JOURNALISM EDUCATION: A SURVEY OF
CITY EDITORS' ATTITUDES

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This study determined attitudes held by metropolitan city editors in Texas toward current journalism instruction in colleges and universities. An open-ended questionnaire was mailed to city editors of newspapers in Texas with circulation over 50,000. Twenty-three of the twenty-six editors to whom questionnaires were sent responded.

The thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter I introduces the study by explaining the purpose, nature, and procedure of the project. Chapter II gives demographic data on the respondents and their publications. Chapter III is concerned with journalism education in general. It includes an analysis of the editors' attitudes toward the value of nine journalism courses and eleven areas of study related to journalism. It also includes an analysis of the editors' opinions on when students should specialize in a reporting field, and what fields are most likely to be a part of routine reportage in the future. Chapter IV is concerned with news-gathering and writing courses. It includes an analysis of the editors' assessments of
recent journalism graduates' average competency in seventeen basic skills, and a comparison of reportorial areas where editors said new reporters are weakest. Chapter V contains some conclusions and recommendations.

Findings which emerged from the study are as follows:

1. City editors are about equally divided on whether job applicants should be required to have degrees, but a majority said if a degree is obtained, it is not a particular advantage for it to be in journalism. The editors were not influenced by whether they held a degree themselves, or by whether it was in journalism.

2. The editors were interested in seeing students obtain a broad liberal arts background, and were most interested in seeing them acquire knowledge in the areas of political science and economics.

3. The editors place a high degree of emphasis on a practical approach to journalism instruction; specifically, they are more interested in news-gathering and writing courses than in courses which deal with research and theory. There is no significant difference in the journalism courses the editors feel are most valuable according to their own degree status.

4. The editors find the skills of recent journalism graduates adequate in most cases, but less than adequate in several areas. Particular weaknesses are knowing how to go about finding sources,
awareness of when identification and attribution are needed, ability to recognize when stories need follow-ups, spelling, and knowledge of style rules. The editors find new reporters least prepared to cover city council, county offices and agencies, and courts.

5. There is a significantly low degree of contact between city editors and educators. Fifty per cent of the respondents had not visited a school or department of journalism in the last year; less than half visited one as frequently as once a year, and less than half had been invited to visit one in the last year. However, there was a high degree of interest in making contacts, and it is recommended that a study be undertaken to determine the most effective format in which the city editors and educators might exchange ideas and information.
JOURNALISM EDUCATION: A SURVEY OF
CITY EDITORS' ATTITUDES

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The alliance between the working press and college and university programs for journalism instruction has always been an uneasy one. Tracing the history of journalism education in the United States, William Sexton (12, p. 9) found the first attempt to establish a collegiate program for journalists came to nothing. In 1869, General Robert E. Lee, then president of Washington College, failed to give away any of fifty "press scholarships" for free tuition in the classics plus one hour of one-the-job training. But he did succeed in stirring criticism from self-made newsmen. E. L. Godkin of The New York Evening Post called the plan an "absurdity."

The educational community could be equally adamant about giving journalism academic acceptance. Joseph Pulitzer campaigned more than a decade before Columbia University reluctantly agreed to accept $2,000,000 in 1903 endowing the first school of journalism in the United States. Getting it open took another eight years. By then it was no longer first, and its creator was dead.
The passage of time has still not erased the professional disdain which Lee discovered, nor the academic suspicion vented on Pulitzer, Sexton says. Only the arguments and issues have changed.

The cast of characters has changed in the ensuing years, too, as journalism educators entered the continuing controversy. Today there are more than 150 schools and departments of journalism in the United States (10, p. 10). In addition, there are several hundred senior and junior colleges which offer journalism courses but not a major. There is, then, a rather large number of faculty members to speak before administrations on the worthiness of journalism as an area of academic study.

If they have not always been as supportive of their programs as they should be, Lincoln University journalism instructor Avon Wilson says (15, p. 740) it may be because journalism educators have found themselves harassed on two fronts.

On the one hand, professionals in the field scoffed at classroom instruction in news desk and reporting skills. On the other hand, campus colleagues belittled journalism professors for their paucity of academic degrees.

Journalism professors who were practical enough to make their programs appeal to the anti-intellectual editors and publishers were scorned for downgrading the university to trade school status.

Some schools of journalism have tried to appease both groups by retaining a core of skills and techniques courses, but at the
same time emphasizing employment of more faculty with doctoral degrees. The trend toward requirement of the Ph. D. has been called "profoundly destructive" (14, p. 6) by one educator, who has also gained national prominence as a newsman, and has been criticized by many editors and publishers who feel the requirement lessens the likelihood instructors will have practical experience. Academically, some journalism educators do not feel the stepped-up scholarship has improved their standing, either. In 1967, Dr. John Merrill of the University of Missouri observed,

A few years back, many of us in journalism education thought that when we got better educated faculty members and brought more professionalism and scholarship to our programs, the lashings we received periodically from practicing journalists and fellow academicians would diminish. Now that we have made great advances in these areas, we find that criticism, rather than dissipating, has grown, and that most of the new critics are no better informed about journalism education than were their predecessors (7, p. 10).

In surveying literature written by journalism educators in recent years, one finds several recurring responses to criticism that journalism programs, for one reason or another, are inadequate. One response is that regardless of the approach schools of journalism take, they are somewhat thwarted in their efforts by the increasing number of students in journalism programs. Journalism enrollments at forty-four schools responding to a survey in 1971 had increased by
an average of 78 per cent in the previous five years. During the same period, the faculty increase had been only 2.5 members on the average. At the University of Texas, where journalism was the most rapidly growing program on campus, there was an increase of 432 undergraduates since 1965, making enrollment 1,760 in 1970 (11, p. 8).

An equally serious complaint is that the profession fails to reward the degree of knowledge and competency required. A department chairman at a state university recently wrote that he found it somewhat discouraging to prepare the brightest and best students for a career in journalism, because "most news agencies remain unwilling or unable to pay the salaries that such young graduates might demand (13, p. 12).

In the late 1960's, a survey was made of persons who had ten years earlier been selected as best-of-the-year graduates by Sigma Delta Chi, a professional fraternity for journalists. Of the thirty-five selected, only seven were still working on newspapers. The median salary of the thirty-five was $12,600; the median salary of the seven was $8,164 (4, p. 14).

It is hardly surprising that educators and editors do not represent a solidified force for education in the profession. One need only look at the differences of opinion that exist within the ranks of
each professional group. In a survey of members of the Association for Education in Journalism, Malcolm MacLean and his associates discovered (8, pp. 102-107) varying attitudes on journalism education issues separated the instructors into five major opinion profiles. The profile analysis was based on Stephenson's Q methodology.

The first of the five groups was the communications group, or those who strongly agreed with statements favorable to more research and theory. The group was against confining course offerings to technical training and, more than the others, was against training journalists by the old, well-tried methods until communication theory is developed.

The second group, termed defenders of journalism schools, was characterized by its strong disagreement with statements which asserted that schools of journalism have little impact on the mass communications industry, and that training for a reporting career could just as easily be obtained in a liberal arts college. The third, or broad background group, didn't care particularly about behavioral research or about training in the skills of journalism. They wanted to insure broad, humanistic liberal arts education for students going into journalism.

The fourth group, the skills group, believed, like those in the defense group, that the transmission of the lore and skills of the
newsroom does justify the existence of a journalism school in an institution of higher learning. Members of the skills group agreed quite strongly that "the best editors have literary talents, not behavioral science insights."

While the defense group and the skills group held serious reservations concerning the value of communication research and theory in journalism training, the fifth, or researcher-go-home group, showed clear antagonism. They fully rejected the ideas that communication theory should be the basis for the teaching of journalism and that the future of journalism education depends upon the scientific study of the communication processes.

Practicing journalists are at least as divided in their thinking as are educators. One writer concluded, "If you want to stir up a hornet's nest, just ask a group of newspapermen what they think about today's journalism school graduates" (9, p. 32). He suggested that even more significance might be attached to the differences of his surveyees when one considers that they were editors in the Midwest, the heartland of many of the top journalism schools in the nation.

In 1961, Charles T. Duncan, dean of the Oregon School of Journalism and then president of the Association for Education in Journalism, spoke at the AEJ national convention about what he felt
was the very unsatisfactory state of journalism education. His address was later reproduced in the *Journalism Quarterly*.

Duncan said,

... nothing could be more effective in the strengthening and improvement of journalism education than a mounting chorus of concern and interest by ownership and management in the strength and quality of the journalism or communications programs of the nation's colleges and universities (3, p. 525).

He was not, however, optimistic that such a chorus would become a reality, nor did he feel that news managers would convey their concern to college and university administrators, from whom support must come.

In 1972 the situation was not much improved. Hillier Kriegbaum of New York University, in his AEJ presidential paper, concerned himself with the same point Duncan had dwelt on a decade earlier. Kriegbaum wrote,

At a time when the mass media are under criticism and attacks as heavy as any in a generation, educators have a responsibility, I believe, to join the professional practitioners in supporting what is good and trying to correct what is wrong. Professors and working newsmen with print and broadcast may argue on just which items belong in each category, but they should not disagree, very much, that each professional group has a tremendous stake in working together toward a better future. Yet this paper will document what comes close to a shocking separatism between those who teach and those who practice journalism in America today (5, p. 805).
In his paper, Kriegbaum evaluated results of a questionnaire mailed to senior news executives in the home towns and metropolitan areas located nearest to a sample of sixty accredited schools. Kriegbaum found what he termed a very real communications gap between professors and practitioners. One third, or 34 per cent, of the senior news executives (101 out of 188 replied) had not visited the journalism school or department in their own home town during the previous year, and 24 per cent had not been to any journalism school at all during that period.

In his analysis of the current state of journalism education, Sexton listed (12, p. 10) among current topics of debate professional training versus communications research, liberal education versus skills and techniques courses, and thorough general education versus specialization in a specific news field.

This study questioned city editors about the areas of concern stressed by Sexton. They are areas which deserve examination, but they are also areas where there is much disagreement of a philosophical nature. Changes in the overall approach of journalism schools' programs, if they come, will do so only after a great deal more discussion and study of the needs and responsibilities of the mass media.

Thus, in addition to gathering data useful for the long-range propositions of journalism education, this exploration also gathered
data useful for determining the attitudes of city editors toward more basic matters. As at least two semesters of reporting are required in most journalism schools now, and this is not a requirement that is likely to change in the immediate future, questions on the strengths and weaknesses of the traditional aspects of reporting instruction were included.

William Lindley, a newsmen-turned-teacher, addressing himself to the basics, says,

The haughty attitudes of some of the "pure" colleges or departments of higher learning have made some journalism professors almost apologetic about teaching reporting, copy editing and typography. Actually, the time to start apologizing for the teaching of journalistic techniques in college will be when we have a surplus of highly skilled reporters, copy editors and typographers.

The purists wave away such statements with the remark that "A good man can pick up all he needs to know about journalism in a city room in a few months." And that favorite reply shows in itself a lack of appreciation of the difference between dull, stenographic prose and carefully crafted stories. It also presumes that city staff men, particularly city editors: (a) are just naturally good teachers; (b) have all the time in the world to help confused young writers, and (c) are just dying to spend time teaching confused young writers. But good city editors are usually too rushed to teach anybody and expect their young reporters to know quite a bit about newspapering, particularly writing techniques. The young man who isn't well grounded in techniques is liable to become discouraged, or fired, or both (6, p. 8).

The criticisms made by all media members in all areas should be given consideration, at least to the extent of categorizing
them so that the more frequent and serious charges emerge as such. The criticisms made by newspapermen about beginning reporters demand particular attention because of the number of journalism graduates entering that medium. The Newspaper Fund, Inc. (2) reports that approximately 62.1 per cent of the journalism graduates of 1972 found employment in the mass media. The largest share, 22.9 per cent, was hired by daily newspapers. Television hired only 4 per cent, radio 3.2 per cent.

City editors' attitudes were analyzed because the city editor represents the level of newspaper management most likely to be in continuous contact with recent journalism graduates as they begin their careers. It is the city editor who takes pleasure in guiding well-prepared journalists or bears the daily frustrations of training those who have not accomplished basic skills before entering the business. The city editor is most likely, too, to see a representative sample of former journalism students, since the city desk traditionally supervises the largest number of employees in an editorial department.

Statement of the Problem

This study was designed to determine attitudes held by metropolitan city editors in Texas toward current journalism instruction in colleges and universities.
Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were (1) to examine city editors' attitudes toward journalism education in general, (2) to examine specifically city editors' attitudes toward the functions of reporting courses, (3) to elicit suggestions and recommendations for improving journalism education, and (4) to explore ways in which editors can make a contribution to education in journalism.

Hypotheses

To carry out the purposes of this study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. The city editors will not be concerned about whether job applicants have degrees.
2. The city editors' preferences on degrees will not be determined by whether they hold a degree themselves.
3. The city editors will not be concerned about whether applicants' degrees are earned in journalism.
4. The city editors' preferences on journalism degrees will not be determined by whether they hold a journalism degree themselves.
5. The city editors will prefer that job applicants have a broad liberal arts background.
6. The city editors will place a high degree of emphasis on a practical approach to journalism courses; specifically, they will be more interested in skills and technique courses than in courses which deal with research and theory.

7. There will be no significant difference in the value placed on journalism courses according to the editors' own degree status.

8. There will be no significant difference in the value placed on communications research according to the number of years of experience the editors have, or their familiarity with current programs of journalism education.

9. The city editors will rate the overall skills of recent journalism graduates adequate, but will cite some instances where they are less than adequate.

10. There will be a low degree of contact between the city editors and journalism departments, but a high degree of interest in making more contacts.

Background and Significance of Study

Journalism Abstracts indicates a relatively small amount of serious study has been undertaken to determine the reasons for the continuing controversy between editors and educators.
The two recent listings which would relate most closely to this study are "Education for Newspapermen: The Preferences of West Coast Managing Editors," a master's thesis written by Susan Tebbe in 1966 at Oregon University, and "A Survey of On-the-job Training of Journalists in the American Newsroom," a master's thesis written by Grant Woodruff Heath at the University of Utah in 1965. The former deals with whether managing editors prefer that newsmen have degrees, and the latter surveys 170 newspapers on their training programs. Neither deals directly with the city editor.

A large number of articles useful in researching this thesis topic appeared in Journalism Quarterly, Quill, and Nieman Reports over the last decade, reaching a peak in 1969 when a total of eleven articles on journalism education (in a broad sense of the term) appeared in the three publications. The total number dropped to three the following year, and had risen again to seven in 1972, indicating a somewhat sporadic concern.

The articles fall into the general categories of (1) overall criticism of schools of journalism as training centers for newsmen, (2) criticism of course offerings and methods of teaching, (3) the role of journalism schools and instructors as critics of the working press, (4) the feasibility of advisory committees comprised of
editors and educators, and (5) continuing education for practicing journalists.

The viewpoint of the articles varies primarily with the author's affiliation with either the working press or the educational community, and with whether the research preceding the writing was of a formal or an informal nature.

The one article which was concerned specifically with city editors (1, pp. 99-102) was a comparative study of the evaluations made by the editors and educators of a sample of student writing. The authors state it was a rather limited and unscientific study.

Limitations

The study was limited to city editors on Texas newspapers with circulations over 50,000 because these are the papers employing the largest numbers of students coming from schools of journalism. It was in the interest of consistency to set the limit at that figure, too, since what would be a city editor's responsibilities are frequently carried out by a managing editor or someone with another title on a smaller paper. In some instances, the decision to include a city was based on the combined circulation of morning and evening papers which are editorially separate but corporately owned.
Basic Assumptions

It is assumed the subjects responded honestly to the close ended questions in the questionnaire and felt free to comment on their particular criticisms and expectations wherein such comments were solicited.

Instruments

An open-ended questionnaire (see Appendix B) designed to extract necessary information from city editors was used to partially fulfill the stated purposes of this study. The questionnaire asked for demographic data on the editors and their newspaper, their degree preferences, their estimation of the average competency in basic skills of their employees who were recent graduates of a school of journalism, and their estimation of the degree of emphasis that should be placed on traditional areas of reportage. Also, it asked for their estimation of the degree of emphasis that should be placed on areas of study related to journalism and on journalism courses. The questionnaire concluded with questions designed to determine the amount of participation the editors had in college and university journalism programs.
Procedures for Collection of Data

The questionnaires were mailed, along with a cover letter (see Appendix A), to twenty-six city editors whose newspapers met the circulation requirements set forth. The 1972 Editor and Publisher Yearbook was used as a guide for compiling the mailing list (Appendix C). Telephone contacts were made before the questionnaires were mailed to encourage their return. Post cards were sent as reminders to those not responding within a week, and a second post card was sent to those not responding within two weeks.

Procedures for Analysis of Data

The data collected were analyzed in the following manner:

1. Question 6, designed to ascertain attitudes toward preparation in basic reporting skills, was analyzed in terms of the editors responding in each of four possible ways. The skills listed were then compared with each other. When appropriate, some of the skills were collapsed.

2. Question 7, designed to determine attitudes toward which specific areas of reporting should be emphasized, was analyzed in terms of the editors responding in each of four possible ways. The areas listed were then compared with each other. When appropriate, some of the areas were collapsed.
3. Question 8, designed to determine attitudes toward which courses of study related to journalism should be emphasized, was analyzed in terms of the editors responding in each of four possible ways. The courses were then compared with each other. When appropriate, some of the courses were collapsed.

4. Question 9, designed to determine which journalism courses the respondents felt were most important for the reporter, was analyzed in terms of which courses received the highest and lowest ratings of semester hours.

Questions designed to elicit demographic data were used to compile groups of editors. The groups, then, were used to compare varying responses to Questions 6-9. Questions designed to determine the editors' degree of participation in journalism education were used additionally to make some conclusions about how the editor-educator controversy might be resolved.

The unstructured portions of the questionnaire, where respondents made comments, were analyzed for attitudes and opinions that were not revealed in, or added to, information gained in the structured portions. Additionally, replies to the questionnaire were compared with what has been written by educators and editors in the literature reviewed.
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13. Strentz, Herbert, "Competent Journalism, Some Thoughts on the Classroom, the Newsroom and the 'Real World,'" Quill, 58 (September, 1970), 12-14.


CHAPTER II

OVERVIEW

Twenty-three (88 per cent) of the twenty-six city editors to whom materials were mailed responded. Twenty-two (85 per cent) of the questionnaires were returned; one editor wrote a letter.

Six editors responded within one week of the initial mailing. Following the mailing of post cards as reminders, thirteen more replied. Thus, two weeks after the questionnaires had gone out, nineteen replies were received. At this time, a second post card was sent to those who had not yet responded. One more reply was received during the next ten days. Three questionnaires were returned after this time, too late to be used for statistical analysis of the data contained on them.

The nineteen editors returning questionnaires supervise an average 18.2 employees each. There were six editors having more than twenty employees under their supervision. In eight cases, city editors shared supervision of some employees because they have some who work for both a morning and evening edition of the same paper.
Seventy-nine per cent of the nineteen editors participate in the final decision of whether to hire job applicants.

The editors frequently used the unstructured portions of the questionnaire to add comments, several of which were about the study itself. "These are topics we have discussed here often," one editor wrote as a conclusion to his questionnaire. "I tried to answer the questions realistically, since this has been the greatest fault of most J-grads we've had here; they have been unrealistic."

One editor said it would be possible to survey her staff, too, if that would be helpful. Another editor said he would welcome a personal visit if any deeper or more extensive views of his feelings were needed. Two wrote letters to accompany their questionnaires. "For some time, I've been concerned about the lack of professionalism in our field," one editor commented in his letter. "Obviously, the only way we can come to grips with the problem is to begin on the J-school level," he concluded. He asked to be apprised of the results of the survey, and suggested the study might be useful to the Texas Daily Newspaper Association.

The other editor who wrote an accompanying letter began by commenting that some of his opinions might fall outside the intent and scope of the survey. "But, unfortunately, it is a rare occasion when the city editor of a daily newspaper is offered an opportunity to
communicate directly with a journalism educator," he explained.

He offered these observations about young journalism graduates:

(1) Most of them come to the profession with a starry-eyed concept of how things ought to be rather than how things really are. They are initially unable to adapt to the variables and uncertainties that plague all daily newspapers. They seem to forget that what's happening on the street has little or no relation to the sheltered academic community. Murders are not scheduled. Neither are obituaries nor rapes... the community at large is not the same ordered environment one encounters in the university.

(2) The "prima donna" syndrome, I feel, is a direct result of young journalism graduates not realizing the importance of the total responsibility of the newspaper to the community it serves... They can't seem to comprehend that the paper is a record--an historical record of the community from the womb to the tomb.

(3) You've got to crawl before you walk... but the young journalist fresh out of college who has spent two or three years as a staffer on the school newspaper feels he has crawled far enough. He thinks he is Walter Cronkite or Damon Runyon the first day on the job. If you try to explain to him that his story has to be backed by facts rather than opinion, he accuses the editors and the paper of being "married" to the so-called "establishment" and walks away in a huff.

This particular editor was one of two who apparently felt it would be useful to include information about themselves. "Before you take me as a crusty, hard-core old fuddy-duddy," this one added, "I am only 30 years old myself. And it has been only a very few years since I stumbled out of college and into the journalism profession."
The other editor who offered information about himself wrote:

Despite impressions given, I am only 25, quite liberal politically and socially, have spent six years editing high school through university publications and have spent the past five years as wire editor working side-by-side with city editors or as a city editor. I have been attending college part-time for the past four years and am nearing a journalism degree, and, hopefully, a government degree. I sympathize with journalism professors, but recent experience has convinced me theory must not overshadow mechanics and classroom atmosphere can't be expected on the job.

In the profile groups to be discussed in this chapter, both of the above editors were in the group of editors having five or fewer years of experience in the newspaper business. Both were in the group which felt a degree was not necessarily needed, nor that it necessarily needed to be in journalism if obtained. The one who held a degree had earned it in English. The latter editor cited qualified for the group considered to have a high degree of participation in the educational process of college and university journalism students. The first qualified only on one point, that he would be interested in meeting with educators to discuss journalism instruction.

To evaluate thoroughly the results of the questionnaire, groups of editors were established in four areas. The groups were concerned with the number of years of experience editors had, their preferences on degrees, their own educational backgrounds, and how active they were in the journalism programs of colleges and
universities. In the case of experience, editors were broken down into groups of those who had fewer than five years, those who had six to fifteen years, and those who had more than fifteen years. Where preference on degrees was concerned, editors were grouped according to whether they considered a degree a necessity and according to whether they believed it should be earned in journalism or another area. Their own educational backgrounds determined whether they would be placed in the group of journalism graduates, non-journalism graduates, or non-graduates. One group was formed from information on how active the editors were in journalism programs, this being the group considered to have a high degree of involvement in journalism education.

Experience

Nineteen editors responded to the question on experience. The average number of years was 16.9. Three editors had five or fewer years of experience; six had six to fifteen years; ten had more than fifteen years.

The average number of years as a city editor or an assistant city editor was six.

With the exception of the 2.5 years one editor had worked outside Texas, the cumulative total of 321 years of experience
represented in this study was gained in Texas. Taking into consideration, also, that only three editors held degrees from schools outside Texas, it can be concluded that the subjects of this study are a rather inbred group.

Degree Preference

The respondents were about equally divided on whether job applicants should have college degrees. Of twenty replying, 55 per cent said applicants generally should have degrees; 45 per cent said a degree was not necessarily a requirement by their standards. One respondent to the question on degree preference did not offer any information on his own educational background.

Hypothesis One, which stated that editors would not be concerned with whether applicants have a degree is neither proven nor disproven since there is only a 10 per cent degree difference in opinion. Hypothesis Two, which stated editors' degree preferences would not be determined by their own degree status is proven by the lack of a significant difference in opinion, as can be seen in Table I.

Seventy-five per cent of the editors indicated that when an applicant has a degree, it is not of particular importance that the degree be in journalism. Twenty-five per cent said the degree generally should be in journalism.
Hypothesis Three, which stated that editors would not be concerned about the area in which an applicant had earned his degree is proven since 50 per cent more did not care whether the degree was in journalism than did. Hypothesis Four, which stated editors' preferences on journalism degrees would not be determined by whether they had a journalism degree is proven by the lack of a significant difference in opinion, as can be seen in Table II.

Two of the editors who felt a degree in journalism was not an advantage expressed stronger feelings about it than did the others in that group. These two were editors of separate morning and evening editions of the same paper. One of them commented, "We have had better experience with persons with broad education." He
held a bachelor of science degree in education with a major in English and a minor in political science. He also held an associate degree in nursing. He added that his managing editor had a degree in chemistry and agronomy, and the wire editor had a degree in physics and was pursuing another in art.

**TABLE II**

**OPINIONS ON WHETHER JOB APPLICANTS' DEGREE SHOULD BE IN JOURNALISM, CLASSIFIED BY DEGREE STATUS OF RESPONDENTS**

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<tr>
<td>Hold No Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several editors qualified their replies that journalism degrees were not necessary. One said almost any major was acceptable, but the applicant should have at least a strong minor in journalism. Another said the prospect "should take basics, such as reporting, feature writing, typography and law of the press."
Two city editors of newspapers in the same city with over 200,000 circulation were among the minority who believed degrees in journalism were preferable. "J courses alone are inadequate," one said, but explained, "We don't have time to train them in rudiments of journalism." The other said applicants should have degrees because "it takes more personal motivation for those who don't, plus a great deal of natural talent." The degree should be in journalism, he said, because "those receiving a degree in journalism seem to sense a need for a broader interest range and go after it."

One respondent offered these comments:

I have a mixed bag here, so to speak. The best of the lot is a 25-year-old Ivy League graduate, not a journalism grad. Another, 23, attended college two years, no journalism courses. He's developed into a fine reporter and a capable writer with a flair for clarity and story organization.

Three others, all J-school grads, so far are trying. They show intelligence, and we're trying to train them.

We've had two J-grads here with master's degrees and we've let them go. They lacked curiosity, love for the written word and the most precious quality of all, the ability to write a simple declarative sentence that says exactly what the writer intends to say.

The editors mentioned a wide variety of majors other than journalism they would consider when selecting employees. English was the most frequently listed (12 times), followed by political science (9), history (8), business and/or economics (6), and
government (4). Mentioned twice each were sociology and physical science. Mentioned once each were social science, psychology, education, law, agriculture, and oceanography.

Educational Backgrounds

Fourteen of the nineteen city editors replying to the question on educational background held degrees. Only two held master's degrees, one in journalism from the University of Texas and the other in political science from Columbia.

There was no demonstrable difference in the way those who had master's degrees and those who had bachelor's degrees or no degree answered questions. On degree preference, one who held a master's degree said he thought a degree was not a necessity. The other holder of a master's degree said he thought a degree generally should be a requirement. Neither thought it was a particular advantage to obtain it in journalism.

Five of the bachelor's degrees were in journalism, four were in English, and two were a combination of journalism and English. One was a combination of journalism and economics. One was in history and one was in education.

Three of the fourteen editors had earned degrees at schools outside of Texas. One man had done his undergraduate work at the
University of Missouri and his graduate work at Columbia. One editor had done undergraduate work at Harvard, another at Notre Dame.

More respondents had attended North Texas State University (four) and the University of Texas at Austin (three) than any other schools. Two had attended Midwestern University. Listed once each were Texas Christian University, Texas Tech University, the University of Texas at Arlington, the University of Texas at El Paso, Texas A & I University, West Texas State University, St. Edward's University, Angelo State University, Lamar State College, Odessa Junior College, George Washington University, and Iowa Wesleyan.

Participation in Journalism Education

City editors were asked several questions to determine their degree of participation in college and university programs of journalism education. They were asked to specify when they last visited a school of journalism, whether they visited frequently, and what the purposes of their visits were. They were also asked to specify when they last were invited to visit a school of journalism and whether they would like to meet with other practicing journalists and journalism instructors to discuss journalism education. This series
of questions received the least response of any on the question-
naire.

Last visits to a school of journalism ranged from "a few days
ago" to "five or six years ago." One man said he couldn't remember
when he made his last visit; one said he had never visited. Eight of
sixteen replying to the question had visited a school of journalism
within the last year; five (of the same eight) said they visited one at
least once a year. To the question of frequency of visits, one editor
replied, "By choice, rarely if ever." This editor, incidentally, held
a master's degree in journalism. Most visits were made for the pur-
pose of speaking to classes. Only one said he visited primarily to
recruit.

Fifteen editors replied to the question which asked when they
had last received an invitation to visit a school of journalism. Only
seven had received an invitation within the last year, and these were
essentially the same editors who said they had made a visit to a school
within the last year and visited one frequently. Three editors said
they had never received invitations. Eighteen replied to a question
that asked whether their paper allowed them time away from their
jobs to accept invitations. Fifteen said yes, two no, and one "rarely"
(see Table III).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience Group</th>
<th>Number of Years of Experience*</th>
<th>Visited J-School within Last Year</th>
<th>Visits J-School at Least Once a Year</th>
<th>Received Invitation to Visit J-School within Last Year</th>
<th>Would Like to Meet with Instructors to Discuss Journalism Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fewer than 5 Years</td>
<td></td>
<td>x**</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-15 Years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>x***</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
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<tr>
<td>More than 15 Years</td>
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<td>. . .</td>
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<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>. . .</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Column represents individual editors by their years of experience.

** x, affirmative answer; solid row indicates high degree of participation.

*** The editor who had not received an invitation, but had visited, had done so to recruit.
Nineteen answered the question on whether they would be interested in meeting with other newsmen and instructors. Fourteen made a positive reply to the question, five a negative. Of the five, three were definitely not interested. One editor said she would have to decline invitations to meet with instructors because she had "no time," and another editor said he was "not necessarily" interested in such discussions. The three who had no interest at all said their papers would "probably" allow them time away from their jobs for such meetings. The editor who replied she had "no time" also indicated her paper would make no allowances for this purpose. The editor who said he was "not necessarily" interested answered "probably not" to the question of company time.

Asked how often a meeting of newsmen and instructors should take place, six said once a year, four said more than once a year, and two said every two years.

Four questions were isolated from the series to develop a group of editors considered to have a high degree of participation in college and university programs of journalism instruction. Those whose replies were affirmative on all four points were included. Of the five who qualified, two were city editors of separated morning and evening editions of the same paper. Three were editors of papers with circulations of 100,000 or more, one was the city editor of a
paper slightly over 50,000 circulation, and the other was the city editor of a paper with circulation around 80,000.

Four held a bachelor's degree in journalism; the fifth was working on one in that area. Four felt a degree was generally necessary; two said it should be in journalism. There was a consensus of opinion among the five that it would be helpful for them and instructors to meet at least annually. One said such a meeting "should be a priority in our profession." Three said they meet now with educators periodically, and one said he keeps in touch with them at least monthly through Sigma Delta Chi meetings.

Only five editors were actively involved in journalism education, but fourteen were interested in becoming more involved, which proves Hypothesis Ten. That hypothesis states there will be a low degree of contact with journalism departments, but a high degree of interest in making more contacts.
CHAPTER III

JOURNALISM EDUCATION IN GENERAL

The city editors were asked to specify the number of semesters needed in nine specific journalism courses. Their response indicated they are most interested in news gathering and writing courses. The courses, in the order they were rated, were general reporting, desk work (editing, headline writing, and make-up), public affairs reporting, feature writing, law of the press, photography, communications research, communications theory, and printing. The range on the number of semesters needed in general reporting was one to nine, with four semesters being listed most often. On all other courses, one semester was listed most often. Five editors said no printing was needed, two said no photography was needed, and four said no work in communications research or theory was necessary.

Hypothesis Six stated that city editors will place a high degree of emphasis on a practical approach to journalism education; specifically they will be more interested in skills and techniques courses than in courses which deal with research and theory. As can be seen
in Table IV, the editors did place more importance on all basic skills courses except photography.

TABLE IV

OPINIONS CONCERNING NUMBER OF SEMESTERS NEEDED IN NINE JOURNALISM COURSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Average Number of Semesters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Reporting</td>
<td>4.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Affairs Reporting</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature Writing</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desk Work</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photography</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law of the Press</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications Research</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications Theories</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The editors commented frequently in the space provided following this question, and in the space provided for general comments at the end of the questionnaire, about what they felt was a necessity to emphasize basics. "Learning to write basic news stories is still the most important factor... if that is mastered in college, the rest can easily come with experience." Another said, "The ability to tackle a complicated story and translate it into a readable and interesting story is the most important thing."

"General reporting and editing really covers the subject for reporters," one editor commented. "If they know how to write
coherently, which many of them don't, they can pick up the other skills by practice, reading other papers and seeing how their copy is edited."

One editor said he had "always felt that most intelligent men and women with a normal amount of curiosity would make pretty fair reporters. Basics are most important," he said, "combined with as wide an education as possible . . . most theoretical journalism courses are needless in relation to arts and humanities."

One editor who said four semesters of desk work as well as four semesters of general reporting would be valuable made this comment: "A reporter's primary trade is just that, reporting and writing. It is also a great help if he understands the problems and functions of the copy desk." One other editor said four semesters of desk work was needed; three said six.

Several editors commented that law of the press is important in their opinion. "I believe law of the press should either be extremely extensive or spread over a two-semester span," said one. Another said, "Thorough overall familiarization with press law needs more attention," and a third said, "Even veteran reporters could use a 'helluva' lot more law." Two of these three editors were among those considered to have a high degree of participation in journalism education.
For the purpose of comparing the attitudes of journalism graduates, non-journalism graduates and non-graduates, eight of the nine courses listed were collapsed in one analysis of the data. The three courses which represent work in news gathering and writing formed one group; the three courses which represent related areas of newspaper skills formed another, and the two courses which represent an analytical approach to journalism formed the third. Law of the press was not included in any of the groups since it could conceivably be in any of the three.

Those who were journalism graduates were in favor of more work in all areas, with the exception of news gathering and writing, where the non-graduates represented the high with a mean of 11.12. This would place a student in at least one news-gathering or writing course each semester of his four years, two in some. Their attitudes may be attributed in part to an unfamiliarity with the curricula structure of journalism schools, few of which would include more than four semesters of basic reporting courses at the maximum. Only one of the non-graduates was in the profile group having a high degree of participation in journalism education. The journalism graduates rated news-gathering and writing courses 2.44 semesters higher than the non-journalism graduates, but in all other cases, the difference in opinion among the groups was .95 semesters or less.
Hypothesis Seven stated there would be no significant difference in the journalism courses the editors feel are most valuable according to the degree status of the editors. Table V shows that the respondents, regardless of degree status, placed the three areas of journalism education in the same order.

**TABLE V**

OPINIONS CONCERNING NUMBER OF SEMESTERS NEEDED IN THREE AREAS OF JOURNALISM, CLASSIFIED BY DEGREE STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>General Reporting, Public Affairs, and Feature Writing</th>
<th>Desk Work, Printing, and Photography</th>
<th>Communications Research and Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journalism Graduates</td>
<td>8.44</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Journalism Graduates</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Graduates</td>
<td>11.12</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis Eight stated there would be no significant difference of opinion on the value of communications research according to the years of experience editors had, or their familiarity with current programs of journalism education in colleges and universities. Both editors in the fewer-than-five-years'-experience group and the six-to-fifteen-years'-experience group said an average of one semester was desirable in communications research. Those with more than fifteen years' experience said only slightly less time, an average of .79 semesters, was desirable. Those editors in the group considered to have a high degree of participation in journalism education, and consequently a greater familiarity with it, said an average of .70 semesters was desirable in communications research. Those not included in the high degree of participation group said an average of .69 semesters was desirable.

One editor commented, "There is too much communications theory and too little practical, realistic application."

Recent and Related Studies

Journalism education has been called (3, p. 26) an "academic stepchild, battered by the crosswinds of advocates of intellectual and vocational preparation."
As was evidenced in the profile analysis of journalism educators (13, pp. 98-107), even faculty members disagree to a great extent on the relative importance of courses within schools of journalism. The main argument seems to stem from the trend in recent years for schools of journalism to move into the realm of scientific research and theoretical studies of the mass media. Courses in these areas evoke the criticism of those who firmly believe in the teaching of basic skills, and fear the teaching of techniques will suffer from the inclusion of communications.

Kriegbaum, in his paper, includes these comments from the managing editor of a large metropolitan daily:

The journalism educators have been burned severely in this state by overemphasizing theory and the Ph. D. to the detriment of hardnosed news reporting and editing. They have alienated many of the editors and publishers by stressing research and 'grantmanship,' without supplying the young communicator we need so desperately in the media (9, p. 808).

Jake Highton, a journalism professor, says,

Unquestionably research and scholarship are vital to universities. Journalism schools must pursue them while keeping up with swift technology. The day may come when newspapers will be circulated in homes by television tape and read anytime of day. But someone will have to report and edit the news. Journalism schools had better train newsmen . . . (7, p. 13).

Following the appearance of Highton's "Green Eyeshakes vs. Chi-Squares" in Quill, Keith P. Sanders undertook a study (15,
pp. 519-530) to determine what newsmen think about journalism research. Sanders felt Highton's article left the impression "that newsmen looked at journalism researchers as people off on a tangent of obfuscated irrelevancy."

Attitudes in Sanders' study were determined through Stephen-son's Q methodology. The Q sample consisted of forty-nine statements selected from a population of more than two hundred statements about journalism research. These were obtained from the subsequent debate in Quill over Highton's article, from other relevant literature, and from interviews with newspapermen and journalism researchers.

Questionnaires and Q decks were sent to 105 newspapers randomly selected from three strata of circulation (less than 35,000, between 35,000 and 100,000, and over 100,000). For newspapers in the two larger strata, materials were addressed alternately to the managing editor, editor, executive editor or associate editor, city editor, and copy editor or news editor. Fifty-one usable questionnaires and fifty completed Q sorts were returned, eleven of them from city editors. Managing editors returned eighteen, those with the title "editor," twelve.

In general, the subjects supported journalism research. In his analysis, Sanders stated,
They see research as something that can help them in producing better newspapers. What they want from research is something practical, not theoretical... With but one exception, they agree that research can be beneficial, but they also think there are communication problems between publishers, editors and working journalists on one hand and researchers on the other (15, p. 520).

The factor analysis produced three highly correlated factors. Sanders termed them the general supporter, the skeptical supporter, and the ignorant supporter.

Twenty-eight subjects, five of them city editors, made up the general supporter factor. Sanders concluded the general supporter still wants well-trained and practically oriented college graduates to join his news team; he sees nothing wrong with the teaching of research in journalism schools and, indeed, sees journalism research as being particularly important for "the new generation."

The five subjects making up the skeptical supporter factor (none were city editors) showed a disdain for the role of research in schools of journalism. The ignorant supporter factor (four subjects, one of whom was a city editor), saw research as a function of journalism schools, but also had the most difficulty defining journalism research.
One subject in this last category thought research was "a waste of time" on the academic level. This subject was, incidentally, the only one indicating a clearly negative attitude toward journalism research. Sanders says the unanimity of favorable attitudes suggests a biased sample response, but one that was anticipated at the outset since anti-research editors could hardly be expected to be eager to cooperate in any study of journalism research, let alone one that would require thirty to forty-five minutes of their time. He felt the value of his study was its ability to describe what pro-journalism research editors think, since they are most likely to be interested in its improvement.

Another area of professional journalism training that has been much written about is technology. Joseph Dunn, vice chairman of the new technology committee of the Associated Press Managing Editors, gave his approval in a recent article (4, pp. 4-6) to educators who believe it is their job to educate students, and the job of the individual newsroom to train its personnel to use the tools of the profession. Dunn's article was based on a discussion of new technology by a panel of educators appearing at an APME meeting. The educators were emphatic, Dunn says, that it is not the function of their institutions to train students to be proficient with Selectric typewriters, scanners, or display terminals. Rather, each of the panelists
expressed strong belief that it remains the mission of his educational institution to produce thinking students who are capable of becoming good journalists first and good technicians second.

Dunn also took note of the fact that educators said budgetary restrictions, as well as the inability to duplicate the many variations of systems presently in operation, make actual training classes prohibitive. Exposure to new technology, in most cases, was handled by making visits to computer-oriented newspapers available to students.

One respondent to this thesis study commented that printing courses should emphasize new optical copy reader techniques. Another said printing would be worth more than the one semester he rated it if it included "comprehensive work in cold type production and electronic techniques."

A survey of typography offerings in journalism schools in 1968 revealed (10, p. 134) most schools had worked some instruction in cold type into their courses. Thirty-two schools out of forty-seven responding to the survey offered printing, with two or three semester hours the most frequently granted amount of credit.

Most of the respondents indicated in their answers or comments that they favored variety in a reporter's education.

"I would like to see more work in English, sociology, political science, and history, and less in copy editing, printing,
editorial writing, etc.," one editor, a journalism graduate, com-
mented. "The student needs as wide a variety of courses as he can
possibly get," another said, this one a non-journalism graduate.

A non-graduate offered these comments:

Repetition does not make for good journalism train-
ing. Education in other fields is much more important,
because a reporter will do most of his work in other
fields. He should have a well-rounded education, giving
him a better understanding of what he is writing about.
A good reporter can and does put into use what he has
learned in his 36 to 44 hours of journalism [more than
the average student would take] by practical application
and on-job training. But he can never pick up the know-
ledge he has left behind by becoming too skilled and too
specialized in journalism.

Diversification of knowledge is the best tool a
reporter can pick up, and he must begin that diversifica-
tion at an early age and continue it through college and
into his job. All the journalism courses in the world
cannot replace that diversification. More history, more
sociology, more government and political science, more
medical and physical science, more about life itself is
needed in the young reporters of today. But the most
special need in college training for a future journalist
is as much as he can absorb of current events. Col-
lege instructors should begin the emphasis on current
events the first day for a beginning freshman and push
it to graduation.

Liberal Arts Background

The city editors surveyed in this study indicated an interest
in hiring young journalists with broad liberal arts backgrounds. They
listed a wide variety of majors they would consider when interviewing
job applicants. English was listed most frequently (63 per cent of
the respondents). Political science was listed by 47 per cent of the respondents, history by 42 per cent, and business and/or economics by 32 per cent. Nine other majors were named, and several added a comment that almost any major would be considered depending upon the applicant's other qualifications.

The editors were asked to rate eleven areas of study according to the degree of emphasis they should be given. Eighteen editors responding to the question rated government (state, local, and federal) highest, followed by political science and economics. There was more difference of opinion on other areas of study. The same number thought history and sociology should be given "much" emphasis, but slightly more thought history should be given "moderate" emphasis. Consumer affairs, a relatively new area of concentration, drew fewer responses for "much" emphasis than did history or sociology, but enough responses for "moderate" emphasis to place it just below history and ahead of sociology in importance if the two columns of higher degree are combined.

The life, earth, and physical sciences drew a combined response in the two columns of higher degree to place just below sociology. Psychology, criminology, and social work all drew the same amount of response in combined percentages for "much" and
"moderate" degrees. Criminology and social work were the only areas where any editors indicated there was no need for emphasis.

Hypothesis Five stated that city editors would prefer that job applicants have a broad educational background, and Table VI

**TABLE VI**

OPINIONS ON THE DEGREE OF EMPHASIS THAT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO AREAS OF STUDY RELATED TO JOURNALISM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Study</th>
<th>Number of Responses According to Degrees of Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Business</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Affairs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life, Earth and Physical Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
shows there are only two areas of study among eleven where any of the editors felt no emphasis was needed. The wide variety of majors other than journalism listed as acceptable also adds validity to the hypothesis.

To determine whether there was any difference of opinion according to the known degree status of seventeen respondents, the data were analyzed by degree status profile groups. Percentiles were based on eight journalism graduates, five non-journalism graduates, and four non-graduates. In the areas of political science and government, all responses were either in the "much" or "moderate" columns. One hundred per cent of the non-journalism graduates indicated "much" emphasis was needed in both areas. In the areas of history and economics, one respondent among the non-graduates was the only one who felt they should have less than "moderate" emphasis (see Table VII).

In the area of marketing and business, 100 per cent of the non-graduates felt it needed "little" emphasis, whereas only 25 per cent of the journalism graduates did, and 40 per cent of the non-journalism graduates did. In the area of consumer affairs, the non-graduates again rated it lower than the other respondents. One hundred per cent of the journalism graduates and 80 per cent of the non-journalism graduates said the area deserved "much" or "moderate"
### TABLE VII

PERCENTILE OF OPINIONS ON DEGREE OF EMPHASIS THAT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO AREAS OF STUDY RELATED TO JOURNALISM, CLASSIFIED BY DEGREE STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Study</th>
<th>Number of Responses According to Degree Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journalism Graduates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>History</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Business</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Affairs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life, Earth and Physical Sciences</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* M, Much; Mo, Moderate; L, Little; N, None.
emphasis; none of the non-graduates thought it deserved "much," and only 50 per cent thought it deserved "moderate." The journalism graduates and non-journalism graduates rated sociology higher, also. Eighty per cent or more of both groups rated it "much" or "moderate"; only 50 per cent of the non-graduates rated it thus.

One respondent in the journalism graduates group and one in the non-graduate group saw no need for emphasis in social work nor criminology. Otherwise, ratings were fairly evenly distributed in these areas. Slightly more non-journalism graduates (60 per cent) rated psychology in the two columns of higher degree than journalism graduates or non-graduates (both 50 per cent). In the area of science, considerably more journalism graduates and non-journalism graduates felt the area deserved more attention (87.5 per cent and 80 per cent, respectively, in the two columns of higher degree) than the non-graduates, 75 per cent of whom said it deserved little emphasis.

A survey (6, pp. 130-132) of Ohio newspaper executives to determine what areas of study potentially related to journalism the executives felt to be most important produced findings similar in some ways to this study. Political science courses were rated highest, but they were followed by behavioral sciences and general business courses. The conclusion of the author was that journalism students should be guided into a heavy concentration of political
science, and that a course in newspaper law should be an important part of the curriculum in every journalism school.

The American Council on Education for Journalism standards permit that only 25 per cent of students' credits may be earned in professional journalism courses, therefore providing the possibility for reporters to acquire a broad liberal arts background (1, p. 18).

Specialization

Fifteen city editors said they believed specialization in a reporting field should come on the job, four said it should come on the graduate level, and two said it could be incorporated into an undergraduate's training. One qualified his answer by saying specialization was acceptable on the undergraduate level only if journalistic skills were gained at the same time.

"Specialization, as a general rule, should come as on the job training or after a generalized background has been formed," one editor commented. "But if a fledgling newspaper reporter has an interest in a specific field, this interest should be fed on the undergraduate level in electives. They will still need a 'breaking in' period to learn basic reporting before spreading into the preferred field."
"On the job training is the only place a reporter can decide for himself what he wants to do," another said. "If he is not eventually doing what he wants to do, he will not do a good job. But specialization before involvement usually makes for unhappy reporters later along the way."

"Unless the prospective reporter has a strong enough interest in a field to get his degree in that area, specialization should await an incubating period on the job," one editor explained. Another said he believed specialization should come after actual job experience, "much the same as with a young doctor who is allowed to specialize only after an introduction to all areas of medicine."

As the city editor of a smaller daily, one respondent said he couldn't afford the luxury of specialists, but would "much rather have an all around reporter who could cover anything." He added, "I feel specialization should not come at the college level, but with newsroom experience. This is why broad educational background is so important."

The editors were asked to name areas of specialization, or "beats," they thought would be important in future years. Five named ecology, or the environment, and five named consumer affairs. Three mentioned urban affairs, and three mentioned investigative reporting into all aspects of government. Two mentioned
energy and family living. Named once each were racial relations, education, science, economics, sociology, and "the psychological analysis of people and trends."

One editor said, "I see a movement toward team coverage rather than beat coverage, a move away from specialization and back into generalization. If a new beat evolves, it will be in the form of an 'undercover' reporting team bent on investigation and in-depth reporting."

Most educators and journalists are agreed that we are living in an era which requires specialized reporting. C.A. McKnight, editor of The Charlotte Observer, says,

This is the time of specialists, or reporters schooled in political science, the mysteries of utility rate structures, philosophies of education, the physical sciences, high finance, health and medicine, aviation and other areas where to be ignorant journalistically is to invoke the scorn of our better informed readers (14, p. 21).

Louis Villano, who has held the positions of city editor and copy editor on a number of publications, says,

The age of the specialist is indeed upon us, but the harsh fact is that, with some notable and all too few exceptions, the press has not been moving forward rapidly enough to develop authorities in those fields which defy traditional reportage. This is a crucial point, for if the press is to speak with authority and with credibility on the complex social, economic and political issues of the day, it must possess people versed in the fields they are covering (16, p. 8).
In its special careers edition at the beginning of this decade, *Quill* listed (2, pp. 24-29) as new beats to look for in the 1970's consumer affairs, mental health, urban affairs, and environmental reporting. It also forecast the increasing importance of graphics arts specialists, familiar with optical scanner systems and other new technology.

Controversy arises primarily over when in a reporter's career he should begin to specialize. Bernard Kilgore, president of *The Wall Street Journal*, said (8, p. 8) he does not believe educators are following the right track when they seek to train highly specialized types of journalists. Kilgore says he can speak from experience in such specialized fields as business, economics and finance, politics, foreign affairs, and even science and religion. "We do not need help in training specialists. We need talent and we benefit from basic training and general experience. But beyond that, we must conduct our own staff development programs."

Educators are not always eager to make specialized reporting part of their purpose. Science, a specialization that has come into its own in recent years beginning with the launch of Russia's Sputnik and the space race that followed, offers an illustration. Pierre C. Fraley (5, p. 323), who left his position as science writer for *The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* to become executive secretary of the
Council for the Advancement of Science Writing, Inc., surveyed seventy-six schools of journalism in 1961 and found that only fourteen (18.4 per cent) had courses in science writing or a special sequence in science or technical writing. His survey drew such responses as, 'I do not believe that science writing has a place in the curriculum of a school of journalism. It does have a place in the graduate program or in specialized programs for experienced newspapermen'' (11, p. 334). Curtis MacDougall replied, "The good old 5 W's are important to everyone and I believe even the best should get their noses rubbed in police reporting for a while . . . specialization should come at the fifth year or graduate level'' (12, p. 325).
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CHAPTER IV

NEWS-GATHERING AND WRITING COURSES

The city editors, by their responses to questions and their comments, indicated a great deal of flexibility was acceptable in the education of a student preparing for a career in newspapers. However, they were eager for students to gain command of basic skills at the same time.

They believed strong emphasis should be placed on news-gathering and writing courses (an average of 9.15 semesters in these courses was indicated, as opposed to 5.03 semesters in editing, printing, and photography, and 1.88 semesters in research and theory). When the editors commented on areas of study related to journalism, they frequently said that broad educational backgrounds were desirable, but that students should also acquire at least the most basic reportorial skills before entering the profession.

Only one news organization out of eighteen represented in this study had what could be called a training program. One editor said the assistant city editor routinely went over copy with the cub reporters after deadline, and this was apparently more than the other
papers did. Another editor commented, "We, probably like most other Texas newspapers, generally are too short-handed to provide an actual training program. Our situation usually involves a new reporter accompanying the person he is about to relieve on a beat. Obviously, this situation is not ideal, but it's necessary."

Both the morning and the evening city editors of the one paper having a training program commented on how it worked. Essentially, it is set up to familiarize summer interns with as many facets of the newspaper as possible, but new employees also take part. Government officials or other newsmakers are invited for informal exchanges with the staff, and other sessions are arranged in particular problem areas as deemed needed. Examples given were a session on libel law conducted by the newspaper's attorney and a production school on the scanner. Monthly staff meetings feature outside speakers or films, one of the editors added. Both of these editors are among those in the profile group considered to have a high degree of participation in the journalism programs of colleges and universities.

"I am strongly in favor of journalism schools," still another member of that profile group commented. "My training, all of it, came on the job; this is a waste of the paper's time and the staffer's time."
The editors were asked to rate the average competency on basic skills of staffers who were recent journalism graduates. The consensus was that skills overall were adequate or less than adequate.

Of the total responses for all skills, 6.8 per cent were considered "good," 50.8 per cent were "adequate," 35.3 per cent were "less than adequate," and 5.6 per cent were "poor." There was a "no answer" percentile of 1.5.

Hypothesis Nine stated that editors would think the skills of recent journalism graduates were adequate overall, but would cite some instances where they were less than adequate. Table VIII indicates this hypothesis is valid.

**TABLE VIII**

EDITORS' ASSESSMENTS OF RECENT JOURNALISM GRADUATES' AVERAGE COMPETENCY IN BASIC SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Skills</th>
<th>Number of Responses by Degree of Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Recognize News Story</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Who Appropriate Sources of Information Are for Most Stories</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of What Sources of Information (Almanac, City Director, etc.) Are for Most Stories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE VIII (cont'd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Skills</th>
<th>Number of Responses by Degree of Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Conduct Interview</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Take Notes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Select Lead</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Organize Facts According to Importance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Write Concisely and Coherently</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy in Reporting</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Estimate Length Story Should Be According to Importance</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of When Identification and Attribution Are Needed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Recognize What Stories Need Follow-ups</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill in Spelling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Grammar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Associated Press (or similar) Style Rules</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Meet Deadlines</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*G, good; A, adequate; LA, less than adequate; P, poor; N/A, no answer.*
Weaknesses, according to the editors, were awareness of who sources would be for most stories (57.9 per cent "less than adequate") and awareness of what sources for most stories are (63.2 per cent "less than adequate" and 10.5 per cent "poor"). Awareness of when identification and attribution are needed and the ability to recognize when stories need follow-ups were both rated 47.4 per cent "less than adequate" and 10.5 per cent "poor."

Editors found spelling skill "less than adequate" by 52.6 per cent and "poor" by 10.5 per cent. Knowledge of Associated Press, or similar style rules, received the lowest ratings, 26.3 per cent "poor" and 36.8 per cent "less than adequate."

The editors found recent journalism graduates most competent in the area of recognizing news stories. Twenty-one per cent said skills were "good"; 73.7 per cent said they were "adequate."

The ability to conduct an interview and the ability to take notes were both rated 5.3 per cent "good" and 78.9 per cent "adequate." No editors said they found skills "good" in the ability to write coherently and concisely, but 57.9 per cent found them "adequate."

The ability to accurately report news drew a 10.5 per cent "good" response and a 68.4 per cent "adequate" response. Editors rated knowledge of grammar 5.3 per cent "good" and 57.9 per cent "adequate." Other strengths were the ability to meet deadlines, 15.8
per cent "good" and 73.7 per cent "adequate," and objectivity in reporting, 15.8 per cent "good" and 52.6 per cent "adequate."

In order to analyze the data by the areas skills were in, three clusters were formed from among the skills listed. The News Gathering cluster was comprised of the ability to recognize news, awareness of who and what sources are for most stories, the ability to conduct interviews and take notes, and the ability to recognize when stories need to be followed up. The News Writing cluster was comprised of the ability to organize facts according to importance, the ability to write coherently and concisely, the ability to estimate how long a story should be according to its importance, spelling skill, and knowledge of grammar and of style rules. The Carefulness in Reporting cluster was comprised of accuracy, the awareness of when identification and attribution are needed, and objectivity.

In News Gathering, editors found skills 6.1 per cent "good," 56.1 per cent "adequate," 31.6 per cent "less than adequate," and 3.5 per cent "poor." There was a "no answer" percentile of 2.6.

In News Writing, editors rated skills 3.5 per cent "good," 43.0 per cent "adequate," 43.0 per cent "less than adequate," and 8.8 per cent "poor." There was a "no answer" percentile of 1.7.

Where Carefulness in Reporting was concerned, editors found skills
12.3 per cent "good," 50.9 per cent "adequate," 33.3 per cent "less than adequate," and 3.5 per cent "poor."

Skills in news writing emerge as the ones needing the most attention, with 51.8 per cent response of "less than adequate" or "poor," and only a 3.5 per cent response of "good."

Most of the editors added comments after responding to the question on basic skills. An editor who is currently completing a degree in journalism said, "This, mechanics, is the key area of classroom failure. This comes first, scholarly theory second. Most schools have priorities reversed." An editor who holds a B.A. in journalism and an M.A. in political science agreed. "The difficulty seems to be in old fashioned 'news savvy.' There is too much mass communications theory and too little practical, realistic application."

One editor did not appear particularly concerned about basic skills. "Our managing editor and I agree that we are usually able to take persons who have no preconceived ideas of how to write and teach them how we want things written. We want well read and broadly educated people who know some things to write about rather than someone who knows how to write but actually knows nothing."

Most of the editors who added comments specified particular skills where they thought new reporters were weak. "I find few new
reporters know how to do rewrites. Very weak on second day leads. Very important on an afternoon paper," wrote one. "Spelling and grammar seem to be major weaknesses of all grads," another said.

One editor expressed concern about reporters' failures to attribute information:

The main complaint I have with recent J-school grads is their failure to attribute information in their copy. Too many times, they merely insert information they "know to be correct," but haven't gotten anyone in authority to say. This is perhaps the most disturbing point. Too, most are too busy looking for those first bylines to take pains with the run-of-the-mill obit or two-graf news story. It takes a lot of emphasis (and, often, some screaming) to convince them that the two- grafer is equally important. I also spend a lot of time reminding new reporters to edit their own copy before putting it in the basket on the city desk. Many seem to think the city desk also acts as the dictionary.

"The ability to write clearly, to obtain facts, and get names correct cannot be over emphasized," another said.

One editor said he found "modern graduates seem a bit sharper than a few years ago." He added, "But, I think we are beginning to attract the better graduates." This editor was one who worked on the lone paper with a training program.

An editor of one of the larger circulation papers said "there is a tremendous lack of humility in the cubs and the main drawback is that they don't take time to learn certain basics--style, organization, etc."
Several editors expressed concern over lack of objectivity.

"Our main complaint is that far too many young journalists are 'advocacy' reporters and cannot comprehend that we insist on pure objectivity," one wrote.

Another said about this point,

None of those [skills] listed "less than adequate" or "poor" create any great problems except objectivity. The others can be learned fairly quickly in the newsroom. But objectivity is a never ending battle for all of us. This isn't to say that we shouldn't have opinions--we must, and we must continually strive to change what we view, as journalists, is wrong. But we must also make every possible effort to present all sides of any controversial story. And this must be done, if at all possible, without a manufactured slant. We have to give the reader the chance to make his own decisions. If we try to make them for him, he might quit listening to us.

One editor said students "need more drill in routines of newspaper work. Young reporters today are too activist and impatient." He had been working in the newspaper business twenty-one years, eight of them as a city editor or an assistant city editor.

Another editor, with only five years' experience in the business and one year as a city editor, said,

I can relate to the youngsters coming out of college. By and large, I agree with their doctrines of change. But you've got to know where you are going. You've got to have your gun loaded with facts before you fire it out at the general public. You've got to understand what the impact will mean to the established, middle class.
One editor offered these comments about the general competence of new reporters:

A number of those we've let go came to our city room with their own preconceived ideas of what a newspaper should be and how a story should be written. They were above working nights, covering the police beat or giving their best on a routine assignment. Their reading was generally restricted to Vonnegut, The Rolling Stone and Tom Wolfe. I'm a great admirer of Wolfe and the so-called new journalism. However, unfortunately, I've seen very few young reporters with the flair and the story telling technique or the potential to write like Wolfe.

We encourage different styles. . . . However, we insist on taste, clarity and fair play.

Frankly, what puzzles me is how or why our major universities give degrees in journalism to students who (1) possess no feel for the English language, (2) literally, can't write a sentence, and (3) don't know syntax or grammar.

Recent and Related Studies

The basics, critics have charged, are often downgraded.

John Hulteng, a professor of journalism, says,

I have been dismayed on more than a few occasions by the tendency of some journalism educators to denigrate and apologize for that part of their curriculum that has to do with developing the ability of students to handle words and ideas effectively. Often such courses are palmed off on the most junior and inexperienced faculty members, who escape from them as soon as they can acquire sufficient seniority (1, p. 14).

M. L. Stein, the chairman of the Department of Journalism at New York University's Washington Square College and a frequent
author of articles on journalism, criticizes (2, pp. 42-43) practitioners who dispense the blanket advice, "You can learn newspaper work on the job." Stein wonders if these newsmen will personally take the time to train the hopeful journalist if he's hired, teach him the fine points of news gathering and writing, conduct seminars for him in the legal aspects of journalism ethics and some of the fine points of public affairs reporting, and, in short, supply him with enough information that he won't be fired during his probationary period.

The "hard knocks" school of journalism is a myth to be discouraged, Stein says, citing the fact that, with the exception of the Copley and Gannett groups, few news operations are providing formal, on-the-job training.

Stein asks,

Where is the city editor who, after making assignments, answering telephones, editing copy and arguing with the M.E., has time to teach fundamentals to fledgling reporters? Once in a while an older reporter, if he's that type of guy, will help a young staff writer, but this is a chancy occurrence. Most newcomers are left to sink or swim and a number of them sink, especially on metropolitan dailies (2, p. 42).

If they do nothing else, Stein says, journalism schools prepare graduates to carry out assignments without the need of hand-holding and nursing by the city desk.
Stein says journalism education, at least a minimum of courses in that area, should not be neglected in an attempt to get a liberal education. If properly taught, journalism students are getting a liberal education, he says. And even the journalism major, at an accredited school, will take only 25 per cent of his work in journalism, but will have a much better understanding of the profession as a result.

The major comes away with a knowledge of the history and tradition of his profession. He learns something about the news media's problems, its relationship to society and government, its function in a democracy. He is informed about the communication process and is presented with an ethical basis for his actions. Above all, he is made aware of his responsibilities as a journalist. I believe firmly that if journalism is ever to become truly a profession, it will be accomplished largely through the influence of journalism schools.

I have met a number of newsmen and women who could have profited from a journalism education. They were skilled typewriter mechanics but had little understanding or appreciation of the nuances of their work and were almost totally lacking in idealism about it (2, p. 43).

Reportorial Areas

The editors were asked to indicate the degree of emphasis they felt twelve traditional areas of reportage should be given as part of a journalism student's education. They rated city council and municipal affairs highest (a response of 42.1 per cent for "much" emphasis). Next highest was election procedures (31.6 per cent
response for "much" emphasis). Other areas rated high in emphasis were county offices and agencies, court structures in general, criminal court procedures, and police, all of which received a 26.3 per cent "much" response. Emphasis on covering legislatures was rated lowest (26.3 per cent response for "little" emphasis). This is probably because most papers select seasoned reporters to cover the state legislature, if the paper is large enough to have its own capital correspondent at all (see Table IX).

The editors were also asked to comment on which of these reportorial areas they found beginning reporters least well prepared to cover. City council and court structures in general were each mentioned by six editors. County offices and agencies were mentioned four times, and federal offices and agencies, the legislature, tax procedures or government financing, and police three times. State offices and agencies, election procedures, criminal court procedures, and welfare agencies were named twice each. Education was listed once.

One editor said the "good" adapt rapidly to all areas. Another said reporters would learn to cover most of these areas on the job, but if they came with some experience or knowledge, that was even better. He added, "Too many reporters, even experienced ones, do not read the paper daily as they should. Most reporters do
TABLE IX

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE DEGREE OF EMPHASIS TRADITIONAL AREAS OF REPORTAGE SHOULD BE GIVEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Areas</th>
<th>Number of Responses by Degree of Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Council and Municipal Affairs</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Offices and Agencies</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Offices and Agencies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislature</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Offices and Agencies</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election Procedures</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court Structures in General</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Court Procedures</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax Procedures and Government</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools and Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare Agencies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*M, much; Mo, moderate; L, little; N, none; N/A, no answer.
not read Austin stories at all, or even many stories not on their own beat."

Most of the editors who felt new reporters had particular weaknesses were concerned that they were in the areas where new reporters are most likely to be assigned. One editor said beginning reporters were weak in preparation for covering city and county affairs, education, and welfare. "These seem to be the least glamorous, but in many ways, the most basic."

The editor of one of the larger metropolitan dailies said, "Most are pretty weak on operation of local government. Many never have attended a meeting of a city council, commissioners court, or school board."

One said, "I believe a beginning journalist should have acquired a working knowledge of all categories mentioned [in the questionnaire], particularly election procedures. I am often amazed at the lack of knowledge in this area."

Another said, "We have been pointedly disappointed in how little most reporters know about court structures in general."

One editor among those in the profile group having a high degree of participation in journalism education offered these comments:

Unfortunately, most recent J-grads seem to be weakest in the areas in which they should be strongest--police and criminal court procedures. The police beat
traditionally has been a starting point and a proving area for many rookie reporters. Obviously, it is mandatory they be thoroughly backgrounded in police and criminal court procedures. I have found that most lack the ability to decide for themselves whether or not a suspect's name can be used, etc. I would strongly emphasize the police and criminal areas be stressed more strongly.

One editor said, "beginning reporters seem least able to cover all areas where facts must be separated from a massive dose of rhetoric, such as city councils, legislature, etc."

Another concluded, "they need a good, well rounded background, especially leaning toward local and county areas, since most will start as general assignment reporters and will deal in these areas."

The data on the question concerning reportorial areas were analyzed in terms of whether respondents preferred that applicants have a degree in journalism, or whether they felt a degree in journalism was not necessarily a requirement (see Table X).

Those who believed a degree in journalism was not particularly important rated desired emphasis in four key areas slightly higher. The combined percentages for "much" and "moderate" emphasis for this group were 92.8 per cent for city council and municipal affairs, 85.7 per cent for county offices and agencies, 85.7 per cent for court structures in general, and 92.8 per cent for criminal
### TABLE X

OPINIONS ON DEGREE OF EMPHASIS SIX AREAS OF REPORTAGE SHOULD BE GIVEN, CLASSIFIED BY DEGREE PREFERENCE OF RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Areas</th>
<th>Number of Responses by Degree Preference</th>
<th>Those Who Believe Degree Should Be in Journalism</th>
<th>Those Who Believe Degree Need not Necessarily Be in Journalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Council and Municipal Affairs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Offices and Agencies</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election Procedures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court Structures in General</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Court Procedures</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*M, much; Mo, Moderate; L, little; N, none; N/A, no answer.
court procedures. The combined "much" and "moderate" percentages of those who preferred journalism degrees were 80 per cent in each case. The group which preferred journalism degrees gave both election procedures and police an 80 per cent combined total, as opposed to the other group's 78.6 per cent.
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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall conclusion of this study is that city editors are interested in seeing college and university departments of journalism take a practical approach to journalism education. They want students well-grounded in liberal arts who are skilled in the basics of news gathering and writing and who possess a willingness to improve those skills on the job before becoming specialized or analytical writers.

One editor summed up his feelings this way: "Many recent grads cannot function away from a controlled, classroom type situation. They tend to bog down when confronted with obstacles. More attention should be paid to the practical experience side in college." This editor added that the practical approach, in his estimation, also included doing away with "fiction regarding soft hours and high pay for newspaper types." They don't exist, he said.

Summary of the Hypotheses

1. The city editors will not be concerned about whether job applicants have degrees.
Fifty-five per cent of twenty editors responding thought job applicants should, in most cases, have degrees; 45 per cent said degrees were not necessarily a requirement. The hypothesis is neither proven nor disproven.

2. The city editors' preference on degrees will not be determined by whether they hold one themselves.

Forty per cent of twenty editors responding held degrees themselves and thought a degree was generally needed; 30 per cent held degrees themselves but did not think one was necessarily needed. Fifteen per cent held no degree, but thought one was generally needed; 10 per cent held no degree and did not think one was necessarily needed. One of the twenty editors offered no information on his own educational background. The lack of a significant difference of opinion makes the hypothesis valid.

3. The city editors will not be concerned about whether applicants' degrees are in journalism.

Seventy-five per cent of the twenty editors responding said a degree in journalism was not necessarily an advantage, making the hypothesis valid.

4. The city editor's preferences on journalism degrees will not be determined by whether they hold a degree in journalism.
Twenty per cent of twenty editors responding held a degree in journalism and thought one in that area was preferable; 30 per cent held a degree in journalism but did not think one in that area was necessarily preferable. The lack of a significant difference of opinion makes the hypothesis valid.

5. The city editors will prefer that job applicants have a broad liberal arts background.

The city editors indicated by the wide variety of majors they would consider when hiring that they were interested in staffs comprised of broad liberal arts backgrounds. The hypothesis is further proven by the fact that there were only two areas of study among eleven listed where any of the editors felt no emphasis was needed. They were interested most in seeing students acquire knowledge in the areas of political science, government (local, state and federal), and economics.

6. The city editors will place a high degree of emphasis on a practical approach to journalism courses; specifically, they will be more interested in skills and technique courses than in courses which deal with research and theory.

The editors said an average total of 9.15 semesters were needed in general reporting, public affairs reporting, and feature writing. They said an average total of 5.03 semesters were needed
in desk work, printing, and photography. They indicated an average total of only 1.88 semesters were needed in communications research and theory, making the hypothesis valid.

7. There will be no significant difference in the journalism courses the editors feel are most valuable according to their own degree status.

The respondents, regardless of degree status, placed the three groups of journalism courses in the same order (general reporting, public affairs reporting, and feature writing; desk work, printing, and photography; communications research and theory), making the hypothesis valid.

8. There will be no significant difference in the value placed on communications research according to the number of years of experience the editors have, or their familiarity with current programs of journalism education.

Editors with fewer than fifteen years' experience said an average of one semester of research was needed; editors with more than fifteen years' experience said an average of .79 semester was needed. Those editors considered to be more familiar with journalism education programs said an average of .70 semester was needed in research; those considered to be less familiar said an average of
.69 semester was needed. The lack of a significant difference of opinion makes the hypothesis valid.

9. The city editors will rate the overall skills of recent journalism graduates adequate, but will cite some instances in which they are less than adequate.

Of the total responses for competency in all skills, 50.8 per cent were considered adequate and 35.3 per cent were considered less than adequate. Weaknesses were awareness of who and what sources would be for most stories, awareness of when identification and attribution are needed, the ability to recognize when stories need follow-ups, spelling, and knowledge of style rules. The editors found new reporters least prepared to cover city council, county offices and agencies, and courts in general. The hypothesis is valid.

10. There will be a low degree of contact between the city editors and journalism departments, but a high degree of interest in making more contacts.

There was a significantly low degree of contact between the editors and journalism schools. Fifty per cent of sixteen respondents had not visited a journalism school within the last year; only 31 per cent visited one as frequently as once a year. An invitation to visit a school of journalism had been received by just 47 per cent during the last year. (A college or university having at least a two-year program
in journalism exists in or very near each of the cities from which editors replied.) Only five editors gave affirmative answers on all three points, making the degree of contact even more limited.

An 88 per cent response to the survey indicates a strong interest in journalism education. Additionally, 73.6 per cent of nineteen respondents answered affirmatively when asked if they would be interested in meeting with journalism instructors to discuss journalism education, and 83 per cent of those said such meetings should take place at least annually. The hypothesis is valid.

Areas for Further Study

At least three areas of further study are suggested by the results of this study.

First, the study could be conducted in other states to determine if other city editors' attitudes differ in any significant ways. Only five editors had attended a college or university outside of Texas and only one had worked on a newspaper in another state. How this might have shaped their opinions cannot be determined from the data collected for this study.

Second, a similar study might be administered to practicing journalists who are recent graduates of a journalism school. Their attitudes toward journalism education and their assessments of their
preparation could then be compared to those of the city editors to determine where there was correlation.

Third, a study could be made of ways in which practicing journalists, particularly city editors, and journalism educators could establish meaningful, continuing talks on journalism education. Whether a formal advisory committee, as has been discussed within the AEJ, is feasible or not would be one point for investigation. It is apparent a majority of city editors are interested in discussing journalism education issues with instructors, but this study did not attempt to survey editors on what format they believed the meetings should take. Nor is there any input from educators, who most certainly would need to be surveyed.

Only one editor commented on a particular program of cooperation, other than summer internships, between his paper and a local journalism school.

The **** is cooperating with **** journalism department in a program which brings sophomore reporters to our newsroom for first-hand observation of newspaper operations. Several students accompany beat reporters on their rounds to see the application of what they've learned in textbooks. This is a pilot program, but I'm enthusiastic about its future. Next year we enter the intern program (Texas Daily Newspaper Association) which I feel is a natural extension of the campus J-school. I strongly believe emphasis in J-school courses should be on practical application. The more the better. The use of professional newsmen (-women) as advisors on school publications brings needed experience to supplement textbook knowledge.
There would seem to be a number of benefits in establishing working relationships to both the working press, by way of more informed beginning reporters, and to journalism faculties. Edmund Lambeth says the industry and schools lack "intellectual common grounds" (6, p. 58). Lambeth, director of the Washington Reporting Program of the University of Missouri School of Journalism, went on to explain how the program he supervises was closing the gap to some extent. In the program, graduate students earn eleven hours of credit for public affairs reporting in the nation's capital. The sale of their news service to daily papers too small to have Washington correspondents helps pay the cost of the program.

There are other examples of practically oriented continuing education, but Villano says there are few. "The present state of continuing education is a depressing one. . . . The Nieman fellowships at Harvard, the outstanding example of such programs, can encompass only fifteen persons" (10, p. 8).

Arnold says (1, p. 20) there is no demand for a masters or a doctorate on papers, so significant post graduate work must be done in the newsroom. Reporters must be allowed to take advantage of seminars. Otherwise, he says, "the dropout rate of the best young people, still eager to learn, will continue as they become frustrated and bored." He adds, "It does seem logical, after we have
spent so much in recruiting, that we invest a little more to keep those whom we already have."

These comments were about cooperative programs of continuing education. But there is much that could be accomplished on the undergraduate level by practicing journalists and educators working together.

Earl Cohn concluded (2, p. 345) after a study of the conceptualization of the newswriting process that student journalists would benefit from "a high degree of involvement and identification with top-flight reporters." John Colburn says, "Journalism schools need more journalists in residence—on a regular basis" (3, p. 27).

City editors and educators working together could bring more reporters to the classroom.

Several persons who have studied and written about journalism education have suggested that practicing journalists could be used effectively as instructors, at least on an adjunct basis.

Tebbel says,

If professionalism is the objective, then the teachers ought to be skilled practitioners of the craft. But too often the schools draw city room people who didn't quite make it, or writers from other media who are less than mediocre, or academicians with only a smattering of experience. It seems axiomatic that teachers who are going to teach writing and editing and presumably improve the standards of the professions ought to be good writers and editors themselves. Too few are (9, p. 6).
MacDougall says,

There are top-flight newsmen who would be fine in the classroom. But with the climate on campuses—the Ph.D. requirements—it's a battle with administrations to get this kind of newsmen. And, if they're hired, often they never get academic promotions. We've got to clear the way to bring men into our field who are not going to be frustrated by academic dead ends (7, p. 12).

The comments made by Tebble and MacDougall were both in the late 1960's. Perhaps the situation has changed somewhat since then. James D. Head, writing in 1971, says, "There is a happy ferment in the J-schools. They have rediscovered a good teacher of the craft does not necessarily have to have all the academic honors and credits. Almost every week Editor and Publisher lists another well known newsman leaving to teach somewhere" (4, p. 17).

It would seem a close cooperation between editors and educators would encourage serious consideration of when it is appropriate to bring practicing journalists into journalism school programs as instructors, and how the best and most qualified could be obtained.

Perhaps the most important, at least the most basic, benefit to be derived from close cooperation of editors and educators is the increased assurance that students being prepared for careers in journalism will get the opportunity to work in their chosen profession.

Kriehbaum concluded after his study of the separatism between editors and educators,
Only one executive who had not visited the local journalism school during the past year said that more than a quarter of his staff had been hired from the local campus. For those who claimed they had visited the local journalism school or department "a half-dozen or more times" during the past 12 months, a full 71 per cent hired 26 per cent or more of their personnel locally. There is an obvious message here for journalism faculty concerned with placing their graduates (5, p. 807).

Even if there is no problem placing graduates, the quality of the placement might be improved. Kriegbaum says good job placement comes most readily after good contacts between professors and practitioners.

Boyd Miller, placement coordinator at Michigan State University, concurs: "Knowing the faculty members personally makes checking them as references later that much more informative" (8, p. 57).

There undoubtedly are any number of approaches to studying journalism education. This thesis concerned itself with city editors, but provided a basis for studying both generalities and specifics of journalism instruction that could be used to survey other populations, namely recent journalism students themselves and their instructors.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


Dear Editor:

The separatism that exists between those who practice journalism and those who teach journalism deserves serious study. Your assistance is needed in a survey of Texas city editors to help provide information for such a study.

The survey is being conducted as partial fulfillment of the thesis requirements for a masters degree in journalism at North Texas State University.

The decision to survey city editors was made because you represent the level of newspaper management most continuously in contact with beginning journalists. If they are coming to the profession unprepared, it is you who could most nearly determine in what ways.

The questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to answer, and is designed in such a way that you may add comments on your own expectations and criticisms. Please feel free to use the backs of the pages if you need more space. Enclosed is a postage-paid, addressed envelope. Please return the questionnaire as soon as possible. Thank you for your time and interest.

Sincerely,

Judi McAda
Graduate Student, NTSU
Journalism Instructor,
Richland College of the
Dallas County Community
College District
APPENDIX B

Questionnaire

Name

Publication

1. How many newsroom employees are under your supervision?

2. If you work for a publishing firm which has editorially separate morning and evening papers, do these employees represent a separate staff, or do they work for both papers?

3. Do you interview prospective employees for the city side?

4. Do you participate in the final decision to hire employees for the city side?

5. Do you believe applicants should have a degree? 
   Do you believe the degree should be in journalism? 
   What other majors might you consider?
6. Please indicate in these specific areas the average competency of employees you know to be recent graduates of a school of journalism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Less than Adequate</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to recognize news story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of who appropriate sources of information are for most stories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of what sources of information (almanac, city directory, etc.) are for most stories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to conduct interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to take notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to select lead</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to organize facts according to importance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to write concisely and coherently</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accuracy in reporting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to estimate length story should be according to importance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of when identification and attribution are needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to recognize what stories need follow-ups</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Skill in spelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of grammar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of AP (or similar) style rules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
93

ability to meet deadlines

objectivity

Comments: ____________________________

7. Please rate the following areas traditionally covered by the city side reporters according to the degree of knowledge you believe a beginning reporter should have about them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Much</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>city council and municipal affairs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>county offices and agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state offices and agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legislature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>federal offices and agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>election procedures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>court structures in general</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>criminal court procedures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tax procedures and government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>financing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>schools and education</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>police</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>welfare agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please comment in the space provided on the next page on which of the above areas beginning journalists seem least prepared to cover.
8. Please rate the following subjects according to the degree of emphasis you believe they should be given as areas of study for the future journalist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Much</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political science in general</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State, local and federal government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer affairs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life, earth and physical science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please comment on your feelings about when "specialization" in a reporting area should come (undergraduate level, graduate level, on the job), and about what new beats you foresee.

Comments: ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
9. Assuming a student is undertaking a four-year program of instruction with plans to be a newspaper reporter, how many semesters do you believe he should have in each of the following journalism courses?

- general reporting and writing
- public affairs reporting
- feature writing
- desk work (editing, headline writing, make-up)
- printing
- photography
- law of the press
- communications research
- communications theories

Comments: __________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

10. How many years have you worked in the newspaper business?

____________________________________________________________________________________ As a city editor or assistant?
____________________________________________________________________________________

11. How many of the years spent in the newspaper business were in Texas?

____________________________________________________________________________________

12. What colleges and universities have you attended? _______

____________________________________________________________________________________

What degrees have you received and in what majors? _______

____________________________________________________________________________________
13. When was the last time you visited a school of journalism? ____ Do you visit one frequently? ____ For what purposes? ____

14. When was the last time you were invited to visit a school of journalism? ____ Does your publication allow you time away from your job to accept such invitations? ____

15. Would you like to meet with other practicing journalists and journalism instructors to discuss journalism education? ____ How often? ____ Would your publication allow you time away from your job for this purpose? ____

16. Do you have any type of formal training program in your newsroom? ____ If so, please describe how it works. ____

General Comments: ___
# APPENDIX C

## MAILING LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Edition</th>
<th>Circulation</th>
<th>City Editor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Abilene Reporter</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Abilene Reporter News</td>
<td>A.M.</td>
<td>44,154</td>
<td>Wally Simmons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P.M.</td>
<td>20,827</td>
<td>Same**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comb.*</td>
<td>64,981</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Amarillo News</strong></td>
<td>A.M.</td>
<td>49,525</td>
<td>Mary Kate Tripp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Amarillo Globe Times</strong></td>
<td>A.M.</td>
<td>49,525</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P.M.</td>
<td>35,513</td>
<td>Orville Howard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comb.</td>
<td>85,038</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Austin American</strong></td>
<td>A.M.</td>
<td>58,768</td>
<td>John Bryant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Austin Statesman</strong></td>
<td>A.M.</td>
<td>58,768</td>
<td>John Bryant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P.M.</td>
<td>32,725</td>
<td>Bob Banta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comb.</td>
<td>91,493</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Beaumont Enterprise</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Beaumont Journal</td>
<td>A.M.</td>
<td>63,471</td>
<td>Fred Guarnere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P.M.</td>
<td>19,964</td>
<td>Joe Elam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comb.</td>
<td>83,435</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Corpus Christi Caller</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Corpus Christi Times</td>
<td>A.M.</td>
<td>68,626</td>
<td>Bill Duncan</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P.M.</td>
<td>37,842</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comb.</td>
<td>106,468</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Dallas Morning News</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Dallas Times Herald</td>
<td>A.M.</td>
<td>255,491</td>
<td>Bob Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P.M.</td>
<td>233,547</td>
<td>Bill Hankins</td>
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<td><strong>The El Paso Times</strong></td>
<td>A.M.</td>
<td>59,348</td>
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<td><strong>The El Paso Herald</strong></td>
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<td>59,348</td>
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<td></td>
<td>P.M.</td>
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<td>Virginia Turner</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comb.</td>
<td>103,215</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Comb., combined circulation of both editions.

**Same, same person serves as city editor of both editions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Edition</th>
<th>Circulation</th>
<th>City Editor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Fort Worth Press</td>
<td>P. M.</td>
<td>55,902</td>
<td>Robert G. Trimble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fort Worth Star-</td>
<td>A. M.</td>
<td>97,755</td>
<td>Horace Craig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telegram</td>
<td>P. M.</td>
<td>138,020</td>
<td>Phil Record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comb.</td>
<td>235,775</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Houston Chronicle</td>
<td>P. M.</td>
<td>295,207</td>
<td>Zarko Franks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Houston Post</td>
<td>A. M.</td>
<td>294,677</td>
<td>Douglas Freeland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lubbock Avalanche</td>
<td>A. M.</td>
<td>57,583</td>
<td>Howard Swindell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>P. M.</td>
<td>22,355</td>
<td>Opal Dixon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comb.</td>
<td>79,938</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The San Angelo Standard-</td>
<td>A. M.</td>
<td>40,235</td>
<td>Mike Perry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times</td>
<td>P. M.</td>
<td>10,242</td>
<td>Charles Redden</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Comb.</td>
<td>50,477</td>
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<tr>
<td>The San Antonio Express</td>
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<td>Jay Rogers</td>
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<td>The San Antonio News</td>
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<td>Bert Wise</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Comb.</td>
<td>149,543</td>
<td></td>
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<td>The San Antonio Light</td>
<td>P. M.</td>
<td>120,943</td>
<td>Joe L. Schott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wichita Falls Record</td>
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