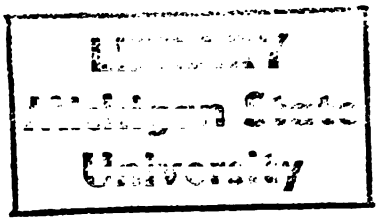

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PROFILES OF DAILY U.S. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL WRITERS: A COMPARISON OF OPINION WRITERS FROM THE "PRESTIGE PRESS" AND THE CIRCULATION LEADERS

By

David A. Szymanski

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ABSTRACT

PROFILES OF DAILY U.S. NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL WRITERS:
A COMPARISON OF OPINION WRITERS FROM THE "PRESTIGE PRESS"
AND THE CIRCULATION LEADERS

By

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This thesis explores the demographics, job satisfaction, perceived impact and staff relationships of editorial writers from three special groups: the top 20 circulation newspapers; the prestige press; and a special group of papers that fall on both lists.

A national mail survey was conducted and a second mailing was used to compile information on 28 newspapers. That information was analyzed using 39 data tables.

The major findings of the study showed that prestige caused more job satisfaction for the high circulation group, while autonomy and societal impact were more important for the prestige press. The special high circulation/high prestige writers said they had the most societal impact.

In writing editorials, writers in all three groups favored explaining all sides of an issue and advocating one side as the newspaper's opinion. Most editorial writers were male, about 44 of 104 writers, and had 7 1/2 years of editorial writing experience. About 25 percent were women.

This thesis is dedicated to my father.

"To dream the impossible dream . . ."

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The Atlanta Constitution, The Baltimore Sun, The Chicago Tribune, The Christian Science Monitor, The Des Moines Register, The Kansas City Star, The Los Angeles Times, The Louisville Courier-Journal and Times, The Miami Herald, The Milwaukee Journal, The New York Times, The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The New York Daily News, USA Today, The New York Post, The Detroit News, The Chicago Sun-Times, The Detroit Free Press, Newsday, The San Francisco Chronicle, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Boston Globe, The Cleveland Plain

Dealer, The Houston Chronicle, The Newark Star-Ledger and The Minneapolis Star and Tribune.

Very special thanks goes out to my family and Rhonda Mellinger, a group of very patient people who were always supportive and upbeat throughout this project. Without their support, the pursuit of a master's degree would have faded in the fall of 1985 and winter of 1986.

I also remembered that through many long nights in front of the IBM personal computer and long days compiling survey returns, that with God, anything is possible.

PREFACE

I decided to work on a project involving editorials after reading some comments from editors that a great newspaper is often reflected in the character of its editorial page. Since I have been fascinated by the great mechanism that puts out a newspaper since I was in fifth grade, I decided to study the editorial pages among the top quality newspapers. I wanted to examine the best minds of the best American newspapers.

Eventually, through review of studies in the scholarly journals, I discovered plenty of work on editorials (content analysis), but very little on those who write the editorials (communicator analysis). I wanted to know how an editorial writer prepared for a profession that demanded a wide-ranging knowledge and appreciation for an array of subjects; a degree of academic achievement; and a substantial amount of vocational experience recognized by their peers.

The person who pursued editorial writing was clearly going beyond the requirements of reporting, because he or she not only had to present all sides of an issue, but also had to advocate one of those points as the newspaper's well-conceived institutional opinion, similar to a lawyer's

function in court. This was a noble task because of the diversity of the writer's audience and the complexity of all issues.

After I completed a survey on editorial writers of almost every daily newspaper in Florida in 1984, I began to rethink the specific focus of my master's thesis, and I decided to expand the work I started in St. Petersburg. I would complete a national survey of editorial writers working for the most prestigious and largest newspapers in the country. One of the questions I had going into this project was how editorial writers working for the "elite" reader compare with those working for the "mass" reader

The hope motivating this research is that both newspaper professionals and readers will find it illuminating and useful. This thesis helps us understand job satisfaction, job goals and influences and job motivation in the context of editorial writers. I hope that the editorial page editor and the lay reader can put these results to work for them in writing and reading editorial opinions.

I also would hope to encourage future communicator analysis research that will update these data and explore other aspects of job preparation, motivation, satisfaction and writing priorities. In the end, the public is served.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This study questioned daily newspaper editorial writers from the 20 largest circulation U.S. newspapers and from the 14 prestige newspapers to determine how they prepare, perform and set objectives for their profession.[1] Szymanski's fall 1984 mail survey of Florida daily newspaper editorial writers (see Appendix B)[2] served as a pretest for this study.

In addition, considering the nature (i.e. size versus prestige) of the two sample groups, the author examined several main research questions dealing with the perceived impact of editorials and the sources of job satisfaction.

Writers among the largest circulation newspapers are important to study because they reach more readers than any other U.S. dailies and thus may have the greatest opportunity for public impact. Three of the papers are in New York, the nation's largest city, and the editorial writers in this sample group can be seen, in the context of this study, as writing for the diverse "mass" audience.

In comparison, writers among the prestige press are a significant sample group because they are considered superior by professional peers and because they may be read by elites

and crucial opinion leaders in society who make important societal decisions. To quote Stempel, "These are elite newspapers, and what they do in coverage is of substantial significance. At the same time, we should note that what the prestige press represents is some of the best of American journalism, not the typical in American journalism."[3] In contrast, these newspapers can be seen writing not only for the "mass" audience, but also for the more sophisticated and perhaps more demanding "elite" audience.

This study in part extended past research on editorial writers by focusing on these two extraordinary groups. The study will compare responses from these editorial writers on their preparation, motivation and management preferences along the dimensions of newspaper circulation, job prestige, age, sex, education, experience, salary, personal philosophy, job duties, job satisfaction and editorial board cooperation.

Using the survey, the author hopes to generate findings of significance to working journalists, teachers, scholars, students and media managers. The results should be helpful in understanding editorial writers in a number of ways: how motivated do they feel they are; what their professional and social relations are like with their staff; how satisfied are they in their job and what makes them satisfied; how effective they feel they are in changing public policy; how they work with their (fellow) writers; and what do they feel their main objectives are in editorial writing.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY

Kenneth Rystrom, communication professor and 17-year editorial-writing veteran, described an editorial as an essay representing the media organization's opinion. Editorials explain issues, develop and discuss the merits of opposing arguments and draw conclusions to inform and spur readers to action.[4]

And while individual journalists write these essays, the opinions represent the newspaper's collective view. Editorials appear as anonymous columns of enlarged type, usually appearing on the left side of the editorial page. The heading above The Detroit News' editorial page reads, in the largest type on the page, "Our Opinions."

Furthermore, Rystrom described the editorial writer as "a writer, a thinker, a scholar, an objective viewer, a critic, a scold and a person with humility." He should hold seven qualities: a wide variety of interests; good reporting skills; ability to fully understand an issue; good writing skills; a sense of fairness or justice; desire to express an opinion; and an ability to reason cogently.[5]

Many editors argue that the quality of a newspaper is reflected in its editorial page. To Chicago Tribune editor

James Squires, the editorial page is "the heart of the paper . . . the voice of the paper." The page should lead the community, not play up to it "like a whore," said Eugene Patterson, publisher of The St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times. Patterson won a Pulitizer Prize in editorial writing at The Atlanta Constitution and said he often had to write editorials that disagreed with public sentiment in Atlanta in order to better the community he lived in. "At the heart of the job is public service," noted Patterson, whose St. Petersburg Times often is at odds with its more conservative elderly community.

Walter Lippmann, the renowned editor and columnist of the last generation, also subscribed to this notion. To Lippmann, "a newspaper's job is to put a community in conversation with itself." This conversation can only result from a mix of different ideas through news dissemination. Newspaper editorials have traditionally encouraged Lippmann's "conversation" by taking one side--analyzing issues to promote one interpretation or solution rather than another.

Accepting these distinctions, the National Conference of Editorial Writers defines the mission of the editorial writer this way: "It's a profession devoted to the public welfare and the public service. The chief duty of its practitioners is to provide for the information and guidance toward sound judgment, which are essential to the sound functioning of a democracy."

When Stempel conducted his poll of editors for his 1980 election study, newspaper professionals chose 14 publications they believed were the best in the United States. These newspapers gained this distinction through a dedication to quality, and what Robert Haiman, director of the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, describes as "reputation." On a similar, yet separate plane, high circulation newspapers could have done a number of things to have achieved their circulation dominance, but the fact remains: they are read by the greatest number of people in that market.

Recognizing this societal importance of editorials, this thesis examined how certain especially influential editorial writers define their job preparation and objectives. How these journalists perceive their profession's role in society also was explored.

Past Research

Researchers such as Szymanski, Hynds, Martin, Drew, Emery, Krieghbaum and Wilhoit have done previous studies that showed that editorial writers were satisfied with their jobs, were highly educated and were highly paid. For example, Wilhoit and Drew explored the political and sociological activities of editorial writers outside of work, as well as demographic variables that affect performance.[6]

Wilhoit and Drew's most recent study on editorial writers in 1980 found that the profession is still mostly male, with the writer's median age at 48 years, about the

same as Wilhoit and Drew's 1971 study.[7] The number of women in the profession increased from 2 percent in 1971 to 7 percent in 1980.

Education levels remained about the same, with 83 percent of the writers earning bachelor's degrees. Journalism was the major area of study, both studies found.

In 1980, out of 650 respondents, 10 percent more editorial writers (total of 22 percent) said that their salaries were only average in comparison to other staff members. By 1979, inflation had run ahead of salary increases for editorial writers, who earned an average of $24,000 that year and $16,750 in 1971.

Most editorial writers in both surveys said they were very satisfied with their job, with more than 67 percent in 1971 and 1980 responding with that high level of satisfaction. In both surveys, only about 2.5 percent found the profession not very satifying.[8]

In 1977, Hynds and Martin explored how newspaper editorialists obtain information and perform their tasks. Hynds used a cluster of four variables: 1. writer-related demographic variables (i.e., In what ways do editorialists differ in age, education and editorial experience?); 2. Information-related variables (In what ways do editorialits differ in their use of sources of ideas and information?); 3. Task-evaluation variables (In what ways do these writers vary in what they consider the most important factors in good editorials, the basic functions of editorials and the

ways to handle issues?); and 4. Writing-style variables (In what ways do editorialists vary in their use of research and writing time? How do they organize materials, choose leads, show preferences for endings and preferences in expository writing devices?).[9]

Hynds surveyed editorial writers and concluded the following: Most editorials are designed primarily to express a viewpoint, motivate readers or provide information. Editorial writers use their own newspaper as the most common information resource. Most editorial writers believed the best approach to handling issues was to give both sides and tell where the paper stands. A relatively small number would give the arguments for one side only, and even fewer would give both sides and leave the decision to the reader. More than half of the editorial writers spent between one and two hours doing research and an hour or more in writing their typical editorials. Many liked to begin editorials with a general statement to gain attention and close with a call to action.[10]

Szymanski also asked similar questions in his Florida survey[11]. The purpose of the Florida study was to develop a profile of the "ideal editorial writer." Questions on the kinds of sources used, the academic and professional preparation and demographic factors all showed that there is no ideal "profile." What emerged was a description or series of conclusions about the average Florida editorial writer:

The average Florida editorial writer was male, about 43 years old and had completed his B.A. in journalism. He was most likely a liberal.

He spent almost 40 percent of his time researching and used a wide variety of sources. The Florida editorial writer found his job very satisfying.

He believed he is very influential in setting his newspaper's policy on an issue and has never been forced into writing an editorial against his will or beliefs. Policy at his newspaper was determined by a consensus of the editorial board.

He measured his influence based on a perception of medium prestige for his profession--about 3 1/2 on a scale of 5, with 5 being the most prestigious kind of job.

His personal perspective on the craft was described as an ideal in the noble skeptic--a person who continually wants to learn--and at the same time, this trait was blended with a tremendous public concern for justice, or as one editorial writer described "a sense of outrage" when a writer thought people were being persecuted unfairly.[12]

Thesis Problem

This thesis replicates Wilhoit's 1972 and 1980 studies, Hynds' 1977 study and Szymanski's 1984 Florida study by measuring the preparation, job tasks and social and political habits and preferences of the editorial writer.

However, in addition, it extends research in this area by adding updated demographic and sociological and political information and focusing several especially important groups of editorial writers--those working for prestige papers, those working for mass circulation papers, and those working for papers combining both these qualities. It fills a gap by examining group dynamics among editorial boards, such as how decisions are made and how writers form the basis for their editorial position. It also compares demographics, social influences and perceived societal impact and satisfaction among these groups of especially crucial writers.

The survey extends research by examining demographic and sociological aspects affecting the job performance of editorial writers in 1985. It also compares the writers among different newspapers using the variables of education, autonomy, salary, impact, age, prestige (writers and papers) and newspaper circulation. Wilhoit cross tabulated using age, geography and newspaper circulation.

Szymanski's 1984 report and the research published by Wilhoit and Drew in 1980 and 1972 serve as a general guide for the theme of the survey, although survey questions were dropped and added and the samples are different. This study also updates and answers contemporary questions that the Szymanski, Wilhoit and Drew studies could not anticipate, or that they omitted or handled indirectly when they drafted their surveys.

Some of those new questions include: What are the main priorities for writers when structuring editorial arguments? Are editorial boards demographically homogenous? How common is serious debate at editorial board meetings and does anyone ever play devil's advocate to assure a divergence of issues are discussed? How is editorial policy formed and what is the role of the publisher among a shrinking number of daily newspapers? How effective do writers among the prestige press and the circulation leaders believe they are influencing the community through their editorials?

The importance of the autonomy of the editorial board was brought to Miami Herald readers' attention October 28, 1984, during a presentation of Szymanski's 1984 survey results.

On October 17, The Herald's editorial board voted to endorse Democratic Presidential Candidate Walter Mondale for president. After deciding to write a pro-Mondale editorial, Publisher Richard Capen overruled the board and directed page editor James Hampton to write an editorial endorsing incumbent Republican President Ronald Reagan.

The result was an editorial endorsing Reagan and a dissenting column by Hampton (see Appendix C). Hampton explained that a majority of the board wanted to endorse Mondale, but the publisher can pull rank, and did. Staff unrest followed, and after considering resigning, Hampton decided to remain to preserve the cohesive staff the newspaper had formed over the years.

This study further examines board autonomy and the relationship between editors of editorial pages, publishers and editorial writers to determine the roles of these people among the three special groups of newspapers studied.

The author hopes cross-tabulated information on job satisfaction and impact will provide useful insights for editorial writers, editorial page editors, publishers, professors, students, scholars and anyone with an interest in mass communication research. Examining editorial writers in 1985 will update past research and offer a unique comparison among writers cited for membership on prestige newspaper staffs, the top circulation publications or both.

The comparison itself is unique: Twenty-eight newspapers are surveyed. Eight "prestige" newspapers are compared with fourteen "large circulation" newspapers. In addition, another six newspapers that fall into both categories are used as a special test group.

Past communicator studies have focused on a multitude of different facets of journalism, including academic and professional training of science writers; political profiles of editors; a typology study of movie critics; and characteristics of managers and reporters of selected U.S. daily newspapers. The place of this thesis in this broad field of "communicator analysis" engages two contexts: 1. editorial writers and 2. reporters, editors and other gatekeepers.

In the context of editorial writers, the study continues and extends research done by Hynds, Wilhoit,

Drew, Szymanski, Krieghbaum, Emery and Martin. In the context of all gatekeepers, the proposed research can help link past studies on preparation, performance, job satisfaction and perceived influence of other kinds of journalists.

The importance of this study to mass communication research lies in recognizing these impact arguments (in each sample group) and testing those arguments in the context of communicator analysis research. The social importance of the research lies in recognizing what type of publication may hold the greater opinion impact--high circulation newspapers or high prestige newspapers.

CHAPTER III

HYPOTHESES AND RATIONALES

The thesis will explore the following hypoptheses:

Hypothesis One: If an editorial writer feels job satisfaction, then it is associated with three factors:

1. His perceived ability to change public policy as a result of his editorials (i.e. The writer's perception of impact).
2. The amount of prestige he feels in his position.
3. Frequent interaction with the editorial board and management.

Findings in Szymanski's Florida survey formed the basis for this hypothesis. Those who said they were "very satisfied" with editorial writing also rated editorial writing higher on the prestige scale than other occupations.[13] These same writers said they were "very influential" in determining their editorial board opinion and were never forced to write an editorial against their personal beliefs.

In Wilhoit's 1980 study, 73 percent of the writers were satisfied with their editorial staffs, while a majority of those who were dissatisfied listed staff size as a reason for dissatisfaction.[14]

Ogan and Weaver's newsroom survey showed relations with others as 4.3 on a 1 to 5 scale, with 5 being most satisfied and 1 least satisfied.[15] In Shaver's study "good interpersonal relations with peers" was fifth among 17 satisfier factors for journalism graduates.[16] Most editorial writers for Wilhoit, Hynds and others listed journalism as their major area of study. Citing this finding, Shaver writes: "because mass communications jobs are, for the most part, oriented to people, it is easy to understand why peer interaction would be so important.[17]

Wilhoit found that writers were just as happy as they were in his 1971 study (more than 97 percent were satisfied or very satisfied) and at the same time, more than 91 percent of those satisfied writers said their editorials had moderate to substantial impact.[18]

Hypothesis Two: If the editorial writer had to list writing preferences, then the most important preference would be to give both sides of an issue and advocate one side.

Despite the complexity of many issues that do not separate into polarized camps of opinion, Hynds' research supports this hypothesis and suggests other functions that editorial writers also mentioned, such as "to motivate" and "to provide information."[19] Almost two-fifths, or 38 percent of those surveyed, said that "expressing a viewpoint" was the most important function of an editorial.

Respondents from Szymanski's survey concur with Hynds and editorial writers interviewed for his report. Those

interviewed say that not citing both sides of an issue in an editorial is a fatal flaw in valid argumentation. After the opponent's argument is weighed against the newspaper's, then the newspaper's side must be advocated in a logical manner.[20]

In addition, this hypothesis is supported by textbook research on editorial writing written by Rystrom, McDougall, Hulteng and Stonecipher, all former editorial writers, who define the purpose of editorial writing primarily as a persuasive one that has to include both sides of an issue.

In addition to these hypotheses, this thesis explores the following major research questions:

1. Does the process of determining editorial policy have a negative, positive or no effect on the job satisfaction of the editorial writer?

This question may add insight to the role of group dynamics and and management styles. Mass communication research by Szymanski, Wilhoit and Hynds showed that editorial writers were satisfied in general and that they all determined their editorial policy by a board vote in consultation with editors and perhaps the publisher. This question updates mass communication research and uses two significant sample groups to analyze the role of employees and management in decision making.

It carries an indirect social importance in recognition of how decision making in the job environment can or cannot affect a communicator's satisfaction. That satisfaction, then, may affect societal impact or overall editorial performance.

2. Which type of writer says he has greater societal impact--those working for large circulation newspapers, or those writing for prestige publications?

Because large circulation newspapers reach the largest reader audiences in the country, and they arguably can have the greatest opportunity for public impact through sheer numbers of people exposed to their editorials. In comparison, prestige newspapers are read by opinion leaders and society's elites and decision-makers, who also affect a large portion of the population. Both have an argument for impact. Those arguments will be tested directly through perceived impact survey responses.

3. How does on-the-job motivation affect how editorial writers perceive their editorial impact?

Psychologists believe that motivation is determined by many different factors, although many agree that it involves "the direction, vigor and persistence of action," according to John Atkinson, professor of psychology at the University of Michigan.

Atkinson writes "(Motivation) is often used in reference to the conscious feeling of desire and the whole complex of ideas and feelings which together seem to constitute the conscious antecedents of behavior according to traditional wisdom." He continues that it is also understood as a synonym for the term "drive." Robert C. Bolles simply explains that motivation is "a hypothetical cause of behavior."

With that understanding, this thesis explores the motivation level of the editorial writer (i.e. high: totally absorbed in work, or low: not very absorbed in work.)

4. Do newspapers tend to hire editorial writers with the same philosophies? Although they may have different backgrounds (i.e. sex, age, education, experience, etc.) are their philosophies on their paper's editorial board the same?

Editorial page editors Bob Pittman of The St. Petersburg Times and Katharine Graham, publisher of The Washington Post, agree that an editorial writer must share the same basic beliefs on a number of issues as the publisher does. Both argue that this is necessary because the newspaper needs to develop a consistent and logical voice on public issues. They also explain that the editorial board does not have enough time to debate every issue to its bare essentials before taking a course of action in an editorial strategy. Therefore, a staff whose philosophies on public policy issues are somewhat similar will work together efficiently and consistently.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

The author employed a mail survey among three samples to collect thesis data.

The survey included newspapers taken from a poll conducted by Stempel and used for a 1980 study on the coverage of the 1980 presidential election. Surveys were sent to editorial writers from fourteen newspapers listed in Stempel's study as the "Prestige Press": The Atlanta Constitution, The Baltimore Sun, The Chicago Tribune, The Christian Science Monitor, The Des Moines Register, The Kansas City Star, The Los Angeles Times, The Louisville Courier-Journal, The Miami Herald, The Milwaukee Journal, The New York Times, The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, The Wall St. Journal, and The Washington Post.

Studying those newspapers, Stempel noted a change in editorial position among elite newspapers: In 1980, the prestige press overwhelming supported President Jimmy Carter, while the majority of the remaining press had sweeping support for Republican Ronald Reagan. Before 1980, Stempel found elite newspapers "lined up editorially fairly close to the way the press as a whole did in election endorsement."[21] This study would like to determine

how similar the prestige press is to the high circulation press in terms of staff preparation, job motivation and professional objectives.

In addition to the prestige press, surveys were sent to an additional fourteen papers (six cover both lists) that appear on the 1985 American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA) list of the top twenty largest circulation daily newspapers in the United States. Those additional newspapers are The New York Daily News, USA Today, The New York Post, The Detroit News, The Chicago Sun-Times, The Detroit Free Press, Newsday, The San Francisco Chronicle, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Boston Globe, The Cleveland Plain Dealer, The Houston Chronicle, The Newark Star-Ledger and The Minneapolis Star and Tribune.

A total of 161 surveys were mailed out to editorial writers at these papers. All survey cover letters were personalized for each writer, along with a handwritten post script on each letter. Approximately 64 surveys were mailed to 14 papers in the high circulation category; 46 surveys to eight papers of the prestige press; and 51 surveys to the six newspapers who were both high prestige and high circulation.

That special group, characterized by both prestige and size, consists of The Wall Street Journal, The Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, The Chicago Tribune, The Washington Post and The Miami Herald.

The author replicated some survey questions from Szymanski's 1984 Florida survey, however, the author also revised, deleted or added a number of questions and responses based on the answers from the Florida survey and additional research findings and questions since November 1984. (For Florida survey, see Appendix B.)

One cannot generalize beyond these three groups of writers using this survey data. The author does not intend to compare these results or generalize these conclusions with all editorial writers or every writer on U.S. dailies.

Based on this premise, no statistical tests are needed because the survey measures specific universes of data, not a random sample. The three groups--prestige, high circulation and high circulation/high prestige--were all surveyed and responses counted and sorted for useability. Percentages were drawn up, based on significant subject areas that contributed to mass communication research.

The significance criteria for this survey analysis is +/- 10 percentage points. Any differences of 10 percent or more are defined as "significant" in this study in analyzing data, especially between the three groups of writers. In addition, zero scores or low scores on some data tables were eliminated and some response categories collapsed. (For the complete response lists, see the national survey instrument in Appendix A.)

CHAPTER V

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rates

The first mailing produced a 49.6 percent overall response from 161 editorial writers surveyed nationwide. The separate samples resulted in a 46.8 percent response among the high circulation newspapers; a 47.8 percent response from the high prestige publications; and a 54.9 percent response from the high prestige/high circulation group.

After the second mailing and some follow-up phone calls, the total usable response rate was 64 percent (104 out of 161 writers).

Responses after two mailings were 72 percent among the high circulation newspapers (46 out of 64); 63 percent among the high prestige publications (29 out of 46); and 57 percent among the high prestige/ high circulation group (29 out of 51). Only three of the 28 newspapers surveyed did not respond.

Editorial Writer Characteristics

Demographics

The average age of the respondents who gave their age was 44, about 4 years younger than Wilhoit's 1980 study

found. Among the prestige papers, the average age was 45; among the high circulation newspapers, 44; and among the high circulation/high prestige group, 42.

The average number of years of editorial writing experience among the writers was 7.5. Among the high circulation papers, the average was 7 years; among the high prestige papers, 10 years; and among the special high prestige/high circulation group, 6 years. More than 25 percent of the writers were female, which marked an 18 percent increase since Wilhoit's 1980 study (see Table 1).

TABLE 1: GENDER

Gender	High Circulation (N=46)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation/ High Prestige (N=29)	Average (N=103)
Female	28.2	25.0	20.6	25.2
Male	71.7	75.0	79.3	74.7
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] One writer did not fill in gender on the survey.

No significant gender differences emerged from among the three groups; however, in a profession Wilhoit described as "still mostly male," women are gaining. This may be attributed to a number of factors, including women's diversifying roles in society and efforts by newspapers to

hire more women editorial writers, to better respresent different viewpoints on an editorial staff. More women are being graduated from college and more women are graduating from journalism schools. Perhaps these unique samples are more cognizant of that than the whole universe of all U.S. daily newspapers. Wilhoit found that women constituted 7 percent of editorial staffs in 1980, compared with 25 percent of the total staffs in this study in 1986.

Tracking education, the undergraduate degree was the most popular, earned by more than half of the respondents (57 percent) (see Table 2).

TABLE 2: EDUCATION

Education	High Circulation (N=46)	High Prestige[a] (N=28)	High Circulation/ High Prestige (N=29)	Average (N=103)
High School	8.7	0.0	0.0	3.7
Undergrad	58.7	48.4	62.1	56.6
Master's	28.3	41.9	17.2	29.2
Doctorate	0.0	0.0	6.9	1.8
Other[b]	2.2	9.7	13.8	7.5
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] One respondent did not answer this question.

[b] Other responses were law degrees, associate's degrees and graduate work.

This represents a 17 percent gain compared with Wilhoit's sample in 1980. In Wilhoit's sample, 40 percent of the writers earned undergraduate degrees. Among these special papers, 11 percent more master's degrees were also earned. These differences may be attributed to the special nature of these newspapers--high prestige and high circulation--both of which may have more demanding hiring criteria than the entire sample of editiorial writers in the United States.

Among the three groups, significant differences among the writers earning the undergraduate degree. More than 10 percent more high circulation writers than prestige writers earned undergraduate degrees and more than 13 percent more high circulation/high prestige writers than prestige writers earned undergraduate degrees.

More than 13 percent more writers from the prestige press earned master's degrees than the high circulation writers. However, even fewer writers earned master's degrees among the special high circulation/high prestige group. More than 24 percent more prestige writers earned master's degrees than the high circulation/high prestige group. More than 11 percent of the high circulation group earned more master's degrees than the high circulation/high prestige group.

These results may indicate that an undergraduate education is needed for both kinds of writers--those who write for high prestige and high circulation publications.

The higher percentage of master's degree recipients among the prestige press may indicate that these papers' editorial staffs tend to hire or prefer writers with more advanced research and theoretical backgrounds that a master's degree demands. This does not mean that the high circulation press shuns or ignores this factor. However, it may be a stronger quality among editors of editorial pages for the prestige press.

Journalism was the most popular major, yet overall, only one-third of the writers studied that discipline, compared with 46 percent of Wilhoit's writers (see Table 3).

TABLE 3: MAJOR[a]

Major	High Circulation (N=41)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation/ High Prestige (N=24)	Average (N=93)
Journalism	26.8	53.3	20.8	33.6
English	26.8	16.6	8.3	20.0
History	19.5	26.6	29.1	24.2
Other[b]	26.9	0.5	41.8	22.2
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Eleven writers did not answer this question.

[b] Other responses were law, government, music, theology, economics, business and anthropology.

Among the three special groups are significant differences in academic preparation. More than half of the prestige press studied journalism, while the two other groups were more diverse. More than 41 percent of the unique high circulation/high prestige group checked "other," signifying a different major other than journalism, English or history. This 42 percent was 41 higher than the prestige press and 15 percent higher than the circulation leaders. These significant differences may indicate a more diverse academic make-up of high circulation/high prestige editorial boards and less of an emphasis on journalism education as the better academic preparation for editorial writing.

When considering English majors, the high circulation writers held the top frequency. The prestige press had 10 percent fewer English majors and the high circulation/high prestige group had 18.5 percent less English majors. These results may reflect a hiring policy pattern among the high circulation press, or more of an emphasis on English language skills than on theoretical knowledge or raw data of another academic subject.

Journalism, which was the dominant major in Wilhort's studies, represented only one-third in the average of all three groups. The 53 percent of the prestige press who said they were journalism majors, topped the high circulation/high prestige group by 32.5 percent and the high circulation writers by 26.5 percent. These significant

differences may show that the prestige press favors or values a journalism education as a practical and logical preparation for a profession that uses reporting skills. The two other special groups have journalism graduates on their boards but may value a broader academic base or reporting experience in place of a journalism school diploma. Perhaps this hiring practice is traditional for some or all members of the prestige press.

Despite different majors, the three writer samples indicate similar job preparation. The average of all three groups showed that more than 66 percent of the writers were former reporters and editors (see Table 4).

TABLE 4: JOB PREPARATION[a]

	High Circulation (N=46)	High Prestige[b] (N=28)	High Circulation/ High Prestige (N=29)	Average (N=103)
Reporter & Editor	71.1	72.5	62.5	66.9
Teacher	13.5	12.5	16.6	13.9
Lawyer	1.6	2.5	5.5	2.9
Other[c]	15.2	12.5	22.2	16.2
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Exact wording of the question: "How did you prepare vocationally for your job as an editorial writer?"

[b] One writer did not answer this question.

[c] Other included minister, press secretary, government agency employees, political aides and business people.

Ten percent more of the writers for the prestige press worked as reporters and editors compared with the high circulation/high prestige group in the same occupation. Still, more than 62 percent of the high prestige/high circulation group worked in journalism before becoming an editorial writer.

When examining the "other" job category, the results are opposite--the 22 percent of the high circulation/ high prestige, group was almost 10 percent more than the prestige press.

These results parallel the majors in Table 3, showing a greater diversity for writers in the special high circulation/high prestige group. This may indicate more individual board hiring philosophies as opposed to more traditional hiring criteria. Despite these differences, the number of similarities in Table 4 may indicate a common value for the benefits of journalism training, which may aid an editorial writer in interviewing, debating, researching, writing and editing.

Another demographic area, salary, shows great divergence among the three special groups.

On average, more than 42 percent of the writers earned more than $50,000 annually, the highest response category. Among the elite, high prestige/high circulation group of six special papers, an overwhelming 78 percent earned that top amount on the pay scale, compared with only 26 percent and 38 percent for the high prestige and high circulation

groups respectively. This shows a 38 increase in writers earning $50,000 or more compared with Wilhoit's 1980 findings. Only 5 percent of the 650 North American editorial writers Wilhoit surveyed earned more than $50,000 annually (see Table 5).

Prestige does not appear to be a factor in pay scale among these groups, since the high circulation group has

TABLE 5: SALARY[a]

Salary	High Circulation (N=44)	High Prestige (N=27)	High Circulation/ High Prestige (N=27)	Average (N=98)
$20,001-$30,000	6.8	0.0	0.0	3.0
$30,001-$40,000	20.4	59.2	18.5	30.3
$40,001-$50,000	40.9	14.8	3.7	24.2
$50,001 and above	38.1	25.9	77.8	42.2
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Six writers did not answer this question.

more writers on the top end of the scale than the prestige group. Perhaps the reason behind these responses is the budget of the papers themselves and the companies that own them. The New York Times and The Washington Post, both diversified, multi-million dollar media companies with

sizeable news and editorial budgets, are in the HC/HP group with the highest editorial writer salaries.

Newsroom Processes

Part of an editorial writer's research time is spent before discussing the editorial idea and part is spent after discussing it.

The highest frequency all writers--28.5 percent--spent four hours or more researching an editorial before writing it. That high frequency category was repeated in the high circulation and high circulation/high prestige group. The high circulation/high prestige group showed the greatest concentration of response--46 percent in the top research category. The highest concentration of the high prestige group--44 percent--only used 1-2 hours of research daily.

The diversity of the high circulation audience may prompt these writers to spend more time researching, than their prestige counterparts. The high circulation and high circulation/high prestige groups may have large staffs that may give an individual writer more time to read, interview and practice other reporting skills to do a thorough job of research (see Table 6).

The high circulation/high prestige writers spend more time researching than the two other groups of writers. They have leads of 39 percent and 16 percent--compared with their two counterparts in the top research category. They

also lead by 12 percent and 18 percent in the second highest research category.

TABLE 6: RESEARCH TIME[a]

Research Time	High Circulation (N=43)	High Prestige (N=27)	High Circulation/ High Prestige (N=28)	Average[b] (N=98)
4 hours or more	30.2	7.4	46.4	28.5
3-4 hours	9.3	3.7	21.4	11.2
2-3 hours	30.2	22.2	21.4	25.5
1-2 hours	18.6	44.4	0.0	20.4
Other[c]	9.3	22.2	10.7	13.2
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Exact wording of the question: "On the average day, how much time do you spend researching a topic before writing or discussing it as an editorial subject?"

[b] Six writers did not answer this question.

[c] Varied research times, based on the editorial issue.

This data indicates that writers for high circulation/ high prestige papers need more time to read, interview and do general research before writing on their editorials than the other two groups. Staff size and management also may play a part in determining the amount of time each writer has to prepare before writing an editorial.

Two other differences are noteworthy. In the top research time slot, 23 percent more high circulation writers (30 percent) said they spent 4 or more hours researching than writers for the prestige press (7 percent). This data may be compared with the "other" category, which allowed writers to decide on a different, more relative scale for research times. In this category, the prestige press held leads of 13 percent and 11.5 percent among the other two groups. These results may indicate more flexibility among the boards of the prestige press, and different styles of management, which may allow writers to decide for themselves how much research time is needed.

In comparing research to education, a comprehensive trend, showing an increase in education with an increase in research time cannot be found here. Other factors must come into play, besides education, to show differences in research time (see Table 7).

These data also may show a certain number of advanced degree recipients (18 percent) feel research time is relative based on the editorial being written. That is, they feel the writing time could vary from less than 1 hour to more than 4 hours of research time based on the editorial.

These data may indicate a singleness of purpose among writers who have to devote various hours to research, depending on the editorial. No matter how many academic

TABLE 7: RESEARCH TIME VS. EDUCATION[a]

Research Time	Undergrad and less (N=61)	Master's/ Advanced (N=38)
4 hours or more	29.5	23.6
3-4 hours	11.4	10.5
2-3 hours	24.5	28.9
1-2 hours	21.3	18.4
Other	13.1	18.4
Totals	100%	100%

[a] Five writers did not respond to this question.

degrees they hold, editorial writers share a mission: to produce a well reasoned editorial that will persuade and inform. Among these special writers, academic background does not seem to affect how many hours of research writers devote to their jobs.

Group Dynamics

Tables 8, 9 and 10 all deal with group interaction on the editorial board, specifically examining the nature of the discussion during staff meetings. These three tables all try to measure group dynamics, which is important in understanding what goes on as the editorial board

determines the institution's final stance on an issue (see Table 8).

In Table 8, the average of the three special groups shows that a majority of writers--or 68 percent--use a systematic discussion type in their editorial staff meetings. The systematic method is a round table report by

TABLE 8: DISCUSSION TYPE[a]

Discussion Type	High Circulation (N=46)	High Prestige (N=27)	High Circulation High Prestige (N=26)	Average (N=99)
Relaxed Free Form	30.4	11.1	50.0	30.3
Systematic	67.3	88.8	46.1	67.6
Editor's Control	2.1	0.0	3.8	2.0
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Exact wording of the question: "Which of the following accurately describes the discussion of your editorial board meetings?"

writers of possible editorial topics they are interested in and a suggestion of how the paper should stand on the issue.

Thirty percent of the total sample said a relaxed, free-form discussion was common to their staff meetings. Free-form discussion would represent a relaxed, less disciplined way to present editorial topics before other

staff members, yet it may accomplish the same objectives as the systematic process.

The prestige press appears to prefer the systematic reporting process, while the special high circulation/high prestige group is almost split evenly among free-form and systematic discussion. Statistically significant differences show a heavy concentration of systematic discussion in the prestige press and high circulation papers, while the prestige writers are more than 20 percent below the high circulation writers in free-form discussion. The prestige press is also more than 38 percent below the high circulation/high prestige group in relaxed/free-form discussion. The high circulation writers are nearly 20 percent behind the special high circulation/high prestige writers in relaxed/free-form discussion.

These results may indicate that the high circulation/high prestige writers value a less structured discussion style compared with the two other groups of writers. For that special group, half of them feel that discussion type works best. Katharine Graham, publisher of The Washington Post, described the editorial process as one of "studied incoherence," combined with, "a certain sense of mystery." The Post is one of the high circulation/high prestige papers.

In the systematic discussion category, the prestige press holds 42 percent more writers there than the high circulation/high prestige group, and over 21 percent more

writers than the circulation leaders. In addition, the circulation leaders post a 21 percent lead over the high circulation/high prestige sample in systematic discussion.

This data may indicate that the prestige press values a system where writers report their ideas at the board meeting. The high circulation/high prestige group and the circulation leaders seem to consider it useful but not as integral as the prestige writers do. This may be due to the nature of these groups of writers and the nature of the company that owns the paper and hires the managers, editors and writers.

From this discussion-type analysis follows the question of actual debate on editorial staffs. In averaging the three groups, the most common response was often, but relaxed debate (see Tables 9 and 10).

More than 40 percent of all of the writers said their boards debate often and over 56 percent said that the "debate" is actually more of a relaxed discussion among the five to 10 members of the editorial board.

The high circulation group held the highest frequency in the "very often" category and the highest on the intensity scale at "heated." This may dispell the theory that high prestige papers need to debate more often and in a more intense fashion to produce more thorough, sophisticated and well-reasoned editorials for its more educated and influential audience.

TABLE 9: DEBATE FREQUENCY[a]

Debate Frequency	High Circulation (N=46)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation High Prestige (N=28)	Average (N=102)
Very often	32.6	3.4	21.4	19.4
Often	39.1	44.8	39.2	40.7
Sometimes	23.9	37.9	21.4	27.1
Seldom or Never	8.6	13.7	17.8	12.5
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Exact wording of the question: "How often do members of your editorial board debate (i.e. hold polar or opposing views on the stance of the newspaper on a particular topic and defend their views openly among board members)?"

TABLE 10: DEBATE INTENSITY[a]

Debate Frequency	High Circulation (N=46)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation High Prestige (N=29)	Average (N=103)
Heated	46.9	33.3	24.1	36.9
Relaxed	46.9	57.5	68.9	56.7
Staged or Other	4.0	9.0	6.8	6.3
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Exact wording of the question: "If there is debate, how would you describe it?"

The data do indicate that debate--whether "heated" or "relaxed"--occurs often or very often among a majority of all three groups. This may be explained by the need to discuss editorials and to plan reasoned arguments. Editorial writers interviewed among a series of different editorial boards by David Shaw, reporter for The Los Angeles Times, used the phases "bloody," "out of control" and "knock-down, drag-out fights" to describe their discussion at the editorial board meeting. This may suggest a cohesive sense of purpose among all editorial staffs, and a glimpse of the behavior of groups of writers.

Other significant statistical differences show that the circulation leaders have a 14 percent lead over the prestige press and a 23 percent lead over the high circulation/high prestige group in the "heated" category of debate.

This may indicate the need among the circulation leaders to more fully consider various views before deciding on the institutional editorial stance for the paper. It may also indicate the nature of the management and writers -- perhaps a group of writers more prone to heated discussion or debate -- that achieve the same result as the other two groups: a well-reasoned editorial.

In the "relaxed" debate category, the high circulation/ high prestige papers held the most writers. That group had 11 percent more writers than the prestige press and 22 percent more than the circulation leaders. However, the

prestige press also led the circulation leaders in this "relaxed" debate category by over 10 percent.

The special high circulation/high prestige group also valued a relaxed discussion type in Table 8. As a group of writers this data may indicate that their most valued form of discussion or debate is one which The Los Angeles Times editorial writers describe as "civility," or a more disciplined, orderly and polite form of considering various views on an issue and logically weighing the benefits of each view.

Hyptheses Tests

Satisfaction

Table 11 begins the review of the hypotheses and provides a basis for satisfaction research (see Table 11).

TABLE 11: JOB SATISFACTION[a]

Satisfaction Level	High Circulation (N=45)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation/ High Prestige (N=29)	Average (N=102)
Extremely Satisfied	40.0	34.5	41.4	38.8
Satisfied	60.0	55.2	51.7	56.3
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Two writers did not answer this question.

The average editorial writer from all three groups was "satisfied" with his job--the second highest response category. More than one-third were "extremely satisfied." These findings agree with both studies done by Wilhoit, showing that writers were very satisfied with their jobs. In addition, no writers said they were dissatisfied or indifferent.

Significant differences do not appear from sample to sample, but in using other variables for comparison, some differences result.

The measures for satisfaction suggested in Hypothesis I (prestige, impact and group interactions) do not produce conclusive evidence using these samples (see Tables 12A, 12B and 12C).

Tables 12A, 12B and 12C compare satisfaction with the writers perceived impact. Some writers did show an increase in impact with an increase in satisfaction and significant differences among samples developed.

The key factor in Tables 12A, 12B and 12C is the trend moving from high to low influence. Table 12A shows that impact is not a decisive factor among the satisfaction of the circulation leaders. An increase in perceived impact among these writers led to less satisfied responses. Almost 10 percent fewer writers said they were "extremely influential" when there was a corresponding increase in satisfaction. The other categories in Table 12A also support this trend.

TABLE 12A: JOB SATISFACTION VS. IMPACT: HC

	Impact			
Satisfaction[a]	Extremely Influential	Moderately Influential	Not Influential at All	Total
Ex. Satisfied (N=19)	5.8	64.7	29.3	100%
Satisfied (N=26)	15.3	57.6	23.0	100%

[a] One writer did not answer the question.

TABLE 12B: JOB SATISFACTION VS. IMPACT: HP

	Impact			
Satisfaction[a]	Extremely Influential	Moderately Influential	Not Influential at All	Total
Ex. Satisfied (N=12)	16.6	58.3	25.0	100%
Satisfied (N=14)	0.0	64.2	35.7	100%

[a] Three writers did not respond.

TABLE 12C: JOB SATISFACTION VS. IMPACT: HC/HP

	Impact			
Satisfaction[a]	Extremely Influential	Moderately Influential	Not Influential at All	Total
Ex. Satisfied (N=11)	63.6	18.1	18.1	100%
Satisfied (N=16)	12.4	50.0	37.5	100%

[a] Two writers did not respond.

Compared to the circulation leaders, the prestige press in Table 12B support the trend of increased impact leading to increased satisfaction. Moving from satisfied to extremely satisfied, there is a 16 percent satisfaction increase in the "extremely influential" category, coupled with a 9 percent satisfaction decrease in the "not influential" response. Similar to the prestige press, the special high circulation /high prestige writers support this part of the hypothesis in Table 12C. There is a 51 percent increase in satisfaction in the "extremely influential" category. However, there was also a 32 percent decrease in satisfaction in the "moderately influential" response. In the "not influential" category, there was a 19 percent satisfaction decrease.

These results may be due to importance transferred through impact. That is, if the writers feel they are changing society through their writing, they may be happier in their jobs. They may feel they are being effective, especially if they value a sense of accomplishment in their work. The communicator, then, may gain satisfaction through the effect of his writing. In this case, the persuader may see the results of his writing by a new elected official, a replacement in the sewer system or the passing of a citywide referendum. This will, in varying degrees for different writers, lead to job satisfaction for the editorial writer.

Among the circulation leaders, impact does not seem to be a decisive factor in satisfaction. These data may

indicate that there are other factors which produce satisfaction for this special group of writers.

In terms of measuring job satisfaction, the survey data show that Hypothesis I is only partly supported. The following discussion will show that only some of the responses agree with the hypothesis. Since there were three components, all three areas--prestige, perceived impact and the number of group interactions -- would have to agree with the hypothesis. They do not. A more accurate theory on editorial writing job satisfaction is needed to encompass individual factors for different types of writers.

To test the second part of Hypothesis I, Tables 13A, 13B and 13C compare job satisfaction with writers' prestige ratings. Among some groups, the data indicates a direct relationship between prestige and satisfaction: that is, the higher the perceived prestige, the greater the job satisfaction (see Tables 13A, 13B and 13C).

TABLE 13A: JOB SATISFACTION VS. PRESTIGE: HC

	Prestige			
Satisfaction[a]	High	Medium	Low	Total
Ex. Satisfied (N=15)	19.3	53.3	26.6	100%
Satisfied (N=26)	15.3	26.9	67.6	100%

[a] Five writers did not respond.

TABLE 13B: JOB SATISFACTION VS. PRESTIGE: HP

Satisfaction[a]	Prestige: High	Medium	Low	Total
Ex. Satisfied (N=10)	0.0	20.0	80.0	100%
Satisfied (N=13)	15.3	38.4	46.1	100%

[a] Six writers did not respond.

TABLE 13C: JOB SATISFACTION VS. PRESTIGE: HC/HP

Satisfaction[a]	Prestige: High	Medium	Low	Total
Ex. Satisfied (N=10)	10.0	80.0	10.0	100%
Satisfied (N=15)	0.0	53.3	46.6	100%

[a] Four writers did not respond.

In Table 13A, the circulation leaders support part of Hypothesis I that states that increased prestige rankings lead to increased satisfaction. There is a 4 percent and 26 percent increase in satisfaction with a corresponding increase in prestige. With a low prestige ranking, there is a 41 percent decrease in satisfaction among these writers.

However, among the prestige press, an opposite trend is seen. In Table 13B, there are decreases of 15 percent and 18 percent in satisfaction with corresponding increases in

prestige. With a decrease in prestige responses, there is a 33 percent increase in satisfaction among prestige writers.

The high circulation/high prestige group in Table 13C is similar to the circulation leaders in this test. There are increases of 10 percent and 27 percent in satisfaction with corresponding increases in prestige. A 37 percent decrease in satisfaction corresponds with a decrease in prestige.

These results could be due to a number of factors, most notably factors specific to the prestige press. There may be a sense, among these prestige writers, that other things besides prestige, lead to satisfaction. Perhaps their sense of prestige is well grounded and when it comes time to develop editorials on a daily basis, other factors, such as autonomy, impact, group interactions or other variables, may produce job satisfaction for the prestige writers.

For the other two groups of writers, prestige may give them a sense of importance or value among their peers and the public. This sense of value may be one ingredient that leads to satisfaction for high circulation writers and the high circulation/high prestige group.

In the third part of the first hypothesis the number of group interactions was linked to an increase in job satisfaction. This part of Hypothesis I gains support (see Tables 14A, 14B and 14C).

TABLE 14A: JOB SATISFACTION VS. GROUP INTERACTION: HC

Satisfaction	Three or Two Types (N=15)	One or No Types (N=30)	Totals[a] (N=45)
Extremely Satisfied	47.3	52.6	100%
Satisfied	23.0	76.9	100%

[a] One writer did not answer this question.

TABLE 14B: JOB SATISFACTION VS. GROUP INTERACTION: HP

Satisfaction	Three or Two Types (N=10)	One or No Types (N=16)	Totals[a] (N=26)
Extremely Satisfied	50.0	50.0	100%
Satisfied	28.5	71.4	100%

[a] Other responses included: Dissatisfied (one type); Dissatisfied (three types); and Extermely Dissatisfied (one type).

TABLE 14C: JOB SATISFACTION VS. GROUP INTERACTION: HC/HP

Satisfaction	Three or Two Types (N=9)	One or No Types (N=18)	Totals[a] (N=27)
Extremely Satisfied	41.6	58.3	100%
Satisfied	26.6	73.3	100%

[a] Other responses included: Indifferent (one type) and Indifferent (one type).

These data in Tables 14A, 14B and 14C are analyzed based on three kinds of group interactions: daily office visits; formal and informal gatherings at work; and social gatherings outside of work. Respondents could check as many responses that applied to their newspaper. These numbers of interactions were then compared to a five-point writer satisfaction scale that ranged from "extremely dissatisfied" to "extremely satisfied."

In Table 14A, the high circulation papers support the notion that the number of different types of group relations influence satisfaction when the number of interactions increases by 24 percent with an increase in satisfaction.

In Table 14B, there is a 21 percent increase in satisfaction in the top interaction category (three or two). This may indicate that prestige press writers value daily office visits to discuss editorials or other matters. They may also value informal gatherings at work or outside social gatherings. Again, it would be difficult to pinpoint the exact reason for this response, other than group interaction seems to be an important satisfaction factor for the prestige press writers as is perceived impact through editorials. This may be related to the type of audience the prestige press writes for--more influential, educated and sophisticated, and perhaps, more independent and separated from the influence of public opinion. The audience of the prestige press may be indeed making or shaping public opinion.

In Table 14C, a 15 percent increase satisfaction in the top category of interactions is consistent with a 15 percent decrease in interactions in the lower satisfaction response. The number of group interactions done by a percentage of all the writers in each group shows that this is not a significant factor in determining job satisfaction among all three groups of writers.

In summary, Hypothesis I is only supported in part. Perceived societal impact increased satisfaction among the prestige press and the high circulation/high prestige group. Perceived prestige increased satisfaction among the circulation leaders and the high circulation/high prestige group. The number of group meetings or interactions was a consistent factor in increasing job satisfaction among all writers. However, the hypothesis stated that all three factors were needed for job satisfaction, and only select groups of writers favored the first two variables.

Perhaps the formula for determining job satisfaction for editorial writers may be too difficult to quantify because of the individual nature of writers and the different working conditions at newspapers. Other, more encompassing factors may lead to job satisfaction for all these special writers who may share some editorial writing goals. It is also important to understand these communicators as persuaders in their own individual environments, and affected differently by the same variables.

Writing Priorities

In contrast to the ambiguous results of Hypothesis I, Hypothesis II received more support. Hypothesis II said, "If the editorial writer had to list writing preferences, then the most important preference would be to give both sides of an issue and advocate one side.

The data totals for all three samples combined indicate that 69.6 percent of all the writers responding placed the highest responsibility-advocacy rating as their top writing priority (see Table 15). Hypothesis II theorized that the most popular editorial writing preference would be to

TABLE 15: TOP WRITING PRIORITY

Writing Priority	High Circulation (N=44)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation High Prestige (N=29)	Average (N=101)
Provide information on an issue	22.7	27.5	24.1	31.3
Discuss all sides of an issue; let reader decide	2.2	0.0	3.4	2.9
Discuss one side of an Issue, then advocate it	20.4	20.6	17.2	24.5
Discuss all sides of an issue, then advocate one side	54.5	51.7	55.1	69.6
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

explain all sides of an issue, then advocate one point. In addition to the totals, at least half of all the writers responding in each sample listed that priority as their top goal.

From Hypothesis II we may infer that these select editorial writers have some kind of "sense of mission" that goes beyond their particular paper type, or in this study, their sample paper type. A majority of them will explain all points and advocate and argue one as the best--the logically most difficult writing strategy of the four techniques. Only 3 percent of the writers would explain an issue and let the reader decide which position to take. This finding of 3 is consistent with research done by Hynds.

If one considers the four-point advocacy-responsibility scale for writing priorities, the data indicates that all three samples are about the same.

Just over 50 percent of each group favors explaining all points and advocating one. All three note about 20-25 percent of their priorities in items 1 and 3 (see Table 15) and less than 3 percent in each sample would let the reader decide which side of an issue to believe.

We may infer that because of the nature of editorial writing among these select groups, paper type does not affect writing strategy. The reader still needs to be educated, informed, convinced and enlightened, no matter what newspaper editorial he is reading. Hypothesis II--

which proprosed that the most common writing technique is explaining all sides of an issue and advocating one--gains support.

Research Questions

Autonomy

Research question 1 explores the relationship between writers' autonomy and job satisfaction. Five data tables comprehensively examine this relationship.

The writers' ability to make their own decisions and set their own objectives were explored in Tables 13 and 14 on decision making and story assignments. In both tables, the average writer showed a great deal of autonomy in controlling the editorial policy and story assignments, relatively free from the editor or publisher interference (see Tables 16 and 17).

Among the individual samples, the prestige press seems to decide its editorial opinions more by board consensus than by one-on-one meetings between writers and editors, or directives from editors or publishers. The prestige papers also are concentrated (90 percent) in the way story assignments are made: the writer who discusses the editorial topic at a board meeting usually writes it.

Among the high circulation papers, a number of those writers--13 percent--will volunteer to write an editorial, even though they may not bring the topic into the staff meeting for discussion. In over 10 percent of the high

TABLE 16: DECISION-MAKING MODEL[a]

	High Circulation (N=46)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation/ High Prestige (N=29)	Average (N=103)
Consensus of Board	74.4	81.4	70.3	76.0
Consensus of Writer & Editor or Directives from Editor or Publisher	11.6	3.7	11.5	9.3
Other Methods[b]	13.9	14.8	14.8	14.5
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Exact wording of the question: "How is editorial policy formed at your newspaper?"

[b] Other methods were various combinations of the decision-making responses, all performed at different times, based on the editorial topic.

circulation boards, the editor assigns editorials. The high circulation/high prestige press seems to parallel their prestige counterparts.

These significant statistical differences indicate that the prestige press may value autonomy more than the high circulation papers.

TABLE 17: STORY ASSIGNMENTS[a]

Story Assignment Technique	High Circulation (N=46)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation/ High Prestige (N=29)	Average (N=103)
Writers Volunteer	13.1	0.04	4.0	7.0
Writers Discuss	73.6	90.9	96.0	84.7
Editors Assigns	10.5	0.0	0.0	4.7
Other[b]	2.6	9.0	0.0	3.5
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Exact wording of the question: "How are editorial story assignments made?"

[b] Other responses were a combination of the response categories, depending on the type of editorial.

In research question 1, there is a positive relationship between high autonomy for editorial writers in decision making and high satisfaction (see Tables 18A, 18B and 18C).

From this result we may infer among these sample groups that editorial writers value a high degree of personal decision-making power as a part of their everyday job duties --and privledges.

TABLE 18A: JOB SATISFACTION VS. DECISION-MAKING MODEL: HC[a]

Satisfaction	High Autonomy	Medium Autonomy	Low Autonomy	Totals
Extremely Satisfied (N=17)	82.2	5.8	11.7	100%
Satisfied (N=26)	66.9	3.8	19.1	100%

[a] Three writers did not answer this question.

TABLE 18B: JOB SATISFACTION VS. DECISION-MAKING MODEL: HP[a]

Satisfaction	High Autonomy	Medium Autonomy	Low Autonomy	Totals
Extremely Satisfied (N=10)	90.0	0.0	10.0	100%
Satisfied (N=14)	71.4	0.0	28.5	100%

[a] Two writers were "dissatisfied" and one was extremely dissatisfied. Two did not answer this question.

TABLE 18C: JOB SATISFACTION VS. DECISION-MAKING MODEL: HC/HP[a]

Satisfaction	High Autonomy	Medium Autonomy	Low Autonomy	Totals
Extremely Satisfied (N=11)	90.8	0.0	9.0	100%
Satisfied (N=14)	71.3	7.1	21.4	100%

[a] Two writers said they were "indifferent" and two did not answer this question.

Relationships among the three separate samples are apparent especially in Tables 18B and 18C. There is an 80 percent increase in autonomy--from 10 percent to 90 percent --within the "extremely satisfied" category for the prestige press. The same relationship follows through for the "satisfied" writers and "extremely satisfied" writers responding in the high circulation/high prestige group.

As earlier data shows on editorial decision-making, the prestige press and the six special papers, that fall into both samples, seem to value autonomy more than the high circulation papers. This data also indicates that there is a direct relation between autonomy and satisfaction.

This may be apparent for a number of factors, but perhaps may be explained by the need to express one's own convictions and reasoning skills when reasearching and writing editorials. Autonomy could be a factor in being satisfied with the process of producing an editorial.

Societal Impact

Research question 2, which asks about the relationship between paper type and perceived impact, produced significant differences (see Table 19).

More than half of the total of all three samples (54 percent) felt they were "moderately influential" through their editorials. More than a quarter (26 percent) thought they were "not too influential," while 15 percent felt they were "influential."

TABLE 19: IMPACT

Perceived Impact	High Circulation (N=44)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation High Prestige (N=28)	Average (N=100)
Influential	13.6	6.8	25.0	14.8
Moderately Influential	47.7	58.6	42.8	54.4
Not too Influential	25.0	48.2	21.4	25.7
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

The highest frequency of all these samples was "moderately influential," with 59 percent of the prestige press responding in that category. The highest frequency of "influential" writers was the high circulation/high prestige group, of which, 25 percent felt they were influential.

Among the "influential" writers, the special high circulation/high prestige group has 11 percent and 18 percent more writers than the circulation leaders and the prestige press respectively. The special high circulation/ prestige group holds the lowest number of "not too influential" writers.

In the "not too influential" category, the prestige writers hold leads of 27 percent and 23 percent over the high circulation/prestige group and the circulation leaders, respectively.

This data may suggest that writers from the six special newspapers known for both high circulation and high prestige feel their editorials carry the most social impact. This may be due to the reputation of these papers among both elite readers and large numbers of the population from various socio-economic backgrounds. As persuaders, these communicators may feel they have many factors in their favor --a positive public image for the newspaper, a larger than average readership and an influential readership. All these factors may play a part in this "impact" response.

Motivation

To answer research question 3 on motivation, both work involvement and work effort were examined (see Table 20).

TABLE 20: WORK INVOLVEMENT[a]

Involvement	High Circulation (N=46)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation High Prestige (N=29)	Average (N=103)
Very little, slightly or moderately	21.7	13.7	24.1	20.3
Strongly	47.8	58.6	41.3	49.0
Very strongly	30.4	27.5	34.4	30.7
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Exact wording of the question: "Some editorial writers are completely engrossed in their work, while to others, editorial writing is only one of several interests. How involved or how motivated do you feel on your job?"

Almost half of all the writers felt they were "strongly" involved in their job, on average. Also on average, more than 30 percent of the special groups felt they were "very strongly" involved, the highest extreme of the involvement scale.

Among the three samples, the only significant statistical differences appear in the "strongly" involved category and the very little, slightly or moderately involved category. The high prestige writers have a 11 percent lead over the high circulation writers and a 17 percent margin over the high circulation/high prestige group. These are both significant statistical differences for this study and may indicate a link between prestige press members and high motivation. Adding the last two high motivation responses, the prestige press has slight gains over both groups; that pattern however, is not the same for work effort (see Table 21).

In this table, high circulation and high prestige seem to be closer in response, and post a 18 percent increase over the high circulation/high prestige group when adding the two top effort responses. Overall, more than 43 percent of the writers said they work "as hard as others" in writing editorials and that number decreases as the work effort categories increase in difficulty.

Another significant difference appears in the top effort category. The circulation leaders have nearly 10 percent more writers (20 percent) who say they work "much

TABLE 21: WORK EFFORT[a]

Work effort	High Circulation (N=44)	High Prestige (N=26)	High Circulation High Prestige (N=28)	Average (N=98)
Much harder	20.4	15.3	10.7	16.3
A little harder	29.5	34.6	21.4	28.5
As hard as others	45.4	50.0	53.5	43.8
Much less hard	2.2	0.0	10.7	4.0
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Exact wording of the question: "Would you say you work harder, less hard or about as hard as other people writing editorials?"

harder" than others, than the high circulation/high prestige group (11) in that top effort category. Similarly, the prestige press has over 13 percent more writers than the high circulation/high prestige sample in the second highest effort category.

In the lowest effort response ("much less hard") the special high circulation/high prestige group had over 10 percent more writers there than did the prestige press writers.

These three comparisons may indicate that the special high circulation/high prestige group of writers do not believe work effort is as important a factor in motivating

themselves to write effective editorials, compared with other factors. As one of the factors used in this study to measure motivation, work involvement seems to be more important to the special high circulation/high prestige group.

The prestige press' slight lead in motivation responses may be due to the special audience those writers work for. To be a member of that group - an argument may be made - motivation must be apparent in one's daily work attitude. With motivation these writers may be looking to perform that much better in research, analysis and writing.

Comparing impact with job involvement, there does not appear to be a clear correlation between absorbing work and perceived societal impact (see Tables 22A, 22B and 22C).

TABLE 22A: IMPACT VS. WORK INVOLVEMENT: HC[a]

Impact	Involvement: High	Medium	Total
Extremely or Moderately Influential (N=34)	76.4	23.5	100%
Not too Influential (N=9)	77.7	22.2	100%

[a] Three writers did not respond.

TABLE 22B: IMPACT VS. WORK INVOLVEMENT: HP[a]

Impact	Involvement: High	Medium	Total
Moderately Influential (N=17)	82.3	17.6	100%
Not too Influential (N=9)	72.6	11.1	100%

[a] Three writers did not respond to this question.

TABLE 22C: IMPACT VS. WORK INVOLVEMENT: HC/HP[a]

Impact	Involvement: High	Medium	Total
Influential (N=8)	85.6	14.2	100%
Moderately Influential (N=12)	75.0	25.0	100%
Not too or not Influential at all (N=8)	75.0	25.0	100%

[a] One writer did not respond to this question.

After response categories were collapsed because of low or no response, the data lined up more on the "high involvement" end of the motivation scale, but that did not correspond to the high end of the impact scale. There were two 10 percent increases in impact for the prestige press and the high circulation/high prestige papers in the high involvement category. However, there is also a 10 percent decrease in impact among the high circulation/high prestige writers in the medium involvement category. There were no significant differences in impact for the circulation leaders.

These results may indicate that in addition to work involvement, other factors give the writers a sense of societal impact. Perhaps the circulation leaders feel they have societal impact, regardless of how "involved" or motivated they are in their profession. The large circulation audience in some of the largest markets in the country may provide this "sense of impact" when readers react to their editorials.

Research question 3 does not show a consistent relationship between high motivational job involvement and perceived impact. Although most writers note that they are "absorbed" or "very absorbed" in their work, there is not a steady increase in motivation with an increase in perceived impact.

We may infer from this data that although most writers feel highly motivated, they feel only moderate

impact on society. The degree of motivation in journalism, or specifically editorial writing, may need to be that high as a consequence of the job. Perceived impact may be difficult for the writers to repond to because after many editorials, there may not be any tangible way to measure societal impact. If an editorial causes one person, or a multitude to think, perhaps that is impact enough for that editorial. For another editorial, letters to the editor, a vote, a resignation or a referendum may offer a questionable indication of what that editorial may have caused society to do. Trying to measure impact in this study is solely a measure of the impression of the writer and this style of measurement is consistent with the spirit of this communicator analysis study, which focuses on the editorial writer's personal impressions of his or her editorial writing job.

Staff Makeup

Finally, in research question 4, there is not a consistent trend in editorial staff makeup (see Tables 23, 24 and 25).

Most of the writers from all three samples had different backgrounds, but the samples are split between similar and divergent philosophies with divergent backgrounds.

In Table 23, the highest frequency showed that more than 39 percent of the writers were "liberals" in their

TABLE 23: PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy	High Circulation (N=42)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation High Prestige (N=26)	Average (N=96)
Conservative	19.0	3.5	11.5	12.5
Moderate	26.1	28.5	38.4	30.2
Liberal	35.7	60.7	23.0	39.5
Independent	14.2	7.1	23.0	14.5
Other	4.7	0.0	3.8	3.1
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

(Note: "Other" included libertarian and radical.)

philosophy, followed by "moderate " (30 percent) and "independent" (14.5 percent).

In Table 24, more than 44 percent the editorial boards had staffs divergent in background but similar in philosophy. This data agrees with comments from editors that boards must share the same philosophies to be consistent as the institutional "voice" of the daily newspaper.

The high circulation press showed the highest duplications in staff vs. personal philosophy in the moderate and liberal categories, while the prestige press were more cohesive among liberal staffs. The special high prestige/high circulation group - true to its special

TABLE 24: STAFF MAKEUP[a]

Staff Type	High Circulation (N=46)	High Prestige (N=28)	High Circulation High Prestige (N=27)	Average (N=101)
Similar back./ Similar philos.	4.3	14.2	14.8	1.9
Diverg. back./ diverg. philos.	39.1	21.4	44.4	34.6
Similar back./ diverg. philos.	15.2	7.1	3.7	9.9
Diverg. back./ similar philos.	43.3	57.1	37.0	44.5
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

[a] Exact wording of the question: "How would you describe your editorial board? (background: age, sex, race, education, experience; philosophy: liberal, conservative, independent)"

and independent nature - showed the highest frequency of cohesion among staffs and individuals who saw themselves as independent and moderate.

These cohesive groups support the results in Table 25, but still leave open the possibility for divergent backgrounds and philosophies among boards. These results tell us that the philosophical duplications may give us a glimpse of the more common editorial stances among these special groups. In a more general context, it indicates the importance of cohesiveness in thinking among editorial boards.

TABLE 25: PERSONAL-STAFF PHILOSOPHY DUPLICATIONS[a]

Philosophy	High Circulation (N=43)	High Prestige (N=27)	High Circulation High Prestige (N=21)	Average (N=91)
Conservative	37.5[b]	0.0	0.0	45.4
Moderate	60.0	50.0	55.5	55.5
Liberal	53.3	82.3	0.0	57.8
Independent	28.5	0.0	40.0	28.5

[a] Figures represent percentages of duplication within each category and therefore do not add rows vertically to 100% totals.

[b] Also note the special interpretation needed for this table. For example, 37.5 percent of the high circulation writers who said they were conservative also said their boards were conservative. This figure does not mean that 37.5 percent of the high circulation writers said they were conservative.

From this data, we also may infer that editorial boards among these groups still can arrive at consensus or don't need to arrive at consensus, or don't need to arrive at consensus quickly, since the philosophies of the writers may vary.

Other Analyses

Some data that was not required for hypotheses or research questions was gathered.

Comparing satisfaction to salary, a direct relationship can be drawn between increased salary and increased

satisfaction, among some writers (See Tables 26A, 26B and 26C).

TABLE 26A: JOB SATISFACTION VS. SALARY: HC[a]

Salary	Extremely Satisfied (N=19)	Satisfied (N=25)	Average (N=44)
$20,000-$30,001	10.5	4.0	6.8
$30,001-$40,000	10.5	28.0	20.4
$40,001-$50,000	31.5	48.0	40.9
$50,001 and above	47.3	20.0	31.8
Totals	100%	100%	100%

[a] Two writers did not respond to this question.

TABLE 26B: JOB SATISFACTION VS. SALARY: HP[a]

Salary	Extremely Satisfied (N=13)	Satisfied (N=14)	Average (N=27)
$30,001-$40,000	61.5	57.1	59.2
$40,001-$50,000	7.6	21.4	14.8
$50,001 and above	30.7	21.4	25.9
Totals	100%	100%	100%

[a] Two writers did not respond to this question.

TABLE 26C: JOB SATISFACTION VS. SALARY: HC/HP[a]

Salary	Extremely Satisfied (N=11)	Satisfied (N=14)	Average (N=25)
$30,001-$40,000	18.1	21.4	18.5
$40,001-$50,000	9.0	0.0	3.7
$50,001 and above	72.7	78.5	77.8
Totals	100%	100%	100%

[a] Four writers did not answer this question.

Table 26A indicates that the numbers of extremely satisfied writers increase as one increases in salary; however, there is not a clear direct relationship between an increase in satisfaction and an increase in salary among the high circulation writers.

A 27 percent increase in satisfaction results in the top salary category; however, that is offset by losses in satisfaction of 16.5 percent and 17.5 percent in two other salary categories.

Among the prestige writers in Table 26B, the only significant change is a 14 percent decrease in satisfaction in the $40,000 to $50,000 salary range. Table 26C reveals small but insignificant changes in satisfaction among writers for the high circulation/high prestige group.

These data may indicate that salary is not a significant factor in creating job satisfaction for these editorial writers. The changes in satisfaction run counter or are insignificant with increases in salary. Perhaps these special writers need more than materialistic rewards to make them satisfied in their jobs. Perhaps prestige, perceived impact and other factors play a larger role in producing day to day satisfaction in a profession that is scrutinized by the writers' peers and the public. Salary may be an accepted benefit at a high circulation, high prestige or high circulation/high prestige paper. Perhaps each editorial writer finds his job satisfaction in proving his or her worth as an effective persuader or gatekeeper in the editorial communication process.

Age seems to be a factor in the perceived impact of writers. A bimodal distribution occurs in Table 23 as the relatively young and old perceive more impact than do the middle aged (see Table 27).

Among the "influential" writers, the youngest (26-35) age group has 11.1 percent more writers than the middle (36-50) group of writers.

Although there are no significant (more than 10 percent) other differences, a bimodal relationship here may suggest that younger and older editorial writers--at the beginning and the end of their careers--feel they have more impact on readers. This may be due to a new optimisim among young writers and an enduring appreciation for the

value and power of editorials among the older, more experienced writers. The middle aged writers may feel they

TABLE 27: IMPACT VS. AGE[a]

Perceived Impact	26-35 (N=20)	36-50 (N=56)	51- and above (N=23)
Extremely Influential	5.0	0.0	4.3
Influential	20.0	8.9	13.0
Moderately Influential	45.0	64.2	43.4
Not too Influential	25.0	23.2	30.4
Not Influential at all	5.0	3.5	0.0
Totals	100%	100%	100%

[a] Five writers did not list their age.

have impact, but do not show it as dramatically as the two other age groups. The middle-aged writers, ingrained in the daily routine of their jobs, may not view their mission with the anticipation, hope or respect of the young and old writers. They may assume a cynical, pessimistic or realistic view after years of editorial writing that limits their expectations for public impact.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Similar to Szymanski's 1984 survey in Florida, this national survey among three special groups showed no ideal "profile" of editorial writers, but some correlations between the background of the writers and their perceived job objectives, attitudes and performances.

The average editorial writer is male, about 44 years old, makes more than $50,000 and is satisfied in his job at a high circulation or prestige newspaper.

Women have made gains in joining editorial staffs and make up more than one-quarter of editorial writing staffs. Over half of the respondents got an undergraduate degree and nearly 30 percent had a master's. The most popular majors were journalism and history.

All three special groups--the high circulation, prestige press and high circulation/high prestige group--showed high job satisfaction, high salaries, moderate social impact and high motivation. In some cases, the statistical differences were significant, but the differences were not consistent enough to draw a reoccurring positive relationship between a newspaper group and a skill.

One is left to consider the similarities between these three groups. Indeed, the fact that the prestige press write for an "elite" audience seems not to be reflected in motivation, satisfaction, research time or many other factors that this survey measures. The similarities may show the singleness of purpose that all editorial writers follow in order to research and write informative and persuasive editorials for a variety of audiences.

Some suggestions for the future may include an updated survey addressing different factors--perhaps writing techniques. Impact was totally dependent on the personal choice of the writer here. Perhaps two studies can be done concurrently - one measuring the writer's personal perception of societal impact, and one measuring public opinion.

More in-depth study can be done on the concept of group dynamics. Groups of board members can be interviewed and monitored as a group. Editors of editorial pages need to be questioned and probed in a separate survey, to gain their perceptions on the workings and purpose of the board.

Communicator analysis, researched from various communicators with different jobs in a mode of communication, may provide a more comprehensive insight of writers the way they are motivated, prepared and perform. Perhaps understanding the communicator is elusive at best, but

taking the elements of the communicator in pieces we more closely know the whole of the writer as communicator.

Previous studies have examined the editorial writer as informer and persuader, representing the newspaper as an institution. Further studies to examine the writers' own analysis of these roles would help the public better understand the purpose of editorials and how they fit into the scheme of the U.S. daily newspaper as an institution.

The author would also encourage further studies comparing the prestige press and the high circulation newspapers. Perhaps there are other factors and other writers among these papers that can also illustrate significant similarities and differences.

APPENDIX A

THE NATIONAL SURVEY INSTRUMENT

APPENDIX A

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
TELEPHONE (517) 353-6430

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1212

Oct. 30, 1985

David A. Szymanski
MSU School of Journalism
Room 305 Com Arts Bldg.
East Lansing, Mich. 48824-1212

Mr./Ms. _____ _____
Editorial Writer
Newspaper Name
Street
City, State Zip

Dear Mr./Ms. _____,

I am currently finishing my master's degree in journalism at Michigan State University and would like to ask you to complete a survey for editorial writers as part of my thesis research.

In addition to this letter, you'll find a survey and a return envelope. I have two requests: Read and complete the survey on editorial writers and mail it back to me by Nov. 15. As you can see, that's not far away, but I need your response.

The survey should take not long to fill out. I conducted a similar survey among Florida editorial writers and they said they filled it out right away or took it to lunch and finished it in 5 to 15 minutes.

Also note that the survey will be confidential. As a research check, I have assigned numbers to the return envelopes to monitor which responses have come back, in case a second mailing is needed. This list will be destroyed after the mailings are finished.

Once again, thank you for your prompt cooperation in helping me finish my journalism degree.

Sincerely,
David A. Szymanski
David A. Szymanski
M.A. Candidate
MSU School of Journalism

P.S. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided for you. You can complete the survey today and mail it immediately. Thank you again.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
TELEPHONE (517) 353-6430

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1212

Nov. 19, 1985

David A. Szymanski
305 Communication Arts Building
MSU School of Journalism
East Lansing, MI 48824-1212

Mr./Ms. Editorial Writer
Newspaper
Street
City, State Zip

Dear M-. ---------,

About two weeks ago you received a national editorial writers survey for my master's degree thesis research. If you have sent in the survey, please accept my personal "thanks."

However, if you have misplaced the survey, here's another copy. Would you please take 10-15 minutes to complete the enclosed survey and return it as soon as possible this week in the stamped envelope provided? I really need your response to finish my graduate work in journalism.

Writers have told me the quick-answer format enables them to finish the survey in less than 15 minutes.

And remember, if you wish, I will send you a free copy of the results of this national survey. A form is provided for this.

Best regards and thank you for your cooperation!

Sincerely,

David A. Szymanski

David A. Szymanski
MSU School of Journalism

Thank you for your cooperation!

FALL 1986 EDITORIAL WRITERS SURVEY FOR DAVID SZYMANSKI, M.A. CANDIDATE
MSU SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

INSTRUCTIONS: Please indicate your answers by checking the appropriate spaces or filling in short answer blanks as requested. All information used in this survey will be confidential and no individuals will be identified in the tabulated results.

Thank you for your cooperation.

1. What is the name of your newspaper? _____

2. What is your gender?
   1 ( ) Female
   2 ( ) Male

3. How old are you? ____

4. How would you describe your personal philosophy on public policy issues? (Please check one)
   1 ( ) Conservative, or conservative leaning
   2 ( ) Moderate, or moderate leaning
   3 ( ) Liberal, or liberal leaning
   4 ( ) Independent
   5 ( ) Other (Please list) _____

5. What is the philosophy of the majority of editorial writers on your staff on public policy issues? (Please check one)
   1 ( ) Conservative, or conservative-leaning
   2 ( ) Moderate, or moderate leaning
   3 ( ) Liberal, or liberal-leaning
   4 ( ) Independent
   5 ( ) Other (Please list) _____

6. What is the length of your experience as an editorial writer?
   (Please list): ____ yrs. ____ mo.s

7. What was the highest level of education you've completed?
   (Please check one)
   1 ( ) High school
   2 ( ) Undergraduate
   3 ( ) Master's
   4 ( ) Doctorate
   5 ( ) Law degree
   6 ( ) Other(s) (Please list) _____

8. What was your major area of study? (Please check one):
   1 ( ) Journalism
   2 ( ) English
   3 ( ) History
   4 ( ) Law/Government
   5 ( ) Business
   6 ( ) Other: _____.

9. What is your yearly editorial-writer salary?
   1 ( ) 0 - $10,000
   2 ( ) $10,001 - $20,000
   3 ( ) $20,001 - $30,000
   4 ( ) $30,001 - $40,000
   5 ( ) $40,001 - $50,000
   6 ( ) $50,000 and above

10. On the average work day, how much time do you spend researching a topic before writing or discussing it as an editorial subject?:
   1 ( ) About 4 hours or more
   2 ( ) About 3 - 4 hours
   3 ( ) About 2 - 3 hours
   4 ( ) About 1 - 2 hours
   5 ( ) About 1 hour or less
   6 ( ) Other: (Please list) _____.

11. What is your most frequently used source? (Please check one)
   1 ( ) Your newspaper's beat reporters
   2 ( ) Local public officials
   3 ( ) Outside experts
   4 ( ) Your newspaper's clips
   5 ( ) Other newspapers (Please list): _____.
   6 ( ) Other: _____.

12. How satisfied are you with your job in editorial writing?
   1 ( ) Extremely satisfied
   2 ( ) Satisfied
   3 ( ) Indifferent
   4 ( ) Dissatisfied
   5 ( ) Extremely Dissatisfied

13. For each of the following occupations, please rank them in order of prestige based on the following scale: 1: Most prestigious; 2: Very prestigious; 3: Prestigious; 4. Some prestige; 5. Not very prestigious at all. (Prestige: "Prominence or influential status acheived through success, renown or wealth." source: American Heritage Dictionary): (Please place a rank number (1 = high and 5 = low) before each occupation.)

____ Supreme Court Justice	____ Mayor of a major city
____ Presidential cabinet member	____ College professor
____ Novelist	____ Accountant
____ Banker	____ Small business owner
____ Editorial writer	____ Auto factory worker
____ Lawyer	____ Local TV anchorperson
____ Physician	____ Nurse
____ Newspaper reporter	____ Carpenter
____ Symphony musician	____ Professional athlete
____ Local columnist	____ Priest or Minister
____ Used car salesman	____ U.S. Congressman
____ Auto mechanic	____ Office secretary
____ Shuttle astronaut	____ Speech therapist
____ TV reporter	____ State court judge

14. What do you believe is the most important objective in writing editorials? (Please rank in order of importance: 1=most important and 4=least important):

____ To inform the reader about an issue.
____ To explain all points of view on an issue, then let the reader decide which side to favor.
____ To explain one point of view on an issue, then advocate that point.
____ To explain all points of view on an issue, then advocate one of those points.

15. On most issues you write editorials about, how influential do you feel you are in creating some public impact? (i.e. changing public policy, encouraging someone to vote for a certain candidate, etc.): (Please check one)

1 ( ) Exteremely influential; almost all of my editorials will create some public impact.
2 ( ) Influential; most of my editorials will create some public impact.
3 ( ) Moderately influential; about half of my editorials will create some public impact.
4 ( ) Not too influential; only a few of my editorials will create some public impact.
5 ( ) Not influential at all; they may be read, but my editorials will not create some public impact.

16. Why do you feel your editorials have the impact they do? (Please explain:) _____
_____
_____
_____.

17. How is editorial policy formed at your newspaper? (Please check one):

1 ( ) By a consensus of the editorial board at a periodic staff meeting where issues are discussed.
2 ( ) By a consensus of the editorial writer and the editorial page editor meeting individually.
3 ( ) By directions from the editorial page editor who suggests the institution's stance.
4 ( ) By directions from the publisher, who suggests the institution's stance.
5 ( ) By other methods: _____.

18. Some editorial writers are completely engrossed in their work, while to others, editorial writing is only one of several interests. How involved or how motivated do you feel on your job?
    1 ( ) Very little involvement; my other professional interests are more absorbing than my editorial writing work.
    2 ( ) Slightly involved.
    3 ( ) Moderately involved; my editorial writing work and my other professional interests are equally absorbing to me.
    4 ( ) Strongly involved
    5 ( ) Very strongly involved; my editorial writing work is my most professionally absorbing interest in my life.

19. Would you say you work harder, less hard or about as hard as other people writing editorials?
    1 ( ) Much harder than most others.
    2 ( ) A little harder than most others.
    3 ( ) About as hard as most others.
    4 ( ) A little less hard than most others.
    5 ( ) Much less hard than most others.

20. How did you prepare vocationally for your job as an editorial writer? (Check as many that apply):
    1 ( ) Worked as a reporter
    2 ( ) Worked as an editor
    3 ( ) Worked as a reporter and editor
    4 ( ) Worker as a teacher
    5 ( ) Worked as a lawyer
    6 ( ) Worked in another position: _____

21. How often does your editorial board meet?
    1 ( ) Every day
    2 ( ) Three or four times a week.
    3 ( ) Once or twice a week.
    4 ( ) There are no editorial board meetings.
    5 ( ) We don't have an editorial board

22. Which of the following most accurately describes the discussion type of your editorial board meetings? (Please check one):
    1 ( ) A relaxed, free-form discussion takes place, covering a multitude of editorial ideas.
    2 ( ) A systematic, but relaxed meeting takes place. Each editorial writer "reports" what his topic idea is.
    3 ( ) The editorial page editor suggests discussion issues and writers talk about those issues.
    4 ( ) The publisher suggests discussion issues and writers talk about those issues.
    5 ( ) Other: _____
    _____
    _____

23. How often do members of your editorial board debate? (i.e. Hold polar or opposing views on the stance of the newspaper on a particular topic and defend their views openly among board members) (Please check one):

1 ( ) Very often. Debating at board meetings is an almost daily occurrence.
2 ( ) Often. Debates occur several times a week.
3 ( ) Sometimes. About once a week.
4 ( ) Seldom. Debate is rare.
5 ( ) Never. Why? _____
_____
_____

24. If there is debate, how would you describe it?

1 ( ) It can sometimes become heated.
2 ( ) Debate is more relaxed, similar to a discussion.
3 ( ) Debate is staged : someone plays devil's advocate to encourage debate.
3 ( ) Other: _____.

25. How are editorial story assignments made?

1 ( ) Writers volunteer for editorials in areas that may not be of special interest to them.
2 ( ) Writers who bring up an issue and discuss it at a board meeting usually write that editorial.
3 ( ) The editorial page editor assigns editorials to writers.
4 ( ) The publisher assigns editorials.
5 ( ) Other: _____.

26. How would you describe your editorial board? (Please check one)

1 ( ) A group of people with similar backgrounds (i.e. age, sex, race, education, experience) and similar philosophies (i.e. conservative- or liberal-leaning).
2 ( ) A group of people with divergent backgrounds and divergent philosophies.
3 ( ) A group of people with similar backgrounds, but divergent philosophies.
4 ( ) A group of people with divergent backgrounds, but similar philosophies.

27. How often do you have to express ideas contrary to your own philosophy or beliefs when you write an editorial because of the opinion of your newspaper?

1 ( ) All of the time
2 ( ) Most of the time
3 ( ) Sometimes
4 ( ) Seldom
5 ( ) Never

28. Do you engage in other meetings with editorial staff? (Check as many that may apply at your newspaper.):
    1 ( ) Members visit each other's offices daily.
    2 ( ) Various formal and informal gatherings take place at work.
    3 ( ) Social gatherings are arranged ouside of work once a week or so. (e.g. picnics, dinners and bars)

Thank you again.

Please place your completed questionnaire in the postage-paid, pre-addressed envelope provided and mail back by Nov. 15, 1985, to:

David A. Szymanski
MSU School of Journalism
Room 305 Com. Arts Bldg.
East Lansing, Mich. 48824-1212

Note: If you would like to receive a copy of the results of this survey, please fill out your name and address below. A copy will be sent to you free of charge:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

Please send to:

David A. Szymanski
305 Com. Arts Bldg.
MSU School of Journalism
East Lansing, MI 48824-1212

APPENDIX B

THE FLORIDA SURVEY INSTRUMENT

APPENDIX B

The Poynter Institute
For Media Studies

Exhibits 1-5 (Cover letter and survey)

Sept. 28, 1984

Mr./Ms. Editorial Writer
Newspaper Name
Newspaper Address

Dear Mr./Ms. (Editorial Writer's name):

I am currently one of 13 journalism graduate students participating in the Poynter Institute's Newspaper Management Program in St. Petersburg, Fla. Part of our 10-week seminar involves writing a research paper, and that's where I need your help.

In addition to this letter, you'll find a survey and a return envelope. I have two requests -- that you read and complete the survey on editorial writers and that you mail it back by Oct. 22. As you can see, that's not far away.

I appreciate your cooperation in helping my research. All names of newspapers and all of the corresponding tabulation material is entirely confidential and will only be used in a general sense (circulation size of newspapers) to compare data.

Once again, much thanks and keep up the informative and persuasive editorials that call all of us to action.

Sincerely,

David A. Szymanski,
management student
The Poynter Institute
for Media Studies

556 Central Avenue St. Petersburg, Florida 33701 (813) 821-9494

EDITORIAL WRITERS SURVEY FOR THE POYNTER INSTITUTE FOR MEDIA STUDIES — FALL 1984

INSTRUCTIONS: Please indicate your answers by checking the appropriate spaces or filling in a blank as requested. If you would like to elaborate on any of your answers, space is provided at the end of the survey. Please know that all information used in this survey will be confidential and no individuals or newspapers will be identified in the tabulated results. Please return surveys by Oct. 22.

1. What is your most frequently used source as an editorial writer?

1 ( ) Beat reporters
2 ( ) Public officials
3 ( ) Outside experts
4 ( ) Other sources: _____

2. In your opinion, what percent of your time is spent researching topics before writing editorials?

_____ percent

3. Are you assigned a specific field to write on occasionally?

1 ( ) Yes
2 ( ) No

4. Do you work full-time on the editorial page or do you work for other departments?

1 ( ) Full-time editorial writer
2 ( ) I work for other departments at the newspaper also.

5. How satisfying is editorial writing for you? (compared with previous positions)

1 ( ) Very satisfying
2 ( ) Satisfying
3 ( ) Somewhat satisfying
4 ( ) Not Satisfying at all

6. What position/job did you hold before joining your editorial staff?

name position(s): _____

7. How would you define your political philosophy?

1 ( ) Conservative
2 ( ) Liberal
3 ( ) Independent
4 ( ) Don't know

8. What is the political philosophy of the majority of editorial writers on your staff?

1 ( ) Conservative
2 ( ) Liberal
3 ( ) Independent
4 ( ) Don't know

9. How often do you feel compelled to express ideas contrary to your own political philosophy or beliefs when you write an editorial?

1 ( ) All of the time
2 ( ) Most of the time
3 ( ) Seldom
4 ( ) Never

(Over Please)

Page 2 -- EDITORIAL WRITERS SURVEY FOR THE POYNTER INSTITUTE FOR MEDIA STUDIES

10. Please indicate your reaction to the following statement: The editorial writer, in order to preserve the ability to make impartial judgments, should avoid membership in partisan political organizations.

1 ( ) Strongly agree
2 ( ) Agree
3 ( ) Disagree
4 ( ) Strongly disagree
5 ( ) Have no feelings one way or another.

11. Have you participated or plan to participate in any of the following functions during the 1984 election campaign?

1 ( ) Gave money or bought tickets to help a party or candidate.
2 ( ) Attended political party rallies, dinners or similar functions.
3 ( ) Talked with individuals urging them to vote for one of the parties or candidates.
4 ( ) Wrote and/or delivered speeches for a party or candidate.
5 ( ) Other campaign activities.
6 ( ) No involvement other than voting and information gathering.

12. In your opinion, does an editorial writer's participation or membership in any of the following groups unfairly bias his/her viewpoint when writing an editorial on that subject:

1 ( ) Political party
2 ( ) Religious organization
3 ( ) Veteran's organization
4 ( ) Non-profit boards (Hospitals, United Fund agencies)
5 ( ) Public interest groups
6 ( ) District, municipal, county, state or federal boards or agencies.
7 ( ) In general, group participation does not affect a writer's viewpoint enough to color editorial opinion.
8 ( ) Any type of group participation affects a writer, consciously or unconsciously.

13. For each of the following occupations, please place a ranking of 1 through 5, using the following scale: 1: Most prestigious; 2: Very prestigious; 3: Average prestige; 4: Somewhat prestigious; 5: Not very prestigious at all. (Prestige: "Prominence or influential status achieved through success, renown or wealth" source: American Heritage Dictionary):

____ Supreme Court Justice
____ Presidential Cabinet Member
____ Novelist
____ Banker
____ Editorial Writer
____ Lawyer
____ Physician
____ Reporter
____ Mayor of a large city
____ College Professor
____ Accountant
____ Small business owner
____ Auto Worker
____ Television Anchorman/Anchorwoman
____ Poet
____ Carpenter

EDITORIAL WRITERS SURVEY FOR THE POYNTER INSTITUTE FOR MEDIA STUDIES -- page 3

14. How old are you? Age: _____

15. What is the highest level of education you have completed to date?

_____

16. What was your major area(s) of study? Area(s): _____

17. How much influence do you believe you have in determining your newspaper's policy on an editorial issue?

1 ( ) I am very influential.
2 ( ) I am influential
3 ( ) I am somewhat influential
4 ( ) I am not influential at all

18. Do you feel editorials should be signed by the writer?

1 ( ) Yes
2 ( ) No

Why? _____

_____

19. How would you describe your editorial board:

1 ( ) A group of people holding the same basic political philosophies.
2 ( ) A group of people with divergent political philosophies.
3 ( ) Cannot tell.

20. How would you describe your editorial board's relationship with your newspaper's reporters?

1 ( ) A cooperative one -- We work with reporters on a daily basis.
2 ( ) A cooperative one -- We work with reporters on a weekly basis.
3 ( ) A cooperative one -- We work with reporters ocassionally.
4 ( ) Coexistence -- We seldom meet with reporters.
5 ( ) Indifference -- Very little contact and communication.
6 ( ) Unable to describe.

21. What the current daily circulation figure for your newspaper? _____

22. How many editorial writers does your newspaper have (including yourself)? _____

23. Does your staff have a full-time research assistant? ( )Yes ( )No

24. To what extent are you satisfied with the editorial staff of your newspaper?

1 ( ) Very satisfied
2 ( ) Somewhat satisfied
3 ( ) Not satisfied at all

25. Which area in the following list do you editorialize on most often?

1 ( ) Local and state politics
2 ( ) National politics
3 ( ) The economy
4 ( ) Foreign policy
5 ( ) Defense (National) policy
6 ( ) National domestic policy

(Over Please)

EDITORIAL WRITERS SURVEY FOR THE POYNTER INSTITUTE FOR MEDIA STUDIES -- page 4

26. How is editorial policy formed at your newspaper?

1 ( ) By a consensus of the editorial board.
2 ( ) By directives from the publisher.
3 ( ) By other methods _____

27. The following is a quote on editorial writers from Warren F. Gardner, retired editorial page editor of The Record and Journal in Meriden, Conn. After reading the quote, briefly describe what you perceive as the "profile of the ideal editorial writer" and include what lifetime influences and techniques affect the editorial writer:

"A good editorial writer is most likely to have been a good reporter. He should bring to the job the temperament of a philosopher, the knowledge of a scholar, the acumen of a critic and the hesitations of a healthy skeptic. If he can bring to bear a little common sense, a devotion to fairness, a good measure of humility, and the ability to laugh, even at himself, he will do well."

Thank you for your help.

Please return the completed questionaire in the postage paid envelope provided by Oct. 22, 1984, to:

David A. Szymanski
The Poynter Institute for Media Studies
556 Central Avenue
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

APPENDIX C

THE MIAMI HERALD EDITORIALS

APPENDIX C

2E The Miami Herald / Sunday, October 28, 1984

The Miami Herald

JAMES L. KNIGHT, Chairman Emeritus

ERIC B. CASPLE, JR., Chairman and Publisher

BEVERLY R. CASPLE, President and General Manager — JOE HAMPTON, Editor — HEATH MEANS WEBB, Executive Editor

JUANITA BRAGG, Associate Editor — PETE WEITZEL, Managing Editor

Re-elect Reagan

SINCE Dwight Eisenhower left office nearly 24 years ago, six men have served as President, a rate of turnover exceeded only during the tumultuous 24 years just before the Civil War. The world has changed a lot since then. No longer is America isolated. World peace and stability depend on the kind of leadership that America provides.

Continuity is important in any Presidential election when the United States is prosperous and at peace, voters reasonably may begin with a presumption in favor of retaining an incumbent of good character.

So the burden of justifying a change is on Walter Mondale. He must show that Ronald Reagan's policies have failed and that his own could succeed. Has he? To find out, *The Herald* compared the candidates in five pivotal areas: national defense, foreign policy, the economy, social issues, and leadership.

NATIONAL DEFENSE

A President has no higher duty than to keep this nation strong. As Commander-in-Chief, he must have at his disposal the forces that he would need should diplomacy fail.

During the 1970s, America's military deteriorated. Key weapons became obsolete. The armed services lost skilled personnel. Drug abuse was rampant. Military pay was so poor that some GIs' families were eligible for food stamps. An undermanned Navy could not carry out its responsibilities. Allies questioned America's resolve.

Building a bipartisan consensus, President Reagan swiftly began to rebuild the military. The Pentagon correctly saw skilled manpower as crucial. Money was invested in pay and incentives so that the armed services could recruit and keep the best.

Tough decisions also were made about weapons. Also, his Administration — like his predecessors — sometimes erred. Waste and cost overruns still are rampant, and Mr. Reagan unwisely plows ahead with the MX missile and the B-1 bomber. On the broad issues of defense, however, Mr. Reagan's policies are sound.

Mr. Mondale tries but fails to explain away his own record. Moreover, he has acknowledged that the military bears the brunt of his plan to reduce Federal deficits. On this crucial issue, then, President Reagan is superior.

(Leg 1)

The Herald Recommends

increases and spending reductions would cut the deficit by two-thirds by 1988. But his scheme does not take into account the increased spending that his political promises would require elsewhere. If it's fair to believe his promise to raise taxes and cut defense spending, then it's also fair to believe his other promises. They would cost billions.

At least Mr. Mondale has a plan, though. If President Reagan has a plan other than blaming Congress and his predecessors (with some justification) or pushing for a balanced-budget amendment, he hasn't disclosed it. As a result, the runaway deficits likely will remain a concern regardless of who wins. On this test of leadership, both men fail.

In America, though, the economy means much more than the Federal budget. Other economic issues are also important. Mr. Reagan's views on trade, taxation, deregulation, the role of unions, and the relationship between government and business are much more beneficial to a free economy than are Mr. Mondale's.

Granted, not all Americans have shared equally in the recovery. Too many still dwell in poverty. Much of the criticism of Mr. Reagan's cuts in social programs is demagoguery, however. Pruning ineffective Federal programs was overdue. Shifting responsibility for many programs to the states was justified. The Reagan Administration deserves credit for reducing waste and fraud in programs such as food stamps and student loans, for seeking innovative health-care alternatives for Medicare recipients, and for devising new employment-training approaches to replace the discredited CETA program.

Mr. Mondale's platform is mostly a rehash of costly programs that have failed. It is a reminder that the ultimate cruelty occurs when the Government makes promises that it can't keep — or keeps promises so expensive that they trigger a cruel resurgence of inflation.

(Leg 2)

(Leg 1 cont.)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

With noted exceptions, Mr. Reagan has responded decisively and appropriately to situations abroad. Grenada? Swift military intervention. Poland? A measured response of sanctions and diplomacy. The Falklands? Tireless efforts to avert war. The Iran-Iraq conflict? Discreet neutrality. Europe? Artful coaxing to revitalize NATO and to smooth acceptance of American missiles. At the United Nations? Firm opposition to attacks on press freedom and on Israel's right to exist.

In Central America, the Administration's patient efforts to bring peace to El Salvador have begun to pay off. Unfortunately, it continues its immoral effort to overthrow Nicaragua's Sandinista regime with CIA-financed contras. It also has been justly criticized for its neglect of human rights in this region and elsewhere.

In the Mideast, events in Lebanon have overshadowed Mr. Reagan's constructive, even-handed follow-up of the Camp David Accords. Had his proposals been accepted, the tragedies there might have been averted.

In Lebanon, the Administration's objectives were altruistic but vague. Slow to recognize changing circumstances, it left Americans vulnerable to attack, then did it again, and again. Yet no government anywhere has been able to halt terrorism or to bring peace to the Mideast. There's no reason to think that Mr. Mondale could.

Critics also fault Mr. Reagan for his failure to secure an arms-control agreement. In any bilateral impasse, however, both sides must share blame. In this instance, the Soviets deserve the greater share. The Kremlin has had three different leaders in the past three years. It is beset by internal problems. The Soviets' belated willingness to talk with Mr. Reagan now that his re-election seems probable confirms that the previous chill was mostly their doing. Regardless of that, progress toward arms control must receive higher priority during Mr. Reagan's second term.

THE ECONOMY

If it was fair to blame Mr. Reagan for the recession during his Administration, then it's fair to credit him for the robust recovery. There have been the heartening declines in unemployment, interest rates, and inflation.

Problems persist, however. Interest rates remain too high, fueling record foreign-trade deficits. Federal deficits are inexcusably excessive. Mr. Reagan, moreover, refuses to acknowledge the deficits' potential for wrecking the current recovery. He must — and he must reduce them.

Mr. Mondale, also, offers no real alternative. True, his announced tax

(Leg 2 cont.)

SOCIAL ISSUES

President Reagan and Mr. Mondale differ on civil rights, affirmative action, civil liberties, freedom of information, abortion, school prayer, the Equal Rights Amendment, and the relationship between church and state. Sometimes these differences are irreconcilable, reflecting deep-seated philosophical divisions as on abortion and prayer. Other differences hinge on the approach to an agreed-upon goal, as with disputes about busing and job quotas.

On most of these issues, *The Herald* is closer to Mr. Mondale's positions than to Mr. Reagan's. In recommending Mr. Reagan's re-election, *The Herald* emphatically rejects his views in those areas of disagreement.

As for fears that Mr. Reagan would pack the Supreme Court with religious fundamentalists, his disclaimers must be taken in good faith. Certainly his first appointment, Sandra Day O'Connor, was exemplary. If that's not enough reassurance, however, the Senate's role in confirming Supreme Court nominees provides added protection.

LEADERSHIP

One test of a leader is whether people follow. By that test, Mr. Reagan has proved to be an extraordinary leader. Not only has he remained popular, he has revived the nation's spirit and reordered its priorities in a way that may leave his imprint on American history. Moreover, he has taken brave stands on tough issues such as free trade and immigration reform — issues on which Mr. Mondale has yielded to pressure groups.

Mr. Mondale is a decent man. He's an experienced lawmaker with humane instincts but little administrative experience. Unfortunately, his campaign has reinforced doubts that he could mobilize public opinion or persuade Congress to adopt his programs.

Comparisons of leadership necessarily must take into account the Vice Presidential nominees as well. Mr. Reagan's running mate, Vice President George Bush, is an able leader fully qualified by experience and ability to serve as President. South Floridians in particular can appreciate his role in the Administration because they've seen him in action here. Mr. Mondale's running mate, Geraldine Ferraro, has been an able lawmaker and a gutsy campaigner, but her credentials are no match for Mr. Bush's.

On leadership as on most pivotal issues, then, the Reagan-Bush ticket is superior to the Mondale-Ferraro ticket. President Reagan believes that one question — is America better off today than it was four years ago? — encapsulates all the issues. To that question there is only one answer: "Yes." It's a qualified "yes," perhaps, but indisputably a "yes" in view of that. The Miami *Herald* — with the reservations stated — recommends the re-election of President Ronald Reagan and Vice President George Bush.

The Marin View

Most of us wanted Mondale

Jim Hampton

Editor of The Herald

ON BEHALF of the substantial majority of this newspaper's Editorial Board, I respectfully but strenuously dissent from today's recommendation of Ronald Reagan for President.

This recommendation does not represent the Board's collective judgment, or my own. Most of us wanted to recommend Walter Mondale, albeit without enthusiasm.

Instead, this recommendation represents Publisher Dick Copen's exercising of his authority to override the Board's collegial decisions.

None of us questions or begrudges him that authority. As Publisher, he must have it — just as I as Editor must be able to overrule everyone but him. Indeed, I have from time to time overridden the Board myself when my colleagues' collective judgment on lesser matters went against my grain.

When Dick told the Board of his decision at our daily meeting last Wednesday, the immediate effect was devastating. Associate Editor Joanne Wragg and I already knew what was coming: He had informed us privately and separately on Tuesday evening.

BOTH Joanne and I tried to dissuade Dick. With the other Board members' unanimous backing, we urged him to let us say instead that we were hopelessly deadlocked and thus would recommend no candidate.

Dick and I first had discussed this alternative over a long lunch on Oct. 18, the day after our Editorial Board's Presidential discussion. That discussion had ended with Dick heading a minority backing Mr. Reagan, Joanne and I among the majority favoring Mr. Mondale. Until that day, neither Dick nor I — by unspoken agreement — had said a word to each other about our Presidential preferences.

I dislike no-recommendation election editorials. In fact, my policy — stated many times in my column and in public appearances — forbids them. But I felt that a no-recommendation editorial would be infinitely preferable to one favoring Mr. Reagan.

To recommend Mr. Reagan, I felt, would damage The Herald, internally and externally. Internally, it would chill the Editorial Board's collegiality. Externally, I feared that it would be read as repudiating our vigorous editorial criticism of his Administration's callousness toward blacks and the poor, its environmental pillage, its efforts to intrude the Government into the bedroom by banning abortion and into the schoolroom by re-introducing school prayer.

To his credit, Dick agonized privately with the rest of us for five full days. Finally, though, he decided that he could not live with a no-recommendation decision. Nor could he accept Mr. Mondale. Someone must decide, he said, and that responsibility fell to him as Publisher. He chose to recommend Mr. Reagan.

My first, visceral reaction was to resign irrevocably, effective today. Then, as I talked individually with other Board members, I realized that I couldn't. My resignation-in-principle would have triggered others. My successor would have inherited dispirited shards, not an Editorial Board. It took me six years to build this Board; how long would it take my successor to re-create it? I could not do that to this newspaper, to my staff, to Dick, to all those who trust in us — and in me personally — to strive always to be fair and honest and caring. My conscience wouldn't let me be so selfish.

Instead, I submitted a one-sentence letter of resignation on Thursday, in a lengthy accompanying memo, I told Dick that it was conditional. I urged him, if he felt the least philosophically discomfited by my editorial policies, to use this natural watershed and bring in an Editor whose views were more consonant with his.

No way, Dick replied. He tore up my letter and handed me the pieces.

In truth, this dissent was Dick's idea from the outset. He had urged me several times to write it. Each time, I refused.

"That's unthinkable," I reasoned. "The Editor can't repudiate the Publisher's decision in public. It just isn't done. And besides, my name's on that masthead right beneath yours, and I'm directly responsible for our editorial expressions too. How can I repudiate that?"

Each time, Dick answered: "Just think about it. Far from hurting anything, your candor would help our readers appreciate the hell that we've all been through these past few days."

It has been hell, believe me. And yet, from start to finish, I never felt any anger toward Dick. Disappointment in his decision, yes. Grave concern over its possible effects on the Editorial Board's internal cohesiveness and external credibility, that too.

THIS dissent will purge the Editorial Board's internal damage; my Board colleagues, for whom I also protest, assure me of that. So will Dick's reassurance to all of us that our collegial process will continue unchanged and that our freedom to praise or to criticize Mr. Reagan's policies — and we have done both, many times — remains unfettered.

Although I disagree profoundly with Dick's decision, this internal ordeal has heightened my respect for him. From Wednesday through Friday he went to extraordinary lengths, using hour after hour of time that I know he didn't have to spare, to talk privately with Board members. By Friday night the dissenters, while still dissenting, felt reassured. Moreover, as often happens after a family fight (for our Board is like a family), we all — Dick included — felt even more unified than we had before.

Like lovictus, our Editorial Board has just come through its darkest night, one "black as the pit from pole to pole." Yet although the Board's majority lost this rumble with our Publisher, and although all our heads are bloody, our dissenters' collective head — like Jupiter's — remains unbowed.

VII. ENDNOTES

[1] Guido H. Stempel III and John W. Windhauser, "The Prestige Press Revisted: Coverage of the 1980 Presidential Campaign," (Journalism Quarterly: v. 61, no. 1, Spring 1984): p. 49.

[2] David A. Szymanski, "Profiles of Florida Newspaper Editorial Writers: Preparation, Motivation and Management of Opinion Leaders," (The Poynter Institute for Media Studies: Nov. 7, 1984): p. 1.

[3] Stempel and Windhauser, p. 49.

[4] Kenneth Rystrom, The Why, Who and How of the Editorial Page, (New York: Random House, Inc., 1983): p. 157.

[5] Ibid., p. 65.

[6] G. Cleveland Wilhoit and Daniel Drew, "Profile of the North American Editorial Writer, 1971-1979," (The Masthead: Winter 1979-80): p. 9.

[7] G. Cleveland Wilhoit and Daniel Drew, "The Politics, Community Participation and Profile of the Editorial Writer," (Editor and Publisher: Aug. 7, 1971): p. 638.

[8] Wilhoit and Drew, "Profile of the North American . . . ," p. 10.

[9] Ernest C. Hynds and Charles H. Martin, "Editorial Writers Tell How They Go About Their Work," (Editor and Publisher: Winter 1977): p. 776.

[10] Ibid., p. 776.

[11] Szymanski, "Profiles of Florida. . . ," p. 12.

[12] Ibid., p. 12.

[13] Ibid., p.13.

[14] Wilhoit and Drew, "Profile of the North American . . . ," p. 11.

[15] Christine L. Ogan and David H. Weaver, "Job Satisfaction in Selected U.S. Daily Newspapers," (Mass Communication Review: Winter 1978/1979): p. 24.

[16] Harold C. Shaver, "Job Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction Among Journalism Graduates," (Journalism Quarterly: v. 55, Spring 1978): p. 59.

[17] Ibid., p. 58.

[18] Wilhoit and Drew, "Profile of the North American . . . ," p. 11.

[19] Hynds and Martin, "Editorial Writers Tell . . . ," p. 777.

[20] Szymanski, p. 14.

[21] Stempel and Windhauser, p. 59.

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