journalism professional organizations of which you are a member: _____

In my position, I (check all which apply):

____ advise students on legal matters.
____ advise students on university/college policies.
____ approve stories before printing.
____ approve editorials before printing.
____ act as liaison between the newspaper and the administration.
____ other (please specify: _____)

Does your school have (check the one that is most appropriate):

____ a journalism department?
____ a program leading to a journalism degree?
____ journalism courses?
____ no journalism program or courses?

If your school has a journalism program or classes:

Is the student newspaper part of a class curriculum? ____Yes ___No

About what percentage of the paper's staff are journalism majors? ____%

Are materials or space for the paper's operation provided by the college/university? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, please estimate the value of the materials or space: $_____

How was the student newspaper funded in fiscal year 1989 (please indicate percentages)?

Student fees collected through college/university:	____%
Grants from college/university:	____%
Advertising sales:	____%
Subscription:	____%
Newsstand sales:	____%
Donations:	____%
Other (please specify:_____):	____%

What was the total student newspaper budget in fiscal 1989? $_____

In the past year at your paper, how many instances have there been of:

stories pulled because of administration pressure? ____

editorials pulled because of administration pressure? ____

stories pulled because of fear of administration reaction? ____

editorials pulled because of fear of administration reaction? ____

II. The following questions ask about your perception of the administration's relationship to the newspaper. Please check the response which indicates the degree to which you agree each statement applies.

The college/university administration believes in the importance of freedom of the press.

_____ strongly agree
_____ agree
_____ not sure
_____ disagree
_____ strongly disagree

The student newspaper can print a story it can prove is true, even if printing that story may embarrass the college/university.

_____ strongly agree
_____ agree
_____ not sure
_____ disagree
_____ strongly disagree

The student newspaper has the freedom to publish what it wants to.

_____ strongly agree
_____ agree
_____ not sure
_____ disagree
_____ strongly disagree

Funding for the student newspaper is not dependent on maintaining the goodwill of the administration.

_____ strongly agree
_____ agree
_____ not sure
_____ disagree
_____ strongly disagree

The college/university administration will not prohibit the publication of articles it considers harmful.

_____ strongly agree
_____ agree
_____ not sure
_____ disagree
_____ strongly disagree

The administration believes the college/university is best served by an independent student newspaper.

_____ strongly agree
_____ agree
_____ not sure
_____ disagree
_____ strongly disagree

code:____

The administration has a good relationship with the student newspaper.

____ strongly agree
____ agree
____ not sure
____ disagree
____ strongly disagree

The student newspaper is free from formal and informal faculty control.

____ strongly agree
____ agree
____ not sure
____ disagree
____ strongly disagree

The student newspaper is free from formal and informal administrative control.

____ strongly agree
____ agree
____ not sure
____ disagree
____ strongly disagree

The student body supports the principle of an independent student newspaper.

____ strongly agree
____ agree
____ not sure
____ disagree
____ strongly disagree

Thank you for your time. Please feel free to use the remainder of this side for any comments you may wish to add. Use the back of this page if necessary.