AN ANALYSIS OF THE SCHOOL CONTENT IN MICHIGAN NEWSPAPERS; COMPARISONS WITH A SIMILAR STUDY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL-PRESS RELATIONS

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William Gregory Monahan

AN ABSTRACT

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Michigan State University of Agriculture and
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William Gregory Monahan An Abstract

This study involved an analysis of the school content in eight daily and fifteen weekly newspapers in the state of Michigan for the period September 1, 1959, through November 30, 1959. The purposes of the study were (1) to determine the quantity and quality of school news in Michigan newspapers from a representative sample and to compare findings with a similar study conducted in 1953-54; (2) to determine implications for improving school-press relations.

The school content was categorized into twenty classifications; front pages were quantified separately as were the number and type of school-related illustrations. Reliability was determined for both measurement and classification of the content. The unit that was used for quantification was the column-inch. (One column wide by one vertical inch.)

For the period of the study, 15,460.5 column-inches of school news were analyzed in weekly newspapers, and 39,467 column-inches of school news were analyzed in daily newspapers. The weekly papers in the sample had a circulation range from 870 for the lowest paper to 10,325 for the highest; among the daily papers in the sample, the circulation range was 3,477 to 59,345. Metropolitan daily

newspapers were excluded from the sample. These newspapers provided a total sample of 818 newspapers with a total of 14,382 pages.

Daily newspapers give slightly more than half of all school content space to athletics and athletic illustrations. Weekly newspapers devote a little more than one-third of total school content to athletics. Other high ranking classifications of school content were curriculum items, finance, miscellaneous items (mostly dealing with the opening of school), general illustrations, and student activities. Items accounting for small amounts of space in both daily and weekly newspapers were school operation, transportation, honor roll, adult education, and safety.

When compared to a similar study conducted in 1953-54 and which used the same classification system, the most striking difference is the amount of space devoted to curriculum. In the present study, curriculum accounted for 7.5 percent of all school content; in the previous study, curriculum accounted for less than .1 percent. In both studies, athletics accounted for the most space.

In analyzing the quality of school content, it was found that feature articles about the schools are generally the best quality of newspaper coverage of schools. Editorial comment was relatively rare but generally favorable to the work and operation of the schools. The analysis of

current editorials about the schools led the writer to examine editorial comment in three daily papers in the sample for a three-month period immediately following the launching of the first Russian satellite in 1957. This analysis disclosed that there was little editorial comment about schools in relation to Sputnik. Those educationally-related editorials that did appear in reference to Sputnik were predominantly favorable to the schools.

Some of the more important conclusions of the study may be summarized as follows:

1. Newspapers in Michigan provide adequate information about the schools and persons who have access to newspapers can profitably utilize them to become better informed about the schools.

2. There is an apparent trend toward increased newspaper content dealing with the classroom activities and learning experiences of children as well as greater emphasis on academic matters.

3. Though some newspapers do an outstanding job of feature reporting on many aspects of the schools, a greater number do not take advantage of numerous opportunities for feature articles on a variety of school-related occurrences.

4. American Education Week receives wide and competent coverage by both daily and weekly newspapers.

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This thesis could not have been completed without the cooperation of many people and the counsel and encouragement of others. The writer is most grateful for the cooperation of those newspapers included in the study for contributing every issue during the specified period of the study, and to Mr. Elmer White of the Michigan Press Association for his helpful advice at various times.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Public education in America has probably faced as many serious problems in the last ten years as in any previous period in its history. As a result of some of these problems and the nature of their implications, we have witnessed an apparent awakening of interest by the American public which shows no sign of abating. On the contrary, this revitalized concern with the schools shall likely be intensified in coming years as schools, and the communities they serve, become more dependent on each other within the complex of rapidly changing social conditions.

This new public interest in the schools has created problems; it has also been instrumental in the solution of others. On this point, a publication of the American Association of School Administrators points out:

> An upsurge of public interest in the nation's schools is taking place thruout America. Seldom have so many people demonstrated keen and vital interest in the public schools (and) along with this awareness has come a new understanding and appreciation of what citizens can and should do to solve (problems). This citizen interest, if channeled constructively, may prove to be the most significant educational trend of this generation.[1]

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[1]American Association of School Administrators, Public Relations for American's Schools, Twenty-eighth Yearbook (Washington: National Education Association, 1950), p. 5.

It was soon obvious to educators who worked with citizen groups toward the solution of problems that there were great differences in the degree to which people were informed about the nature and function of the schools in the society. Questions arising out of such observations, as well as the growing importance of the mass media as a vast educational system in and of themselves, demanded that educators better inform themselves about mass media.

Consequently, in 1954, the National Society for the Study of Education directed that its fifty-third yearbook be devoted to the relationship of the mass media and education.[1] Other educational organizations devoted annual publications to this growingly important area and the National School Public Relations Association began to exert a vigorous leadership gaining new support and recognition from other agencies. But perhaps most important, professional educators recognized that responsible public participation and interest in educational problems demanded new skills and new knowledge from educators; thus, a sound research base in communication and public opinion was recognized and encouraged.

Among the various media, the newspaper is still generally regarded as the most important source for the dissemination of information about the schools. Another

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[1]National Society for the Study of Education, Mass Media and Education, Fifty-third Yearbook (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), 290 pp.

yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators indicates this to be the opinion of educators. Its opening statement holds that many people, ". . . get most of what they know about their schools from what they read in the newspaper . . . (it) is the chief medium of information in practically every community."[1] Persons in the field of journalism would probably agree. One text states:

> The newspaper press is the source from which the public derives its knowledge of facts. The daily journal goes into every home, office, and every workshop.[2]

Though this statement may be a bit over-enthusiastic, there is certainly little doubt that the newspaper is a medium of high exposure. In the United States today, newspaper circulation approaches fifty-five million. This presents a ratio of about one paper per home.

The schools and the press really have a great deal in common. This may be demonstrated by a statement by the Hutchins Commission on Freedom of the Press:

> These agencies (the press) can facilitate thought and discussion. They can stifle it. They can advance the cause of civilization or they can thwart it. They can debase and vulgarize mankind. They can endanger the peace of the world; they can do so accidentally, in

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[1]American Association of School Administrators, The Superintendent, The Board, and The Press, Twenty-ninth Yearbook (Washington: National Education Association, 1951), p. 4.

[2]George L. Bird and Frederic E. Merwin (eds.), The Newspaper and Society (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1942), p. 103.

> a fit of absence of the mind. They can play up or down the news and its significance, foster and feed emotions, create complacent fictions and blind spots, misuse the great words, and uphold empty slogans. Their scope and power increase every day as new instruments become available to them. These instruments can spread lies fasther and farther than our forefathers dreamed when they enshrined freedom of the press in the First Amendment to our Constitution.[1]

Except for a portion of that final sentence, this statement could just as easily have been made in reference to the schools of America. It would appear that here are two giant institutions of American culture--both media for molding the directions that our national behavior may take in the coming years.

What newspapers have to say about the schools is not the only means by which the public is exposed to school information; it may not, in some areas, be the most important but it has been so regarded for a great many years. As Peterson points out in the previously mentioned National Society for the Study of Education yearbook:

> Man can explore at firsthand but a tiny part of the world of which he is a part. To know and understand the world, man must depend largely on the printed word. Not only can the press furnish man with the information he needs to formulate his own ideas but it can also stimulate him by offering him the ideas of others.[2]

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[1]Commission on Freedom of the Press, A Free and Responsible Press (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 3.

[2]National Society for the Study of Education, Op. Cit., p. 57.

The necessary support that will be required for the schools in the years immediately ahead will depend upon an intelligent and careful appraisal by the public. This can only come about through an understanding of issues which in turn is directly related to the information available to the public about the schools. Nor can there be much question regarding the assumption that the newspaper is the primary source of such information in most communities. Studies that attempt to ascertain the nature of the school content in newspapers as well as the quality of it can serve a useful purpose for guiding both school and newspaper personnel in the development of more effective bases for interpreting schools to their communities.

Nature of The Study

The problem and its background.

In 1953-54, as the schools began to compete with long established items for front-page space in the press, editors and school administrators in Michigan evidenced a concern for more effective cooperation with a view toward better handling of the school news.

This situation prompted the organization of the MICHIGAN COMMUNICATIONS STUDY. Begun as a cooperative venture by the Michigan Press Association, Michigan Association of School Administrators, and Michigan State University--later coordinated through the Mid-west Administration Center,

University of Chicago--this study proposed to investigate questions of importance, the answers to which would provide both agencies with new knowledge and new techniques for telling the school story.[1]

The Michigan Communications Study was launched into three areas:

1. A Newspaper Content Analysis. To determine the nature and handling of school news in Michigan papers.

2. A Community Survey. To appraise the extent of knowledge about public schools as well as what people think and how opinions are formed.

3. A Collection of Effective Procedures. For improving the reporting of news and communication between the schools and the people.

The Michigan Communications Study will be discussed in some detail in the following chapter of this thesis. It should suffice here, therefore, to point out that much has changed since the school content in Michigan newspapers was analyzed in phase number one of that study.

The data for the content analysis phase of the Michigan Communications Study were gathered during 1953 and 1954. One of the values of content analysis as a research method

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[1]William Roe, Leo Haak, and Earl McIntyre, "Creating an Informed Citizenry: Michigan Communications Study," Michigan Education Journal (November, 1954), 117-119.

is the identification of trends over time. Among the numerous events that have occurred since then was the launching of the Soviet satellite, Sputnik, in 1957. This sparked the entrance of education into new dimensions of publicity and though there have been many assumptions and generalizations about the effects of Sputnik on education, there has been little research to support them.

Obviously schools, and the communities they serve, are much more closely related than ever before. It is equally apparent that this relationship will see intensification in the coming years rather than the aloof separation that characterized the relationship only a few short years ago.

Studies such as the Michigan Communications Study are aimed toward the discovery of significant factors in this school-community communications problem area.

However, as changes become even more accelerated--a fact that the last few years' events clearly support--and in light of widespread and revitalized interest in public education, it is of paramount importance that the nature of the public image of schools be continually researched.

Purposes of the study.

The present study is therefore directed toward further illuminating the characteristics of this image and it has the following purposes:

1. To determine the quantity and quality of school news appearing in Michigan daily and weekly newspapers and the identification of trends through comparisons with the content analysis data of the Michigan Communications Study.

2. To determine implications for school-community-communications.

Assumptions of the study.

The following assumptions were basic to the study:

1. Newspapers publish a measurable quantity of school news and school related photographs.

2. Among the mass media newspapers rank high as a source of information about schools and serve as an important source to local communities. In other words, it can be assumed that the manifest content is meaningful.

3. In view of a similar study having been conducted as a part of the Michigan Communications Study and in which the same quantitative categories were used, three months was assumed to be an adequate period in which to establish trends over time.

4. The length of period of analysis does not need to be longer than three months in order to conduct a qualitative analysis.

5. Factors, or criteria, can be established for the purpose of evaluating the quality of school news.

6. The quality of school news is related to the effectiveness of the newspaper in the formation of opinion.

Definitions.

A number of terms are used repeatedly in reporting on the data of this study. To facilitate the explication of these data, such terms should be made explicit.

School content -- School content refers to the news of public schools which is the type of news being analyzed; the term school news is used synonomously with school content.

Category -- Categories served as devices into which observed classes of phenomena were coded.

Classification -- One type of category; the most often mentioned type of category in this study into which all school news was coded. There were twenty classifications of school news used. Thus a classification is a category, but a category may or may not be a classification. In addition to the classifications into which school news was categorized, there were also categories for types of photographs and for types of front page news items.

Column-inch -- The enumeration unit in this study which consists of one vertical inch of news space one column in width.

Type-space -- That portion of a newspaper page on which type appears; thus the total type-space on a page may be 160 column-inches though the total space may be 330 square-inches.

"News-hole" -- That portion of a newspaper's total space which does not include advertising.

Limitations of the study.

The above discussion of the nature of the study defines, somewhat, its limitations. The following six statements are additional limitations which further define the scope of the investigation:

1. The sample of daily and weekly newspapers analyzed was confined to a total of twenty-three papers published in the state of Michigan.

2. The content studied was limited to items and photographs related to the public schools not including public higher education. Adult education was considered a part of the regular public school program.

3. Photographs examined were limited to half-tones used as news and feature materials. Though a considerable number of these appeared as part of paid advertising, these were not included.

4. Each weekly newspaper and each daily newspaper was examined for the period September 1, 1959, through November 30, 1959.

5. Sources of data used in this study were limited to (a) information obtained in the papers studied; (b) information from a panel of judges for tests of reliability; (c) information obtained from a survey of the literature

in the fields of public relations, school administration, communication arts, and social psychology.

6. No attempt was made either to determine or to measure the effects of newspaper content on a public.

Hypotheses.

In pursuing the above purposes, the following hypotheses were examined in this study:

1. That daily and weekly newspapers cover a variety of educational activities and functions dealing with the public schools.

2. That there are no significant differences between newspapers among various topics of school news ranked by the amount of space given them by newspapers. (Treating daily and weekly papers as separate classes.)

3. That there are no significant differences among newspapers when ranked and compared on the amount of space given to each topic of school news. (Treating daily and weekly papers as separate classes.)

4. That there are no significant differences among newspapers when ranked by the percent of total space given to each topic of school news. (Treating daily and weekly papers as separate classes.)

5. That space given to curriculum and teaching method will have increased in comparison to space given to these topics in a previous study.

Organization of The Remainder of The Thesis

This study has been divided into six chapters. Chapter I has included an introduction to the problem and its background. Chapter II contains a review of literature relevant to the general area under investigation. Chapter III presents the research design and the general methodology of the study as well as a report on the analysis of quantitative data. Chapter IV contains an evaluative, or qualitative analysis of the school content in the sample of newspapers used in this study. Chapter V presents an analysis of editorials and features written about the schools in newspapers as well as an analysis of newspaper editorials in a subsample which dealt with Sputnik in the period immediately following the advent of the first Russian satellite. Chapter VI is the final chapter of the thesis and contains a summary, certain conclusions derived from the findings, and implications that the writer feels are relevant for better school-press relations.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

Since this study is concerned with the nature of space given to the public schools in newspapers, it has been necessary to examine literature and reported research in areas other than journalism and mass media alone. Obviously, the importance of public interest in the schools and the nature of schools' response to this interest has resulted in attempts by the schools themselves to incorporate community-directed relations within their programs. Thus, literature in the area of school public relations is highly relevant. Also relevant--since school public relations programs constitute another area of administrative responsibility--is literature in school administration. The importance of journalism literature is evident.

School Public Relations

With one notable exception, there was little if any attention given to the subject of school public relations prior to the last few years of the 1920's.

The exception was a study published by R. G. Reynolds in 1922.[1] Reynolds was interested in examining the treatment of the schools in papers throughout the United States. His study analyzed and classified school news in twenty-five daily newspapers in seventeen states and for a period of three months.

From this study Reynolds concluded that the schools represent an important source of news of which not very much was considered to be "sensationalism" or critically destructive. Reynolds also concluded that too much space in the newspapers was devoted to school athletic events.

In a study in which school public relations programs were seen to be vitally needed, William Todd[2] attempted to determine what people know about their schools. His study, published in 1927, involved interviews in 6,000 homes in seventeen cities. The most significant conclusion of this study was to the effect that citizens know only about half of what they should know in order to give reasonable consideration and exercise responsible action toward the schools and toward school issues.

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[1]Rollo G. Reynolds, Newspaper Publicity for the Public Schools (New York: Published by the author, Columbia University Press, 1922), 126 pp.

[2]William H. Todd, What Citizens Know About Their Schools (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1927), 87 pp.

Closely related to Todd's study was another that came out of Teachers College, Columbia University in 1929. Conducted by Farley[1] this study was designed to find out what people wanted to know about their schools. He concluded that:

> Patrons of the public schools are more interested in topics relating to the instructional program as subjects of school news than topics relating to any other phase of the public school program. The order of interest . . . expressed by 5,067 patrons in 13 cities is: Pupils Progress and Achievement, Methods of Instruction, Health of Pupils, Courses of Study, Value of Education, Discipline and Behavior, Teachers and School Officers, Attendance, Buildings and Building Program, Business Management and Finance, Board of Education and Administration, Parent-Teachers Association, Extra-curricular Activities.[2]

Farley felt that most newspaper editors ". . . have the idea that this order should just about be reversed."[3]

Fowlkes,[4] in 1929, also attempted to determine what people know about their schools. Examining responses to a questionnaire submitted to 146 persons in three mid-western towns, he found that school patrons are "woefully untutored" concerning school affairs. He also recommended that some type of information program be set up by superintendents of schools to correct this situation.[5]

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[1]Belmont M. Farley, "What To Tell The People About The Public Schools," Contributions to Education, No. 355 (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929), 136 pp.

[2]Ibid., p. 38.

[3]Ibid., p. 58.

[4]John G. Fowlkes, "What Does the Layman Know About the Schools?" The Nations Schools (October, 1929), 86-90.

[5]Ibid., p. 89.

A somewhat different approach was taken by Walker in a study conducted in 1932. In an extensive case-study of demands and pressures on the schools, Walker concluded that though these demands and pressures may be either harmful or helpful, most of the harmful ones, ". . . are due to the promoters being uninformed or misinformed."[1] Though Walker's study was not primarily concerned with public relations, he came out of it with an evident reappraisal of the importance of this area of administrative activity. His first six recommendations were commentaries on the importance of an informed public or on the need for structured, formal public relations programs. So much committed to this was Walker that he followed the study a year later with a small volume solely devoted to school public relations. Though not entirely relevant at this point, the opening statement of the book is certainly interesting:

> The years 1931 to 1933 showed clearly how little many people knew about their schools--what they were doing and why. Loud and long was the clamor in many communities against supervision, household and industrial arts, music, and "fads and frills" generally. There was some justification for these demands, but many of them were ill-advised and destructive.[2]

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[1]J. Flint Walker, Demands on The Schools (Unpublished Doctor's thesis, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1932), 151 pp.

[2]J. Flint Walker, Public Relations for The Public Schools (Trenton, New Jersey: MacCrallish and Quigley Co., 1933), p. 9.

Along lines similar to Farley's attempt to determine what kinds of items about the schools are of interest to patrons, is a more recent study by Jelinek.[1]

Jelinek confined his study to topics of high school news but he sampled opinions of school administrators, teachers, students, and college of education people in addition to parents. His findings indicate that there is a tendency for agreement among educators and laymen as to what constitutes important and interesting information to patrons. Also of significance was his finding that there was little difference between various strata of educators as to what is desirable news.[2] He did not sample opinions of newsmen themselves however. Had he done so, there is indication from at least one study, that he might have found considerable difference of opinion--if not about the importance of specific kinds of news items, certainly about "ground rules" of relationships between editors and school superintendents. The study referred to was conducted by Gross[3] and focused on tensions and strains in practices and procedures for collecting school news.

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[1]James J. Jelinek, The Relative Importance of Topics of High School News (Unpublished Doctor's thesis, School of Education, Indiana University, 1951), 287 pp.

[2]Ibid., p. 275.

[3]Neil Gross, The School and The Press (Cambridge: The New England School Development Council, 1954), 56 pp.

Gross' findings indicated that a minority of both superintendents and editors were "very satisfied" with procedures for handling school news. The major grievances of the schools were found to be: (a) a tendency for the press to overemphasize 'bad' news; (b) reporters assigned to the school 'beat' spend little time on educational news; and (c) the press does not work to make significant facts about education interesting. Grievances of the newspapers were found to be: (a) school people are evasive in interviews; (b) educators have no real idea of what news is; and (c) school press releases are poorly written. It was also pointed out in this study that the majority of educators and editors accepted criticisms from each other as being justified. Also, there was relatively high agreement between superintendents and editors on areas of school news that required greater or lesser emphasis, the type of school news in which the public displays greatest and least interest, and the relative adequacy of coverage of school news areas.

Since the depression years, the output of information pertaining to school public relations has seen tremendous increase. There have been hundreds of publications, including articles, books, and monographs dealing with the subject. The organization of the National School Public Relations Association helped to give the area a somewhat more solid and professional base. The National School Public Relations

Association itself has actively encouraged school systems to develop better press relations and has issued publications to facilitate this.

In an extensive analysis of research covering the entire area of school-community relations (which is much broader than the scope of the present discussion), Jones[1] does not overlook the vital importance of school-press relationships. This becomes evident by his discussion of acceptable objectives of school-community programs. Among these are: interpreting the schools to the public, informing the people of the work of the schools, the gaining of public support, the promotion of confidence in the schools, the evaluation of the school program, and the development of educational leadership. Certainly, the role of school-press relations is paramount in the attainment of any of these objectives.

Jones concluded that there has not been enough conclusive analysis of the relative effectiveness of the various media in improving and facilitating greater coordination of school and community relationships.[2]

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[1] James J. Jones, An Analysis and Summary of Significant Research Findings Concerning Some Problems and Issues of School-Community Relations (Unpublished Doctor's thesis, School of Education, Indiana University, 1956), 342 pp.

[2] Ibid., p. 312.

Irons[1] also alluded to media effectiveness in a study concerned with superintendents' annual reports. He strongly points out the need for an analysis and refinement of techniques being employed by school public relations persons in the use of various media.

The most notable research in which this was actually attempted came nearly fourteen years after Irons did his dissertation at the University of Pittsburg. Robert Snider[2] analyzed photographic content dealing with education in twelve evening daily newspapers in Indiana.

Snider examined 2,428 photographs dealing with schools over a period of ten months in 1952-53. Of these, 904 photographs or 37.2% were devoted to athletics and 26.2% to graduation. With reference to cumulative percentages of photographs in thirty-six subject-matter categories, Snider states:

> The listing . . . makes a number of facts manifest. It can be seen that over three-fourths of the 2,428 photographs examined were found in five subject-matter categories, i.e., athletics, graduation, faculty, music, and miscellany. In other words, fewer than twenty-five per cent of the pictures considered here could be classified in 31 of the 36 categories. Even more striking is the fact that of the 2,428 photographs, 1,540 or 63 per cent were pictures of athletics or graduation activities.[3]

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[1]H. S. Irons, The Development of Characteristics in Superintendents' Annual Reports to The Board and to The Public (Unpublished Doctor's thesis, University of Pittsburgh, 1942), 214 pp.

[2]Robert C. Snider, A Study of Published Newspaper Photographs dealing with Public Schools in Indiana (Unpublished Doctor's thesis, School of Education, Indiana University, 1956), 244 pp.

[3]Ibid., p. 130.

He concluded that newspapers fail to publish photographs that illustrate a wide range of school activities and do not therefore provide readers with an accurate portrayal of the schools. Moreover, neither superintendents nor editors, on the basis of interviews, give enough attention to photographs as a medium for conveying information to the public. Finally, among his conclusions Snider pointed out that there was more mutual understanding between editor and superintendent in communities where both expressed high interest in school photographs. He said of these:

> Newspapers in such communities consistently print a relatively larger number of school photographs covering a wider range of school activities.[1]

Journalism and Mass Media

Measuring the contents of newspapers is not a particularly new research procedure. Bird and Merwin point this out as well as the nature of the quality of early attempts:

> As early as the last decade of the nineteenth century, efforts were being made to measure the contents of newspapers. Sometimes the purpose of these attempts was to determine the reading habits of subscribers, and at other times it was to measure the influence of the press. The measurement in both cases was an awkward and inaccurate means to the end in view. . . . to date no study has been completed that is not open to criticism for the patent flaws of methodology. In one the sample covers only one day; in another the Sunday edition is omitted, and in others the classes into which the items of news were thrown create much confusion.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 187.

[2] George L. Bird and Frederick E. Merwin (eds.), The Newspaper and Society (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1942), p. 162.

There has been some research in the treatment of the schools in the press conducted by students of journalism. Snider refers to two such studies. One conducted by Noffsinger in 1929 and, of more recent vintage, a study by Glenn in 1942. The former examined the contents of five papers for a period of one school year and concluded that not enough space was being devoted to curriculum and school administration. He felt that school men were not living up to a responsibility for keeping the newspaper informed of educational matters. Glenn on the other hand concluded that school men felt inadequate in matters of newspaper procedure to present the schools understandingly and that newspapermen felt similarly about the schools.[1]

The Gross study mentioned previously attempted to investigate this factor of the relationship between the school and the press. In the Introduction to the published study it was pointed out that the public will, ". . . evince more interest in the schools in the years ahead and it is an obligation of the schools and the press to see that they are so informed."[2] That this obligation requires a high degree of cooperation should be evident since the existence of strains and tensions in the school-press relationship will undoubtedly affect the kind and quality of school news presented.

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[1]Snider, Op. Cit., pp. 27-28.

[2]Gross, Op. Cit., p. 4.

Those who decry the lack of research being done by persons actually engaged in the business of printing newspapers have cause for optimism in two directions. First, the publishers themselves through the American Newspaper Publishing Association cooperated with the Advertising Research Foundation in a monumental readership survey covering a period of eleven years.[1] Though this study was completed in 1942, it provided additional impetus for both newspapers and magazines to continue to do studies of readership and it is not uncommon for many newspapers to engage in this kind of research with a minimum of outside research consultants. Another direction of cause for optimism has been the growth of a group of professional academicians who have blended backgrounds in social research methods with practical experiences in the mass media. Such people have formed the core of staffs for Colleges, Schools, and Departments of General Communication Arts and are making major contributions to a growing quantity of empirical research in all phases of communication and mass media. These men have the ability to take theoretical concepts in social psychology, sociology, interpersonal relations, and philosophy and assimilate these in structural relationships

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[1]The Advertising Research Foundation, The Continuing Study of Newspaper Reading: 138-Study Summary (New York: The Advertising Research Foundation, 1951), 58 pp.

to more normative data gathered in interviews, surveys, content analyses, etc. The result has been that more and more is being learned about the effects of communication on the attitudes and behavior of those who participate in it as well as the nature of values, attitudes, opinions, and behaviors of those who act as sources of communication.

The Continuing Study of Newspaper Reading mentioned above deserves some expansion here. There have been few studies in any field that have approached its breadth. The summary of this research reports on 138 studies of daily newspapers with a combined circulation of 11,107,379 and included papers that ranged in size from 16 pages to 96 pages. Conclusions of the study were based on more than 60,000 interviews with men and women above the age of 18.[1]

Some of the findings of the continuing study are noteworthy; (1) The median readership for all types of pages is 60 per cent for men and 70 per cent for women. (2) There is very little difference in the average readership for the first and second sections of a newspaper. (3) Front pages obtain the highest readership from all readers, and picture pages rank second. Sports pages rank third among men and society pages rank third among women. (4) There is no significant difference in the attention

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

paid to left and right hand pages and the very slight differences that exist are in favor of left-hand pages.

Though no attempt was apparently made to determine the degree of understanding with which content was "read" in these papers, nor to the extent that content was retained (or if, indeed, it was even read in the newspaper at all[1]) the fact remains that the study has made a useful contribution to our knowledge of newspaper reading habits.

The efforts of researchers in the general field of communication represent the most noteworthy contribution to a growing knowledge of social behavior and therefore are of utmost importance to practitioners in all fields of public relations.

To review these contributions is not the purpose of this study and any such review would encompass many volumes in itself. Investigation has covered the entire range of human communication and includes highly theoretical works like those of Kurt Lewin to the more familiar opinion polls of Gallup.

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[1]The methodology in the Continuing Study of Newspaper Reading involved interviews with about 450 persons on the day following publication of the paper to be examined. Informants who reported having read the paper were then requested to indicate on a fresh, unmarked copy, exactly what they recalled having read on each page of the issue. An effort was made to stratify the sample of respondents as to age, occupation, sex, and area of circulation of the paper involved.

A technique often employed by communication researchers is labelled content analysis, and since this is the technique of research that was employed on this study, it deserves additional comment here.

It has been noted previously that content analysis is not a recent innovation.[1] In a sense, the literary and music critic who has been with us a considerable number of years, employs a kind of qualitative content analysis. As a method of scientific research, the most authoritative and recognized methodological work descriptive of content analysis is Berelson's Content Analysis in Communication Research.[2] This book is an expansion and fuller treatment of articles that appear by Berelson in other works.[3]

Berelson derives his definition of content analysis by critically analyzing definitions used by a number of other researchers and theorists. By narrowing these various interpretations of it, Berelson comes up with the following definition:

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[1]Bird and Merwin, Loc. Cit.

[2]Bernard Berelson, Content Analysis in Communication Research (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1952), 255 pp.

[3]Bernard Berelson, "Content Analysis," in Gardner Lindzey, Handbook of Social Psychology (Cambridge: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1954), pp. 488-523; and Bernard Berelson, "Content Analysis in Communication Research," reported in Leon Festinger and Daniel Katz, Research Methods in the Behavioral Sciences (New York: Dryden Press, 1953), pp. 221-232.

> Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.[1]

This definition implies certain assumptions and certain qualitative generalizations. Berelson lists three such assumptions as being important: (1) assumes that inferences about the relationship between intent and content, or between content and effect, can validly be made, or that actual relationships can be established; (2) assumes that the study of the manifest content is meaningful, i.e., that what it means to the analyst is what it was intended to mean by the communicator; (3) a third assumption that is important in quantification holds that descriptions in terms of quantities is also meaningful.[2]

Qualitative generalizations on the other hand have to do with inferences made about the perceptions of the communicator. These generalizations may be in terms of relative importance of certain items; examples of such considerations are location--front page, inside page, top of page or bottom, left or right; treatment--direction or position of the communicator on an issue.

A most important factor in qualitative analysis has to do with reliability of inferences. This merely raises

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[1]Berelson, Op. Cit., p. 22.

[2]Ibid., p. 28.

the question as to whether one is relatively accuate in establishing that what the content means to one person is essentially that which it means to another.

Empirical evidence discloses that content analysis has been utilized for a great variety of purposes. On this point Berelson has this to say:

> The method of content analysis has been applied to so large and diverse a group of materials, with respect to so large and diverse a set of problems, that it is not easy to order the uses in a single classification.[1]

Berelson identifies at least seventeen types of uses for the method but is quick to point out that these should not be viewed as a "listing" but rather as a system of classification. By this, he means that, ". . . there is no claim that the uses form a logically coherent organization or that they are classified on a single dimensional base."[2]

The classification that Berelson presents orders content analysis usage under three major headings: (1) characteristics of communication content; (2) causes of content; and (3) consequences of content. The study reported on in this thesis is concerned with factors associated with the first of these classifications.

The relevance to communication of writings and ideas of various theorists in the behavioral sciences is another area of growing importance.

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[1]Bernard Berelson, "Content Analysis," in Gardner Lindzey, Handbook of Social Psychology, Op. Cit., p. 490.

[2]Ibid., p. 490.

An Interdisciplinary Approach

One of the more interesting of recent research attempts to appraise the school-community communications problem was the Michigan Communications Study.[1] This study and the previously cited study by Snider constitute the only notable research attempts in this area in recent years. The Michigan Communications Study was conceived from meetings of the Michigan Association of School Administrators and the Michigan Press Association. In the beginning, school administrators and newspaper editors sat down together to look at mutual problems, but it didn't stop there. Writing of the beginnings of this study, Roe and others say:

> . . . a committee was created, composed of three editors from the Michigan Press Association and three superintendents from the Michigan Association of School Administrators, to appraise the possibility of conducting a joint study which would answer some of the questions raised: "What does the public know about the schools?" "What should the public know?" "How do you get an informed public?" "What is the best and surest way of communicating with the public?" "What is the responsibility of the newspaper in this process of communication?" "What is the responsibility of the school?" "What are the steps in the formation of public opinion?"[2]

It can be seen from this statement that the Michigan Communications Study approached an ambitious scope of investigation. It was organized into three specific areas including

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[1]See Chapter I, p. 5.

[2]William Roe, Leo Haak, and Earl McIntyre, "Creating an Informed Citizenry," Michigan Education Association Journal (November, 1954), p. 117.

a content analysis of state newspapers, a community survey, and the development of a series of effective-procedures handbooks. The study was directed by Earl McIntyre, Professor of Journalism; its associate director was William Roe, Professor of Educational Administration; Leo Haak, Professor of Social Science, was research director and coordinator. All were from Michigan State University. Thus, this study involved sociologists and journalists as well as educators. The fact that the study received financial assistance through the Mid-west Administration Center, University of Chicago, is additional evidence of concern for the areas it proposed to research.

The findings of this study may be generalized under each of the specific areas of investigation.

I. Content Analysis.

(A) Average daily paper devotes 36.8 inches to school news, and average weekly, 45.7 inches.

(B) Highest paper among dailies averaged 110 inches per issue; the lowest averaged only 12 inches.

(C) Of all school news, 48% was devoted to athletics; 18% to student activities, and less than .1% to curriculum and teaching method.

(D) The outstate towns over 2,500 population seem to be the most successful in school space, averaging 63 inches per issue which is almost a half more than the state average.

(E) Greatest average school content is found among papers with larger circulation rather than with 'thickness' of paper.

(F) Treatment of schools in newspapers is less adequate than is desired.

Commenting on the quality of the school news, Luck states:

> Most of the stories would be of real interest only to a reader who was personally involved, but this should not be over-criticized. Justifiable criticisms of these articles are, however, that they tend to: (1) be written in a routine style; (2) lack attractive headlines; or (3) are given poor position . . .
>
> . . . One cannot study the typical papers without the feeling that marvelous opportunities for publicity are lost every day by Michigan schools.[1]

Though Luck's analysis tends to emphasize inferior qualities, there were examples of excellence mentioned. He classified these under articles given "prominent display," and those that "aroused interest" in terms of well written headlines.[2]

In analyzing the quality of school news, the Luck study examined a sample within the sample; i. e., each paper in the total sample was not specifically scrutinized critically for quality. Regarding this, Luck states:

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[1]David Luck, What Michigan Newspapers Tell About the Schools (East Lansing: Bureau of Business Research, Michigan State College, 1954), 26 pp.

[2]Ibid., pp. 24-25.

> Front page items from the issues of all these papers (8 dailies and 42 weeklies) over a month were studied. Also full months were scanned of 3 dailies and 5 weeklies, selected because the quantitative analysis found them to be outstandingly high or low.[1]

Since this qualitative study was based on comparative study of these newspapers, it has some validity though this begs the question of accuracy. If each paper was only scanned, it is likely that headlines were the cue for classification and if this were indeed the case, it is equally likely that many items were mis-categorized in the quantitative analysis. This would be more true of weeklies than of dailies since the author's study of weeklies disclosed that many items of different subject-matter content were grouped together under a single heading. Close analysis of these might result in their being classified among several categories whereas a cursory scanning technique would likely result in their being classified as miscellaneous.

This implies another weakness in the Luck study, viz: the sample was too large for the length of time the study was pursued. Berelson points out that:

> Since there is so much communication content and since content analysis is so time-consuming, sampling procedures are particularly appropriate. In the large majority of cases it is possible to devise a representative and adequate sample which is economical of administration. For most purposes, analysis of a

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

> small, carefully chosen sample of the relevant content will produce as valid results as the analysis of a great deal more--and with expenditure of much less time and effort.[1]

The implication here is that a large and awkward sample can result in a tendency to exercise less care in classification. Of course sample size must always be appropriate to the task at hand and if the categories themselves are less extensive, a larger sample would perhaps be less of a relevant question. For example, if a study contemplated the comparisons of space devoted to "education" and to "foreign news" there would be much less time involved in differentiation than between such categories as "teaching method" and "curriculum." In the Luck study, these two latter categories were only two among twenty, but the sample used included 42 weekly newspapers, 8 dailies, and one metropolitan daily which were analyzed over a period of one complete year. One could hardly say this was an easy sample to administer.

II. Community Surveys.

In that phase of the study dealing with community surveys, the following findings were presented.

(1) Citizens are not well informed about their schools.

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[1] Berelson, Op. Cit., pp. 174-175.

(2) Many citizens have no opinion about school problems.

(3) A survey stimulates community leaders to action.

(4) The greatest single source of information is the teacher who is a friend or acquaintance.

(5) The best informed are not always the most favorable.[1]

Findings and discussion of this phase of the research project are contained in an unpublished report by Haak which treats the data in great detail.[2]

These surveys were conducted in six middle-sized Michigan communities and the findings deserve some additional comment here. Perhaps the most notable of implications has to do with the teacher as a source of information, the action-stimulation effect of a survey, and the fact that the best informed are not always favorable.

Following a pilot-community survey in St. Johns, Michigan, content about schools nearly doubled in the local newspaper. This newspaper ranked among the first three in total school news in the quantitative content analysis. Moreover, the survey became a topic of conversation and was used as a basis for discussion at faculty

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[1]Roe, Haak, and McIntyre, Op. Cit., p. 118.

[2]Leo Haak, The Effectiveness of School-Community Communications (Unpublished typewritten report, Michigan State University, 1955), 325 pp.

meetings. Also, the school system hired a part-time public relations person to coordinate better press and community relations.[1]

Of equal importance was the finding that the teacher is an important source of information. Though one might assume that staff personnel are always a source of information in any enterprise, it was most revealing that more than one-half of persons interviewed said that they had a friend who, either a teacher or an ex-teacher, provided them with information about the schools. It would appear that the image of a school in the minds of its patrons is very largely dependent on the communication behavior of teachers. This in turn may be very much affected by the nature of the interpersonal relationships among staff members.[2]

In the community surveys, which were primarily designed as an investigation of communication effects, respondents were asked a series of questions about their schools and on the basis of their replies, were divided into three "informed" groups: (1) best informed; (2) average informed; (3) least well-informed.

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[1] Ibid., p. 4.

[2] For an expanded treatment of this, see: William G. Monahan, "Staff Morale and Communication," Michigan Secondary Principals Journal, 1:2, 1960.

A notable finding was that the best informed citizens are not necessarily the most favorable. Using these three factors of information, opinions were surveyed in a number of areas among which was "general evaluation of schools." The following table is reproduced from an unpublished preliminary report by Haak:

	General evaluation of Schools[1] Proportion who responded			
	very favorable	favorable	not very favorable	Total
	(%)	(%)	(%)	
Best informed	35	36	29	100%
Average	43	35	22	100
Least well-informed	56	28	14	100

It can be seen from this table that the "least well-informed" are the most favorable in their general evaluation of the schools. When these findings are compared with income of respondents, it was pointed out that 90% of the "least well-informed" group come from low-income strata. One might infer from this that there is a relationship between favorableness and opposition to increased taxation. In other words, low income persons may be more favorable because they realize that better schools are more expensive.

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[1] Leo Haak, "The Nature of the School Public Relations Problem" (Unpublished mimeograph report, Michigan Communications Study, Michigan State University, July, 1954), 8 pp.

It is also interesting to note that readership of the local newspaper was found to be closely related to knowledge of the schools. Haak reports that only 10% of the best informed indicated they did not read the local paper whereas 34% of the least well-informed indicated non-reading.[1]

The third phase of the Michigan Communications Study was concerned with the collection of effective procedures for improving communications between the school and its publics.

III. Effective Procedures.

Following the research, salient findings were presented to newspaper men and to school public relations persons. Through workshops, conferences, and personal interviews, these research data were, ". . . tempered with the knowledge of and 'knowhow' of the practitioner so action programs for improvement will be based on practice as well as theory."[2]

After critical review of a number of pilot publications a final handbook was issued.[3] It was divided into two sections; Part I was entitled, "For Educators," and

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[1] Ibid., p. 8.

[2] Roe, Haak, and McIntyre, Op. Cit., p. 117.

[3] William H. Roe (ed.), Schools Are News (East Lansing: Bureau of Educational Research, Michigan State University, 1955), 103 pp.

Part II, "For Editors." Edited by William Roe and contributed to by a number of nationally known school public relations people, the booklet has received favorable comment from newspaper men as well as school personnel.

It is appropriate to end this chapter with a statement in the opening paragraph of Schools Are News:

> There may be no blood involved in the superintendent's relations, but it is still a fact that the schools are part of a community family with obligations and relationships that cannot be ignored. Whether a school has relations or not with its local newspapers is not the question. Every school has them. The question is, "Are they good or bad?"
>
> The superintendent who told his local weekly editor with great satisfaction, "You mind your newspaper business and I'll mind mine," didn't end his relations with the paper. He just made them poor relations.[1]

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[1]Otis Crosby and Sylvia Ciernick, Ibid., p. 1.

CHAPTER III

QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

The Sample

Selecting the sample.

The sample for this study consisted of fifteen weekly newspapers and eight daily newspapers in Michigan. The universe that this sample represented included all of those in the state of Michigan.

In comparison with the sample of newspapers used by Luck,[1] this study employed a smaller number of total papers. Again this number was selected in light of the expenditure of time and effort required in handling and in terms of Berelson's statement regarding the validity of smaller samples in content analysis.[2]

To insure random selection of the sample of newspapers used, numbers were assigned to all weekly and daily newspapers, excepting the Detroit metropolitan papers; the sampling frame in this case was the 1959 edition, Michigan

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[1]David Luck, What Michigan Newspapers Tell About the Schools (East Lansing: Bureau of Business Research, Michigan State College, 1954), p. 4.

[2]See page 32.

Newspaper Ratebook and County Market Data.[1] Using a table of random numbers in a standard statistics text,[2] the writer selected the sample according to defined statistical procedures.[3]

The sample of daily and weekly newspapers with circulation data and average thickness of a single issue as selected by the above sampling procedure are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

TABLE 1

CIRCULATION AND AVERAGE PAGES PER ISSUE FOR DAILY NEWSPAPERS IN SAMPLE

Paper	Circulation	Average pages per issue
A	59,345	39.7
B	36,029	31.7
C	13,223	15.0
D	12,710	18.8
E	8,040	13.1
F	6,381	12.6
G	4,783	10.3
H	3,477	7.2
Total	143,988	148.4

[1]Michigan Press Association, Michigan Newspaper Ratebook and County Market Data, 1959 Edition (East Lansing: Michigan Press Association, 1959)

[2]Wilfrid J. Dixon and Frank J. Massey, Jr., Introduction to Statistical Analysis (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1957) 488 pp.

[3]Ibid., p. 34.

TABLE 2

CIRCULATION AND AVERAGE PAGES PER ISSUE
FOR WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS IN SAMPLE

Paper	Circulation	Average pages per issue
A	10,325	14.6
B	5,766	28.9
C	3,474	10.0
D	2,800	14.0
E	2,310	16.3
F	2,281	8.7
G	2,250	10.4
H	1,950	9.6
I	1,938	10.6
J	1,714	19.0
K	1,708	7.5
L	1,648	9.2
M	1,578	8.3
N	1,456	8.4
O	870	4.7
Total	42,068	180.2

Excluding the Detroit metropolitan dailies with circulations around 500,000, the daily newspapers in the above table seem to be adequately representative of daily newspapers in Michigan. The same is also true of weekly newspapers although the group with circulation between 500 and 1,000 might have been more adequately represented.

When compared with the sample used by Luck, the newspapers in the present study again appear to be comparable. These two samples of weeklies are compared in Table 3.

TABLE 3

COMPARISON BY CIRCULATION OF PAPERS
IN THE TWO STUDIES

Circulation	No. of papers in Luck study	No. of papers in current study
600- 1,000	9	1
1,001- 2,000	16	7
2,001- 3,000	8	3
3,001- 5,000	2	1
5,001- 7,500	2	1
7,500-10,000	3	1

It can be seen from this table that other than the first circulation category, the sample in the present study is similarly representative of the Luck study. Since both of these samples were selected randomly, however, representativeness is a quality of the sampling procedure itself and both were used for generalizing to the universe. Since there were no similar data presented by Luck in daily newspapers, no comparison among dailies can be made here.

The locations of the newspapers used in the present study are plotted on the map in Appendix A.

Handling the sample.

Reading, measuring, and analyzing the school content in 818 newspapers with a total of 14,382 pages necessitated a decision at the outset with reference to the sheer effort of handling the papers themselves.

This decision lay between two alternatives; either clipping all school items or devising some method for retaining the entire issue of each paper intact. Since the latter offered the most convenience it was decided to retain the total issue. This was facilitated through building a rack, attaching a number of issues of newspapers to a wooden bar and hanging these over the rack.

This system enabled the researcher to analyze each paper without the pressure of a day to day clipping process which could have detracted from the analysis.

Measuring the content.

Certain measuring procedures were determined at the outset of the study. These may be summarized as follows:

1. Measurements would be recorded in the column-inches unit (one column wide and one inch vertically).

2. Measurement would be made to the nearest half-inch. More precise measurements were deemed to be unnecessary since consistency in measuring was the more important consideration. Accordingly, an item of content that measured six and one-half inches was considered as occurring in a space of six and one-half inches whereas an item of content measuring six and three-quarter inches was considered as occurring in a space of seven inches. Content that measured between quarter units was considered as occurring to the nearest half-inch unit.

3. Every item on the schools bearing a headline would be measured and classified. The same procedure would apply for every illustration with a caption.

4. All front page items were measured twice; one time by the writer and again by an assistant. This was done for the purpose of establishing measurement reliability, and for specific front page quantification.

Classifying the content.

To facilitate comparisons of the present study with that of Luck, the same content classifications were used. In these classifications, reading matter was separated from illustrations. The classifications and the definition of each as employed in this study are as follows:

1. Adult education. Those educational experiences and programs conducted either for credit or non-credit designed for adults and conducted, administered, and otherwise organized through the auspices of the local public school system. This does not include higher education.

2. Illustrations, other. General illustrations with captions relating to the schools and not classifiable under social, student, or athletic illustrations as elsewhere defined among these classifications.

3. Editorial comment. Those items of content that can be distinctly classified as editorials wherein the opinions of the newspaper's personnel are stated regarding the schools.

4. Social news. Those items relating to the social activities of students when it is apparent that the behaviors reported are patently related to the schools such that "student behaviors" would be distinguishable from personal behaviors.

5. Social illustrations. Those illustrations with captions which depict students behaving in social situations compatible with the kinds of situations that might be classified under four (4) above.[1]

6. Student activities. Those school-connected but extra-curricular activities of students usually of an informal nature including such experiences as clubs, dramatics, student government and others of similar nature.

7. Student activity illustrations. Photographs of extra-curricular activities as described above and including the illustration of preparations of class or organizational projects, campaigns, and similar activities.

8. Honor roll. Listings of pupils who have achieved certain scholastic standards as defined by the schools and which are usually referred to as "Honor Roll." Also included in this category for purposes of this study, are items that point out other scholastic honors accruing to pupils.

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[1]Social is used here and in the preceding classification in its more pedestrian sense; i.e., having to do with entertainment, recreation, popularity contests, and similar activities of students under the auspices of the school.

9. Finance. Items having to do with matters of a fiscal nature are included in this category and in which finance is the principal factor being reported.

10. School board. Those items having to do with the deliberations, responsibilities, reported activities, and meetings of the Board of Education.

11. School operation. Items having to do with the care, maintenance, and operation of the school plant.

12. Teaching methods. Items primarily concerned with the techniques of teaching either as direct reports or as reports of research, ideas, opinions, or other statements of persons; also included in this category are items that discuss human growth and development in terms of application to learning.

13. Conferences and institutes. Items reporting on professional meetings of teachers and/or pupils when the latter attend such meetings under the authorization and sponsorship of the schools or as representatives of scholastic organizations.

14. Curriculum. Items that concern content-related experiences of pupils under the direction and guidance of the teacher and in which the emphasis is directed to <u>what</u> is being learned, taught, planned, and programmed rather than <u>how</u> such things are, or will be done. The latter would be classified under "teaching methods."

15. Athletics. All items having to do with school athletics of an inter-scholastic nature or that aim toward the development, purposefully, or physical skills in connection with inter-scholastic competition.

16. Athletic illustrations. All illustrations with captions having to do with athletics, athletic coaches, and athletic teams in the public schools.

17. PTA. All items having to do with parent and teacher organizations in the public schools whether or not these organizations are labelled as PTA, Mother's Clubs, or by some other designation.

18. Transportation. Items having to do with school transportation and school busses.

19. Safety. Items having to do with safety and safety education, such items being oriented to school activities or to school children.

20. Miscellaneous. Any item that cannot properly be classified elsewhere among these classification categories.

There were occasions when content might have been classified in more than one of these categories but in which the actual classification could be determined according to the above definitions. For example, a report of a PTA meeting in which the school board members were guests and in which the theme of the meeting was a panel discussion on school budget; for quantification purposes, this example

would have been classified as PTA since that organization served as the primary vehicle for the news item being published.

In some cases, the ambivalence of an item made it difficult to classify in one or another category. For this reason it was necessary to determine the reliability of the writer's ability to properly classify various school news items in addition to the reliability of measurement.

Reliability in Measuring

The primary purpose in checking the measurement of school content in newspapers was not to test the writer's, or an assistant's ability to read a twelve-inch ruler, but rather to insure that some care would be taken in the measurement of the news so that consistency was maintained throughout the course of the three months during which newspapers were analyzed.

The procedure for checking measurement was pursued by having both the writer and an assistant measure all items of school news appearing on the front pages of all daily and weekly newspapers in the sample.

Table 4 indicates that this consistency was more than adequately achieved.

The differences in measurement of front page content were a little less than one-tenth of one percent. One would expect them to be close, however, since the only

abilities involved were being able to recognize content as having to do with public schools and being able to accurately interpret a ruler. The differences in fact could be traced to measuring the space occupied by a news item where accompanied by an illustration. When one measures these together, the net total is slightly more than when they are measured separately.

TABLE 4

COMPARISONS OF WRITER'S AND ASSISTANT'S MEASUREMENTS OF FRONT PAGE CONTENT

Measurer	Front page dailies	Front page weeklies
Analyst	3,702.5 in.	5,852.5 in.
Assistant	3,706.5	5,849.0

Reliability in Classification

Equally important to the reliability of the results reported in this study, was the determination of the writer's ability to classify items consistently. Moreover, the probability of differences in the way two or more persons would classify a number of items is much greater.

To test classification reliability, a panel procedure was followed. Three persons were presented with written definitions of the classifications and were then

asked to classify a representative sample of school items. A Professor of Education, an Instructor, and a Graduate Assistant served as the panel for this exercise. Each of these three persons studied the definitions and was satisfied that they were meaningful. Information on the background of the panel may be found in Appendix B.

The sample of items was selected by first referring to the category sheets that were used during the analysis period. From these, several papers were selected by noting that there were quantitative data more widely distributed among the several categories for these specific issues. Two such papers were selected and all school news items with exception of athletics were clipped from these and mounted on sheets of paper.[1] Adjacent to each clipping, a number was placed which corresponded to that clipping. Each person, after studying the definitions of the categories and bringing his own judgment to bear upon them, then classified the sample of items by placing the number of the item opposite the category in which it was to be classified. A facsimile of one of these sheets with clippings mounted is included in Illustration 1, page 51.

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[1]All of the athletic items and illustrations were not clipped since these were obviously indicated as being athletic news; several examples were included and it was assumed that this would suffice for adequate classification.

It's a Family Affair

Helping the Beginner to Add and Subtract

9

By Garry Cleveland Myers, Ph.D.

Some children entering the first grade don't know the meaning of a symbol like 6 when it is seen or heard. So the teacher spends much time having all the children count numbers up to 10 or higher.

Even in the second grade, these children may be kept counting things as they practice adding or subtracting the simple 2-place numbers like 4 plus 3, or 5 minus 2.

When these children are in the fourth or fifth grade, they still may keep on counting out numbers as they add or subtract.

As a rule, children in the beginning of number work are kept far too long at counting. When helping the child with simple addition or subtraction, parents may urge the child to count. Indeed, the parent supposes she is helping the child reason it out. That's not reasoning.

It doesn't take much practice for a child to see that the numbers he adds stand for things he can count. As soon as he gets this idea, he should learn by heart the basic facts of addition like 6 and 3 are 9, 4 and 7 are 11, 2 and 8 are 10.

Although there are only 100 of these combinations, he will need to use them all his life. Later, he can memorize the 100 basic subtraction facts.

You may help your child learn these facts of addition by having him practice only these or four an evening, reviewing [illegible] he had learned before.

A good way is to buy or make cards with the whole combinations —such as 6 plus 7 are 13—printed on one side of the card, and only the 6 plus 7 on the other side. Have him say over and over, "6 and 7 are 13," until he is sure he remembers it, before testing him on the other side.

Most parents err by urging the child to attack too many cards at a sitting and by testing him on combinations he has not mastered. The secret of success is accuracy.

A child will tend to hurry and guess and thus make many mistakes. By being very calm and persuasive, induce him to go slowly and carefully. Speed will take care of itself.

When, for example, he remembers that 7 and 8 are 15, no one needs to hurry him to say it quickly. But if he counts out these numbers, he can't answer quickly no matter how hard he tries. If your child pauses before correctly answering, you can be pretty sure that he has counted.

Don't have your child practice combinations of subtraction and addition the same evening.

Parents who count objects as they live and play with the child, three to five, and who encourage him to count things up to 10, have this child so ready for number work [illegible] entering school that he will need little or no practice at counting.

Will Dedicate New Junior High in S.L. Nov. 30

Dedication ceremonies for the new Spring Lake Junior High School will be Monday, Nov. 30 and will include open houses from 3 to 5 p.m. and 7 to 8 p.m.

A dedication program will follow at 8 p.m. with the speaker as yet unpicked.

A committee headed by Mrs. Howard Snyder is handling details of the ceremony. The group met with the Board of Education Tuesday night.

10

East Bay PTA Has October Meeting

East Bay School PTA held its October meeting Monday evening with 50 members attending.

The first grade of Mrs. Mengel won the membership contest award with 100 per cent. Total number of members standing at 132. The kindergarten won the room count award for most parents present.

Matters discussed concerned the PTA project for the school, "Immunization Program Developments" and "School Financial Situation."

The program consisted of a panel discussion on "Pornography" headed by Edward Perkett, postmaster and James Cobb of the Jr. Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Cobb stressed the importance of local magazine retailers keeping questionable publications off of their shelves. Mr. Perkett gave figures as to great increase nationally of complaints about pornographic material coming through the mails addressed to children and teenagers. The prosecutions also are gaining rapidly, according to the local postmaster, who urged any resident to bring in at once any material on the questionable sale

11

Benzie-Leelanau MEA Group Meets

HONOR—The annual meeting of the Benzie-Leelanau sub-district of the Michigan Education Association was held at Honor Monday evening with 50 teachers from the two counties attending the session.

Following the dinner served at the Honor church sub-district, President Titus Mendell of Benzonia gave a talk on continuing contact, closer cooperation of school faculty members and their school boards, encouragement of better press coverage of school board meetings and school activities, and better public relations between school and community.

Sten Larson, of the Frankfort school gave a report of the M.E.A. regional council meeting at Traverse City.

Al Amundsen, field representative of the M.E.A., spoke on "Continuing Contracts and Tenure."

12

ILLUSTRATION 1.

Table 5 presents the results of this test for reliability.

TABLE 5

CLASSIFICATION OF ITEMS BY PANEL OF JUDGES

Agreement among judges	Number of items
All agreed	37
Two of three agreed	3
All disagreed	1
Total	41

On only four items was there any degree of disagreement among the three judges. This constitutes 90.2 percent agreement. In addition, however, it should be pointed out that there was complete disagreement on only one item. This item is circled in the facsimile sheet, Illustration 1, page 51. One judge classified this item as school operations; another classified it as miscellaneous, and the third classified it as school board.

The writer would agree with the judge who classified this item of content as miscellaneous since the subject in this case is a dedication and does not logically fit in any of the other classifications.

Analysis of The Content

Reporting the quantitative analysis of the school content in daily and weekly newspapers in this study is based

on various sorting and computing of the data. Correlation with the size of papers was determined by finding the total column-inches per total page of each paper. This was then multiplied by the total number of pages for each newspaper for the three-month period to determine column-inches of total space. Tables 6 and 7 compare daily and weekly newspapers respectively when school news is considered as a percent of total type space.

TABLE 6

SCHOOL CONTENT IN WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS
SEPTEMBER 1, 1959 TO NOVEMBER 30, 1959

Paper	Column-inches of total space	Column-inches of school news	School news as a % of total space
B[a]	29,120	2,060.5	7.1 %
M	12,960	888.5	6.9
H	16,660	1,115.0	6.7
J	26,316	1,654.0	6.3
E	33,920	2,027.0	6.0
D	60,160	3,176.0	5.3
I	24,288	1,022.5	4.2
L	21,120	844.5	4.0
O	10,912	409.5	3.8
C	21,320	793.0	3.7
K	17,288	578.0	3.3
F	19,936	611.0	3.10
N	15,400	481.5	3.12
G	23,936	637.0	2.7
A	31,920	816.5	2.6
Total	338,940	15,460.5	4.6

[a]Papers are identified by circulation throughout this study; see Table 1, page 40.

TABLE 7

SCHOOL CONTENT IN DAILY NEWSPAPERS
SEPTEMBER 1, 1959 TO NOVEMBER 30, 1959

Paper	Column-inches of total space	Column-inches of school news	School news as a % of total space
F[a]	179,352	7,751.5	4.0 %
E	174,736	5,239.0	3.0
H	97,976	2,411.0	2.5
G	136,432	3,257.5	2.4
A	539,680	9,566.5	1.8
B	469,920	6,671.5	1.4
C	202,352	2,513.0	1.3
D	253,680	3,007.5	1.2
Total	2,049,128	39,467.0	1.9

[a]Papers are identified by circulation throughout this study; see Table 2, page 41.

Variations among newspapers.

It would appear from Tables 6 and 7 that neither the circulation of a paper nor the amount of total space available have any consistent relationship to the amount of space given to school news. This is especially revealing when school news is shown as a percentage of total space.

Among weekly newspapers, the fourth ranking paper (D) in circulation was the first ranking paper in the percent of its total space devoted to school news; while the first ranking paper in circulation (A) was last in percent of total space given to school news.

On the other hand, there is only so much space that can be devoted to schools as one area of news; therefore the total amount of school news for the three-months period should also be considered as indicative of emphasis given to schools by the press. On this basis six of the fifteen weekly newspapers devoted more than 1,000 column-inches of space to the schools; seven others devoted between 500 and 999 column-inches, while only two papers devoted less than 500 inches to the schools. The range in total inches of school content was from 409.5 column-inches for the lowest paper, to 3,176 column-inches for the highest paper.

Among daily newspaper, the range from lowest to highest in total inches of school news was 2,411 to 9,566.5.

It is interesting to note that for both of these extremes--for daily and weekly newspapers--the lowest papers were the lowest ranking papers in circulation while the highest were the first or second ranking papers in circulation. This would seem to indicate that there is a definite directional relationship between the circulation of a newspaper and the amount of space it gives to the schools. However when the papers are compared by rank in circulation, school content, and school content as a percentage of total space, the relationship inferred does not appear to be substantiated. Table 6 presents these comparisons.

TABLE 8

COMPARISONS OF NEWSPAPERS RANKED BY CIRCULATION, TOTAL SCHOOL CONTENT AND SCHOOL NEWS AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL SPACE

Paper	Rank by circulation	Rank by total school content	Rank by school content as a % of total type space
		Daily Newspapers	
A	1	1	5
B	2	3	6
C	3	7	7
D	4	8	8
E	5	4	2
F	6	2	1
G	7	5	4
H	8	6	3
		Weekly Newspapers	
A	1	9	15
B	2	1	6
C	3	10	10
D	4	2	1
E	5	3	5
F	6	12	12
G	7	11	14
H	8	13	11
I	9	5	7
J	10	4	4
K	11	5	3
L	12	8	8
M	13	7	2
N	14	14	13
O	15	15	9

To determine whether there actually is a relationship between the rank of a newspaper in circulation and its rank in total school news space, a rank order correlation (rho) was applied to these data. The following formula was used:

$$1 - \frac{6 \sum D^2}{N(N^2-1)}$$ where D is the difference between ranks, and N the number of papers.

For the dailies, the rank order correlation coefficient (r_o) was equal to +.50. This indicated a weak relationship between these two factors. For the weekly newspapers, r_o = +.41, thus there is even less relationship between circulation and total space devoted to school news among weekly newspapers than among dailies and in neither is this a highly significant relationship.

Nothing has been said to this point about the thickness of a newspaper in relation to total school news space. It would seem that the thickness of a paper in itself would indicate a greater amount of space devoted to schools. To test this, the average pages per issue was determined for all of the daily and weekly newspapers and newspapers were ranked accordingly. Again, the rank order correlation was computed for these variables.

For daily newspapers the r_o between thickness and total space given to school news was +.50, not large enough to indicate a relationship at either the .01 or .05 levels of significance.

For weeklies, the r_o between these two factors was +.66. This is significant at the .01 level where a coefficient of at least .623 is required for significance.[1] It can be stated on the basis of these statistical findings that the thickness of daily newspapers has no significant bearing on the total amount of space devoted to school news, but among weekly newspapers there is a positive relationship. Thus, the more pages in an issue of a weekly newspaper, the more likelihood there is that the schools will receive a greater proportion of space.

Front page school news.

How important the schools are as a source of news may be indicated by the amount of front page space given to school affairs. Among daily newspapers, almost ten percent of all school news appeared on the front page, while among weeklies, more than one-third (34.1%) of all school news is found on page one. Data on front page news are presented in Tables 9 and 10.

The variations are great for both daily and weekly papers. It can be seen from these tables that, among weekly newspapers, the percentage of school news appearing on front pages is inversely proportional to the size of the paper;

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[1]Sidney Siegel, Nonparametric Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956), Table P, p. 284.

i.e., as the papers increase in thickness, the tendency is to print a smaller percentage of school news on the front page. Correlation of weekly newspapers ranked by thickness (average pages per issue) with rank in percentage of school news on page one yields a negative r_o of -.27.

TABLE 9

FRONT PAGE SPACE DEVOTED TO SCHOOLS
IN DAILY NEWSPAPERS

Paper	Average page per issue	Total column-inches of school content	Column-inches of school news on page 1	Percent of school news on page 1
H	7.2	2,411.0	1,594	66.1 %
D	18.8	3,007.5	326	11.0
G	10.3	3,257.5	319	9.7
C	15.0	2,543.0	215	8.5
F	12.6	6,751.0	561	8.3
E	13.1	5,259.0	384	7.3
A	39.7	9,566.5	212.5	2.2
B	31.7	6,671.5	92	1.4
Total		39,467.0	3,702.5	9.4 %

It should be noted that among those weekly newspapers which average over ten pages per issue, the average percent of front page space given to schools is still a rather high 22.6 percent.

The type and quality of front page items about the schools will be treated in Chapter IV of this thesis; it can be stated at this point that apparently weekly newspapers

consider the schools to be a rather important source of news if front-page space is a criterion of significance.

TABLE 10

FRONT PAGE SPACE DEVOTED TO SCHOOLS
IN WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

Paper	Average page per issue	Total column-inches of school news	Column-inches of school news on page 1	Percent of school news on page 1
C	4.7	409.5	409.5	22.1 %
M	8.4	481.5	413.0	85.9
H	9.6	578.0	442.5	76.6
L	9.2	844.5	571.5	67.7
G	10.4	637.0	373.5	58.6
C	10.0	793.0	451.5	56.9
M	8.3	868.5	458.5	52.7
F	8.7	611.0	317.0	51.8
I	10.6	1,022.5	465.0	45.4
A	14.6	816.5	270.0	33.0
K	7.5	1,115.0	289.0	25.9
E	16.3	2,027.0	482.0	23.7
D	14.0	2,080.5	378.0	18.2
J	19.0	1,654.0	258.0	15.5
B	28.9	3,176.0	278.0	8.4
Total		17,114.5	5,852.5	34.1 %

School content as a percent of the "news hole."

Throughout this study, percentages are reported in relation to the total type-space of a newspaper. It was pointed out that this is computed by multiplying the total number of pages for the period of the study by the size of

the type-space page. Thus if a paper has a page eight columns wide and twenty inches long, the total space per page is equal to 160 column-inches; if, during the three-months period of this study, a paper accumulated 130 pages, its total space is determined to be 130 x 160, or 20,800 column-inches.

This is an adequate method for calculating percentages but since total space also includes advertising copy, the reported percentage figure tends to appear low. It might be more meaningful to report percentages using the "news hole" only. Thus one could talk about school content as a percent of total news space, rather than of both news and advertising space.

A traditional rule of thumb among newspapers is to assume a 60:40 percent ratio between advertising and news. Although some papers deviate from this rather extensively, it is still a fairly reliable ratio. Using forty percent of total space as an estimate of the "news hole" the writer computed school news as a percentage of total news space. Tables 11 and 12 present this information for daily and weekly newspapers.

It can be seen from Tables 11 and 12 that when the actual space given just to news is considered, school content accounts for a considerable portion of space, more so than one might infer when school news is reported as percentages of total space.

TABLE 11

SCHOOL CONTENT IN THE "NEWS HOLE"
DAILY NEWSPAPERS

Paper	School content as percent of total space	School content as percent of news hole
F	4.6 %	7.9 %
E	3.6	7.4
H	2.5	6.2
G	2.4	5.9
A	1.9	4.4
B	1.4	3.3
C	1.3	3.1
D	1.2	2.9
Average for all daily papers	1.9 %	4.9 %

TABLE 12

SCHOOL CONTENT IN THE "NEWS HOLE"
WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

Paper	School content as percent of total space	School content as percent of news hole
D	7.1 %	17.7 %
I	6.9	17.1
K	6.7	16.7
J	6.3	15.7
L	6.0	14.9
B	5.3	13.1
M	4.2	10.5
N	4.0	9.9
O	3.8	9.4
C	3.7	9.3
H	3.3	8.3
K	3.12	7.8
F	3.10	7.7
G	2.7	6.6
A	2.6	6.4
Average for all weekly papers	4.8 %	11.4 %

Topics of school news.

In this study all school related news items and illustrations were classified into twenty categories. The space devoted to each of these categories by the eight daily and fifteen weekly newspapers was measured for each issue and totals for each category were computed for the three-months period. Tables 13 and 14 present these data for daily and weekly newspapers.

TABLE 13

TOTAL CONTENT BY CLASSIFICATIONS IN DAILY PAPERS SEPTEMBER 1, 1959 TO NOVEMBER 30, 1959

Paper	Column-inches of school news	Percent of total	Cumulative percentage
Athletics	15,086.5	38.2 %	38.2 %
Athletic illustrations	5,938.5	15.0	53.2
Miscellaneous	2,867.0	7.4	60.6
Illustrations, other	2,399.0	6.3	66.9
Curriculum	2,268.0	6.0	72.9
Finance	2,176.0	5.7	78.6
PTA	1,673.5	4.4	83.0
Student activities	1,261.5	3.3	86.3
Student activities, illustrations	1,140.5	3.0	89.3
School board	673.5	2.0	91.3
Teaching methods	588.5	1.6	92.9
Illustrations, social	500.0	1.4	94.3
Conferences and institutes	457.0	1.2	95.5
Social news	427.0	1.1	96.6
Safety	333.0	.8	97.4
Editorial comment	283.0	.7	98.1
Honor roll	165.5	.41	98.51
School operation	159.0	.40	98.91
Adult education	148.5	.39	99.3
Transportation	120.0	.32	99.62

TABLE 14

TOTAL CONTENT BY CLASSIFICATIONS IN WEEKLY PAPERS
SEPTEMBER 1, 1959 TO NOVEMBER 30, 1959

Paper	Column-inches of school news	Percent of total	Cumulative percentage
Athletics	4,956.0	28.9 %	28.9 %
Miscellaneous	2,259.5	13.2	42.1
Illustrations, other	1,424.0	8.0	50.1
Athletic illustrations	1,337.5	7.8	57.9
Curriculum	1,283.0	7.5	65.4
Finance	1,236.5	7.2	72.6
Student activities	1,013.0	6.0	78.6
PTA	783.0	4.5	83.1
School board	413.5	2.4	85.5
Illustrations, social	334.5	2.0	87.5
Teaching methods	283.0	1.7	89.2
Editorial comment	275.0	1.6	90.8
Social news	272.5	1.6	92.4
Illustrations, student activities	241.5	1.4	93.8
Conferences and institutes	235.5	1.4	95.2
Safety	227.5	1.3	96.5
Adult education	173.5	1.0	97.5
Honor roll	170.0	.9	98.4
Transportation	149.5	.8	99.2
School operation	127.5	.7	99.9

In examining Tables 13 and 14 several factors become apparent. Both daily and weekly newspapers as a group devoted comparable attention to the same items. Although not in precisely the same order, the first five categories in both daily and weekly papers include the same five types of content; again this is true for the bottom four categories. Moreover, all of the categories appear to have been treated with similar

emphasis by both weeklies and dailies. Ranking the categories in the order they appear in these tables for both daily and weekly papers and applying the rank order correlation (rho) statistic, the relationship is substantiated with a r_o equalling +.95, which indicates a very strong relationship.

It is also apparent that daily newspapers devote slightly more than half of all school content to athletics and to athletic illustrations. Weekly newspapers devote a little more than one-third of the total school content to these two categories but about twice as much news in weeklies was classified as miscellaneous.

Both weekly newspapers and dailies devote similar percentages of the total school content to curriculum. The writer hypothesized at the outset of this study that matters pertaining to curriculum would show an increase. This is based on an assumption that events during recent years have focused greater attention on educational programming. Factors relating to evaluation of these comparisons of specific content areas will be treated in greater detail in Chapter IV.

Variations on categories among papers.

Both daily and weekly newspapers varied greatly in the amounts of space individual papers devoted to the different types of school content. This became apparent

for example when it was noted during the analysis that two weekly papers that devoted similar aggregate amounts of space to all school news differed on a single category by more than 200 inches. In this particular instance, weekly paper "H" gave a total of 253.5 column-inches of space to the finance category, while weekly paper "I" gave only 26 column-inches to this category, yet both papers were close in total space given to schools.

In order to examine more penetratingly whether or not there were significant variations among all newspapers between all categories, it was decided to analyze statistically three dimensions of variations:

1. Differences in column-inches between newspapers according to variations among categories within each paper. (Treating daily and weekly newspapers as separate groups.)

2. Differences in column-inches between newspapers according to variations among the same category across each paper. (Treating daily and weekly newspapers as separate groups.)

3. Differences in percentages of total school content between newspapers according to variations among the same category across each paper. (Treating daily and weekly newspapers as separate groups.)

In the statistical analysis of each of these three dimensions of variation, the data were cast in a two-way table having N rows and K columns. The data of the

statistical test used were ranks. For this reason, a non-parametric statistic is appropriate. It is pointed out by Siegel that:

> . . . When parametric techniques of statistical inference are used with such data (rank orders) any decisions about hypotheses are doubtful.[1]

For this particular analysis, the statistic χ_r^2, or Friedman two-way analysis of variance test, was used. Senders says of this statistic:

> The Friedman Test is the <u>only</u> appropriate test when the <u>same</u> individuals have been treated in different ways and our interest is in comparing the effects of the treatments.[2]

The procedure for the use of the χ_r^2 statistic was first to arrange the totals of school news for each category and for each newspaper in a two-way table; the newspapers provided the <u>rows</u>, and the categories of content provided the <u>columns</u>. Ranks from 1 to 20 were then assigned to each category of content by the amount of space each newspaper gave to that category. Thus if a particular newspaper gave the most space to <u>athletics</u>, and the least space to <u>transportation</u>, these categories were ranked as "1" and "20" respectively and all other categories were ordered properly between them.

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[1]Siegel, <u>Op. Cit.</u>, p. 26.

[2]Virginia L. Senders, <u>Measurement and Statistics</u> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 492.

If a newspaper gave no space to a particular category, that category was ranked last. If there were several categories to which no space was given, those categories tied for last; however, they were not all given a rank of "20" but were assigned the middle rank among the three. For example, if a newspaper gave no space to three categories, each of these was assigned a rank of "19." This same procedure was applied to all ties.

After each category was ranked for every newspaper, the ranks were summed for each column. Since there was considerable opportunity for error both in assigning ranks (one for each of 160 cells for daily newspapers, and 300 cells for weekly newspapers) and in computing the sums of the columns, a check was made on the accuracy of summing ranks using the formula:

$$\frac{rk(k+1)}{2}$$

which is equal to $\sum T_i$, when T_i is the sum of a single column.

These computations were then substituted in the formula for χ_r^2 below:

$$\chi_r^2 = \frac{12}{rk(k+1)} \sum T_i^2 - 3r(k+1)$$

Since the statistic is computed the same way for both weekly and daily papers, the computations are shown for dailies only. The application of this statistic

(chi r square) to the first dimension of variation is presented as follows for daily newspapers.

ΣT_i	ΣT_i^2
138.5	19,460.25
39.	1,521
113.5	12,882.25
114	12,996
104.5	10,920.25
61	3,721
88.5	7,832.25
128.5	16,512.25
47	2,209
79	6,241
133.5	17,822.25
113	12,769
99	9,801
54	2,916
8	64
16	256
46	2,136
132.5	17,556.25
118.5	14,042.25
35	1,225
	173,883

$r = 8$

$k = 20$

$$\chi_r^2 = \frac{12}{rk(k+1)} \Sigma T_i^2 - 3r(k+1)$$

$$= \frac{12}{3,360} (173,883) - 24(21)$$

$$= .0035(173,883) - 504$$

$$= 608.59 - 504$$

$$\chi_r^2 = 104.6$$

Reject H_o if greater than 29.1 at .05 level, or 31.3 at .01 level of significance.

104.6 is much greater, therefore reject H_o.

In the above statistical analysis, the null hypothesis being tested was to the effect that there were no differences in the ways categories of school news rank from one newspaper to the next. The value of the χ_r^2 coefficient in this case is so much greater than that required for significance that there can be no doubt that daily newspapers differed greatly in the amount of space given to different types of school news.

The value of the computed χ_r^2 for weekly newspapers on this same dimension of variation was 145.9 indicating the same conclusion for the weekly newspapers.

The second dimension of variation asks the question: how do the different papers rank in relation to the amount of space each gives to these twenty categories of school news. The H_o on this dimension can be stated: there are no significant differences between newspapers ranked by space devoted to each of the twenty categories of school news.

The computations for the statistic on the second dimension of variation for daily newspapers follow:

ΣT_i	ΣT_i^2
37.5	1,406.25
68	4,624
115	13,225
120	14,400
90	8,100
52	2,704
106	11,236
131.5	17,292.25
	72,987.50

$r = 20$

$k = 8$

$$\chi_r^2 = \frac{12}{rk(k+1)} \Sigma T_i^2 - 3r(k+1)$$

$$= \frac{12}{1,440} (72,987.50) - 60(9)$$

$$= .0083 (72,987.50) - 540$$

$$= 605.8 - 540.0$$

$$\chi_r^2 = 65.8$$

Reject H_o if χ_r^2 is greater than distribution of χ^2 with k - 1 degrees of freedom.

χ^2 with k - 1 d.f. is 18.5 at the .05 level of significance and 20.3 at the .01 level of significance.

Conclusion: reject H_o.

In a sense, this is the same question that was tested regarding the thickness of a newspaper in relation to school news; however, the question is here being posed in terms of <u>each category</u> of school news and <u>each newspaper</u> rather than

on total news in all categories. Thus, if a paper with a large number of average pages per issue does not devote more space to each of the various categories than a paper with considerably less number of pages, it could be concluded that there are no differences.

Computing the same statistic for weekly papers produced a χ_{μ}^2 of 60.7. Both values for the statistic on dailies and weeklies are much larger than the value required for significance in a table of χ^2 distributions, thus we must reject the hypothesis that there are no differences among newspapers ranked by space devoted to each of the twenty categories.

The conclusion is obvious; newspapers which devote more total space to school news also devote more space generally to <u>each</u> category of school news.

If there are differences in amount of space, one might assume that there are also differences among the various newspapers in their rankings on the twenty categories in terms of percentages; i.e., if a paper with a large number of pages per issue <u>does</u> devote more space to the various categories than a paper with considerably less number of pages per issue, shouldn't the larger paper also devote a greater percentage of the total school content to each category.

The H_0 on this dimension can be stated: there are no significant differences between newspapers ranked by percentage of total school content devoted to each of the twenty categories of school news.

Again, the Friedman Test was applied to the data arranged in a two-way table with r = 20 and k = 8.

The computations for the daily newspapers using the χ_r^2 are presented below.

ΣT_i	ΣT_i^2
78	6,084
86	7,396
82	6,724
105	11,025
86.5	7,482.25
78	6,084
81	6,561
114.5	13,110.25
	66,262.50

$$r = 20$$

$$k = 8$$

$$\chi_r^2 = \frac{12}{rk(k+1)} \Sigma T_i^2 - 3r(k+1)$$

$$= \frac{12}{1,440} (66,262.50) - 60(9)$$

$$= .0083 (66,262.50) - 540$$

$$= 550 - 540$$

$$\chi_r^2 = 10$$

Reject H_0 if χ_r^2 is greater than distribution of χ^2 with k - 1 degrees of freedom.

χ^2 with k - 1 d.f. is 18.5 at the .05 level of significance and 20.3 at the .01 level of significance.

Conclusion: do not reject.

This time, the papers were ranked according to the percentage of total school content by categories. In this case, if <u>athletics</u> accounted for a greater percentage of the total space in paper "A" than it did in paper "B," paper "A"

would rank higher than paper "B"; and if paper "H" gave less of its total space to athletics than all the other papers, it was ranked last along this category. If the H_0 had been rejected, it would be assumed that a newspaper which ranked rather high in percent of total content given to any particular category would also rank rather high in percentages given to all other categories.

Computing the same statistic for weekly newspapers produced a χ_4^2 of 11.4. Both values for the statistic (on dailies and weeklies) are not larger than the value required for significance in a table of χ^2 distributions, thus we do not reject the null hypothesis. There are no significant differences between the ways newspapers rank in the percentage of total space devoted to the various categories of school content. To further illuminate this finding, it was found for example that daily newspaper "F" which ranked sixth in average thickness, ranked first in five categories of school content as a percent of total school news space, while newspaper "A"--first in thickness--ranked first on only one category as a percent of total school news space.

In the case of the analysis of the third dimension of variation, any assumption to the effect that differences in the amount of column-inches devoted to certain school topics by newspapers is indicative of differences in the percentages is fallacious. The fact is that newspapers do differ greatly in the actual number of column-inches

given to certain school topics. When newspapers were ranked by the percentages that each category is of the total amount of school news, there is an orderly pattern apparent. This indicates that the percentage for any one newspaper will be similar to other newspapers, thus one may predict with high probability from one newspaper to the universe sampled.

The percentages of total school news content devoted to the various categories provide a reasonably good criterion for ascertaining the kinds of emphases that newspapers place on education. This does not imply that the number of total column-inches is not also important. However, it has been demonstrated that the larger a newspaper is, the more likely it is to devote greater total space to the schools, therefore percentages of total space suggest greater reliability for generalizing about category emphasis.

Quantitative Analysis of Photographs

It was not possible to include within the scope of this study a penetrating analysis of school photographs. On the other hand, it was felt that merely quantifying illustrations by column-inches according to the four illustration categories included in the classifications would provide little insight into the nature and quantity of school photographs published by newspapers.

Since the range in the size of published photographs is very great, it was decided at the outset of the present study to count the number of photographs dealing with the schools published in all newspapers in the sample.

Following the first week of counting, during which photographs were quantified by various labels of their content, there appeared to be five categories into which these could be classified: (1) athletics; (2) buildings; (3) pupils; (4) staff-personnel; and, (5) parents and others.

According to these classifications, Tables 15 and 16 present data for photographs during the course of the study.

TABLE 15

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS IN DAILY PAPERS
SEPTEMBER 1, 1959 TO NOVEMBER 30, 1959

Type of Photograph	Daily newspapers A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total	Percent of Total
Athletics	103	73	38	51	38	105	42	50	505	64.8 %
Buildings	14	2	--	1	--	10	--	2	29	3.7
Staff-personnel	13	3	23	3	3	6	1	2	52	6.7
Pupils	40	16	6	3	22	39	14	10	150	19.2
Parents, others	11	8	1	6	5	8	3	1	43	5.5
Total	181	107	68	64	66	168	60	65	779	

TABLE 16

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS IN WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS
SEPTEMBER 1, 1959 TO NOVEMBER 30, 1959

Type of Photograph	Weekly newspapers															Total	Percent of total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O		
Athletics	2	34	1	18	9	3	20	4	--	17	--	3	5	8	--	124	39.8 %
Buildings	--	11	7	13	6	--	--	2	2	--	1	--	--	--	--	42	13.5
Staff-personnel	3	--	--	1	6	--	--	--	4	1	--	8	--	--	--	23	7.4
Pupils	5	5	3	30	14	6	3	4	9	19	1	1	2	1	--	94	30.2
Parents, others	1	1	7	7	2	2	--	--	1	4	1	--	--	--	--	26	8.4
Total	11	51	18	69	37	11	23	10	15	35	3	12	7	9	0	311	

In examining these tables on photographs, it is again apparent that athletics receives considerable emphasis. But it is also interesting to note that among weekly newspapers, the number of photographs devoted to athletics is not much greater than the number of photographs of pupils in general whereas among daily newspapers, athletic photographs are nearly five times greater than those of pupils in general.

There are a number of possible explanations of this which invite speculation. It is an expensive proposition for weekly newspapers to use photographs in most cases. Usually these smaller papers do not have their own processing and engraving equipment and therefore must have such work done elsewhere. Daily papers on the other hand take their need and use of photographs as a matter of course. Athletic events provide all of the elements necessary to action photography and represent one of the only regular opportunities for newspaper photographers to exercise their skill in action photography. Many weekly newspapers have small staffs and among the smaller weeklies it is not uncommon for the editor or publisher himself to tend to most of the news coverage. Such persons are not always skillful in the photographing of the kind of action that occurs in athletics and may prefer to use their illustration budget on a greater variety of photographs.

There is also a possible sociological explanation here as well. Since the weekly newspaper most often serves the pivotal area of a small community, it may be that the editor assumes that a majority of his readers attended the athletic events in the area and would rather see illustrations of other things. The subject matter of photographs in newspapers deserves a greater research effort than has heretofore been given to it in the behavioral sciences.

A final comment about school photographs; pictures of teachers and other school personnel were rare in both weekly and daily newspapers. Only 23 out of 311 illustrations in weekly newspapers and 52 of 779 illustrations in the dailies were of personnel.

Comparisons with School News in 1953-54

In comparing the quantity of school news appearing in Michigan newspapers in 1959 with what appeared in 1953-54, there are two very striking contrasts. One has to do with the great increase in space devoted to curriculum and the other with a decrease in space devoted to student activity. Comparisons by categories are presented in Table 17.

TABLE 17

COMPARISONS OF SCHOOL TOPICS AS PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL SCHOOL CONTENT IN WEEKLY PAPERS 1953 AND 1959

Type of content	1953 Percent of total space	1953 Cumulative percent	1959 Percent of total space	1959 Cumulative percent
Athletics	26.4 %	26.4 %	28.9 %	28.9 %
Student activities	23.5	49.9	6.0	34.9
Miscellaneous	14.5	64.4	13.2	48.1
PTA	4.6	69.0	4.5	52.6
School board	3.1	72.1	2.4	55.0
Finance	4.9	80.0	7.2	62.2
Illustrations, other	4.8	84.8	8.0	70.2
Student activity illustrations	3.5	88.3	1.4	71.6
Athletic illustrations	2.7	91.0	7.8	79.4
Social news	2.4	93.4	1.6	81.0
Honor roll	1.7	95.1	.9	81.9
Editorial comment	1.3	96.4	1.6	83.5
Adult education	1.1	97.5	1.0	84.5
Conferences and institutes	.9	98.4	1.4	85.9
Safety	.6	99.0	1.3	87.2
Transportation	.3	99.3	.9	88.1
School operation	.3	99.6	.7	88.8
Curriculum	.2	99.8	7.5	96.3
Teaching methods	.1	99.9	1.7	98.0
Social illustrations[a]			2.0	100.0

[a]This category not reported in the tabulated data in the 1953 study although it was included as a category in that study; the writer assumes that the content in social illustrations was included in reporting as a part of illustrations, other.

It will be noted that in comparing these two sets of data, space devoted to athletics and to athletic illustrations account for a greater percentage of space in the 1959 study than in the 1953 study. This is more probably due to the differences in the lengths of the two studies than to actual changes in trends. The 1953 study was done during the course of one entire year and thus there were several months during the summer vacation period when practically no school news appeared having to do with athletics. On the other hand, the present study was conducted during "football season" which is a much-followed sport in the state of Michigan. The combination of these two factors should allow the conclusion that there is little difference between the two studies in terms of space devoted to athletics. The same is also true for athletic illustrations. Football is somewhat more attractive for photographing than other athletic events during the year with the possible exception of basketball. But even with basketball, the conditions of play seldom vary; there is no mud, no snow or rain to add a special element to the photographs. Moreover, the nature of football is such that there is more time for planning shots, more predictability for the anticipation of the situation that will offer the better event for photographing. Basketball is always fast and constantly changing. The photographer snaps his picture and takes his chances. Finally, football comes at a time of year when high

school (and college) athletics have been dormant for several months. Consequently, there are more photographs of football in September and early October.

The decrease in student activity news is also partly to be explained in terms of time. In the Luck study, April, May and March were the three highest months for student activity news. This is due to the many terminal activities that engage the attention of students as they approach year's end. Thirty-one percent of all student activity news occurred during these three months in the study conducted by Luck.

One of the most striking differences in these comparisons is the increase in curriculum. Accounting for less than one percent of the total school news in the 1950 study, it rose to seven and one-half percent in the present study. Some of this increase may be due to differences in interpretation as to what constitutes curriculum news but this would not explain such a notable difference.

The logical conclusion is an increased interest by newspaper editors in matters relating to the child's scholastic experiences in response to an awakening interest throughout the nation.

Events in the world have caused Americans to take a more searching and critical look at their schools. As a result, this renewed interest in academia has been reflected

in the press. This will be treated in greater perspective in Chapters IV and V. Other categories of school content have remained about the same and such differences as there are can probably be explained in terms of the differences in the length of time both studies were conducted.

Summary

This chapter has presented a quantitative analysis of data collected during a three-month period of studying eight daily and fifteen weekly newspapers randomly selected to represent newspapers in the state of Michigan.

These data have been analyzed by newspaper comparisons and by comparisons of different topics of school news. Statistical analysis was confined to use of the rank order correlation (rho) and the Friedman two-way analysis of variance test for examining variations among newspapers and topics of school news.

Reliability was determined for both measuring of content and classification of content into twenty defined categories.

Photographs appearing in both daily and weekly newspapers during the period of the study were discussed and quantified, and comparisons were made between this study and a similar study conducted by David Luck in 1953 as a phase of the Michigan Communications Study.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATIVE ANALYSIS

This chapter is concerned with general evaluation of the school content in terms of its characteristics and treatment by newspapers. It is also concerned with inferences regarding the effectiveness of both newspapers and schools in the joint effort of interpreting schools to the public. Finally, it is concerned with qualitative inferences based on quantitative implications.

In pursuing an evaluative analysis of this nature, these several concerns are seen as being inter-related, therefore it has not been possible to treat them as completely separate entities. Discussion of the characteristics and treatment of school content in itself implies an evaluation of the effectiveness of interpretation. Berelson stated this inter-relationship notion by pointing out that:

> . . . it (qualitative analysis) is aimed toward a totality impact--to see elements of the content as a meaningful whole and analyze accordingly.[1]

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[1]Bernard Berelson, Op. Cit., p. 34.

Characteristics of School Content

In an analysis of more than 56,000 column-inches of news pertaining to the public schools, it would still be difficult to distinguish between what was 'good' and what was 'bad'. The characteristics and treatment of school news can only be generalized in terms of the event being reported and the total effort necessary to communicate it.

From this point of view, school news items fall within a continuum having three rather distinctly identifiable areas. First, there is a location on this theoretical continuum occupied by items which may be labelled as <u>routine announcements</u>; secondly, there is an area which may be labelled as <u>reportorial description</u>; and, third there is an area which may be described as <u>interpretive-judgmental</u>.

The purpose of describing these in terms of a continuum has to do with overlapping. Some items which may be reportorial descriptions also provide announcements of events forthcoming, or may be somewhat interpretive. The reader should therefore bear in mind this concept of a continuum in the evaluation of the character and treatment of school content. Illustrations 2 through 6 contain examples of these three kinds of school content.

Elementary PTA

The Elementary P.T.A. teachers reception will meet at 8 p.m. Thursday evening, Sept. 17, at the High School gymnasium.

P-TA Invites Public To Meetings

Plans were completed at a Tuesday noon meeting of the executive board for the October 20 meeting of the Parent-Teachers Association, to be held at 8:00 p.m. in the auditorium. The board met in the school cafeteria.

The by-laws of the St. Louis Junior-Senior Parent-Teachers s Association state, in part, that any person interested in the objectives of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and willing to uphold its policies and subscribe to its by-laws may become a member.

With this in mind the board members decided that the meetings this year be planned to be of interest to all parents, hoping that through complete understanding and cooperation between teachers and parents, the students will receive the greatest benefits from the present school facilities.

Speech Therapist William Wallace will talk about the new speech program in the St. Louis Schools; and the High School vocal group will sing at the Tuesday night meeting.

All parents and teachers, as well as interested citizens who have no children in school, are invited to attend the meeting, advises P-TA President Fred Carter.

School safety patrol organized

A Safety Patrol has been organized at the Fuller Street School.

Boys are posted at Woodard's Service Station corner, Durkee St.; at the school corner and M-79, and at Grove and M-66 corner. The boys are on duty mornings and after school.

The following boys are members of the patrol: Bruce Higdon, Frank Spidel, Ronald Cross, Bobby Blake, Jim Elliston, Donald Suntken, Sidney Green, Jerry McElvaine, Steven Douse, Dennis Smith, Steven Graham, Alan Hunt, and Captain Jerry Gray.

Parents should urge their boys and girls to obey safety patrol members.

Local Education Group To Meet on Thursday

The opening of the school year was the signal for the Williamston Education Association, local chapter of the Michigan Education Association to start an active program under the leadership of Mrs. June Stover, president.

The annual fall picnic sponsored by the organization was held Thursday, Sept. 10, at the Memorial School. This event for teachers, their families and other school personnel was well attended despite the unseasonable weather.

The first regular meeting will be held Thursday, Sept. 17. In addition to a business meeting, there will be a review of summer activities of the members

ILLUSTRATION 2.
Routine Announcements

Okay Change In Schools' Fire Alarms

Installation of a new fire safety program which would tie in the school fire alarms with the City fire alarms, was approved by the Board of Education at its meeting Tuesday.

The action follows a Fire Department recommendation that "the school fire alarms when sounded should also sound in the fire station."

Fire department and school authorities have estimated the cost of installing such a system within Highland Park at $30,691.34. Of this amount, $25,935.85 represents the cost of installation within the public schools.

The City Council has appropriated an amount to cover 50 per cent of the cost to the schools. The remainder will be paid by the School District, which has authorized appropriation of a sum not to exceed $13,000.

Disc Jockey Dance To Begin Fall Activities At P.H.S.

Fall activities at Portland High School will start with the Kick-off Hop in the P.H.S. gym Saturday evening, Sept. 12, from 8 to 12. Gene Healy of WILS, Lansing will be guest disc jockey. Admission will be 50c per person.

The cheerleaders, sponsors of the dance, urge you to get your date and start the school year's activities with an evening of dancing to the newest records, M.C.'d by one of your favorite disc jockeys.

Cheerleaders for Portland High School will be chosen on Monday, Sept. 14, at 3:30 by a committee composed of teachers and cheerleader sponsor, Mrs Ruth French.

Both reserve and varsity cheerleaders will be chosen, according to Mrs French, and in keeping with a new policy, those chosen will be cheerleaders for the whole year.

School Notes

The Sexton acapella choir, under direction of Frank McKowen gave an assembly Monday at the high school. Featured were the madrigal group of 16 singers, and Miss Barbara Govons, who played an original piano composition. Mrs. Sandra Faul directed the singing of the Nation's Creed, in which the local choir also took part. Rupert Otto played the piano accompaniment.

Laingsburg Votes For Bond Issue

$350,000 Proposal Approved Monday

A $350,000 bond issue to finance the construction of a new elementary school was finally approved at Laingsburg Monday after similar propositions had been turned down by voters twice in the last year.

The bond issue Monday won by a wide margin, 316 yes to 164 no, with six ballots void.

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A FIVE-MILL tax increase for four years also passed, 309 yes to 183 no, with seven ballots void.

Money raised by the tax increase will be used for operating purposes.

Work on the construction of the new, 14-room elementary school at the northeast edge of the city is expected to begin as soon as possible.

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CLASSES ARE now on a half day schedule for the first six grades because of lack of space.

A portion of the bond issue money will be used to complete and repair present school facilities.

ILLUSTRATION 3.
Repertorial-descriptive content

Adult Education Advisory Group Holds Meeting

Seven members of the advisory council on the Adult Education Program in Williamston met with the director of the program, Leon Alger, Monday night and discussed several matters concerning the setting up of the program.

Members of the council are: Henry Kennedy, Mrs. Andrew Kleiver, Lester May, Bob Lewis, Mrs. Robert Wolfe, Mrs. Charles Langdon, and Mrs. Wayne Gorsline.

The group discussed a community survey to determine whether or not the adults in the area are interested in such a program of adult education and if so in what fields they would be interested in studying.

If the results of this survey are favorable to the program they hope to start classes the week of October 12. The survey should be completed by September 11, according to Alger.

Finances for the program were also discussed at the meeting which was held at the high school, and it was estimated that it would probably be self-supporting.

4 New Teachers Added to Staff At Alba School

Four new teachers are included on the faculty at the Alba Public Schools this year.

Superintendent Wesley Gilpin said that Mr. and Mrs. Willis Bogenhagen of Menominee, Michigan are teaching shop and home economics, respectively.

Robert Darbee of East Jordan is the coach and will teach history. He is teaching under the Ford Foundation program out of Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant.

Mrs. Hazel Moore of Mancelona has replaced Mrs. Ernest Holmes, who retired last year. Mrs. Moore is teaching kindergarten and first grade.

Other teachers are the same as last year.

EDITORIALS . . . . .

Only recently the legislature of Michigan passed a law making school board meetings open to the public. The law was necessary because in some communities the meetings of the school board were not public, and the public was even actively held from the proceedings.

We in Nashville have been fortunate in this respect. Our school board meetings have always been public, and any citizen who wished to sit in on a meeting was more than welcome. Yet few people have taken advantage of this opportunity to see their board in action or to acquaint themselves with the problems of that board.

It is not fair to any governing group to simply elect them and then forget them. The board is YOUR board; they were elected by you and they deserve your support.

The legislature was concerned enough with this to pass the law. The people of the school district should be enough concerned to attend the meetings once in a while.

Left: Example of Editorial item.

Below: Example of a report of an "authoritative-statement."

'GOOD MARKS TOO EASY'

American Schools Fail To Challenge Students

Brilliant or merely above-average students too rarely reach their potential in the American educational system, says Michael Millgate, an English educator who recently taught at the University of Michigan.

His views appear in the current issue of The Michigan Alumnus Quarterly Review, published at the U-M

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"**IF A TALENTED** student is determined to get good marks, they are too easily within reach," says Millgate. "At most universities the student who is at all bright can get consistently high grades without serious effort and has little incentive to develop his abilities to their fullest extent.

"Graduate courses are often of high standard, comparable to university work anywhere in the world, but undergraduate courses frequently seem designed to complete the training in citizenship begun in high school or to provide the equipment for answering general knowledge quizzes.

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"**THE INSISTENCE** on students studying subjects quite remote from their major fields may be admirable in intention, but in practice usually means that they emerge with a useless smattering of many subjects and a competent knowledge of none.

"This may be adequate for those who need nothing beyond a ready supply of cocktail conversation, but no one should pretend that it is a university education.

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"**THE ABLE** student is further discouraged by the tendency to emphasize the memorization of facts which can be tested objectively, and the refusal to trust him to do serious work on his own time.

"The British system, which has its own failings of course, is to trust the student much more, by giving him fewer specific assignments and longer vacations. It emphasizes not the mere amassing of information but the development of mental skills and habits which will equip the student to meet and evaluate with confidence any new material — a poem, an historical document a syllogism — with which he may be confronted.

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"**MOREOVER** the large number of scholarships available to British students enables them to avoid the necessity a great many American students are under, of working full-time during vacations and part-time during term in order to keep themselves at college.

"Working one's way through college' doesn't quite square with that other popular slogan 'making the most of college,' however much it may be in the authentic American tradition," Millgate contends.

ILLUSTRATION 4.

Two examples of interpretive-judgemental content

It's a Family Affair

Word Games Can Help to Make Learning Fun

By Garry Cleveland Myers, Ph.D.

Some while ago I advised that when you help your child, in the first grade, to learn the names of the different letters of the alphabet, you should dwell first on the consonants. They are easier to learn than are the vowels.

With but few exceptions, each consonant has only one sound whereas each vowel has several different sounds. Besides, most words begin with a consonant.

Here's some good home fun:

Draw or cut out from old magazines or newspapers groups of pictures of things whose names begin with the same letter and sound—car, cat, cane, coat; bug, bag, box, bird; pail, pig, pan, pen.

Let the child paste these pictures on a page, one group to the page. Then have him name the pictures in each group and listen for the beginning sound of each name.

This is the kind of a thing a youngster may like to do even before beginning school. It could give him a total of many hours of useful fun at finding such groups of pictures, cutting them out and pasting them on a sheet of paper or page of a scrapbook.

After the child, say in the first grade, has learned his letters you should type or print under each picture its name. Then as he associates each name-word with its picture he can be let to see the letter at the beginning of each word in its group and to listen for its sound as he says the word.

After the child has had much practice with pictured words, each of whose beginning sound is that of only a single consonant like c, b, p, introduce him to pictured words beginning with a sound made by two or more letters together—sled, skate, broom.

Help him find groups of pictured words to cut out and paste on a sheet of paper, one group to the page.

Here are some samples: Tractor, train, trap, trunk; bridge, bridle, brush, broom; stool, stork, stove, star; crane, crib, crow, crab.

After he has practiced on groups like these, of pictured words, lead him on to say aloud groups of words not pictured but beginning with sounds made of two or more letters: trip, try, trick. This he would do best after practicing on the pictured group of tractor, train, truck.

In like manner practice him on saying non-pictured words he sees following each other grouping of pictured words.

Almost any parent is smart enough to direct this kind of home fun with phonics. Such practice may also help the child of the third or higher grade who has trouble with sounds in words. And no matter what the teacher's methods are, this should not hin

Left: Example of syndicated item.

Below: Example of wire-services item.

Union Leader Says Schools Let Down

DETROIT (AP) — Leonard Woodcock, vice president of the United Auto Workers Union, said today that schools should be freed "from primary dependence upon property taxes for support."

In a speech prepared for the Detroit Teachers' Institute, Woodcock, who is a member of the board of governors of Wayne State University, said such dependence "is now politically dangerous."

He declared "the incipient taxpayers' revolts are instinctive reactions against unfair systems of taxation."

The solution, Woodcock said, "is greater state aid through revenues collected in a fair and equitable manner and, most necessary of all, federal aid to education in all its forms."

FALLING DOWN

Woodcock said "America is falling down on the job" of education of its youngsters. He said less than 1 per cent of the nation's gross national product goes for education as aganist an estimated 10 to 15 per cent in Russia.

ILLUSTRATION 5.
Other examples of interpretive-judgemental content

CONTROVERSIAL MATTER

More Teachers Allow Pupils Plan Studies

More and more teachers are permitting students to take part in planning the content and activity of their social studies classes, says W. Scott Westerman (Ph. D.), Univerty of Michigan assistant professor of education.

Whether pupils should enjoy this privilege is still a controversial matter among educators. "But there are signs that teacher-pupil planning is being increasingly accepted and used," Westerman says. "It's being more widely used and used at various grade, intelligence and course levels. Criticisms have diminished."

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WESTERMAN HIMSELF is optimistic about letting students share the planning load with their teachers. "If the teacher attends to preparatory activities, including the establishment of broad frameworks within which he may guide pupils, successful teacher-pupil planning is apt to be assured," he asserts.

But the idea still stirs debate. According to Westerman, "Those in favor of teacher-pupil planning say it gives special attention to pupils' interests and deed Pupils are better motivated and participate more generally and with greater efficiency. This results in an increased variety and quantity of learning experiences and a better quality of learning.

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"THOSE IN favor also point out that teacher-pupil planning resembles democracy in action. It provides significant practice in citizenship. It develops the skills of self-government and decision making."

What do the critics have to say? "They maintain that letting pupils help run the show impairs learning," Westerman says. "They feel that pupils' interests are frequently shallow, whimsical, concerend with the immediate and unrelated to their fundamental needs.

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FURTHER, THE critics charge that when pupils pick the course content, it is either not sufficiently challenging or is too difficult and stresses pupil concern to the neglect of wider social concerns.

"They feel there is also apt to be a lack of continuous learning, and a few pupils have a tendency to dominate the situation. They also say it's a time waster because the teacher doesn't have a chance to guide efficient learning.

"Neither of these positions is completely supported by research studies," Westerman concludes. "But the voice of the critics is getting fainter and teacher-pupil planning is now well accepted and well defined."

Left: Another example of an "authoritative-statement."

Below: Example of interpretive content in straight reporting.

Mad Fad Hits School --And Meets Approval

High heels??. Dressy dresses??. Suits??.

What is this mad fad going around St. Louis High?

Dress-up day at St. Louis High School seems to have been started as a practical joke but has caught on throughout the high school.

It all began Friday before the Corunna-St. Louis football game when a few Junior girls showed up at school in dresses and high heels. Rumor has it that this was in honor of the opposing teams funeral.

The first Friday not many students carried out the original plan, but as the weeks progressed each succeeding Friday found more and more students decked out in their "Sunday Best", even the boys, with suits, ties—and polished shoes.

This practical joke met with faculty approval and now Friday has become unofficially "dress-up day" for all St. Louis High School Students. Faculty and students agree that this was a good innovation for this school.

Townspeople, relieved at the absence of jeans and slacks, add, "Me Too".

ILLUSTRATION 6.
Examples of interpretive-judgemental content

Routine announcements.

Announcements of a routine nature were frequent in all papers in the sample studied. Pertaining primarily to forthcoming meetings or events, these items represent an important source of information about schools and associated agencies. The newspaper best exemplifies its role of public service through the printing of such announcements thus the phrase "free advertising" (which is often used to describe this kind of content) is entirely inappropriate.

Parent-teacher organizations were the subject of the majority of routine announcements, and various kinds of student activities also accounted for a large number. The character of such items usually was limited to the time, location, and purpose of the event announced. Many newspapers often expanded these; this was especially true when a speaker was scheduled and when the newspaper was informed of the subject of the speech plus information about the person.

Since many newspapers included both the 'bare essentials' in one routine announcement and more elaborate details in another, it seems apparent that the paper depends heavily on the particular organization involved to furnish it with the details. The nature of such announcements therefore are dependent upon the organization as well as the newspaper.

Another form of announcement which occurred with some frequency had to do with both teachers' and pupils' attendance at various regional, local, and state functions. Such items constitute greater "news value" than the strictly informational type of announcement discussed previously. In many cases, these items were later followed-up with reports of the meeting or conference attended, however, these follow-ups were the exception rather than the rule. One paper announced that a Michigan Congressman would speak to a local PTA on a certain date; the item ran about four column-inches and included the topic of the proposed speech, the time, place, and other usual information. In the appropriate issue following this speech, there was considerable coverage of another speech by the Congressman before a local business and civic group (which may or may not have been previously announced by the newspaper) but there was no mention of the PTA speech.

Occasionally, routine announcements included slight editorializing but the nature of these suggests that the school authorities might have requested that the item be treated that way. An excellent example is the last paragraph in the item headed by, "School Safety Patrol Organized," in Illustration 2, page 85.

Reportorial description.

The majority of school news items were in the nature of descriptive reports. Examples of these are included in Illustration 3, page 86. Practically all of the athletic news would fall in this category. Exceptions are sports columns where opinions are freely expressed and items appearing between games which serve a sort of continuity function. These latter items are usually concerned with progress and prospects of the team in preparation for the next encounter and in many cases are more in the nature of judgmental evaluations than mere description. These occasionally afforded the writer a moment of diversion in noting the license for criticism that a sportswriter has by virtue of his partisan support of the "home team." There was, for example, one rich observation that went something like this:

> A sputtering offense that has produced only 33 points in the last three games and a defense that has suddenly sprouted leaks are two gigantic obstacles that the Penrals must overcome before the title clash with Rockford on the sixth.

Or another piece of advice that forewarned one local coach of potential eminent disaster if some way was not found for solving the problem of ". . . containing big two-hundred pound Charlie Jones who carries the mail from the full-back slot." Unfortunately, the advice was evidently wasted for the next week's edition pointed out in a straight-forward manner that big Charlie Jones had indeed carried the

ball from the full-back slot to the tune of six out of the seven touchdowns scored against the hapless locals.

Also included in news that could be classified as reportorial description were the many reports of conditions and situations that arise during the course of attending to the administration of schools. Such items as transportation regulations about school busses, school safety, and reports of school dedications and student activities; items about programs, staff appointments, honor roll, and school finance are, for the most part, reportorial descriptions.

Interpretive-judgmental.

Items that may be included in the interpretive-judgmental area of the continuum of school news do not account for a very great percentage of the total number of items, but they do account for a sizable proportion of space.

This would include several forms of news content; editorials obviously are included in this category. Three other types may be identified. First, there are those items in which the newspaper itself interprets, judges, or generalizes through straight reporting or through 'by-line' features written by members of its staff. Secondly, there are those items reporting the statements of authorities or public figures, and third, there are syndicated columns which offer various individual interpretations and

generalizations. Examples of this kind of content are found in Illustrations 4 through 6, pages 87-89.

The three kinds of school news discussed within the continuum described on page 84 are important to the process of presenting the patrons of schools with adequate information. But where the first two of these--routine announcements and reportorial descriptions--are primarily informational, the third is more; it involves the element of persuasion and is therefore more important in considering whether or not the schools are treated favorably or unfavorably in the press.

Treatment and Coverage of The Schools

There are probably several ways of viewing the notion of how the schools are treated in the press. For purposes of this study, two dimensions of treatment will be discussed; direction or tone, and coverage.

Coverage has to do primarily with qualitative inferences based on quantitative implications. The tone or direction of school news is concerned with whether or not schools are reflected favorably or unfavorably.

It was pointed out above that interpretive-judgmental content involves the element of persuasion and is therefore of more importance to the favorable reflection of the schools by the press. It was also pointed out that included in interpretive-judgmental content are both

editorials--plainly evident as interpretive-judgmental--and certain kinds of reportorial content, whose element of interpretation is sometimes less evident. Yet reportorial content is probably more persuasive than editorial content.

On this point, Berelson states:

> Too often discussions of the general problem of the effect of communications upon public opinion is restricted to (editorial content). Yet (reportorial content) is probably more effective in converting opinion.[1]

As important as this is, however, there can be little doubt that persuasion is most likely to be maximally effective when both the reportorial content and the editorial content are congruent.[2] The treatment and coverage of schools in editorials in addition to feature articles are discussed in Chapter V of this thesis.

Syndicated features and wire-service items.

Syndicated features specifically relating to the elementary and secondary schools were rare but those that were available to newspapers were used.

The most notable syndicated series was a group of fifteen articles by Dr. and Mrs. Benjamin Fine under the general title, "Educating Your Child." This series was

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[1] Bernard Berelson, "Communication and Public Opinion," in Wilbur Schramm, Process and Effects of Mass Communication, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955), p. 543.

[2] Ibid., p. 543.

carried in six of the eight daily newspapers. Of the fifteen articles, all but two were primarily concerned with elementary and secondary education. The two that were not dealt with college selection and adjustment. The articles dealing with the elementary and secondary schools totaled 597 column-inches and about half of this space was concerned with curriculum and teaching method. One particular item under the sub-head, "Score Card For A Good School," raised fifty-seven questions about schools. Following up any one of these would have made a good story in itself but none of the papers did this.

Another syndicated column appeared under the by-line of Dr. Gary Cleveland Myers; its title, "It's a Family Affair," indicates the frame of reference in which education of the child is approached by Dr. Myers. Some of the articles did not relate specifically to the schools but were concerned with growth problems--cheating, lying, dating, etc.--and how to cope with these so that the child is nurtured through these difficult manifestations of growth complications. On the whole, however, the columns were devoted to the child's life in the school, his capacities to do certain kinds of school work, the effect and nature of school activities, and ways the family can be a help rather than a hindrance. It is the type of piece that is probably read by parents. Unfortunately this column appeared

regularly in only one of the daily newspapers. (See Illustration 1, Chapter III, page 51.

Among items with wire-services identification, integration-segregation accounted for the majority of items together with incidental and unique events and occurrences in the public schools throughout the nation. Items in Michigan news that were carried by the wire services were predominantly finance items related to the cash crisis as it concerned state aid. A few others were reports of speeches. (See Illustration 5, page 88.)

Releases and authoritative statements.

It would require a rigorous and unique analysis in itself to identify the school content that results from press releases even in ninety percent of the cases. On the other hand, certain items can rather easily be so identified either by the heading or by the nature of the content itself. Among the former are regular releases from associations and organizations, as typified by a regular contribution from the Executive-Secretary of the Michigan Press Association under the title, "Michigan Mirror," and carried by the majority of the newspapers. Generally related to reporting in depth on 'goings-on' in the state, three of these pieces, each about twelve column-inches, were related to education. One was a well-written article on finance, another on the instructional philosophy of the Department of Public

Instruction, and a third on ways educators are seeking new insights through research in teaching methods.

Releases that were not as evident as those mentioned above could usually be identified by the nature of the item itself. These often began with such phrases as:

> "The Michigan Education Association today announced . . .
>
> "The Department of Public Instruction listed . . .
>
> "Mr.____ ____, State Superintendent of Public Instruction today released the . . .
>
> "'Failure should help the student,' said Dr.____, University of . . .

The majority of these were similar to the last example above in which an authoritative statement is made and quoted. Moreover, there were usually statements of persons associated with the University of Michigan. In some cases, these items are credited to articles by the quoted authority that have appeared in various journals; (see Illustration 4, page 87) in others, there is no reference to the situation in which the original statement is made. (See Illustration 6, page 89.)

Such articles as these are couched in persuasively presented ways. Their overall purpose appears to be that of attempting to inform people of current thinking in education. Some were constructively critical of present practice and theory but the majority would be congruent with the ideas and thinking of most professional educators.

Emphasis on School Topics

The degree of emphasis placed on certain topics of school news can be examined in several ways. One of these pertains to the actual quantity of space and has been presented in some detail in Chapter III. Another way is to examine the location and number of items.

Front page topics.

Although the quantity of front page space given to school topics is an important consideration in ascertaining emphasis, it should be remembered that front page articles are often continued to other sections of a newspaper. Thus, it is equally important to examine the frequency of school news topics on front pages in addition to column-inches of space.[1] Table 12 lists the number and kind of front page items pertaining to schools in daily and weekly newspapers.

It can be seen from this table that athletics accounts for the greatest total number of items on front pages though weeklies put half again as many items dealing with athletics on their front pages. Finance is the second leading topic by number of front page articles. Daily newspapers print a greater number of miscellaneous items on front pages. These included items about citizens' committees, school dedications, and isolated incidents about schools reported from wire services throughout the nation.

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[1]See Tables 9 and 10, pp. 59-60, Chapter III.

TABLE 18

SCHOOL TOPICS ON THE FRONT PAGES OF DAILY AND WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

Topic of content	Number of items Dailies	Number of items Weeklies	Total
Athletics	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dances	[illegible]	[illegible]	116
Athletic illustrations	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Miscellaneous	[illegible]	21	[illegible]
Illustrations, other	27	[illegible]	[illegible]
School board	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
PTA	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Student activities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Staff-personnel	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Conferences and institutes	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
American Education Week	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Social	[illegible]	12	[illegible]
Student activities, illustrations	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Curriculum	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Social illustrations	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Transportation	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Safety	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Honor roll	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
School operations	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Teaching methods	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total	272	389	661

It will also be noted that daily newspapers printed nothing of certain categories to which weeklies devoted front page articles. Also, weekly newspapers gave front page space to a greater number of overall items. These two factors are not unrelated. Weekly newspapers depend more on local

and need more to fill the paper; the majority do not have access to wire services. Then, too, the weekly paper prints only one issue to every six for daily newspapers and articles that mean front page importance to the weekly paper are often relegated to the inside pages in dailies leaving state-wide, national, and international coverage to the front pages. Although there are no quantitative data comparing number and size of individual items, those that appeared on the front pages of weekly newspapers were normally more spacious than those that appeared on the front pages of daily newspapers. One explanation for this among smaller weeklies is the fact that the front page <u>is</u> the newspaper; other pages are filled with advertising and mat releases, but very little that could be classified as news.

<u>The "school page."</u>

Eleven of the weekly newspapers in this study had a special page set aside for school news. In most cases, the space on such pages varied from week to week. These pages were of two kinds; one in which the high school pupils themselves wrote the page, and another in which news of the schools was concentrated. The various high school pages in which students prepared the copy were predominantly devoted to student and social activities, yet a number of these were quite good. Items on these high school pages included in addition to social and other student activities, such

features as sketches of teachers with accompanying illustrations; reports of field trips and occasionally insightful accounts of classroom activities. Whether these are read by anyone other than students cannot be established but the better ones provide information about schools not readily available in general news coverage.

Another kind of school page that was more common consisted of the setting aside of space under an appropriate heading that identified the news as related to the schools. Papers "M," "P," and "W," have particularly informative pages of this type. Reports of the actual activities of children in the various grades, often including high school, were reported as well as columns by school administrators designed to explain everything from budget to educational philosophy.

As events occurred at regular intervals during the school month, and which would normally be covered by the paper whether or not it had a school page, these were also included with appropriate heads. An example is the meeting of a school board. With the exception of paper "B," papers that used either type of school page printed more total column-inches than papers which did not make use of these.

Specific Topics in The News

Since a number of topics accounted for a large percentage of the school news, it is appropriate to consider these in brief detail.

Athletics.--A common conclusion of most previous content analyses of school news was to the effect that too much space is devoted to athletics.[1] That school news dealing with athletics receives great emphasis cannot be questioned but whether this emphasis is in itself damaging to the educational purposes of the school cannot be demonstrated within the limitations of this study.

The reasons for greater space given to athletics may at least be partially explained by the organizational structure of the newspaper itself. Newspapers that have sports editors and sports pages see the coverage of high school athletics as an important segment of their responsibility. Moreover, the major portion of athletic space in daily newspapers is found in Saturday issues since most athletic events take place on Friday nights. Particularly was this true for the present study which covered the 'football months.' But it is also true to great extent for high school athletics throughout the school year. In addition to this, Saturday is not a 'heavy' day for newspapers generally; i.e., the Saturday issue is a smaller paper.

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[1]See Chapter II, pp. 14-15.

Thus, the sizable amount of space reporting Friday night athletic events represents a relatively large percentage of the total space in a Saturday issue and consequently, a larger overall percentage of total space for any number of issues.

Weekly newspapers on the other hand are issued usually on Wednesday or Thursday. Friday night athletic events in the average weekly paper are 'old news' and get little more than token description. These papers must direct their stories for the most part to general performances of teams and to contests coming up. As a result, weekly newspapers on the average devote a smaller percentage of the total school content to athletics.

The impact on educational programs of athletics and athletic news coverage is often generalized as a negative one. There is very little research to support or challenge these generalizations in terms of the newspaper's role. Certainly this is a ripe field for research.

Curriculum and teaching method.--One notable result of the quantification of school content was the increased amount of space devoted to curriculum when compared to the Luck study. There can be little doubt that school content in curriculum and teaching method has substantially increased since 1953. On the other hand, when examined as comparisons

between these two studies, this fact should be tempered somewhat by certain methodological considerations.

There was no available information for ascertaining the definitions of the classifications as used in the earlier study, thus it is probable that some of the increase may be the result of different interpretations as to what exactly constitutes curriculum and teaching method news. Added to this and perhaps more important, is a factor in the analysis procedure itself; viz: that clusters of items about the schools without identifying headlines were classified miscellaneously. Luck states:

> The heading that may puzzle the reader is "miscellaneous," because so much lineage is assigned to it . . . The type of item which constituted most of this group is a section full of short items, without headlines, on so many topics that it could not be classified under any one topic.[1]

In the present study such items as described by Luck were examined by the individual item regardless of headline. Many of these were precise descriptions of teaching methods and of curriculum.

How much of the total of curriculum and teaching method that such items as these contributed is an impossible question to answer. The point is that the totals reported for these two classifications in the earlier study were

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[1]Luck, Op. Cit., p. 14.

probably less than the actual space given them but still considerably less than in the present study.

The increase in news devoted to curriculum can be explained as a reflection of aroused public interest in the real business of the schools--teaching and learning. It has been pointed out that six of the eight daily newspapers in the study carried the syndicated series of fifteen articles by Dr. and Mrs. Benjamin Fine. Most of these dealt with curriculum. Though Dr. Fine, former Education Editor for the New York Times, is a very able writer and has an established reputation as a national authority, it is still doubtful that such a series as this would have been attempted ten years ago much less being published in a large number of papers.

A considerable number of the feature articles appearing in both daily and weekly newspapers were also devoted to matters of curriculum and teaching method. These ranged from excellent pieces on instructional materials to informative articles explaining special education programs, curriculum and educational philosophy, and the use and purposes of a series of elementary reading text books adopted by one system.

Most of the releases presented the professional opinions of educators on various aspects of school program, teaching techniques and grading and reporting.

Certainly when compared with the amount of space devoted to athletics, curriculum doesn't rank very well, but in terms of the content itself, items dealing with curriculum were often more notable by the location, headline treatment, and general quality of presentation. Moreover, when all things are considered, the amount of space given to curriculum and teaching method suggests that newspapers recognize the importance of these areas and are anxious to print them. To do this requires more cooperation from school personnel than coverage of athletic events. With continued increase in this cooperation, news of curriculum and teaching method will surely account for still greater space.

It is interesting to speculate about the possible effect of such a cooperative venture as the Michigan Communications Study in this regard. There can be little doubt that the bringing together of newsmen and schoolmen, to take a cooperative look at a mutual area of interest, can have anything other than fruitful results. Perhaps then, another part of the explanation for this sizable increase in curriculum may be traced to the Michigan Communications Study.

Student activity.--Another area of school coverage that deserves mention is student activities. Though these include a multitude of things, the quantity of content

devoted to student activities is another indication of school programming. In the current thinking of curriculum specialists, all of the experiences that the child has under the guidance of the school are classifiable as curriculum. If this definition had been used in the present study, student activity content would also have been included.

Many of the items dealing with the activities of students involved field trips, debate clubs, orchestra and band activities, dramatics, and various class projects. Another sizable proportion of student activities dealt with the construction of homecoming floats, Halloween displays and similar activities. Yet, by and large, reports of these various activities provide insight into the scope of a school's program and the nature of experiences that children have access to in attending them.

Social activities.--The majority of social activity items and illustrations had to do with homecoming affairs and with the election, crowning, and general activities associated with contests for naming homecoming queens. Others consisted of various dances and parties sponsored by school organizations.

PTA.--Items dealing with Parent and Teacher Associations and with Mother's Clubs ran consistently in all newspapers. With very few exceptions, these were the least informative of all school items. In the majority of cases,

PTA items consisted merely of a listing of names of persons present at meetings with about one sentence given to the subject of the program. It may be that the listing of names is considered highly important as a motivation for getting people 'out' to meetings; on the other hand, more detail on programs might prove equally effective. Occasionally an item provided more information about a program and may have used only half the space that other items devoted to the people who attended. (See Illustration 7, page 110.)

Miscellaneous.--The largest portion of the school content that was included as miscellaneous was given to opening of school activities. Enrollment, teaching assignments, and building assignments for children living in various sections of communities are examples of these back-to-school items. All newspapers used this occasion as a good advertising opportunity.

Though classified as miscellaneous and there quantified, items having to do with staff-personnel and with American Education Week were also quantified separately. It was felt that space given to these areas of school content deserved unique quantification. On the basis of this, American Education Week accounted for 272 column-inches of space in weekly newspapers--equal to 1.5 percent of the total school content. In daily newspapers, American Education Week accounted for 221 column-inches of space, or .6 percent of the total school content.

Baldwin PTA Hears Automobile Club Talk

"What Does Father Know About Safety" was the program at Baldwin School PTA's first meeting of the year Thursday evening.

Joseph Zabelski of the Automobile Club spoke.

Mrs. Ray Ritter, president, introduced new officers.

★ ★ ★

They are Mrs. Rolland Wright, vice president; Donald Frericks, father vice president; Mrs. Edith McKee, teacher vice president; Mrs. Jack Harroun, recording secretary; Mrs. Gust Johnson, corresponding secretary; Mrs. George Larson, treasurer and Mrs. Nicholas Morris, historian.

★ ★ ★

Council delegates are Ray Ritter, Mrs. Harry Wallace, Mrs. Larson and Mrs. Harvey Dennis, alternate.

A social hour followed the business meeting.

Hostesses were Mrs. James Scott, Mrs. Conrad Burlison, Mrs. Raymond Ellsworth, Mrs. Walter Pointer, Mrs. Reul Baker and Mrs. Herbert Slaght.

Honor PTA

HONOR -- The effect of increased enrollment on the school was discussed by Supt. Robert Lone at a meeting of the Honor PTA this week.

Mr. Lone pointed out that if further building is not done in the near future, the high school program will be adversely affected.

Further discussion of this matter will be held at the next PTA meeting, October 5, at which time it is hoped that a decision can be made about additional classroom space.

ILLUSTRATION 7.

Contrasts in reporting styles of two PT-A meetings.

Staff-personnel items accounted for 245.5 column-inches or .7 percent of the total school content in daily newspapers. In weekly newspapers, staff-personnel items accounted for 2)4 column-inches of space or 1.7 percent of the total.

Though the amount of space given to either of these items was small, it was still larger than that given to several other categories. Moreover, American Education Week was also the subject of a number of editorials and that space is not included in the above figures.

Only two daily newspapers and one weekly paper gave no space at all to American Education Week. Those papers that printed items in connection with this event gave it prominent display. (See Illustration 8, page 112.) Several daily papers tied in a series with the event or used it as a take-off for a feature article.

Many of the personnel items consisted of brief sketches of new faculty members often accompanied by illustrations. This was true of both daily and weekly newspapers though weeklies gave such items more prominent display. Other items about personnel occurred in connection with individual activities of faculty members or with appearances of administrators before local civic or other organizations.

It cannot be said on the basis of this study that teachers are overlooked by the communities in which they

SCHOOLS TO HOLD 'OPEN HOUSE'

Education Week In School Plans

This year marks the thirty-ninth annual observance of American Education Week, spon-sored by the American Legion, National Education Association, U.S. Office of Education, and ...t Congress of Parents

...dinarily

Plan Open House at School

...d Public Schools wi... Nov. 1

Nov. 8-14 American Education Week

...child's the revelation that a shocking ...tage of American people ... physically

School Dedication, Open House Highlighting Education Week

Mecosta School Will Hold an Open House

Mecosta ...

Schools Appraise Week

'Praise and Appraise Your Schools' Is Theme of Visit School During Education Week

Will you visit your child's school during American Education Week, November 8-14?

The Michigan Education Association reveals that 26 million adults visited their schools throughout the nation during AEW in 1958. In Michigan, 70,000 teachers and 1.6 million students have extended this invitation to everyone: "Won't You Come to our School?"

This year's theme is "Praise and Appraise Your Schools."

Formed in 1921, American Education Week grew out of the revelation that a shocking percentage of American people were illiterate and physically unfit. Representatives of the National Education Association and the American Legion established a plan for "securing for America a program of education adequate to meet the needs of the 20th century, and which will give every boy and girl that training and equipment which is rightfully his under our democratic government."

From 1922 on, the observance has been co-sponsored by the U. S.

ILLUSTRATION 8.

American Education Week in the headlines.

teach; in a number of instances, teachers who received honors of one kind or another received notable mention in the press. One of the most effective items appeared in a weekly newspaper and reported a speech by a retired teacher to the local Future Teachers of America club in the high school. On the basis of the article one was left with the impression that the speech was excellent, well received, and the teacher who delivered it, a very great teacher indeed.

Another newspaper printed the picture and a brief sketch of one faculty member in each weekly edition. These were accompanied by an illustration of the teacher and were carried on the front page. Still another--a daily--published an interesting and informative article of about ten column-inches on student-teachers who had come into the community to do their practice teaching. Anyone who has ever had the experience of student-teaching can well imagine the uplifting effect that such an article could have on the morale of floundering young school teachers. Moreover, the nature of the information included about the student-teaching program appealed readers to knowledge in this case that they might not have gotten otherwise.

The Annual Report

Annual reports of school systems were not quantified in this study since these are normally paid for by the schools

as directed by statute. However, in practically every case, articles relating to these reports were published elsewhere in the newspaper and in one case, an editorial resulted urging people to read and study the annual report.

Though these annual reports were not included in the quantitative data, they deserve mention here. In more than half of the cases of published reports, the finished article looked about like one might expect--the usual statement of income and expenditures. In others, outstanding treatment was given to these reports complete with photographs and descriptive statements about the use of facilities, curriculum, and staff.

One daily newspaper printed the annual school report in the form of a tabloid insert with a total of sixteen pages. It contained 432 column-inches of text and 372 column-inches of illustrations. The report was divided into the various instructional areas and the complete program of studies for kindergarten through twelfth grade was included. Diagrams of enrollment projections and pie-graphs of income and expenditures provided any school patron with an accurate and understandable picture of the school situation.

This was perhaps the most outstanding example of treatment of an annual report by any newspaper but it was in a rather large city; smaller communities could not be expected to publish a comparable report. Yet, many of the

weekly newspaper printed full page "reports to the people" which constituted the same charts as the tabloid if not as impressive in scope.

Paper "P" among the dailies printed a straight news article on budget in addition to the full page treatment given the annual report. This article also used pie-graphs to illustrate expenditures and income and presented information regarding salaries provided.

Summary

This chapter presented a qualitative analysis of the school content in eight daily, and fifteen weekly newspapers. Where it facilitated the discussion certain qualitative references were made as a result of implications of quantitative data in Chapter III. Content was also examined in terms of its characteristics and as it related to the treatment given to schools by newspapers.

Various categories of the school content were discussed where it was felt that the quantitative data indicated a need for additional comment. Within the discussion and under the heading, miscellaneous, the nature and treatment of American Education Week and items relating to school personnel were also mentioned.

Finally, a brief section was devoted to the annual report as handled by newspapers even though such reports were not specifically quantified under any classification in the quantitative analysis.

CHAPTER V

FEATURES AND EDITORIALS

Feature articles and editorials project a more personal point of view into the news. On this basis, one can say that these kinds of items require a more creative effort on the part of the writer than would normally be required in a routine announcement or in a reportorial description. Features could usually be described as 'human interest' since their purpose is seldom to report 'news' but rather to make an everyday-type of event into a meaningful and news-worthy occurrence.

It follows that features and editorials about schools are not only indications of public interest but in many cases also provide insight into the nature of the relationship between the school and the newspaper. This is more true of features than of editorials since the writing of a feature almost always necessitates some measure of co-operation and communication between persons in the schools and persons from the newspaper. Editorials on the other hand may require this cooperation in a few situations but by and large editorials are in the form of <u>reactions</u> to people and events.

In terms of readership, research discloses that editorials receive less readership in daily newspapers than do features, or human interest.[1] Editorials receive higher readership in weeklies than in dailies but again, human interest ranks higher for both dailies and weeklies. Though there has been no research into weekly readership that approaches the scope of the continuing study of daily newspaper readership conducted by the Advertising Research Foundation, Schramm and Ludwig compared the findings of twenty-four different readership surveys in order to synthesize the various conclusions on readership in these studies.[2] On the basis of this investigation these writers concluded that, ". . . local editorials are better read on the average than half of the other content categories in a weekly."[3] And that, "Human interest ranks higher in readership than general news."[4] In that study, human interest items ranked fifth among sixteen categories for both men and women. Local editorials ranked ninth for men and tenth for women. This research alone suggests that school administrators should encourage increased use of features on various aspects of the schools.

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[1]The Advertising Research Foundation, The Continuing Study of Newspaper Reading: 138-Study Summary (New York: The Advertising Research Foundation, 1951), p. 42.

[2]Wilbur Schramm and Merritt Ludwig, "The Weekly Newspaper and its Readers," Journalism Quarterly, 28:3, 1951, pp. 301-314.

[3]Ibid., p. 304.

[4]Ibid., p. 311.

Because features and editorials represent an important aspect of the school content and since it is established that these receive comparatively good readership, it was felt that the nature of editorials and features deserved unique discussion in this thesis.

Feature Articles on The Schools

Although weekly newspapers devoted more space proportionately to editorials, daily newspapers printed more feature articles on the schools than weeklies. During the entire course of the study, a total of nine feature articles appeared in weekly newspapers and five of these appeared as a series in one paper. Daily newspapers on the other hand printed a total of thirty-six feature articles not including syndicated copy. Among those printing features, three dailies contributed more than half. Paper "F" did an interesting series in which a reporter, "Goes Back to School." This series covered thirteen weekly articles and provided a reader with a description and interpretation of the activities that involve pupils from kindergarten through high school. Paper "A" ran a number of unrelated features at relatively regular intervals, and it regularly ran a series in which specific students wrote essays under the title,"What Education Means to Me." These were specifically written for the paper and were always accompanied by the pupil's photograph.

All of the other dailies with the exception of paper "H" ran at least one feature article. These covered a broad range of school affairs; paper "A" for example printed a feature about the school lunch program with the unique headline, "_____School's Lunchrooms Serve Education With Food." The article pointed out the ideas of the system's dietician on balanced diets and how children must be taught to eat properly. Paper "B" did a fine feature under a by-line about the experiences of a substitute teacher. Titled, "Substitute Teacher Has Life of Riley?" The article was excellently written and pointed out both the work and satisfaction inherent in teaching school.

A feature article which exemplified a careful and competent attempt at explaining the importance of art in the individual's intellectual growth was one--in this writer's view--which appeared in paper "B" under the heading, "Today's Art Educators Frown on Coloring Books." The theme of the piece was contained in a quote by the supervisor of art in the school, viz: ". . . it is our attempt to teach children to be original thinkers--creativeness in the arts has common attributes with creativeness in the sciences." This article was accompanied by thirty-four column-inches of photographs; was located all across the upper half of the first page of a section, and ran a total of sixty-four column-inches.

The treatment of schools in feature articles in the larger daily newspapers invites speculation regarding the roles of the education editor and the school public relations person. Just as the education editor is a person familiar with the purposes, function and operation of schools, there are people in the schools themselves who could play a similar role from the other 'end.' That is, for newspapers not large enough for the inclusion of an education editor, some person in the schools could likely be found to perform such a function to the complete satisfaction of the newspaper. The very high quality of most of the feature articles found during this study suggests that this is an area that deserves greater attention from both schools and press.

Treatment and Coverage in Editorials

During the course of analyzing the school content of newspapers included in this study, a total of sixty-nine different editorials with a combined space of 558 column-inches appeared in both daily and weekly newspapers. Very few of these editorials could be viewed as unfavorably critical; most were highly complimentary to the work of the schools and urged a greater public concern on behalf of education. Many of the latter appeared in connection with American Education Week, November 8-14.

Critical editorials were concerned with the need for program quality without additional outlay of funds,

calling for greater efficiency in economy of operation and with criticism of specific programs like driver-training and in the case of one paper, athletics.[1] A few others were not critical but favored additional science and mathematics training.

Favorable editorials ranged all the way from tributes to successful athletic teams to praise of a new high school which was not in the district primarily served by the newspaper.

Editorials were about evenly divided between weekly and daily newspapers. Since the daily papers are issued six times as often as the weeklies, it must be concluded that weekly papers devote a greater proportion of attention to schools editorially than daily papers. Table 19 presents comparisons of weekly and daily newspapers.

TABLE 19

EDITORIAL COMPARISONS FOR DAILY AND WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

Papers	Column-inches of editorials	Percent of total school news
Daily newspapers	283.0	.7 %
Weekly newspapers	275.0	1.6
Total	558.0	.98 %

[1]This paper ranked fifth among dailies in the amount of space devoted to athletics and athletic illustrations.

Though the editorials that appeared were predominantly favorable to the schools, the small overall percentage of editorials written about the schools suggests two possible inferences. First, one might assume that newspapers are relatively well satisfied with the schools otherwise editorials would have been more frequent and more critical. Second, one might infer that regardless of favorableness, newspapers are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied but are merely apathetic. The first of these inferences seems the more likely; if newspapers were apathetic there would not have been as much space devoted to schools in other sections of the paper.

Schools and Sputnik in Editorials

The limited amount and nature of space given to schools in the form of editorial comment seems to refute a popular myth among some educators today to the effect that education is treated often and critically in the comments of editors. Furthermore, such generalizations tend to trace increased school publicity to reactions by editors following Russia's launching of Sputnik in 1957. During the period of this analysis, there were no editorials which related education with the space-race between this nation and the Soviet Union.

In order to gain some insight into the nature of editorial reaction to Sputnik as this event was seen to

affect education in this country at the time, the writer decided to examine editorials in three daily newspapers for the period October 5, 1957--the day that the news of Sputnik was first announced--through December 31, 1957.

The quantitative content analysis served to guide the selection of the three daily newspapers for this purpose. The three newspapers were selected on the basis of total content given to school news during the three-months' analysis period. One paper was selected because it ranked high in total content; another because it was at or near the mean total of content, and a third because it ranked low in total content.

This phase of the study was not a rigorous attempt at a detailed analysis of the Sputnik reaction as reflected in newspapers. Now, and during the last two years, there has been a general tendency for public pronouncement to the effect that educational academia is a front page story as a result of Sputnik. This study certainly indicates that school news having to do with curriculum and teaching method occupies greater space than perhaps ever before; the writer was therefore curious to know how certain newspapers, within the sample used in this study, treated the advent of Sputnik and more important, what had these papers to say about the schools in relation to that event. The purpose was therefore one of exploration only. For this reason, the editorials of weekly newspapers were not examined.

The newspapers whose editorials were examined were papers "A," "E," and "G." The following table presents some data for these three newspapers which may serve as a point of reference of the discussion which follows.

TABLE 20

SELECTED DATA FOR THE THREE SPUTNIK NEWSPAPERS

Paper	Circulation	Total School News	Total Curriculum News
A	59,345	9,566.5 col.in.	549.0 col.in.
E	8,040	5,259.0	471.5
G	4,783	3,257.5	86.5

Editorial Reaction to Sputnik.

On October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union launched the world's first earth satellite made by men. The event was purportedly to be expected not of the Soviet Union, but of the United States. The United States had made an announcement close to the start of the International Geophysical Year that it would launch an artificial earth satellite before that international scientific observance drew to its close in December, 1957.

As one editorial stated, ". . . had the United States done this instead of the Russians, people would have not been surprised. It is the kind of thing that had come

to be expected of us." The implication is both obvious and valid; it was not expected of Russia and it did come as an over-whelming surprise.

It would be folly to even guess at the amount of actual newspaper space that in one or another way has been given to Sputnik and its followers. Nor even in this minute exploration was any attempt made at quantifying space given to Sputnik throughout the newspaper. For many weeks after the first beeps of the tiny satellite's radio were heard, it was a continuing news story. After the event itself faded, its implications and the political and military events it motivated were major news stories. Since then, the trials and tribulations of missiles and men and of space and the moon have been notable and newsworthy.

The little Russian moon signalled the start of a great race. It is oddly true, however, that the United States only became aware of its participation in that race after its opponent had this great headstart.

The race itself and its many ramifications absorbed the attention of editorial writers if these three newspapers are representative. In a period of three months, these three newspapers printed a total of forty-three different editorials related to Sputnik, or in which Sputnik was the essential motivation for the piece. Of this total, only five were related to education. These five appeared in two of the newspapers; three of them in one paper.

During this three-month period from October 5, 1957, through December 31, 1957, there were four major events in what one might label, the Sputnik cycle. First there was the launching of Sputnik I on October 4; secondly, on November 2, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik II--a much heavier vehicle which carried a dog and appropriate instruments for testing its reactions (this one was sometimes called "muttnik.") The third event in the cycle was the much heralded but dismal failure of the United States' Vanguard on December 6. The fourth event was the successful launching by the United States of the Atlas Intercontinental Ballistics Missile (ICBM) on December 17.

At least one, or all of the newspapers reacted editorially to all four of these events. Not at all related to Sputnik but by coincidence of timing, another event occurred almost in the middle of this three-months' cycle. This was American Education Week. It was in observance of this event that four of the five editorials appeared in which education was related to the satellites. Though the third newspaper also gave editorial space to the observance of American Education Week, it did not relate the event to Sputnik. The nature of editorial treatment of Sputnik in each of the three newspapers follows.

Treatment of Sputnik in newspaper "A."--Newspaper "A," the largest of the three papers both in circulation

and average thickness, printed a total of sixteen editorials related to Sputnik. Ten of these were written during October; three were written in November, and three more in December.

The first editorial in newspaper "A" was somewhat congratulatory and merely speculated generally about the fact that a satellite was launched. On October 7, another editorial appeared with the general theme that we must admit that Russia can do something. This was followed by eight other editorials during the remainder of the month which seem to fall into three categories of comment: (1) editorials of reassurance; i.e., the satellites pose no great threat to peace and "we are not awed" by them; (2) editorials critical of services rivalry and secrecy; and (3) editorials of explanation for our lag in space science as well as implications of Sputniks.

These three categories seem to hold true for all three newspapers. Editorials related to education would fall into the third of these categories. Paper "A" was mostly reassuring in its editorial treatment of Sputnik. This point of view is typified by an editorial that appeared following the United States' failure with the Vanguard on December 6. It was to the effect that the failure was "not important" and though possibly humiliating in some few respects, it should be remembered that our

scientists felt ". . . the hot breath of public expectancy on the backs of their necks." Next time, the editorial pointed out, we would be more careful and we would succeed. Again there was the reassurance that these satellites are not weapons and that the United States is in no jeopardy from them.

An editorial of fourteen column-inches during American Education Week urged citizens to visit schools and become acquainted with educational problems. It made no reference at all to Sputnik or to space.

There was only one editorial in newspaper "A" that was critical in any sense of the word. This piece merely commented on a report of the National Science Foundation which was critical of the secrecy which prevented translation of Russian scientific journals. These purported to openly explain many things about Sputnik. The editorial suggested that even though secrecy was necessary and to be desired, this report by the National Science Foundation deserved careful and thoughtful consideration by our statesmen.

Editorial treatment of Sputnik in newspaper "E."--Although newspaper "E" was not as optimistic as paper "A," it became more reassuring and confident during the last two months. Its early reactions, in the form of five editorials during the month of October, were critical of

United States Intelligence agencies for not better informing us of the Russian's progress, and speculatively anxious about the effect of the Russian success on the prestige of the United States among small nations. Interdepartmental rivalry among the Army, Navy, and Air Force also incurred some rather sharp criticism from this newspaper. Following the Soviet launching of Sputnik II on November 2, this newspaper assumed an attitude of grave concern. Under the heading, "A Must Program," an editorial of November 5, urged that the United States missile program be geared to top efficiency and that the paramount objective be just to "catch up."

Four days later, following President Eisenhower's announcement that Dr. James Killian of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was to direct the Scientific Defense Program, an editorial appeared entitled "Reassurance." The point of view was optimism and this optimism was maintained during the remaining months.

On November 13 and in observance of American Education Week, this newspaper printed an editorial commenting on shortages of teachers and facilities in public education. The editorial pointed out that "recent Russian attainments" had prompted criticisms of our educational system to the effect that we do not place enough stress on science nor provide adequate opportunities for the above-average student,

and then it posed the question as to whether or not current deficiencies in education might be caused by public apathy rather than ". . . by those who head up our educational programs." It finished by suggesting that the crucial questions are: what does America expect of its schools, and are we willing to pay the price?

On December 28, another editorial appeared that had some comment about education. Titled, "Let's Not Grow Hysterical," the writer labelled as 'hysterical,' a Pennsylvania proposal to mandate a six-day school week. The editorial writer pointed out that our educational program very likely would see some changes as a result of a renewed public interest in scholarship but to increase the school year by more than twenty percent ". . . merely for the sake of a crash program would appear to be putting the cart before the horse." The point was made that regardless of the length of the school day, little could be accomplished without better facilities and better teachers and these cost dollars.

Editorial treatment of Sputnik in newspaper "G."--A predominance among editorials in newspaper "G" were concerned with the arms race and with the implications of Sputnik propaganda purposes, thus the converse effect on the United States' prestige abroad. Again the reassurance theme was apparent. An early editorial following the announcement of Sputnik I pointed out that "he who is first"

has nothing to do with "he who is best." Missile secrecy came in for some criticism, the point of view being that it was no longer an advantage and might actually be a barrier to cooperation with other free nations.

Following Sputnik II, a somewhat solemn piece appeared under the heading "Score, 2 to 0." The writer pointed out that the launching of a much heavier satellite had more serious implications for the United States and suggested that only spectacular developments in our own space program could counter-balance the effect of this latest Russian achievement on the neutral and tremulous nations of the world.

In reaction to the Vanguard failure, an editorial appeared advising that equally bad is our tendency to "talk too much." The point in this editorial was that even though three out of ten attempts to launch a satellite fail even for the Russians, they keep their failures a secret and we broadcast ours to the world.

This failure was seen as "our greatest test"--the test of our faith in ourselves. The writer was reassuring that our scientists would succeed. Following the successful launching of the Atlas ICBM, an editorial followed which said, in effect, I told you so. This optimism held for the remainder of the month.

Newspaper "G" printed three editorials related to education in connection with Sputnik. The first of these entitled, "Soviet Education," presented some of those now famous, early statistics about the number of Russian graduates in specialist fields and the number studying in institutions of higher learning. The point of view was to the effect that this nation's schools need not attempt to match the Spartan aspects of the Soviet system but, ". . . if we are not to fall seriously behind in science and its vital applications to industry and defense, many thousands of youngsters are going to have to dig in harder on the science subjects."

Interestingly, this was followed in two weeks by another editorial entitled, "More Research Needed," which pointed out that in our society, scientists can not be dictated to, and that the scientist's training in the United States, ". . . intense though it is, must be set in a broad frame of humanistic studies. Thus he will have full grasp of the human values men cherish, and will be able to serve . . . all humanity in any additional capacity, public or private, for which he shows talent."

A third editorial related to education appeared in newspaper "G" on December 20. Entitled, "Another Side of Soviet Science," this piece recalled the earlier editorial about Russian graduates and suggested that the former

editorial was hasty. A Wall Street Journal report was quoted which pointed out that we do as well proportionately as the Soviets and even better in the percentages of our students who get into college and the percentage of those that eventually graduate. It was also pointed out that many of the so-called higher educational institutions in the Soviet Union were little more than slightly advanced trade schools.

Summary

Editorials and feature articles require greater effort in writing than routine news items. For this reason these kinds of content--whether written about schools or anything else--necessitate some measure of creativity in composition. It follows therefore that editorials and features bring a more personal point of view to the subject at hand and on the basis of this it was felt that these kinds of content deserved unique discussion in this thesis.

It was pointed out that research indicates feature items get higher readership than editorials and that editorials also get higher readership than half of the other kinds of content in weekly newspapers. Weekly newspapers give more space proportionately to editorials about the schools than do daily newspapers; on the other hand, daily newspapers give greater emphasis to feature articles. In

daily newspapers that have education editors, one would expect more frequent features; this in turn may be a competitive motivation for other daily and some weekly newspapers to also give more attention to the feature.

Editorials that comment on school matters constitute a small proportion of space but those that appear are predominantly favorable. The relative lack of editorial space should not be construed as lack of interest since the total amount of space given to school news throughout newspapers indicates that this represents an important area of news in the view of newspaper editors and publishers.

The small amount of space and the very limited amount of critical comment about schools in editorials in addition to a tendency in recent years for educators to assume that editors are rather fond of talking about education led the writer to examine another aspect of editorial treatment of schools. Since the assumption referred to above is usually based on the premise that Sputnik sparked an editorial reaction which included much comment about the role of the schools, the writer decided to examine editorial reaction to Sputnik for three months following the advent of the Russian satellite in October, 1957. Though this represented merely a phase of this study and was not designed as a rigorous analysis, there is indication that newspapers did

not relate Sputnik to schools in more than a token sense. Moreover, those editorials which did relate them were predominantly favorable to the work and purposes of the schools.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Summary

This study was concerned with an analysis of the school content in Michigan newspapers. The purposes of the study were:

(1) To determine the quantity and quality of school news appearing in Michigan newspapers and the identification of trends through comparisons with a similar study.

(2) To determine implications for improving school-community communications.

In pursuing the purposes outlined above, the following hypotheses were developed and served as a basis for the research:

(1) That daily and weekly newspapers cover a wide variety of educational activities and functions dealing with public schools.

(2) That there are no significant differences among various topics of school news ranked by the amount of space given them by newspapers. (Daily and weekly newspapers treated as separate classes.)

(3) That there are no significant differences among newspapers when ranked and compared on the amount of space given to each topic of school news. (Daily and weekly newspapers treated as separate classes.)

(4) That there are no significant differences among newspapers ranked by the percent of total space each paper gives to each topic of school news. (Treating daily and weekly newspapers as separate classes.)

(5) That space given to curriculum and teaching method will have increased in comparison to space given to these topics in a previous study.

In exploring various methods of approach to this problem, it was necessary to consider published research and literature in a number of areas of inquiry seldom integrated in the general body of educational literature. Subject-matter areas explored in an effort to provide a conceptual framework for this study included: school administration, school public relations, journalism, and general communication theory.

Prior to 1920, there was practically no literature published which related specifically to school public relations. Several early studies established that the schools represent an important source of news. Others attempted to define the extent of what school patrons know about the nature and function of their schools, and still others

attempted to determine what kinds of information about the schools people expected newspapers to provide them.

The conclusions of these studies were varied but there was general agreement that newspapers give undue emphasis to certain aspects of the school program while other school activities are relatively ignored. Research in later years indicated that the public is provided little information about those aspects of the school program that it would like to know more about.

Students of both education and journalism have also examined what is actually being published about the schools in newspapers. In a large proportion of such studies, the actual quantity and quality of the school news was determined.

More recently, an analysis of newspaper photographs and an interdisciplinary approach to the school-community-communication problem were attempted which represent new approaches to research in this general area.

The technique of research used in many such studies is a method known as content analysis. This research method was used in the present study and its methodology was discussed.

In pursuing the purposes of this study, school content was analyzed in eight daily and fifteen weekly newspapers. This sample was randomly selected by accepted statistical procedures and represented the universe of newspapers in the state of Michigan.

Twenty classifications were used into which various school news items were categorized. In addition to these classifications, school content was also categorized by the number and type of items appearing on front pages and by the number and type of photographs printed. These procedures constituted what has been defined as quantitative analysis.

The reliability of the writer's classification of school content as well as reliability in measuring and quantifying the content was established in two ways. First, an assistant and the writer separately measured all school content appearing on the front pages of all newspapers and then compared these quantifications; secondly, representative samples of school content were submitted to a panel of three judges together with definitions of the classifications and differences in their classifications were noted.

Variations among the various newspapers in the sample were great. Some of these variations were plainly evident from the tabular presentations while others were statistically analyzed using the Spearman rank order (rho) correlation, and the Friedman two-way analysis of variance test (X_r^2).

The quantification of the school content was proceeded by totaling the number of column-inches of space given to each of the twenty classifications; totaling the

number of items by topic for all front page space given schools; and determining the total amount of space available in each newspaper by multiplying the page size by the number of issues in the three-month period. The number and type of school photographs were also noted.

A qualitative analysis was also presented. This analysis attempted to categorize school content by characteristics and treatment and also involved inferences based on the quantitative data. A number of illustrations of representative content were presented in connection with discussion in the qualitative analysis.

Feature articles and editorials, due to the nature of the more creative effort involved in the writing, were discussed uniquely in this study. This led the writer to investigate the nature of editorial space given to schools in relation to the launching of Sputnik by the Soviet Union.

Three daily newspapers were selected for study of editorial comment following the advent of the Soviet satellite in October, 1957. These three newspapers were visited by the writer and editorials were studied for the period October 5, 1957, through December 31, 1957. The attempt here was to ascertain the nature of editorial comment about schools in relation to the news of Sputnik.

Newspaper Space Given to The Schools

Within the limits established by this study, a total of 54,827.5 column-inches of school news was analyzed. Correlation by rank order between the circulation of newspapers and total school content indicated a weak relationship for daily newspapers and no significant relationship for weekly newspapers. Correlation between the thickness of a newspaper and total space given to schools indicated no significant relationship for daily newspapers but there was a high positive correlation on these variables for weekly newspapers.

When newspapers were ranked by thickness and also by the percentage of school news appearing on front pages, and a rank order correlation computed, it was found that there was a significant negative correlation; that is, as newspapers increase in thickness there is a tendency to print less school news on the front page. Daily newspapers printed a smaller number of items about the schools on the front page than did weeklies, consequently daily newspapers printed nothing of certain categories on front pages to which weeklies devoted numerous items. Among weekly newspapers, athletics accounted for the greatest number of front page topics, while among daily newspapers, financial topics accounted for the greatest number.

An important consideration here, however, is the fact that the front page constitutes a great majority of the total news-hole among weekly newspapers; i.e., the chances of any item of news getting on the front page are much greater for weekly newspapers of small thickness than for other larger weeklies or for dailies. In addition to this, weekly newspapers depend more on area and local news to fill the paper since most of these do not have access to wire services. Also, the weekly newspaper prints one issue to every six for the average daily newspaper and therefore items that mean front page importance even to the larger weekly newspapers are relegated to the inside pages of dailies leaving the front page for national, state, and international news items.

Both daily and weekly newspapers devote proportional attention to the same kinds of school news. Athletics and athletic illustrations accounted for considerably greater percentage of total space among daily newspapers than among weeklies, though the weeklies gave more attention to athletics than to any other category of school news. Among daily papers, athletics and athletic illustrations accounted for 53.2 percent of all the school content; these two categories accounted for 36.7 percent of all school content among weekly newspapers. General illustrations, curriculum, finance, and miscellaneous school items accounted for another 35.9 percent of the school content among weekly newspapers

and for 25.4 percent of the remaining school news space in daily newspapers. Together with athletics and athletic illustrations, these categories accounted for 72.3 percent of all school content in weekly newspapers. Three other categories accounted for notable amounts of space; these were general illustrations, PTA, and student activities.

There are a number of probable explanations for the dominance of athletic content but certainly an important one has to do with the regularity of athletic contests throughout the year. Added to this is the fact that the competitive nature of athletics necessitates that some information be printed which informs the team follower of the activities of other teams. This certainly is not true of a school board meeting. Yet school board meetings are also regular events and though they do not occur as often as athletic events, they are regularly covered. Moreover, forty-three items relating to school boards appeared on the front pages of both daily and weekly newspapers. Only five other items appeared with greater frequency on front pages.

There were great differences in the amounts of space different newspapers gave to different topics of school news. However, this was a difficult conclusion to reach by examining rankings of each paper on each category since this presented the analyst with a two-way table of 160 cells

for daily newspapers and 300 cells for weekly newspapers. This problem was solved by submitting the ranked data to the Friedman two-way analysis of variance test (X_r^2). The hypothesis that there were no differences in the ways categories of school news rank from one paper to the next was rejected on the basis of this statistical analysis.

There were also great differences in the ways the newspapers themselves ranked by the amount of space given to each of the various categories. This examined whether or not a paper with greater average thickness (number of pages per issue) gave more space to various school topics than papers with less thicknesses. On the basis of the Friedman test, it must be concluded that there are significant differences in this respect, thus a thicker newspaper does tend to give more space to most of the categories of school news even though there is no significant correlation between thickness ranks and rankings in total school space. Thus several papers, by giving more space to certain specific topics of school news affected the total school space such that a rank-order correlation indicated only a weak relationship between thickness and total school content. The Friedman test, being a more powerful statistic, disclosed that when each individual topic is considered and this used to compare each individual newspaper, there is a general tendency for significant differences.

When school news was looked at as a percentage of the total space available and newspapers were ranked in this fashion, it was concluded from statistical analysis that there are no significant differences among the daily newspapers and among the weekly newspapers. Thus, though there were great differences among the various newspapers in the amount of space each devoted to the various categories, there were no significant differences in the way papers ranked in the percentages of total space devoted to the various categories. To further illustrate this finding, it was pointed out that daily newspaper "F" which ranked sixth in average thickness, ranked first in five categories of school content as a percent of total space whereas daily newspaper "A" which ranked first in average thickness, ranked first on only one category as a percent of total space.

It should be pointed out here that among the daily newspapers analyzed in this study, newspaper "F" was the most outstanding in its treatment of school news. Paper "A" was also notable for its handling of the school content.

Among weeklies, most of the newspapers deserve credit for their treatment of school news. Papers "D," "M," "B," and "K" were especially noteworthy.

One of the notable findings of the quantitative analysis was the percentage of total space given to curriculum. When comparisons were made with a similar content

analysis conducted in 1953 which employed the same classifications, it was noted that space given to curriculum had increased from .2 percent to 7.5 percent. Though some of this increase may be due to differences in definition of what constitutes curriculum news, this would not explain so great an increase. The logical conclusion is a more acute interest by the newspaper in matters relating to the child's scholastic experiences in response to an awakening interest throughout the nation. This finding supports one of the original hypotheses of the study, moreover it was felt that this increased interest is traceable to the priority being placed on education primarily as a result of events during the last few years which have seen increased intellectual and cultural competition between this nation and the Soviet Union.

It was partly due to this thought that an examination was made of editorial comment in reaction to the launching of Sputnik and the events of the few months following it. Consequently, editorials were examined for the period October 5, 1957, through December 31, 1957, in three newspapers.

Of a total of forty-two editorials that appeared during this period, five were educationally related. One of the three newspapers did not relate Sputnik to education even though editorials about education appeared. The other

two newspapers were not 'crash' critical of education nor did they blame the American system of public education in any fashion for the failure of the United States to beat the Soviet Union into the sky with a satellite. On the contrary, editorial comment relative to education and Sputnik was reassuring and rational and pointed out that our scientists need training within the humanistic tradition; also, that our schools and colleges compare very well in proportional comparisons with the Soviet Union by number of students graduating in higher education and numbers attending such institutions. Educators cannot blame the press for harmful criticism if these newspapers are representative. This is a fruitful area for further research not only for its educational implications but in order to determine in greater scope, the nature of editorial reaction to Sputnik.

The best written school content appeared in the form of feature articles on various aspects of the schools. Daily newspapers printed a greater number of features than did weeklies. Another impressive quality of writing about schools was apparent in several syndicated features.

Current editorials accounted for a small percentage of the total school news; in daily newspapers, seven-tenths percent of the total space was occupied by editorials while in weekly papers, editorials accounted for one and six-tenths

percent of the space. Though a small proportion of the total space, editorials were predominantly favorable to the work and purposes of the schools. The relative lack of editorial comment may indicate that newspapers are fairly satisfied with the job being done by the schools.

Conclusions

The findings of this study, based on an analysis of the school content in daily and weekly newspapers in the state of Michigan, provide an empirical basis for the following general conclusions:

1. Though there are great variations in amounts of space given to school functions and activities, newspapers in Michigan provide adequate information about the functions and activities of schools and persons who have access to newspapers can profitably utilize them to become better informed about the schools.

2. Both daily and weekly newspapers give notable and disproportionate emphasis to athletics but whether this is harmful to the general image and interpretation of schools must be decided by additional research.

3. There is an apparent trend developing which will see a continued increase in newspaper content dealing with the classroom activities and learning experiences of children as well as greater emphasis on academic matters.

4. Newspapers through editorial and reportorial content reflect a concern for the effect on education of the present disquieting financial problems in the state of Michigan.

5. Among various kinds of school content, the least informative were items dealing with parent-teacher organizations, a majority of which were reports of meetings in the form of mere listings of names. In many cases, the subjects of and guests at these meetings deserved better coverage.

6. Though some newspapers do an outstanding job of feature reporting on many aspects of the schools, a greater number do not take advantage of numerous opportunities for feature articles on a variety of school-related occurrences.

7. American Education Week receives wide and competent coverage by both daily and weekly newspapers.

8. Newspapers often miss opportunities for good material by failing to follow-up certain professional activities of teachers in connection with conferences and institutes.

9. There is indication that newspapers were not critical of the schools following the launching of Sputnik in 1957, however, the nature and scope of the investigation of this suggests that a more penetrating research would be both needed and valuable.

Recommendations

As an outgrowth of the study reported in this thesis, the following recommendations are offered as potentially valuable avenues for improving the process through which schools are interpreted and communicated to the communities they serve:

1. Students of school administration as well as teachers in the public schools should be more exposed to study in the process of communication and its implications in the school-community relationship.

2. Editors and other newspaper personnel need to continually study the objectives and function of the school program in order to more capably perform their role in adequately and responsibly interpreting the schools to their readers and to their listeners or viewers.

3. School administrators or other persons assigned the task of working with the press need to become better informed regarding the problems and function of the press; to become more familiar with the 'ground rules' and to responsibly adhere to them.

4. Persons in related educational agencies like parent-teacher organizations who are responsible for press-relations should become familiar with basic public relations skills like writing press releases and the use of photographs.

In-service programs or workshops for such persons would be a valuable service.

5. Colleges of education should continue to stress the importance of and need for the development of good school public relations. As education faces increasingly perplexing problems there will be a continually growing need for public understanding and support. Newspapers are in a unique position to complement and supplement that understanding; they can also thwart it.

6. As the need and importance of better communication between schools and communities will surely increase in the years ahead, colleges of education can also provide a service through the initiation, staffing and organization of training programs in the process and effects of communication for both teachers and school administrators--in-service and pre-service.

7. Feature articles represent one of the best vehicles for presenting many aspects of the school's story; moreover, research indicates that such articles receive high readership. Though features examined in this study were of high quality, they were too infrequent. School administrators who are interested in opportunities for improving the communication of school information to the community should give attention to ways of encouraging greater use of feature articles about the schools.

Implications For Further Research

The very nature of a content analysis of newspapers with the problems it poses for handling the newspapers themselves dictates certain limitations at the outset. Among these, the scope of the investigation must be carefully determined which thereby eliminates potentially valuable areas for further research. During the course of this study, other areas were identified which offer fruitful avenues of research but could not be explored within the limitations of the present study. The recommendations which follow are therefore derived from this study.

1. What are the effects of similar kinds of school content on readers of weekly newspapers as opposed to readers of daily newspapers?

2. How do editors of newspapers or those persons who handle the 'school beat,' compare with school superintendents or school public relations persons on certain attitudes regarding the schools?

3. Is it possible to predict the nature of the interpretation of schools via local newspapers through testing theoretical constructs of interpersonal relations between school personnel and newspaper personnel?

4. What can be learned about the nature of schools from an analysis of 'feedback,' as exemplified in

letters-to-the-editor about school matters, in newspapers in various parts of the nation?

5. Could the emphasis given to athletics by newspapers be determined as harmful or not harmful through a comparison of school systems by success of athletic teams and success in the passage of school bond proposals?

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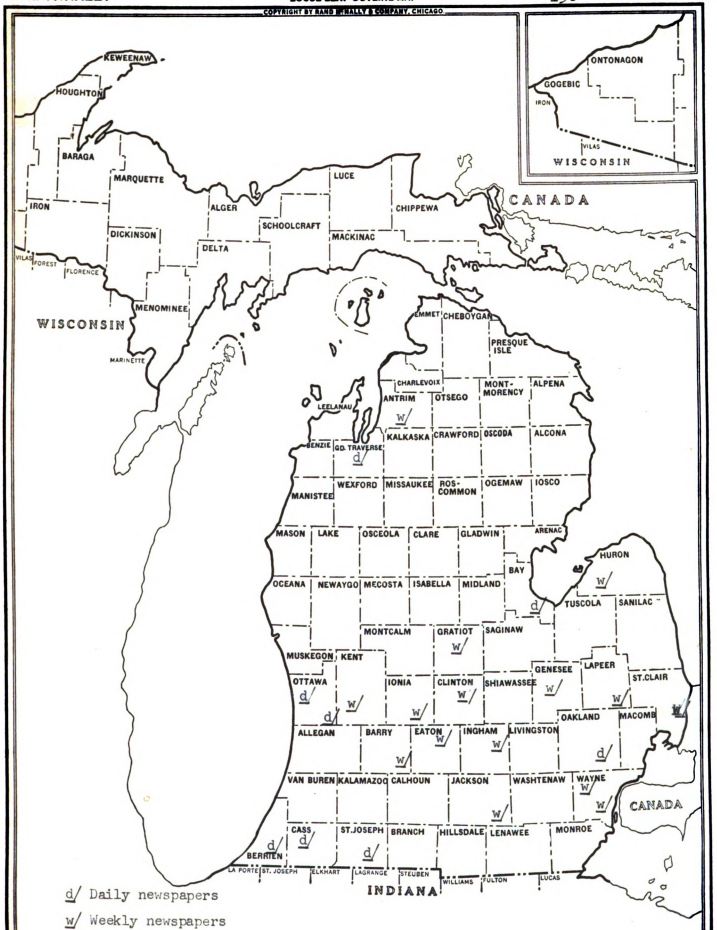
APPENDIX A

MAP OF MICHIGAN SHOWING LOCATION OF THE SAMPLE OF NEWSPAPERS



APPENDIX B

PANEL OF JUDGES USED FOR RELIABILITY OF CLASSIFICATION

Dr. Fred W. Vescolani, Associate Professor of Education, Michigan State University.

Dr. Herbert R. Hengst, Instructor, College of Education, Michigan State University.

Mr. Burton D. Friedman, Graduate Assistant, College of Education, Michigan State University, presently on leave of absence from the University of Puerto Rico.

APPENDIX C

NEWSPAPERS USED IN THE STUDY WITH CIRCULATION DATA

DAILY NEWSPAPERS

Paper	Circulation
A - Pontiac Press	59,345
B - Bay City Times	36,029
C - Holland Evening Sentinel	13,223
D - Traverse City Record-Eagle	12,710
E - Niles Daily Star	8,040
F - Grand Haven Tribune	6,381
G - Three Rivers Commercial	4,783
H - Dowagiac Daily News	3,477

WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

A - The Highland Parker	10,325
B - Clinton County Republican	5,766
C - Grand Ledge Independent	3,474
D - Northville Record	2,800
E - Grandville Star	2,310
F - Pigeon Progress-Advance	2,281
G - Portland Review and Observer	2,250
H - Flushing Observer	1,950
I - St. Louis Leader-Press	1,938
J - Williamston Enterprise	1,714
K - Marine City Independent	1,708
L - Imlay City News	1,648
M - Nashville News	1,578
N - Mancelona Herald	1,456
O - Brooklyn Exponent	870

APPENDIX D

CONTENT ANALYSIS CATEGORY SHEETS

CLASSIFICATION SHEET

Adult Education	
Illustrations - Other	
Editorial Comment	
Social	
Illustrations	
Student Activities	
Illustrations	
Honor Roll	
Finance	
School Board	
School On.	
Teaching Methods	
Conferences & Inst.	
Cir.	
Athletics	
Illustrations	
P.T.A.	
Transportation	
Safety	
Misc.	
Total Inches	
Page 1 Totals	
Pages	
Date	

Photograph categories

Athletics											
Buildings											
Staff-personnel											
Pupils											
Others											
Total number											
Date of issue											

Front page categories

(Write the classification in the blank space provided and note the number and size of items in that classification.)

Classification	Talley of items	Column-inches				
Total						