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WISCONSIN ENVIRONMENT REPORTERS AND SOURCE EVALUATION: A STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING SOURCE SELECTION

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University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1984

Adviser: John R. Ross

REPORTING. SOURCES. JOURNALISTS. ENVIRONMENT NEWS. SURVEY RESEARCH.

This study attempts to determine factors influencing Wisconsin environmental reporters' source evaluation. Specifically, the study examines the relationship between positive source ratings and the variables of time spent covering the environment, formal training, job experience, social networks and type of medium.

The questionnaire — mailed to 40 Wisconsin newspaper and television environmental reporters — used semantic differentials to compare source ratings.

Reporters found governmental sources to be most reliable, followed by academic, industrial and environmental (in that order). A government/academic and industrial/environmental dichotomy is evident.

Remaining hypotheses assume that reporter familiarity with a source or with sets of beliefs will lead to a positive image of the source.

Significant differences between full- and part-time environmental reporters were found on five scales, which partially supports that assumption.

The first measure of formal training (years in school) was not useful because most reporters completed 12-16 years. The other measure (relevant coursework) supported the idea on nine scales that more college courses would lead to a more positive rating of academic sources.

Results supported the hypothesis on seven scales that reporters with more job-related experience would evaluate all sources more positively.

Finally, newspaper environmental reporters evaluated sources more positively than television environmental reporters on six scales.

The author found two dominant factors operating: an "evaluative" factor and a "potency" factor.

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AN ANALYSIS OF COVERAGE IN THE NATION OF EVENTS IN GRENADA LEADING TO THE AMERICAN-LED INTERVENTION

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Ohio University, 1985

Adviser: Norman Dohn

THE NATION (BARBADOS). GRENADA. EDITORIAL POLICY. CARIBBEAN. CRITICAL ANALYSIS.

The Nation, an independent daily tabloid in Barbados, is one of the papers in the Caribbean that gave extensive coverage of the 1979 revolution in Grenada, Maurice Bishop's death, the Revolutionary Military Council (RMC) takeover, and the intervention. This is a qualitative study of the Grenada-related articles published in *The Nation* during those events.

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Editorials and news stories relating to Grenada in *The Nation* one week after the 1979 revolution, and from October 20 to one week after the military intervention on October 25, were analyzed. A random sample of constructed weeks also was done from 1979 to 1983 to examine the Grenada-related articles, if any, published during that period.

The study shows *The Nation* supported the 1979 revolution, condemned Bishop's death and the RMC takeover, and supported the American-led intervention. The Grenada revolution had critical implications for the entire Caribbean. It successfully challenged, for the first time, the transfer of political power from ballots to bullets. A crucial issue for reporters, governments and individuals seems to have been a concern for elections. This concern stemmed from the fact that most countries in the English-speaking Caribbean inherited their political systems from the British. Because of this tradition there was an aversion to military solutions for political problems. The ascendancy of Bishop, popular though it may have been, grated on the deeply-held value system of the elites in the region. *The Nation* went out on a limb against world press opinion, justifying its actions by its nearness to Grenada and knowledge of that region.

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THE CROWDED AIRWAVES: MANAGING SPECTRUM IN A COMPETITIVE ERA

Gross, Richard Robert, M.A.

University of Pennsylvania, 1985

Adviser: Robert Lewis Shayon

TELECOMMUNICATIONS SPECTRUM. BROADCAST REGULATION.

Using an evaluation criterion of telecommunications spectrum management systems advanced in a 1979 MathTech, Inc. study prepared for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, the author compared the MathTech study's ideal spectrum management system with the ideal spectrum management systems conceived by a panel of six spectrum management experts. The author's purpose was to determine the best possible means of managing spectrum for telecommunications purposes.

Included on the panel were: Henry M. Geller, Dale N. Hatfield, Charles Lee Jackson, Donald M. Jansky, Douglas W. Webbink and John G. Williams.

Each panel member was questioned intensively to obtain his views on spectrum management generally, and on three telecommunications services specifically: Multipoint Distribution Service (now Multichannel Multipoint Distribution Service), Cellular Radio and Low Power Television.

The MathTech study's finding that "economic techniques promise to improve use of the spectrum resource" was the central issue presented to the panel members for discussion. Relevant literature and decisions of the Federal Communications Commission were discussed.

The author concluded that there is no ideal system of spectrum management, but a system which uses auctions to assign the spectrum, along with a fee/underwriting scheme to ensure public interest broadcast programming, would be best.

A PILOT STUDY OF PRESS-MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE AFTERMATH OF GRENADA

Gabriel, Peter Hitchcock, M.A.

University of Maryland, 1985

Adviser: Ray E. Hiebert

ACCESS TO INFORMATION. MILITARY NEWS. GRENADA. SIDLE COMMISSION. HISTORICAL ANALYSIS.

In October 1983 the United States invaded the island of Grenada. The American news media were not allowed access to the island until two days after the initial landings. As a result of Grenada, a panel (the Sidle Commission) was created in February 1984 to make recommendations for media-military relations in future military operations.

This descriptive study reviews press-military relationships historically and analyzes the relationship following Grenada. Personal interviews were conducted with civilian news correspondents currently assigned to the Pentagon. Interviews were also conducted with military officers. The Sidle Commission Report formed the basis for the interviews and analysis.

The study reveals that both the press and the military see a need for increased understanding between the two groups. Some journalists view the relationship as adversarial in nature, while some officers stress the need for cooperation between the two groups. Both the press and the military question the practicality of press exclusion in future military operations. The limitations of this study are discussed, and recommendations are made for future research.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOOD AND JOURNALISTIC PERFORMANCE

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University of North Carolina, 1984

Adviser: Donald L. Shaw

JOURNALISTS. EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH.

This thesis, designed to explore the effects of serving food to journalists as a way to influence communication, discusses an experiment based upon the hypothesis that news stories edited during a period of food consumption would be more favorable to the subjects of the stories than would articles edited by journalists working in a situation with no food present. Overall, results were in the predicted direction but were not statistically significant. Experimental data suggested that the journalistic performance of students with better editing skills (as measured by editing course grades) is less likely to be susceptible to extraneous influences, such as food, than is the performance of subjects with weaker editing skills.

SEXIST LANGUAGE IN BROADCAST TELEVISION NEWS: EFFECT ON PERSON PERCEPTION OF USING THE TERM "GIRL" IN REFERENCE TO FEMALE ADULTS

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Ohio State University, 1984

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STEREOTYPES. TELEVISION NEWS. AUDIENCE RESEARCH.

Researchers in mass communications have long investigated the effects of media content on mass communication audiences. Contemporary media effects research tends toward investigation of long-term versus short-term effects, as measured through cognitive versus attitudinal indices. With the recent growth of the feminist movement have come charges that one of the long-term, cognitive effects of media content is the perpetuation of stereotypic, and thus sexist, images of women in this society. Specifically, it has been charged that use of the term "girl" in reference to female adults, although not uncommon, is pejorative, in that it leads to images of immaturity, frivolity, incompetence and youth.

This study investigates the validity of such claims, hypothesizing that use of "girl" in broadcast television news in reference to a female adult is correlated with lower perceived status of that female adult. Osgood's semantic differential technique is employed to measure perceived status. This hypothesis is conditionally supported; among female viewers, use of "girl" is correlated with lower perceived status, relative to use of "woman." However, the opposite is true among male viewers, who tend to rate a female adult higher on Osgood's evaluative dimension when she is referred to as "girl" than when she is referred to as "woman." These findings are interpreted (1) from a microconceptual perspective, in which this interaction is seen as a manifestation of differences in the ways men and women use and perceive the terms "girl" and "woman" in this society; and (2) from the macroconceptual "cultivation of beliefs" perspective, in which the interaction is seen as a manifestation of, and thus cultivator of, a societal imbalance in the criteria by which women and men are valued in this society.

PUBLIC POLICY CONSIDERATIONS IN THE CABLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1983: TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN 1984 AS A DISSIPATIVE STRUCTURE

Gergel, Patricia Morton, M.A.

University of South Carolina, 1984

Adviser: Lowndes F. Stephens

CABLE TELEVISION. TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATION. CABLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT (1983). CRITICAL ANALYSIS.

On June 14, 1983, the U.S. Senate passed the Cable Telecommunications Act of 1983 (S.66), with the stated purpose of deregulating cable television. The report of the Senate committee studying the bill specifically mentioned five new media as offering alternatives to the pay-television (as opposed to free network television) consumer which would prevent an unregulated cable industry from being a monopoly: direct broadcast satellites, low-power television, multipoint distribution service, satellite master antenna television, and subscription television. S.66 has since been signed into law.

The premise of this thesis is that if these five media are not truly viable in the marketplace as alternative delivery systems for pay television, then S.66 is poor public policy by virtue of the fact that it creates an unregulated monopoly of pay television.

To study how the five media are performing in the marketplace, a computerized bibliographic retrieval service was used to locate reports in 1,700 trade and industry publications from

doctrine may apply. With consensual recording, the law is unclear and inconsistent. Surreptitious newsgathering raises as many ethical as legal questions.

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EXCLUDING THE PRESS FROM THE GRENADA INVASION: A Q-METHODOLOGY STUDY

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ATTITUDES. GRENADA. CARIBBEAN. AUDIENCE RESEARCH.

When U.S. Marines and Army Rangers invaded the Caribbean island of Grenada on October 25, 1983, journalists were not allowed to observe the action for the first 48 hours of the operation. The media responded to this action with an uproar of protest, and during the ensuing weeks, the press ban, and the issue of media access to military operations, became a larger news story than the invasion itself.

The purpose of this study was to identify attitudinal belief patterns of selected individuals for the issue of media access to military operations. Q-sort methodology was employed for this identification.

Forty participants, 15 with military connections, 14 from the media and 11 from the general public, performed an 80-item Q-sort, composed of statements about the Grenada press ban and relations between government, military and media. The statements were taken from articles, columns, interviews and TV commentaries, or created to express a desired opinion.

Based on the strength of their agreement or disagreement, the participants were asked to sort the statements on an 11-point continuum. The participants were then grouped into attitudinal types by using factor analysis to compare entire Q-sorts. This was accomplished through the use of a computer program called QUANAL, which performs all the appropriate tests for Q-methodological studies.

As a result of this analysis, three attitudinal belief patterns were identified.

Type I people believe that the rights of the press were infringed upon in Grenada, and this type of press ban should never happen again.

Type II people believe that the press ban was justified and should be used again.

Type III people believe the barring of the press from Grenada was wrong, but guidelines should be established for the press to adhere to when covering combat operations.

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A STUDY OF LARGE FARMERS' RADIO LISTENING HABITS IN SOUTHERN WISCONSIN

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University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1984

Adviser: Larry Meiller

RADIO NEWS. AGRICULTURAL NEWS. AUDIENCE RESEARCH.

This study examined the radio listening habits and market information needs of a group of southern Wisconsin farmers. It attempted to find qualitative data about listening habits, i.e., how well are farmers listening to the radio and who do

they prefer to hear?

A questionnaire was administered to 230 farmers at extension and farm commodity meetings in 12 counties. The average profile was a 39-year-old dairy farmer with 72 cows on 475 acres.

Results indicated that these farmers stopped what they were doing to listen to weather and farm market news. Their favorite listening periods for broadcast market news were 12 to 12:59 p.m., before 6 a.m., and 5 to 5:59 p.m., but farmers preferred to hear market news from 6 to 6:59 a.m., 12 to 12:59 p.m., and 5 to 5:59 p.m. Three-fourths of the farmers listened to market news the same length of time for all seasons.

Country/Western and easy listening were the favorite types of music among the group. Farmers preferring rock music and classical/jazz music were significantly younger or older, respectively, from the other farmers.

The most important livestock market information were terminal prices and outlook information. For grain market news, cash prices at local elevators and outlook information ranked highest with the group.

The farmers perceived market reports as being read faster over the air compared to general news, but both were at an adequate pace.

Most farmers did not care or want broadcast market terminology simplified. Those farmers desiring simpler terms tended to be older than those not wanting simpler terms.

Immediate market outlooks (up to six months) and local farm news and features were the most needed farm programming. Least needed were futures prices and general economic news.

Farmers surveyed at extension and nonextension meetings preferred to hear university extension specialists, other farmers, and their county extension agent on the radio. Farmers wanting to hear another farmer operated significantly smaller farms. Those farmers using the futures market had a significantly stronger desire to hear a commodity broker on the radio.

The most common suggestions to improve farm radio programs were requests for more market news, farm broadcasters who understand agricultural terminology, and programs to educate the general public about farming.

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STUDY OF EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS IN PITTSBURGH FOR ENTRY-LEVEL STAFF POSITIONS IN ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATIONS

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Point Park College, 1984

Adviser: Kathleen Smith

EMPLOYMENT. JOURNALISM EDUCATION. SURVEY RESEARCH.

The purpose of this study was to define the employment standards Pittsburgh employers hold for hiring communicators into entry-level positions. It sought to report Pittsburgh hiring practices and to determine the importance employers place on academic training, communications skills and various personal and professional factors. It also sought to define the roles pre-employment communications testing, personal interviews and portfolios play in the hiring function.

The data regarding employment standards and pre-employment testing were gathered through a questionnaire mailed to