

1984

The Effects of Widescreen Television on Local and National Newscaster Credibility: an Experimental Study.

Donald Ray Mott

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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THE EFFECTS OF WIDESCREEN TELEVISION ON LOCAL AND NATIONAL
NEWSCASTER CREDIBILITY: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col.

PH.D. 1984

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**THE EFFECTS OF WIDESCREEN
TELEVISION ON LOCAL AND
NATIONAL NEWSCASTER
CREDIBILITY:**

AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Speech Communication,
Theater, and Communication Disorders

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were any perceived differences in credibility between the widescreen television treatment, standard screen treatment and national and local newscasters. The data revealed no significant differences as a result of the widescreen television treatment. In addition, no significant main effects were observed between the newscaster treatments, "local" and "national," suggesting that as a group, viewers do not appear to have any predispositional attitudes dependent upon specific criteria toward the credibility of either type of newscaster.

The design of the experiment was a classic 2 x 2 factorial design. The stimulus was a simulated newscast employing a professional newscaster in a major metropolitan market unknown to the test subjects. The final simulated tape also contained two actualities from a CBS broadcast taped October 12, 1983 at 5:30 P.M. CST. The newscaster treatment was administered verbally to subjects before the tape was shown. Test groups #1 and #2 were told that the tape was sent by CBS and was a demonstration tape of a newscaster recently hired by its news department. Groups #3 and #4 were told they were

going to see a local newscaster in a major metropolitan market. Test subjects were asked to rate only the anchorman seen in the newscast and not any of the other news persons (correspondents) in the broadcast. Groups #2 and #4 viewed the newscast on a 6-foot (diagonal) widescreen television projection system manufactured by the SONY Corporation. Groups #1 and #3 viewed the simulated newscast on a conventional, tube-type RCA color television set (25" measured diagonally).

Because of the experimental nature of this research, a reliable testing instrument was developed in a pilot study. The same simulated newscast described above was used. All pre-test subjects saw the simulated newscast on a conventional tube-type 25" (diagonal) television set. The test subjects responded to the twenty-five item semantic differential instrument developed by McCroskey and Jenson in 1975. Eighteen scales passed the McCroskey and Jenson criterion for inclusion in the final testing instrument.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

From its beginnings in the 1940s as a small, black and white image housed in a large wooden cabinet to the present-day, widescreen television projection devices that can fill huge theater screens, television has left social researchers in disagreement as to its actual power to inform, persuade (or dissuade), influence, and socialize the viewer. It is not surprising that many communication research efforts have been directed toward this complicated electronic device for the express purpose of investigating its communication effects. Consider Joseph Klapper's observation on visual media:

The visual media, i.e., television and film, are widely believed to be uniquely effective simply because they are visual. Both media have been observed to command more complete attention from their audiences than do other media and to be at times completely pre-occupying, especially for children. A group of related studies published in 1933 revealed that most children and many adults tend to

accept unquestioningly all presumably factual information in films, and to retain such information particularly well. A series of later studies, taken as a whole, provides contradictory findings in regard to whether material presented over television is or is not better retained than comparable material presented by lecture, print, or radio.¹

The same controversy is still raging, especially in the area of television violence studies and particularly those that focus on the child viewer. For many years, this research has failed to produce the expected causality between television violence and the viewer. In the latest government report issued in March 1982, it was suggested that after reviewing more than ten years of research on television violence and its effects on children, there was, in fact, a causal relationship;² this, however, is still being debated by many researchers.

Of equal interest to communication researchers during approximately the same ten year period was an exhaustive search for a variety of variables affecting messages and ethos, or source credibility, transmitted via an electronic channel medium such as television. Early studies on ethos primarily demonstrated that receivers of a message not only evaluated the message but also the source. These studies, however, used live speakers verbalizing persuasible messages to measure the effects of credibility and the degree to which attitude change was produced in the receiver.³ A variety of such studies ensued until researchers turned their attention toward media variables which were suspected of affecting the

message as well as the source's credibility. Several studies in the sixties involving a visual media source include David Markham's exploratory research concerning the audience's perception of television newscasters.⁴ More recently, Hayes L. Anderson investigated whether or not a film camera's point-of-view could create various nonverbal assertions which affect evaluation of the person filmed and his message.⁵ In 1976, Jeffrey Simon demonstrated the distinction between "real" and "ideal" news images with viewers using a Q-Analysis.⁶ A more recent study by Virginia S. Strickland in 1980 investigated the effects of sex, age and sex-role attitudes on television newscaster credibility.⁷ The same year, David Klein reported the relationship between close-up and extreme close-up camera shots and audience response in order to explain perceived differences in para-proxemic attributions (effectations based upon the relative distance of a media source) attributed to subject image size within the frame.⁸ These studies, however, do not take into account the new technologies, such as home widescreen television projection systems, which are becoming increasingly available to the mass audience.

This experimental study will investigate the effects of widescreen television--a projected television image on a large reflective screen--on local and national newscaster source credibility. Research is needed in this area to determine what effects, if any, are attributable to the widescreen television image and newscaster source

credibility.

Background and Importance of the Study

The theory that perceptions of the source are affected by certain variables during the communication process is not a new one.⁹ One such variable is the message which can affect the receivers perception of the source. Percy H. Tannenbaum noted:

From a broad viewpoint, we may conceive of two major classifications of variables that are operative in a given communication message having some effect, intended or otherwise. There are, on the one hand, factors in the recipients of the message which may enhance or limit its effectiveness.

The other major classification consists of factors in the message itself. Obviously the content of a message will determine, to an extent, its effects.¹⁰

This is consistent with the concept of human communication as a process that involves the interaction and mutual influence of a source and receiver. Much of the research conducted by Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum supports this theory.¹¹

Kenneth E. Anderson and Theodore Clevenger, Jr., cite studies which demonstrate that groups of listeners can be influenced by speaker variables and yet, tend to be less sensitive to message variables such as organization, reasoning and the quality of evidence presented.¹² This suggests that there are other factors besides the source's reputation and the explicit persuasive message which can

affect receiver response. Research conducted by Erwin P. Bettinghaus, who based his study on the congruity principle, found that "effective" speech delivery caused greater shifts in attitude toward the speaker than did the "ineffective" mode:

This experiment tends to confirm what rhetorical theorists have said for centuries: that effectiveness in delivery contributes not only to the credibility of the speaker, but also to the persuasiveness of the speaker in achieving acceptance of his message.¹³

Bettinghaus also found that the "attitude toward the treatment of the speech topic is not shown as significant in determining the listener's attitude toward the speech topic,"¹⁴ because listeners could not differentiate very clearly between the "strong" speech treatment and the "weak" treatment. This suggested to Bettinghaus that the shift toward congruity seems to be determined more by the receiver's attitude toward the source than toward the speech topic.

Other studies reveal that the personal manner of the source can affect receiver perceptions and attitudes. Studies by Greenberg and Tannenbaum,¹⁵ and Bettinghaus and Preston,¹⁶ demonstrated that speakers who are unsure of what they are saying tend to be judged as nonauthoritative. Erwin L. Atwood¹⁷ and T. R. King¹⁸ both reported similar findings: when a message is judged to be high in credibility but the personal manner of the source is not, the audience

will lower its impressions of the source rather than the content.

Studies by Dommermuth and Miller, et al., observed no significant differences when similar messages were transmitted through different media.¹⁹ Many of these studies focused primarily on message salience, however Dommermuth's study did include credibility as one of four dependent measures. Although the channel selected to transmit the message does not appear to affect to any significant degree perceptions of the source or message, other studies point to irrelevant and subjective aspects of communication that can alter perceptions of the source. Many of these factors contributing to these perceptions are nonverbal cues which affect the character of the source and are attributable to speaker posture, body position, physical distance, eye contact and degree of body angle.²⁰ Other nonverbal cues affecting audience perception of the source include the amount of head nodding, facial expressions, frequency of verbal reinforcers as well as speech disturbances, and the amount of gesture and body movement.²¹

These studies purport that messages are made up of distinctive stimuli called signs or cues which can evolve from verbal and nonverbal content, context and the specific treatment given a message. It is therefore conceivable that a particular stimulus within the communication act may alter in some way a particular interpretation of the total stimulus pattern. Tannenbaum has defined this as an "indexing

process," which occurs when the message emphasizes a particular perception and produces or generates a particular reaction over all others:

It is apparent from the foregoing results that what we have referred to as the indexing process is a general phenomenon that may be operative in many kinds of communication situations. In each of the . . . studies reported, the manipulation of a single index under conditions of single communication exposures produced significant effects on the judgements of the total message.²²

The television or film camera can easily contribute to a conflicting or incongruous image caused by a number of technical variables indicative of the medium which can include lens perspective and distortion, camera angle, lighting and sound recording. As the literature suggests, activating the "indexing" process as a result of one of these technical variables in the message channel may affect receiver perceptions, including source credibility.

Some research is available regarding the encoding effect of the photographic or electronic image. These studies suggest that the expressive representation of pictorial communication is not arbitrary and appears to have associations independent of content. Tannenbaum and Fosdick, for example, reported data on perceptions of photographed models that were illuminated by several different lighting setups:

In this investigation at least, the most noticeable effect was that of the 45° angle

condition. It stood out from the other three angles used by producing more consistently pronounced effects on all three factors [evaluation, activity and potency], with the remaining conditions showing relatively little variation from one to another.²³

Shoemaker reported that viewers assigned different evaluations to the photographed models according to the vertical camera angle from which they were pictured.²⁴

Robert C. Williams, in his article "On the Value of Varying TV Shots," reported four findings which are contrary to standard practices as they are aesthetically perceived and executed in commercial, educational and industrial film or television production.²⁵ Williams even asserted that a viewer's higher interest "may not be in the message but rather in the means of communication," suggesting that the incongruity of the situation may arouse viewer interest, but that this "interest" would be an interference, a form of communication "noise."²⁶

It appears that with both film and television images, the content cannot be presented without the implication of an expressive interpretation formed by the camera angle. If camera angles convey certain nonverbal connotations, then the interpretation of the content of the shot or sequence appears to exist in its visual expression. When applying these observations to the new technologies, especially widescreen television, we must also consider what effect the larger screen will have on audience interpretation and response.

Literature on film and television production and

technique suggests that the manner in which the camera is used can affect both the emotional and psychological reactions of the viewer.²⁷ This literature also suggests that each camera angle may inherently contain nonverbal cues affecting connotations about the subject being viewed. Such cues would be magnified on a larger viewing screen, as in the case of a widescreen projected television image, but does the magnification of the cues increase audience response to them? This is one of the major implications of this study.

While camera angle, lighting and size of the image are not the complete message itself, there is evidence to suggest that they may also contribute to differences in which nonverbal stimuli make symbolic assertions about the source's attributes. According to Hayes L. Anderson, "whether these expressive elements as camera angle can project associations independent of context and content when they are related to verbal information from the sound track is a central issue in communication."²⁸

The need to further investigate media "cues" and the indexing process is self evident, considering television technology is continually being improved and refined, most notably in the areas of picture quality, picture size, stereophonic sound and computerized electronic picture manipulation. These new aspects of broadcast technology are open to vigorous study by the researcher.

The communications explosion assisted by electronic advances is destined to change our communication processes.

At a recent Southern Speech Communication Association convention, Navita Cummings James argued that changes in communication technology result in changes in other forms of communication systems, which include the family, children's play, the business environment, and academe.²⁹

In a paper given by Robert D. Gratz and Philip J. Salem, "Computers, Pac-Man, and the New Identity Crisis: Communication Relationships in a New Era," it was argued that finding methods to augment the new communication technologies is imperative if one is to maintain a positive concept and definition of "self."³⁰ Gratz and Salem also reported that technological devices such as television have the potential for limiting the development of social relationships and the broadening of self-concepts.³¹

Since these new technologies are just now becoming affordable and available to the masses, research in this area is imperative. The new widescreen television image has not been tested for its effects on para-proxemics, para-social behavior or source credibility. The need is clear for further research in this area if we are to deduce the overall effects and impact of these new technologies on the communication process.

The Research Questions

This study will be conducted in an effort to ascertain the effects of widescreen television on local and national

newscaster credibility. The five main research questions to be answered are:

1. What are the effects of the widescreen television image on both local and national newscaster credibility?
2. Is there a significant difference in credibility between "local" and "national" newscasters?
3. What specific dimensions of newscaster credibility are affected by widescreen television?
4. What specific scale items of credibility are affected by the widescreen television image?
5. Is there a "diffusion" effect (or negative effect) which takes place on any of the dimensions of newscaster credibility as a result of the source becoming larger on widescreen television?

These questions were posed since there was no theoretical basis to suggest the magnification of a television image will cause enhanced perception of visual cues, possibly altering credibility. Therefore, it is plausible to assume that the visual discriminating power of human subjects is sufficient enough to encode all the necessary information from a standard 25" television. If this is the case, then magnifying the image approximately three times will contribute no additional information in the visual encoding process. For this reason, the null hypothesis was taken. In addition, if no effects are observed for this treatment, then it logically follows that there should be no interaction effects between newscaster type and screen size.

Also under investigation is the newscaster treatment

itself. It is plausible to assume that viewers might be predisposed to automatically judge a "national" newscaster as more credible than a "local" newscaster, although other criteria might be necessary and operational for this to be true. Therefore, in order to avoid a Class I error, this researcher has taken the null hypothesis and assumes there are no preconceived constructs concerning the credibility of national or local newscasters.

Scope and Development of the Study

A computer search (SCARS) through several databases was undertaken for the purpose of locating studies which involved newscaster credibility and/or the new broadcasting technologies. The databases searched included ERIC, Psychological Abstracts and Sociological Abstracts.

The Index to Journals in Communication Studies Through 1974³² was also consulted for review. The following subject headings were considered in the search for articles: ethos, ethos and attitude change, film, film news (newsreels), communication, communication effects, mass communication, communication processes, messages, message content, message variables, news, new technologies, television, television news, television newscasters, source credibility, source credibility and age, and source credibility and sex. In addition, the following journals were reviewed from 1974 to the present. These journals

included: Quarterly Journal of Speech, Communication Monographs, Southern Speech Communication Journal, Central States Speech Journal, The Journal of Broadcasting, and the Journal of Communication.

Other communication-oriented journals not listed in the Index which were reviewed included Human Communication Research and Journalism Quarterly.

Since research might have been conducted in academic fields of study other than communication, the following reference works were reviewed: Dissertation Abstracts; Series B, Behavioral and Social Sciences (1941-1984), Sociological Abstracts (1952-1984), and Psychological Abstracts (1927-1984). A review of relevant research on perceived credibility and television newscasters is provided in the Review of Literature section.

Notes

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¹⁰Percy H. Tannenbaum, "The Indexing Process in Communication," Public Opinion Quarterly 19 (Fall 1955), p. 292.

¹¹Charles E. Osgood, Percy H. Tannenbaum and George Suci, The Measurement of Meaning (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1957).

¹²Kenneth E. Andersen and Theodore Clevenger, Jr., "A Summary of Experimental Research in Ethos," Speech Monographs 30 (June 1963), pp. 59-58.

¹³Erwin P. Bettinghaus, "The Operation of Congruity in an Oral Communication Situation," Speech Monographs 28 (Aug. 1961), p. 142.

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¹⁵Bradley S. Greenberg and Percy H. Tannenbaum, "Communicator Performance Under Cognitive Stress," Journalism Quarterly 39 (Spring 1962), pp. 169-178.

¹⁶Erwin P. Bettinghaus and Ivan L. Preston, "Dogmatism and Performance of the Communicator Under Cognitive Stress," Journalism Quarterly 41 (Summer 1964), pp. 399-402.

¹⁷Erwin L. Atwood, "The Effects of Source and Message Credibility on Writing Style," Journalism Quarterly 43 (Spring 1966), pp. 90-94.

¹⁸Thomas R. King, "An Experimental Study of the Effects of *Ethos* Upon the Immediate and Delayed Recall of Information," Central States Speech Journal 17 (February 1966), pp. 22-28. See "Results and Discussion" section of King's article, pp. 26-28.

¹⁹See studies by William P. Dommermuth, "How Does the Medium Affect the Message?" Journalism Quarterly 51 (Autumn 1974), pp. 441-47; and Gerald Miller, David Bender, Florence Thomas and Henry Nicholson, "Real Versus Reel: What's the Verdict?" Journal of Communication 24 (Summer 1974), pp. 99-111.

²⁰Albert Mehrabian, "Significance of Posture and Position in the Communication of Attitude and Status Relationships," Psychology Bulletin 71 (May 1969), pp. 370-71.

²¹Howard M. Rosenfeld, "Approval-Seeking and Approval-Inducing Functions of Verbal and Nonverbal Responses in a Dyad," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 4 (1966), pp. 597-605; and Howard M. Rosenfeld, "Instrumental Affiliative Functions of Facial and Gestural Expressions," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 4 (1966), pp. 65-72.

²²Percy H. Tannenbaum, "The Indexing Process in Communication," Public Opinion Quarterly 19 (Fall 1955), p. 299.

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²⁴David Shoemaker, "An Analysis of the Effects of Three Vertical Camera Angles and Three Lighting Ratios on the Cognitive Judgments of Photographs of Three Human Models," Diss., Indiana University, 1964.

²⁵Robert C. Williams, "On the Value of Varying TV Shots," Journal of Broadcasting 9 (Winter 1964-65), p. 42.

²⁶Williams, p. 42.

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²⁸Anderson, p. 11.

²⁹Navita Cummings James, "The Impact of New Communication Technologies on Human Communication," paper presented at the 53rd Annual Southern Speech Communication Association Convention, Orlando, Florida, 7 April 1983.

³⁰Robert D. Gantz and Philip J. Salem, "Computers, Pac-Man, and the New Identity Crisis: Communication Relationships in a New Era," paper presented at the 53rd Annual Southern Speech Communication Association Convention, Orlando, Florida, 6 April 1983.

³¹Gantz and Salem, pp. 6-8.

³²Ronald J. Malton and Irene R. Malton, Index to Journals in Communication Studies Through 1974 (Falls Church, Va.: Speech Communication Association, 1975).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Important to this research is the examination of studies on source credibility, audience perception, television newscaster credibility, message salience, and the effects of the photographic or electronic image on source credibility.

The review of literature revealed no empirical studies that investigated credibility between local and national newscasters, nor were there any empirical studies that specifically investigated newscaster credibility and widescreen projected television images. The research did, however, reveal numerous studies on source credibility as well as studies that were designed for investigating newscaster credibility. Many of these studies concentrated on either the attributes of the "ideal" newscaster or those attributes that affect newscaster credibility. These studies discussed a variety of intervening variables, but the majority of these primarily focused on possible sex differences for both credibility and perception. Another intervening variable under investigation was age. Because the body of research on credibility is so large, this chapter

was broken down into several major headings, which include Source Credibility, Newscaster Credibility, Channel Variables, Receiver Variables, Perception, Messages and Message Variables.

Source Credibility

Early Research Efforts

The source's role is of vital importance in the communication process as Berlo's research has shown--the more credible the perceived source, the more likely the transmitted information will be accepted.¹

One of the first rhetoricians to discuss the issue of source credibility was Aristotle: "The character (ethos) of the speaker is a cause of persuasion. . . . We might also affirm that his character (ethos) is the most potent of all means of persuasion."² Aristotle described the three basic components of source credibility as high character, good will and wisdom.³

Early research efforts in the 1930s and 1940s by such researchers as Sherif,⁴ Asch,⁵ and Lewis⁶ concerned themselves with the effects of ethos on attitude change. Studies conducted in the late 1940s and in the 1950s by Haiman,⁷ Hovland, et al.,⁸ and Sherif⁹ further added to the body of knowledge on credibility by concluding that receivers not only evaluate the message in a communication situation, but

they also evaluate the source, which in turn can affect the message itself.

Credibility as a Multidimensional Construct

Charles Osgood, in his article "Studies on the Generality of Affective Meaning Systems,"¹⁰ formulates "meaning" in terms of semantic space on a three dimensional axis. By employing a semantic differential--polar opposite pairs of descriptive adjectives--one can empirically measure "meaning" and therefore perceptions. This led James C. McCroskey to develop Likert-type scales to measure ethos specifically for mass media news sources.¹¹ As McCroskey and Jenson noted, "over the past decade laboratory research on persuasion has consistently found source image to be a multidimensional perception."¹² The three dimensions they reported which consistently accounted for the most variance were "Character," "Sociability," and "Competence."

C. David Mortensen describes credibility as a multi-dimensional construct that is "actually a loose assortment of factors that, taken together, produce the impression of a source."¹³ However, researchers often disagree on the dimensions that comprise credibility. Early research efforts by Hovland, Janis and Kelly in 1953 reported that credibility depends on a two-dimensional construct--trustworthiness and expertise.¹⁴ McCroskey (in 1966) also found two components of credibility--authoritativeness and character.¹⁵

In 1969, Berlo found the dimensions of "safety" and "qualification" which appear similar to those dimensions found by Hovland, et al. In addition, Berlo found a third dimension--"dynamism"--comprised of such components as "energetic," "bold" and "aggressive."¹⁶ In addition to these dimensions of credibility, Whitehead added the "objectivity" dimension.¹⁷

Gary Cronkhite and Jo Liska stated that credibility is not a set of scales or factors but rather the capability of the source to produce changes in the receiver:

One cannot assume that any of these rating scales or dimensions are those which listeners actually carry around in their heads and use as the bases for their perceptual judgements. When certain types of listeners are instructed to make certain types of ratings vis-a-vis certain types of sources under certain conditions, a sort of "average" factor structure emerges. It is a mistake, however, to believe that the perceptual structure is identical for any two listeners or for any single listener at two different times.¹⁸

In addition, Cronkhite and Liska said:

The credibility of sources usually depends heavily upon the specific functions they perform in specific topic-situations for specific listeners. . . . Sources may act as purveyors of information, but they may also serve as sources of reward and punishment, provide ego maintenance and defense, or help clarify listeners' self-concepts, among a variety of other functions.¹⁹

Researchers such as David Markham, who evaluated newscasters on a fifty-five item semantic differential

instrument and identified three major dimensions of credibility--message validity, dynamism and trustworthiness²⁰ --and James McCroskey and Thomas A. Jenson, who factor analyzed existing source credibility rating scales to establish a set of twenty-five scales specifically designed for measuring the credibility of mass media news sources,²¹ are among several who have pre-tested their scale items for a variety of specific source functions, topic situations and specific listeners.

In a 1981 experimental study employing discriminant analysis, Mary I. Blue reported the presence of five dimensions of believability of television newscasters. Blue labeled these dimensions "Professionalism," "Style," "Trustworthiness," "Sophistication," and "Character."²²

In a study by Thomas M. Steinfatt and Charles V. Roberts III, positive evidence was presented for a relationship between trustworthiness and physiological arousal.²³ The theorized construct of "expertness" was also included as a variable (as was "topic" and the sex of the receiver) but was not found to be significant either in the main effect or with this variable's interaction with "trustworthiness." Sex of the receiver and "topic" were also not found to be significant.²⁴ Steinfatt and Roberts' use of "trustworthiness" and "expertness" in their study closely resembles and reflects Janis, Hovland and Kelly's two dimensional construct of credibility.

Newscaster Credibility

Much of the research regarding the credibility of television newscasters focuses on the personal appeal aspects of newscasters in an attempt to isolate the factors of the "ideal" newscaster. Other studies have investigated the variables which affect newscaster credibility, such as age and sex. More recent studies have investigated para-proxemic attributions, para-social phenomena and research biases involving credibility.

Television as a Credible Medium

There is evidence to support that the credibility of television is higher than for other media such as radio, newspapers, and magazines. The Roper Organization's 1983 public opinion poll reported that 53% of the respondents rated television as the most credible medium followed by newspapers (22%), magazines (8%), and radio (6%).²⁵

In 1976, Seong Hyong Lee engaged in an experimental study to determine which news medium was more credible-- newspaper or television. Using the multidimensional approach by engaging factor analysis to investigate credibility, Lee's findings indicated that college students judged television news to be three times more credible than newspaper news.²⁶ "Newspaper believers," Lee added, "regarded 'completeness' of newspaper news as a major element of newspaper news

credibility."²⁷

One study, however, challenged the credibility of television news against other media news sources. In 1981, Walter Gantz attempted to assess the extent to which television news credibility sources were a function of researcher operationalizations of the concept.²⁸ Gantz was responding to reports which suggested that Roper's single item measure of television news was biased as well as an inadequate indicator of news credibility. Gantz found that when each medium was assessed individually, the rating for television was only "a razor's edge higher than newspapers."²⁹ Gantz also found that television was considered the more credible news source whenever conflicting versions of the same story appeared in newspapers and on television.

Para-Social Phenomenon

In 1956, Horton and Wohl hypothesized the presence of a para-social phenomenon, a one-sided, psuedo-interpersonal relationship between a viewer and a televised personae (celebrity or television personality).³⁰ This led M. R. Levy in 1979 to research, investigate and test this relationship. Levy reported that the familiarity of newscasters is important to viewers because, "people who engage in para-social interaction are often reassured by a familiar, friendly 'image' of their intimates-at-a-

distance."³¹ One of the more interesting aspects of this phenomenon is that the viewer perceives the bond with the newscaster as real. The entire construct of the relationship is simply an invention of the receiver, although newscasters--because of ratings--do not appear to discourage it. In many cases, they encourage this type of relationship for self-serving needs. In conclusion, Levy stated, "para-socially active viewers experience a sense of order, belonging, and context from their relationship with the news personae."³²

"Ideal" Newscaster Attributes

In 1973, H. Shosteck analyzed surveys of viewer reactions to news personalities which included newscasters, weather reporters, sportscasters, commentators and editorialists.³³ The results of Shosteck's study reveal that personalities who are better known are often better liked. Shosteck also found that "TV News personalities may not have the same appeal for all segments of the audience," and that their appeal will vary substantially with sex, age and/or socio-economic status of the viewer. Another aspect of the study revealed that:

Personalities who are liked for their appearance and personal appeal appear to attract viewers who tend to be older, female, and of lower socioeconomic status. Conversely, personalities who are rated highly because of their professional attributes tend to draw

viewers who are younger, male and of higher socioeconomic status.³⁴

In addition, Shosteck found that a news personality must be more than just "good." The newscaster must possess a distinctive characteristic such as "good looks, a distinctive voice, obvious knowledgeability, analytical acumen, etc."³⁵

In an attempt to determine why one newscaster is more interesting to watch than another, Sanders and Pritchett investigated the attributes of the "ideal" newscaster. They found that among viewers the "ideal" newscaster would be "white, clean-shaven, 31-55 years old and would wear a dark coat and white shirt. The newscaster should not wear a bow tie, but otherwise style makes little difference."³⁶

Leslie W. Sargent found that personal integrity (sincerity, accuracy and responsibility) of newscasters "are the most highly valued attributes in an accepted source;" this appears to account for more appeal than does their method of presentation.³⁷ In "Viewer Needs and Desires in Television Newscasters," William L. Cathcart reported that the most desirable characteristics of a newscaster were knowledge, experience, trustworthiness, and articulation.³⁸

Non-Verbal Cues and Newscaster Credibility

Nonverbal cues also affect the attitude of the audience towards the newscaster. In 1970, James Tankard's experiment showed that eye contact was effective in influencing the

viewer's image of television announcers.³⁹ F. D. Julian found that college students perceive male newscasters with good eye contact and those wearing casual clothes as more trustworthy than newscasters with poor eye contact and wearing suits.⁴⁰ Lee M. Mandell and Donald L. Shaw demonstrated that the mechanical aspects of television news can have an effect on perceptions of a newscaster.⁴¹ Robert Tiemens suggested that the camera angle may influence viewer perceptions of newscaster effectiveness, knowledgeability and authority.⁴² McCain, Chilberg and Wakshlag found that high angle sequences of the subject increased the perceived credibility of student newscasters; this effect, however, received only partial support.⁴³ The newscasters' sociability and character were enhanced when the "preponderant shot was higher than its corresponding referent shot."⁴⁴ Since combinations of shots or sequences of shots have a particular significance which is quite different from the interpretive significance people attribute to individual shots, it was observed that high angle shots raised credibility on a number of dimensions. But merely including a high angle shot as a "referent" negatively affects credibility judgements.⁴⁵ McCain and his associates concluded that high and low camera angles within shots have different effects depending upon how they are employed in the context of a sequence of shots.⁴⁶ The apparent contradictions of this study to the Mandell-Shaw study and the study by Tiemens are explained by the use of different dependent

measures employed. It appears that "potency" and "activity" interact with judgements receivers make about a person's credibility; hence, a camera shooting upward toward either a televised or filmed performer may increase the perceived power that he or she has over the individual audience members, insuring the difficulty of the audience to relate to these performers.⁴⁷ In other words, the most effective communication occurs between people who are similar or homophilous with one another.⁴⁸

Sex, Age and Credibility

The sex of the source has also been related to perceived credibility. One of the first studies which concluded that males were perceived as more credible than females during a persuasive message was conducted by Franklyn Haiman.⁴⁹ Similar findings were reported by researchers James O. Whittaker and Robert D. Meade. Collecting data in Brazil, India, Jordan and Hong Kong on sex and credibility, they reported that males were rated more credible than females.⁵⁰ In addition, Anthony Mulac and Robert A. Sherman demonstrated that male students giving a persuasive message were rated much more credible and competent than female students giving the same persuasive message.⁵¹

In 1972, Charles Rossiter analyzed data collected from receivers listening to messages pre-recorded on audio tape by male and female speakers. Rossiter examined both the sex of

the speaker and the sex of the listener in addition to message recall. His study showed that there were no significant differences in message recall as a result of sex.⁵²

Two recent experimental studies tested newscaster sex and perceived credibility. Balon, Philport and Beadle (1978) examined the effects of a television newscaster's sex and race on audience perceptions of credibility. Their results revealed that males are perceived as less verbal, equally qualified but less credible than females; blacks were perceived as more anxious, less qualified and thus less credible than white newscasters.⁵³

Susan Whittaker and Ron Whittaker examined the factors of acceptance, behavioral and verbal believability, effectiveness, and preference of male and female newscasters perceived by adults in a controlled listening environment:

Although there were no differences based on sex, it was found that Ss tended to believe the first newscast they heard, regardless of its content or the newscaster involved. Perceived newscaster effectiveness or acceptance were not found to be related to newscast order."⁵⁴

Mary Blue reported that although the high-credibility male newscaster was slightly more believable than the high-credibility female newscaster, no other significant differences between newscaster sex were found.⁵⁵

In 1980, Strickland investigated whether credibility differed for male and female and young and mature television

newscasters. The study also examined the influence of the viewer's age, sex and sex-role attitudes on the perceptions of credibility for male and female and young and mature newscasters. Her findings demonstrated that there were no significant differences in credibility ratings between male and female newscasters or between young and mature newscasters; however, when the variables of sex and age of the newscaster were examined together, mature male newscasters were perceived as significantly more credible except in the case of young female newscasters.⁵⁶ No significant relationship was found between sex, age, and sex-role attitudes of television viewers and credibility of male and female or young and mature newscasters.

Para-Proxemic Attributions

A study by David Klein investigated not only investigated close-up shots in the subjective camera, but also the para-proxemic attributions related to close-up and extreme close-up camera shots and audience response.⁵⁷ He found significant differences in para-proxemic attributions between males and females and the close-up and extreme close-up camera shots.⁵⁸ Also of interest is Klein's finding that males became more threatened viewing a close-up of another male.

Channel Variables

The effect of the channel (through which the message passes)

on the message has also been of concern to researchers investigating the communication process. Several studies have attempted to show that the same message passed through different channels will produce different effects on receivers as a result of channel variables inherent in a particular medium. There is some evidence to suggest that the channel medium of television does affect credibility,⁵⁹ including a study done by Meyer in 1972 investigating news reporter bias.⁶⁰

Meyer's experiment employed three treatment groups, one of which was a control group. All subjects in these treatment groups were pre-tested for negative attitudes toward Spiro Agnew, then Vice President of the United States. One group saw a videotape of the David Frost show which featured Agnew as the guest; the second group read a news item of the show in the New York Times which emphasized Agnew's discussion of violent activities involving "hard hats" who had clashed with anti-war demonstrators; the third group saw neither the television show on which Agnew appeared or read the newspaper item.⁶¹ Meyer reported the following observations:

The most striking result is the vast discrepancy between the attitudinal effects of the [videotaped] program as compared to the newspaper account. College students who only read the newspaper account showed evidence of further polarization and reinforcement of their attitudes against Agnew. . . . In direct contrast, those seeing the program judged Agnew as a more reliable source of information about his opponents and their statements, agreed that Agnew approves of non-violent dissent, that he was more sincere in his attempts to communicate with student dissenters, that he was more effective in his

ability to communicate with student dissenters, and that he was a more competent Vice President.⁴²

Dommermuth⁴³ and Miller, Bender, Thomas and Nicholson⁴⁴ reported that no significant differences were observed on the dependent variables for similar messages transmitted over different channel media.

Dommermuth's experiment investigated the same message presented over several different channel media--television, radio, print media and film. The dependent variables used in the experiment were credibility, attitude change, recall of the message and perception of the medium. Dommermuth reported no significant differences among the dependent variables across any of the channel media.⁴⁵

Miller, et al., used a staged trial for their experiment. One set of test subjects saw the trial in person as it was acted out, while another group saw the same trial on videotape. Miller and his associates reported no significant differences in the credibility of counsels for either the plaintiff or the defense.⁴⁶

Propaganda studies, conducted by researchers such as Wall and Boyd,⁴⁷ Croft and Stimpson,⁴⁸ and Cohen,⁴⁹ found no differences in attitude change between subjects viewing live presentations or videotape presentations.

Based on these studies, it appears that channel variables do not appear to affect receiver perceptions except under certain conditions and when compared to other media

transmitting similar messages.

Receiver Variables

Like channel variables, it was important to this study to determine the effects, if any, of receiver variables affecting the credibility of the source, especially newscasters.

A 1969 study by Siegal, Miller and Wotring reported that some receivers are influenced more than others by a source. These so-called "credibility-prone" receivers rated the source's credibility higher than did those from the non-credibility prone group.⁷⁰

Studies done by Simons, et al.,⁷¹ and McCroskey, Richmond and Daly⁷² reported findings whereby receivers who perceived the source as "similar" to themselves rated it higher than receivers who perceived the source to be quite dissimilar from themselves. This confirms McCain, Chilberg and Wakshlag's findings that concluded the most effective communication occurs between people who are homophilous with one another.⁷³

Although the effects of receiver variables are present and affect credibility, it was observed that these studies used persuasive messages given by the source. As Cronkhite and Liska observed, the criteria for rating credibility will change as the specific function of the source changes. Therefore, when applying these studies to newscaster

credibility, we find a totally different function performed by the newscaster (dispenser of information) as opposed to a source addressing an audience with a persuasive message (persuasive function) to induce attitude change.

Perception

Studies conducted in the field of human perception report a variety of psychological factors that play a substantial role in our ability to understand and learn by attributing meaning to objects and events in the world. How external stimuli are processed and interpreted through such factors as values, needs, attitudes and beliefs (which also change and modify themselves during information processing), forms a central issue for both psychology and philosophy as well as communication research. It is therefore necessary to assume that the process of human learning is acquired through some form of systematic interpretation of events, even though differences in personality and predisposition may alter the perceptual process from one individual to another.

Because it is impossible to experience everything in the world, the construct of perception is seen as a relatively selective process which is primarily dependent upon an individual's cultural background as suggested by Bagby and his binocular rivalry theory.⁷⁴ In the same vein, Berlo stated, "Our own prior experiences inherently determine the characteristics of our observations."⁷⁵ This predicates

that there is considerable bias within the perception process itself indicating that individuals bring with them their own experiences, biases, and predisposition to the communication situation. Consider McCroskey and Jenson's observations:

One of the clearest conclusions that may be drawn from the last several decades of research concerning the effects of mass media is that what the listener or reader brings to the media situation (i.e., his or her background and preconceived notions) is a much more important determinant of media impact than anything in the media itself. One thing the receiver brings to the situation (which much research suggests may be the single most important factor determining media impact) is a perception of the image of the particular media source.⁷⁶

Mortensen suggests that perception is the total configuration of the outside world as it is interpreted by the individual rather than a given material object or stimulus.⁷⁷ According to Renato Tagiuri, social perception refers to that process by which an individual comes to know others through the various facets of personality.⁷⁸ Regarding credibility and perception, Hovland, et al. state that credibility is a perceptual variable intervening between the speaker as a physical stimulus and the listener's response.⁷⁹

Perception and Sex

In a 1976 study on perception by Thomas R. Donohue, "Perceptions of Violent TV News Film: An Experimental

Comparison of Sex and Color Factors," three major findings emerged.⁸⁰ The results demonstrated that "organizational and aesthetic perceptions of violent television news film differ significantly with [only] the sex of the subjects."⁸¹ Females found the violent television news film to be more disorganized and both males and females differed in their aesthetic and overall perception of the black and white version, but not with the color news film.⁸² Another major implication of this study was that the male subjects perceived the black and white news film more positively while the females subjects perceived the black and white news film more negatively.⁸³ The third finding implies that color "does not appear to affect the perceived organization of the messages' content in students' minds. Thus, color did not emerge as a significant variable which aids or inhibits the contextual structuring of violent filmed events."⁸⁴

The fact that color did not contribute significantly to perceptual differences is consistent with two previous investigations--Kraner and Rosenstein, and Vandermeer.⁸⁵ The finding does, however, conflict with three other studies undertaken by Kumata, Katzman, and Katzman and Nyenhuis, where the effect of color on recall was most often the focus of the investigations.⁸⁶

Messages and Message Variables

In Tannenbaum's article, "Initial Attitude Toward Source

and Concept as Factors in Attitude Change Through Communication," he stated:

Despite the relative paucity of experimentation, it is apparent that attitude toward the communicator is not independent of what he says or does. Indeed, this is probably one of the main avenues through which attitudes toward persons and groups are developed, altered and maintained."⁸⁷

Bettinghaus adds that "the basis for the effects produced by messages lies in the similarities of meaning that various stimuli have for source and receiver."⁸⁸ This implies that messages can produce a varied number of receiver-oriented responses as a result of shared meanings between a source and receiver toward an object or concept. Conversely, because people develop connotative meanings for words, the same message may have different meanings for different people. Mortensen feels that word meanings and their ordering within the context are never rigid because "message organization is a dimension of verbal interaction that we take very much for granted most of the time. Words often come easy; they are the product of the moment, the result of reactions that tend to be spontaneous."⁸⁹ Mortensen further directs our attention to the fact that "high ego involvement functions as the basis for judging all other aspects of the social situation," suggesting ego-involved people are the least likely to interpret the meaning of messages in an objective manner."⁹⁰

There are several factors which can affect the source as

a result of the message being transmitted. Addington reported that "mispronunciations do not significantly affect the ratings of general effectiveness," but added, "the only statistical finding, that the speakers and the speeches were not equally effective, was neither relevant or surprising."¹ Actually, Addington's findings were quite relevant since his study revealed that confounding a message (such as with mispronunciations) does not necessarily reduce message effectiveness but does lower the credibility of the source.

Sources can manipulate their messages by using various types of appeals, but message effectiveness also depends heavily on source credibility. Jerry L. Lynn reported that a "more effective PSA may result if (1) the source is made more salient on the basis of credibility, and (2) if greater control were exercised over media decisions." The Lynn study also suggested that "message appeals should be chosen for specific audiences."²

To summarize, while a high source credibility may increase message effectiveness, message content and message variables, the message itself can affect the credibility of a source, either positively or negatively. This indicates that the source is never independent from what is said regardless of the specific function the source serves.

Conclusions

The literature review reveals that source credibility is

a multidimensional construct and must be measured accordingly. Source credibility is generally thought to consist of several dimensions which are affected by the source's function and situation, as well as the receiver's attitudes toward the source and message content. In addition, Mary Blue reported five dimensions of believability, a related construct to credibility, although the order of the dimensions differed.⁹³

Surveys investigating the sex of a television newscaster and perceived credibility have led news directors to believe that audiences prefer male newscasters; in reality, survey respondents have expressed no preference for either sex. Strickland's research confirms that there are no significant differences in the measurement of credibility between female and male newscasters.⁹⁴ In at least one study that was non-newscaster related, it was found that female speakers were equal to, or more credible than, male speakers.⁹⁵

Studies by Rosenfeld and Christie,⁹⁶ Rossiter,⁹⁷ Sloman,⁹⁸ Widgery⁹⁹ and Blue¹⁰⁰ demonstrated that neither male nor female receivers rated a male or female communicator as more or less credible. Since no significant differences were observed between the credibility and the sex of a newscaster, this will not be an issue for investigation in this study.

Sanders and Pritchett found that viewers favored older newscasters and disliked younger newscasters under the age of 30.¹⁰¹ Other research by Hovland, Janis and Kelly indicated

that in certain situations, age is used as a measure of experience (expertise), which is a dimension of credibility.¹⁰²

The review of literature has contributed to isolating those variables which do not affect the perceived credibility of a communicator. These variables include channel and receiver variables, both of which appear to have little or no effect on newscaster credibility, since newscasters perform only an information function. The criteria for receiver evaluation is quite different when listening to persuasive speakers. To generalize previous research efforts on the credibility of persuasive speakers and to apply them to newscaster credibility would certainly be erroneous. Therefore, channel and receiver variables will not be an area of study in this research.

One definition of perception offered by Tagiuri is that process by which an individual comes to know others, but as Berlo has observed, an individual's own experience, values and biases are irrevocably woven into the perception process. As Donohue has shown, the perceptual differences in viewing violent news film between males and females were more a function of their sex than the color treatment.¹⁰³

It has been demonstrated that the experience and preconceived ideas of the receiver (including the receiver's perception and predisposition toward the source) brought to the communication situation are important determinants that affect the communication process. Message content and

message variables are equally important determinants since they may also affect source credibility.

Research specifically focusing on newscaster credibility is minimal; research incorporating the effects of the new technologies in broadcasting is almost non-existent. This predicates the need for further research in this area.

Notes

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CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Since not much is known about how the widescreen television image affects the credibility of a newscaster, this study was designed as an exploratory experiment employing a classic 2 x 2 factorial design. In addition, a pre-test was employed to develop a valid and reliable instrument to measure differences in viewer perceptions of a news source viewed on two television screen sizes. The author investigated the interaction of newscaster source credibility and the widescreen television image by employing two levels of newscaster status: local and national.

The following chapter has been designed to: (1) discuss the selection of the variables used in the experiment; (2) address the question of instrumentation; (3) describe the production of a simulated newscast; (4) explain the criteria by which the final scales were chosen for this experiment; and (5) formulate a testing design for the experiment.

The following sections in this chapter include Selection of the Variables, which describes the variables chosen for the experiment and gives justification for those independent

variables (such as sex and age) not included in the experiment. The Stimulus section explains the criteria for formulating the visual stimulus and describes in detail how the simulated videotape was produced for the pre-test subjects. The section entitled Development of the Testing Instrument, which includes the sub-section "The Pre-Test Sample and Analysis," describes the criteria used for the pre-test investigation of the testing instrument supplied by James C. McCroskey and Thomas A Jenson. This section discusses the factor analysis comparison between the McCroskey and Jenson results and the results obtained in the pre-test. This section also reports the scales selected for the experiment and explains the specific criteria used in the selection of the final scales. The final section, Testing Design for the Experiment, contains three sub-sections: (1) "Stimulus," which describes the visual stimulus used in the experiment; (2) "Selection of Subjects," which explains the sampling procedures used; and (3) "Procedure," which reveals the actual testing design of the experiment.

Selection of the Variables

Credibility and Sex

Despite the expected differences in perception between males and females, only a few researchers have used sex as an independent variable.¹ In attempting to understand how sex

was related to perceptions of color and black and white political commercials, Thomas R. Donohue demonstrated that females who viewed the color version of a political commercial rated it significantly more aesthetically pleasing than males who viewed the same commercial.² Based on previous research findings, several important variables emerged which could affect perceptions of a filmed or televised event: (1) the nature and salience of the event; and (2) the perception of a violent event as opposed to a predictable non-violent event.

In Donohue's 1976 study, the perceptual differences attributed to sex were rationalized as differences between males and females with regard to behavior modeling and "response sets" toward other external stimuli.³ Donohue concluded that sex was a far more important factor in determining viewer reaction than any differences in the film itself. Donohue's focus for these studies concentrated on the "organizational" and "aesthetic" dimensions in a viewing experience and not on the dimensions of credibility.

Mary Blue's 1981 study concluded no significant differences in believability for male or female newscasters who were manipulated as either low or medium-credibility. She did, however, find a slight increase in believability with a high-credible male newscaster over a high-credible female newscaster.⁴

Previous literature has also demonstrated that the sex of a newscaster or sex of the receiver does not affect credibility to a significant degree. For this reason, the sex

of the source (newscaster) or the receiver (viewer) will not be an issue for investigation. Based on these studies and other previous research efforts in this area, the independent variable "sex" was eliminated from the study.

Newscaster Manipulation

Blue's study demonstrated that it is possible to manipulate the source credibility of a newscaster between treatment groups. Rather than manipulate the credibility of a newscaster as Blue did, newscaster type (i.e. "local" and "national") will be manipulated instead to observe possible significant differences in credibility between the two types.

This researcher did not find any studies which specifically measured differences in perceived credibility between local and national newscasters. Whether or not the bias of "local" or "national" newscaster perceptions act as predeterminants of newscaster credibility is therefore a major concern of this study.

The "Ideal" Newscaster

Based on Sanders and Pritchett's findings, the individual chosen for the simulated newscast used in the experiment was a caucasian male, 5' 11" tall, clean-shaven (except for a trimmed moustache), weighed 185 pounds (with a medium-heavy build), sported Brunette hair, and was 36 years of age. As

for dress, he wore a dark coat, white shirt and a tie (but not a bow tie).⁹ Except for his moustache, this newscaster appeared to fit Sanders and Pritchett's "ideal" image of a newscaster.

Cues, Indexing and Magnification

Of major importance in this study was the effect of screen size on newscaster credibility. As previously noted, messages are made up of distinct stimulus elements called signs or cues. These cues can evolve from verbal and non-verbal content, context and treatment given to the message. It was therefore a logical assumption that image magnification on a large screen might also magnify certain "signs" or "cues" which might affect the dimensions of credibility by activating Tannenbaum's "indexing effect." In addition, such effects could be interpreted as either positive or negative, depending upon whether these cues (or indexes) are interpreted by the receiver as either positive or negative.

Stimulus

The stimulus for this study was a simulated newscast segment lasting for approximately 10 minutes. The criteria for the newscast were as follows: (1) the stimulus material had to approximate what appeared to be a newscast videotaped directly off the air or a professional demonstration tape

supplied by one of the networks; (2) the anchorman had to be relatively unknown, especially to the test subjects; (3) the anchorman had to be professional enough to pass as a newly hired newsman by one of the major television networks; (4) the segment could not appear edited, therefore, it would have to contain other related news materials, such as actualities featuring voice-overs and on-camera stand ups by correspondents; and (5) the simulated news tape had to be of good picture and sound quality.

To achieve these criteria, the following steps were taken: first, the CBS Nightly News was videotaped (3/4" U-Matic cassette) on October 11, 1983 at 5:30 PM CST. The newscast, featuring Dan Rather as the anchorman, was transcribed except for the actualities and TV commercials (see Appendix B). Dan Rather's transcription was then re-ordered and edited down to 10 minutes. It included several international stories as well as several national stories; two stories were considered "light" news (see Appendix B). The edited copy was then read on-camera by Jeffrey Simon, a professional broadcaster, in the television news studio of WAFB-TV Channel 9 located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Simon read the copy, pausing after each introduction of an actuality which was to be edited in at a later date. Simon's simulated newscast was originally recorded on professional 2" videotape and later transferred to 3/4" U-Matic cassette before the actualities were inserted. After receiving the 3/4" videotape from WAFB-TV, the actualities were edited into the tape to

complete the simulated news segment. The final result was a high-quality videotape that appeared as if it had been taped directly off the air during an actual news broadcast and featuring a professional newscaster.

To substantiate the content quality of the videotape, several professional broadcasters at WDAM-TV Channel 7, located in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, were asked to rate the tape. Their general consensus confirmed the tape was of high quality and the newscaster featured in the segment appeared to be a professional broadcaster. They also indicated that the segment did not appear to be simulated (see Appendix G).

Development of the Testing Instrument

Selection of Media Scales

In 1975, McCroskey and Jenson selected 204 adults at random in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois, for their first sample and 707 adults selected at random in Peoria, Illinois, for their second sample; a third sample of 459 predominantly white college students came from Illinois State University enrolled in beginning communication courses required by all students at the University.⁴

These test subjects in three groups were administered 46 semantic differential scales. Data from the three phases of the investigation were analyzed separately, and all data were submitted to principal component factor analyses and varimax

rotation.⁷ The second phase of data analyses consisted of canonical correlation analyses and the third phases employed a step-wise multiple regression analysis.⁸

McCroskey and Jenson produced a twenty-five scale semantic differential which indicated the presence of five factors accounting for 70% of the total variance of the satisfactory loaded items (see Table 1); the emerging factors were labeled "Competence," "Extroversion," "Composure," "Character" and "Sociability."⁹ Two of the factors, "Character" and "Sociability," collapsed over each other in the pilot study, resulting in a single factor labeled "Character-Sociability."

David Klein selected two of the highest loading scale items from each factor generated in the McCroskey-Jenson study. These selected scale items were then pre-tested by Klein for validity in his pilot study before running his experiment on para-social attributes and camera angles. Employing the Image Factoring method for his study, Klein reported a total variance exceeding 65% for his ten selected factors.¹⁰

Although Cronkhite and Liska are critical of researchers "borrowing" one another's scales for testing, it appears that the McCroskey and Jenson scales, verified by Klein, are a reliable instrument (with more than 70% of the total variance) for testing the image of media news sources (see sub-heading "Assessment of Reliability" in this chapter).¹¹ Cronkhite and Liska's major concern is that borrowed scales, often

TABLE 1

McCROSKY AND JENSON'S SUGGESTED SCALES FOR THE
MEASUREMENT OF MASS MEDIA NEWS SOURCE IMAGE

Dimension/Scales	Pilot Sample	Peoria Sample	ISU Sample
COMPETENCE			
qualified-unqualified	.85(1)	.74(1)	.75(1)
expert-inexpert	.82(1)	.73(1)	.77(1)
reliable-unreliable	.83(1)	.74(1)	.77(1)
believable-unbelievable	.78(1)	.71(1)	.69(1)
incompetent-competent	-.71(1)	-.66(1)	-.77(1)
intellectual-narrow	.58(1)	.71(1)	.70(1)
valuable-worthless	.74(1)	.74(1)	.75(1)
uninformed-informed	-.85(1)	-.63(1)	-.58(1)
CHARACTER			
cruel-kind	-.72(2/3)	-.74(2/3)	-.74(2/3)
unsympathetic-sympathetic	-.59(2/3)	-.68(2/3)	-.63(2/3)
selfish-unselfish	-.57(2/3)	-.64(2/3)	-.66(2/3)
sinful-virtuous	-.57(2/3)	-.59(2/3)	-.63(2/3)
SOCIABILITY			
friendly-unfriendly	.70(2/3)	.62(3)	.72(3)
cheerful-gloomy	.72(2/3)	.64(3)	.72(3)
good natured-irritable	.58(2/3)	.64(3)	.67(3)
sociable-unsociable	.75(2/3)	.58(3)	.59(3)
COMPOSURE			
composed-excitabile	.84(4)	.63(4)	.79(4)
calm-anxious	.87(4)	.59(4)	.72(4)
tense-relaxed	NA	-.61(4)	-.59(4)
nervous-poised	-.59(4)	-.62(4)	-.58(4)
EXTROVERSION			
meek-aggressive	-.77(5)	-.68(5)	-.68(5)
timid-bold	-.82(5)	-.68(5)	-.75(5)
talkative-silent	.58(5)	.67(5)	.59(5)
extroverted-introverted	.68(5)	.59(5)	.57(5)
verbal-quiet	NA	.69(5)	.58(5)

Numbers in parentheses after loading indicate factor on which loading appeared: 1-Competence, 2-Character, 3-Sociability, 4-Composure, 5-Extroversion, 2/3-Character-Sociability.

Source: James C. McCroskey and Thomas A. Jenson, "Image of Mass Media News Sources," Journal of Broadcasting 19 (Spring, 1975), pp. 174-75.

purported to be general scales for a variety of testing situations, should be pre-tested by the researcher for validity and reliability for his or her particular experiment.

Factoring Method

Cronkhite and Liska also question the use of various factor methods employed by researchers. For example, although the most frequently used factoring methods employed are Quartimax and Varimax, they asked the question:

. . . as to why any orthogonal rotation should be used when analyzing a concept such as credibility . . . why should one assume that the factors of credibility are not correlated with one another? We certainly assume that credibility factors are related to listener acceptance. Why, then, adopt an orthogonal solution which forces the obtained factors to remain uncorrelated with one another?¹²

McCroskey and Young respond by stating that the Varimax method of rotation will generate uncorrelated factor scores which can then be used in analysis of variance or multiple regression analyses without introducing the problem of multicollinearity of predictors--"a distinct advantage."¹³ By employing the Varimax method of factor rotation, the factors are "purified" and "simplified" in the columns of the factor matrix in which all the scale loadings tend toward "one" or "zero."¹⁴

It is only recently that communication researchers have begun employing oblique analysis as an alternate method of

determining factors, which McCroskey and Young also support and recommend for communication research.¹⁵ However, McCroskey and Jenson have devoted most of their research to instrument development consistently using the standard varimax solution to increase the purity of the factors.¹⁶

In addition, McCroskey and Jenson have employed an a priori criterion for the loading of an item to be considered significant--a primary loading on one factor of at least .60 with no secondary loading on any other factor with a value greater than .40.¹⁷ McCroskey and Young also contend that ". . . when any rotation method other than varimax is employed, the .60-.40 criterion is meaningless."¹⁸

Although it is widely acknowledged that the McCroskey-Jenson scales were derived from several media news sources (e.g., print media, radio and television),¹⁹ researchers, such as Klein and others, have successfully employed these scales with factor scores similar to the original McCroskey and Jenson study.

The Number of Pre-Test Subjects (Ss)

Another concern for this study was the number of subjects selected for the pre-test. When employing factor analysis, it is usually considered necessary to test large numbers of subjects. Various factor analysis studies have reported using from less than one hundred to over one thousand test subjects. What then would be the minimum

number of test subjects required for a reliable factor analysis solution? McCroskey and Young provided the answer:

With small sample sizes, the individual correlations are accompanied by a wide margin of error. As sample size increases, the confidence interval around the individual correlations is narrowed and the probability that factor analysis will be working with true correlations is increased.

While no firm sample size can be set for all factor analytic work, we recommend approximately 200 for any study which purports to produce generalizable findings. With $N=200$ the correlations obtained are reasonably stable, and nonsignificant correlations can have little impact of factor analysis.²⁰

The Pre-Test Sample

Selection of Subjects

The subject population for the pre-test was 201 test subjects, the minimum number of Ss suggested by McCroskey and Young. To simplify data collection, the block sampling technique was used to yield approximately 25 subjects per testing session. This method has been successfully used by other researchers such as Terry Ostermeier,²¹ Pat Taylor²² and Mary Blue.²³

Human Subjects Committee

As required by the Human Subjects Committee at the University of Southern Mississippi, test subjects were

informed about the nature of the experiment and any ill effects that might result from the testing. They were also given the option to decline from participating in the experiment without any penalty (e.g. lower grade for the class). The Human Subjects Committee specified three ways to obtain the consent of test subjects. First, there was the "long form" which required specific information about any possible ill effects that could be experienced by the subject, regardless of how remote those possibilities were. The subject was required to sign the form in the presence of a witness. Secondly, there was the "short form," a condensed version of the "long form." Essentially, the same information was required but not in as much detail as the longer consent form. Finally, there was the verbal presentation, which could be read aloud to the test subjects (see Appendix A). The verbal presentation had to briefly explain what the test subjects would do while participating in the experiment. In addition, the verbal presentation had to convey that no ill effects would be experienced by the test subject. The next requirement was to give the subjects the option to decline from participating in the experiment, explaining carefully that no penalty would result if they chose to decline participation. After these verbal statements were made, the researcher had to sign the paper from which the presentation was read. A witness, which was either the instructor if present or one of the test subjects, also had to sign the document. Once these formalities were

completed, the experiment began.

Testing Procedures

Instruction sheets (see Appendix D) were given to the test subjects first. This familiarized the subjects with the type of testing instrument they were about to use and how to mark their responses correctly. Next, the testing instrument was distributed (see Appendix E). Subjects were told to complete the "classification" data on the reverse side of the instrument.

After the 201 pre-test subjects saw the 10-minute simulated newscast, they were asked to rate only the news anchorman in the segment. The subjects were again reminded to fill out the classification measures on the reverse side of the testing instrument.

Pre-Test Analysis

Assessment of Reliability

Probably the most critical methodological consideration within any research design is the assessment of the reliability of the data from which inferences are to be drawn or hypotheses tested. The concept of reliability has been expressed with a variety of terms including: dependability, stability, accura-

cy, consistency, precision, and predictability.²⁴ Kerlinger defined reliability as ". . . the proportion of the 'true' variance to the total obtained variance of the data yielded by a measuring instrument . . ."²⁵ and summarized the value of reliability by cautioning:

To be interpretable, a test must be reliable. . . . High reliability is no guarantee of good scientific results, but there can be no good scientific results without reliability. In brief, reliability is a necessary but not sufficient condition of the value of research results and their interpretation . . .²⁶

TABLE 2
RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS FOR THE PRE-TEST

	SCORE
Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	.93641
Standardized Item Alpha	.93584

Basic to this study was the reliability of McCroskey and Jenson's twenty-five item semantic differential to measure perceptions of credibility of a television news source. With the aid of a sub-program RELIABILITY within the SSPS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) statistical package, internal consistency was established for the

McCroskey-Jenson scales by employing Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of Reliability and the Standardized Item Alpha.²⁷ The results in Table 2 indicate that the McCroskey and Jenson scales are a sufficiently reliable instrument for testing a mass media news source, and more specifically, a television newscaster.

Questionnaire Analysis

The pre-test questionnaire data revealed that 51.7% of the test subjects were male and 47.8% were female. Slightly less than one-half of one percent (one test subject) did not answer this question. Ranked by classification, 38.3% of the test subjects were seniors, 33.3% were juniors and 14.9% were sophomores. Freshman only accounted for 5.5% of the group and graduates constituted only 7.5%.

Slightly less than half the test subjects (43.3%) said they watched the news in the early evening, followed by 24.4% who said they watched the news late at night. Three test subjects (1.5%) said they did not watch the news at all. Only a small percentage said they watched in the mornings (7.0%) and afternoons (8.0%). Thirty-two test subjects (16.0%) did not answer this question.

The largest group (61.2%) reported their age between 21 and 25 followed by the "19-20" age group (25.4%). Eight test subjects (4.0%) reported their age between 26 and 30 and only

6 of the subjects (3.0%) said they were above 30 years of age. Only 12 (6.0%) reported their age between 16 and 18 years of age. None of the test subjects said they were under 16 years of age. One test subject (0.5%) did not answer this question.

Test subject viewing time was under the national average, which is currently reported between 3 and 7 hours per day.²⁸ The largest group (44.8%) reported watching television between 3 and 4 hours per day followed by the "1-2 hours per day" group (29.4%). Only 10.5% of the test subjects reported watching television between 5 and 6 hours, while just under 2% paralleled the national viewing average. Eight subjects (4.0%) said they watched more than 7 hours per day. Only 1 subject (0.5%) did not answer this question.

More than half the test subjects (59.2%) said they got their news from television, which is slightly less than the Roper Organization's public opinion poll of 65.0%.²⁹ In addition, the next largest group of test subjects (17.9%) said they got their news information from radio, which corresponds to Roper's findings of 18.0%. Newspapers only accounted for 11.9% of the test subjects' source of news, which is considerably lower than Roper's opinion poll of 44.0%. Magazines only accounted for 6.0% as a news source in Roper's poll, a figure slightly greater than reported by the test subjects (1.5%). Eighteen test subjects (9.0%) did not answer this question and one subject (0.5%) reported getting

news from another source other than those reported above.

Although most test subjects circled one answer per question, it was observed that several subjects responded with two or more choices, especially on questions 4 and 6. The wording on Question 6 was such that test subjects could have easily believed they were required to circle all answer choices that applied to their particular viewing situation. To correct this problem in the final testing instrument, the wording for Question 6 was changed to read: "During what time of the day do you watch the most television news? (circle one only)." All other questions were also changed to include "circle one" at the end of each question. In addition, test subjects were verbally instructed to circle only one answer per question.

Only Question 7 ("How many hours do you spend watching television?") was eliminated from the final testing instrument because this pre-test figure did not coincide with the pre-test figure reported in question 5: "How many hours of television do you watch per day." The pre-test questionnaire analysis revealed that test subjects' average weekly viewing time was much lower than their reported daily average viewing time multiplied by seven days. It was reasoned that question 5 was a better indicator of subject response than question 7 because the former was an easily remembered unit of time, whereas the latter was considered cumulative and required the test subjects to add up their viewing hours for the week.

For a complete breakdown of this data, see Table 3.

Results Analysis

Analysis of the pre-test scores using descriptive and one-way frequency statistics revealed that almost all distributions for each scale item (except for items "sympathetic-unsympathetic," and "cheerful-gloomy") were skewed more toward the positive adjective pole with extreme cases toward the negative adjective pole. Two scale items ("calm-anxious" and "relaxed-tense") revealed a bimodal distribution. The "calm-relaxed" scale item showed a markedly stronger positive distribution than its negative counterpart, but the "relaxed-anxious" distribution was almost equally split between perceptions of the newscaster on this item, although the overall mean leaned slightly to the positive pole.

The overall mean for all twenty-five scale items was 4.71681, indicating a credible image of the newscaster in the simulated news segment. For individual scale means of each pre-test item, see Figures 1 and 2.

Since the scale items used in the actual experiment were to be subjected to analysis of variance procedures to determine significant differences between and within treatment groups, it was necessary for the pre-test scale items to be rotated in an uncorrelated--or orthogonal--design. Therefore, the pre-test data were factor analyzed

TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF PRE-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

SEX:

Males (104) = 51.7% Females (96) = 47.8% N/A (1) = 0.5%

AGE and CLASSIFICATION

Under 16 (0) = 0.0%	Freshman (11) = 5.5%
16-18 (12) = 6.0%	Sophomore (30) = 14.9%
19-20 (51) = 25.3%	Junior (67) = 33.3%
21-25 (123) = 61.2%	Senior (77) = 38.3%
26-30 (8) = 4.0%	Graduate (15) = 7.5%
Over 30 (6) = 3.0%	N/A (1) = 0.5%
N/A (1) = 0.5%	

1. Where Do You Get Most Of Your News From?

Newspapers (24) = 11.9%	Magazines (3) = 1.5%
Radio (36) = 17.9%	Television (119) = 59.2%
Other (1) = 0.5%	N/A (18) = 9.0%

2. How Many Hours Of Television Do You Watch Per Day?

Under 1 (18) = 9.0%	1-2 (59) = 29.4%
3-4 (90) = 44.8%	5-6 (21) = 10.4%
6-7 (4) = 2.0%	Over 7 (8) = 4.0%
N/A (1) = 0.5%	

3. During What Times Of The Day Do You Watch Television News?

Mornings (14) = 7.0%	Afternoons (16) = 8.0%
Early Eve. (87) = 43.3%	Late Night (49) = 24.4%
None (3) = 1.5%	N/A (32) = 15.9%

Note: Parentheses indicate the number of subjects responding to that category.

FIGURE 1

OVERALL SCALE MEANS FOR PRE-TEST ITEMS

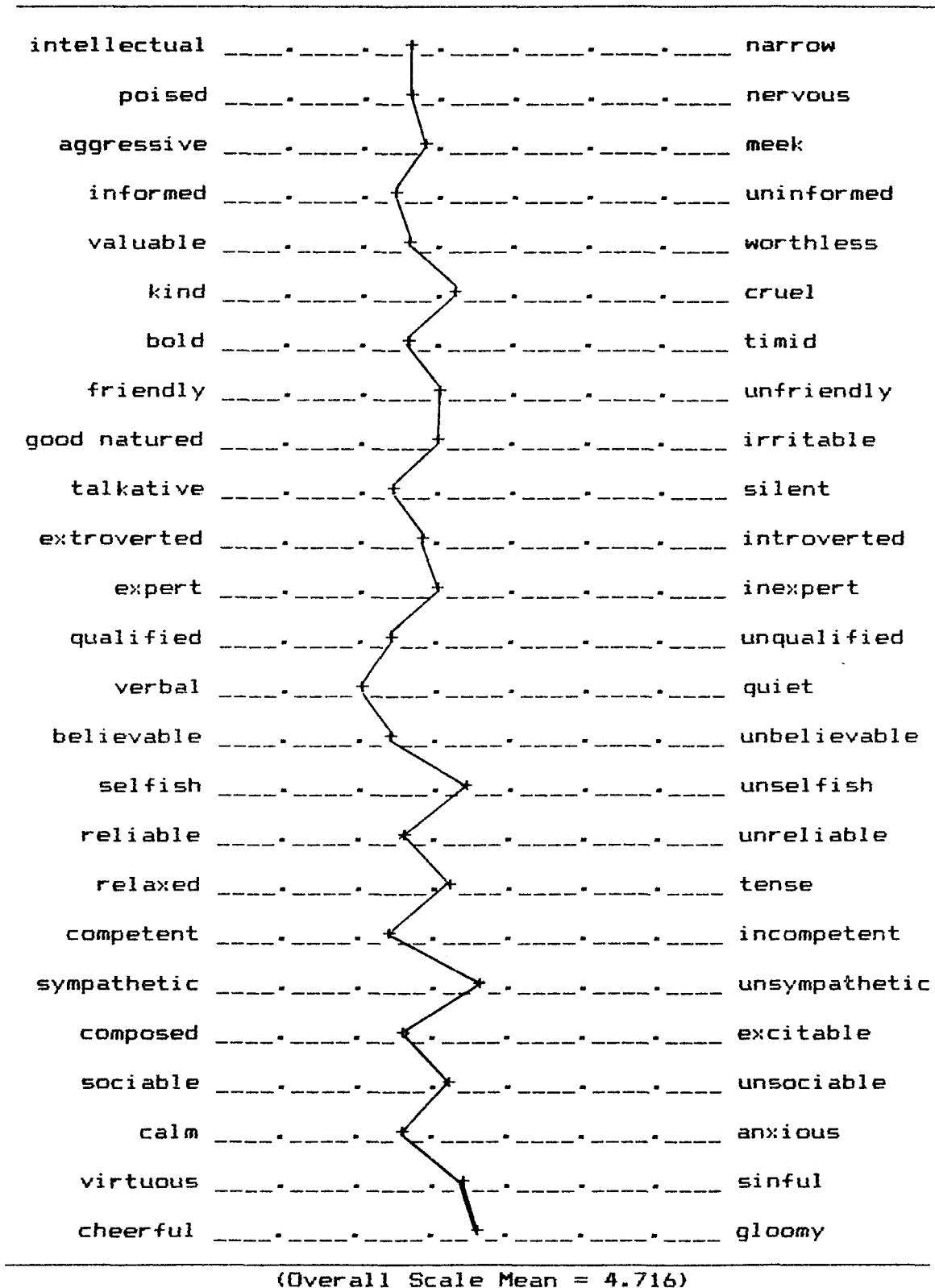
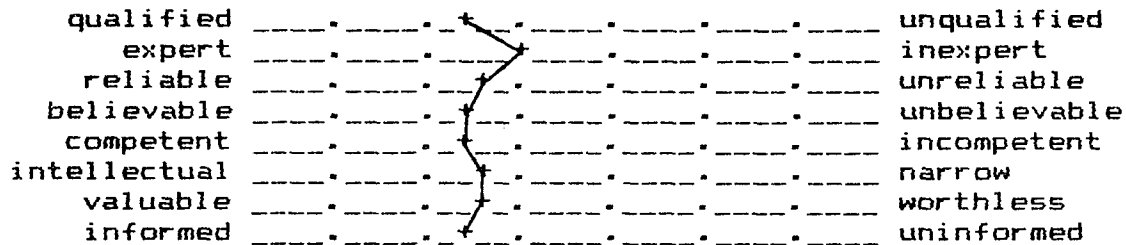
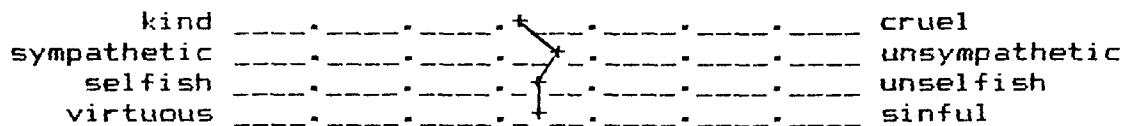


FIGURE 2
 OVERALL SCALE MEANS FOR PRE-TEST ITEMS
 BY DIMENSIONS OF CREDIBILITY

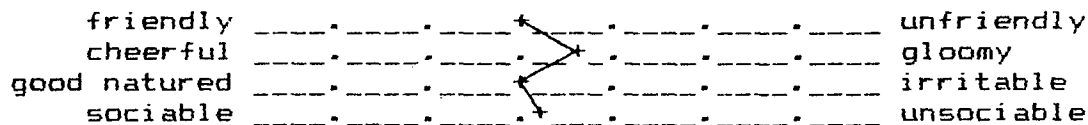
COMPETENCE



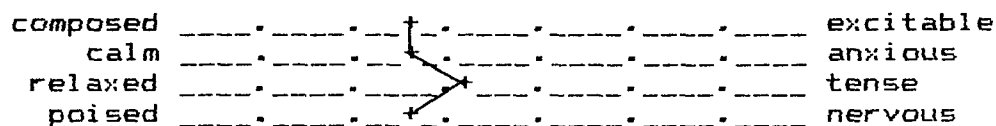
CHARACTER



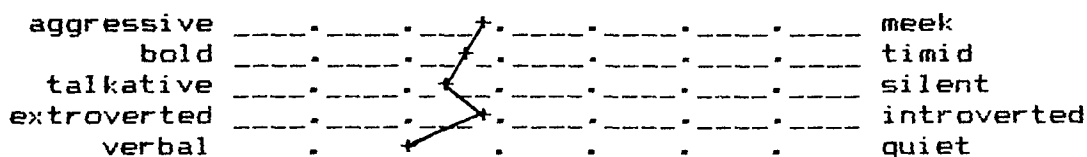
SOCIABILITY



COMPOSURE



EXTROVERSION



(Overall Scale Mean = 4.716)

employing a standard Varimax solution. McCroskey and Young's .60-.40 loading criterion was applied in the selection of scales for the testing instrument. The results revealed that only 18 out of the original 25 items loaded successfully according to the McCroskey-Jenson criteria.

Closer inspection of the factors scores revealed that, overall, they were slightly less than those achieved in the factored solutions by McCroskey and Jenson. The most unstable dimension was "Extroversion" (which shares many of the attributes of the dimension "dynamism," and is considered one of the most unstable dimensions to travel across different groups). Surprisingly, the "Competence" dimension, usually a fairly stable dimension across different groups, was considerably unstable in that three scale items failed to achieve the McCroskey-Jenson criterion. One scale item associated with the "Competence" dimension, "believable-unbelievable," was marginal with a factor score of .59070 for the primary loading. This item, however, was included in the final scales chosen for the experiment since it came extremely close to the McCroskey-Jenson criterion of .60 and with no other factor loading equal to or greater than .40. Many of the factor scores in the "Sociability" and "Character" dimensions were slightly higher than the factored solutions reported by the McCroskey and Jenson study, but one scale item, "cruel-kind," did fail in the "Character" dimension.

For a complete factored solution of the twenty-five scale

items (with transformation matrix and eigenvalues), refer to Table 4.

Analysis of the Seven Failed Scales

The scales that did not meet the McCroskey-Jenson criteria included: (1) "informed-uninformed," (2) "cruel-kind," (3) "talkative-silent," (4) "extroverted-introverted," (5) "verbal-quiet," (6) "reliable-unreliable" and (7) "competent-incompetent."

The "informed-uninformed" item emerged on the "Competence" dimension but failed to meet the McCroskey-Jenson .60-.40 criterion (.50693); all other factor scores, however, were below .40. The "cruel-kind" item collapsed over the "Character" and "Sociability" dimensions but did not achieve a rating higher than .60 on either dimension. The "talkative-silent" scale item emerged on the "Extroversion" dimension as reported in the McCroskey-Jenson study but did not meet the .60-.40 criterion; values higher than .40 were observed on the secondary ("Competence" - .48122) and tertiary ("Sociability" - .40488) loadings. The "extroverted-introverted" item emerged as expected on the "Extroversion" dimension and the "competent-incompetent" item emerged as expected on the "Competence" dimension as reported by McCroskey and Jenson, but both scale items did not meet the .60-.40 criterion. Two scale items emerged on different dimensions than reported by McCroskey and Jenson. The

TABLE 4

ROTATED FACTOR STRUCTURE USING THE VARIMAX
ROTATION METHOD; 5 FACTORS: PRE-TEST

VARIMAX ROTATED FACTOR PATTERN					
	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5
INTELLECTUAL-NARROW	.31358	.26896	.02678	*.69131	.15198
NERVOUS-POISED	.17586	*.62981	.42748	.12898	.29726
MEEK-AGRESSIVE	.06196	.16820	*.83024	.06778	.23246
UNINFORMED-INFORMED	-.05339	.37666	.26709	.50693	.35654
VALUABLE-WORTHLESS	.36465	.26123	.10976	*.63208	.13079
CRUEL-KIND	.55826	.09678	.01381	-.03705	.44133
TIMID-BOLD	.10213	.21049	*.78157	.16378	.03966
FRIENDLY-UNFRIENDLY	*.78840	.02600	-.03351	.25209	.19123
GOOD NATURED-IRRITABLE	*.73434	.27781	-.02601	.26096	.18021
TALKATIVE-SILENT	.40488	-.10693	.49765	.48122	.02794
EXTROVERTED-INTROVERTED	-.03528	-.09569	.51539	.50646	-.07396
EXPERT-INEXPERT	.38607	.31771	.26565	*.62699	.04162
QUALIFIED-UNQUALIFIED	.27703	.29013	.11801	*.77188	.05875
VERBAL-QUIET	.31833	-.05776	.48154	.56711	-.10218
BELIEVABLE-UNBELIEVABLE	.38873	.34365	.14162	*.59070	.29803
SELFISH-UNSELFISH	.23751	.10279	.03908	.10769	*.77246
RELIABLE-UNRELIABLE	.46778	.32065	.07487	.45745	.30082
TENSE-RELAXED	.45615	*.62792	.24821	.18615	.07303
INCOMPETENT-COMPETENT	.14623	.34354	.21920	.53545	.36393
UNSYMPATHETIC-SYMPATHETIC*	.61611	.11718	.16924	.12789	.25859
COMPOSED-EXCITABLE	-.09463	*.77758	-.01792	.21934	.04229
SOCIABLE-UNSOCIABLE	*.74345	.05403	.13304	.27069	.09865
CALM-ANXIOUS	.31462	*.78043	.03434	.25437	.00279
SINFUL-VIRTUOUS	.17537	.01946	.10130	.13161	*.81165
CHEERFUL-GLOOMY	*.77979	.07986	.18016	.24704	-.04026
ORTHOGONAL TRANSFORMATION MATRIX					
	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5
FACTOR 1	.56614	.39809	.32308	.57759	.28812
FACTOR 2	-.67175	.23784	.59011	.28776	-.24726
FACTOR 3	-.30633	.74985	-.39522	-.18975	.38946
FACTOR 4	-.10446	-.27071	.47679	-.35244	.75117
FACTOR 5	.35139	.38652	.40479	-.65066	-.37404
EIGENVALUES	10.2108	2.1930	1.8126	1.4981	1.0549
PCT-VARIANCE	40.8	8.8	7.3	6.0	4.2
CUM-PCT	40.8	49.6	56.9	62.9	67.1

* Denotes item loaded on factor

"verbal-quiet" item emerged on the "Competence" dimension (.56711) rather than on the "Extroversion" dimension, and the "reliable-unreliable" item emerged on the "Sociability" dimension (.46778) rather than on the "Competence" dimension.

These seven scale items were excluded from the final testing instrument primarily because of their failure to meet the McCroskey-Jenson .60-.40 criterion. In a few instances, the primary loadings did not emerge on the same dimensions of the varimax solution as reported in McCroskey and Jenson's study. However, these particular items also failed to meet the .60-.40 criterion and were therefore excluded from the testing instrument on that basis. For a comparison of factor loadings for these items, see Table 5.

Of the seven scale items that did not pass the a priori criterion, it was observed that at least six adjective pairs represented "implied" attributes of a television newscaster. This is one possible explanation why these scales failed to measure newscaster credibility.

Mary Blue used the "step-wise" discriminant analysis function to select her variables from a pool of 44 scale measures that were considered useful in discriminating among the different groups in her study.³⁰ Of the 14 scales eliminated from Blue's final experiment, several of them were either identical or close in meaning to the scales eliminated in this study. Three of these scales that were identical included: "verbal-quiet," "competent-incompetent" and "reliable-unreliable." Scale items that came close in

meaning were: "good natured-mean" (kind-cruel), "outgoing-withdrawn" (extroverted-introverted) and "professional-unprofessional" (competent-incompetent). Closer inspection of the seventh scale item eliminated from the study, "informed-uninformed," revealed that the loadings were not dispersed across the various dimensions of credibility

TABLE 5
FACTOR LOADINGS FOR SCALE ITEMS
FAILING THE McCROSKEY-JENSON
.60-.40 CRITERION

VARIMAX ROTATED FACTOR PATTERN						
		FACTOR	FACTOR	FACTOR	FACTOR	FACTOR
		1	2	3	4	5
UNINFORMED-INFORMED	(1)	-.05339	.37666	.26709	.50693	.35654
CRUEL-KIND	(2)	.55826	.09678	.01381	-.03705	.44133
TALKATIVE-SILENT	(5)	.40488	-.10693	.49765	.48122	.02794
EXTROVERT-INTROVERT	(5)	-.03528	-.09569	.51539	.50646	-.07396
VERBAL-QUIET	(5)	.31833	-.05776	.48154	.56711	-.10218
RELIABLE-UNRELIABLE	(1)	.46778	.32065	.07487	.45745	.30082
INCOMPETENT-COMPETENT	(1)	.14623	.34354	.21920	.53545	.36393

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate primary loadings as reported by McCroskey and Jenson. The order of the dimensions for this pre-test study are as follows: Factor 1 = Sociability; Factor 2 = Composure; Factor 3 = Extroversion; Factor 4 = Competence; Factor 5 = Character.

(usually indicating a meaningless or irrelevant measure) but in fact came very close to the McCroskey and Jenson a priori .60-.40 criterion (.50693) with no other loading higher than .40. The primary loading as reported in the McCroskey and Jenson study for this scale item was extremely high for their pilot study (.85) and slightly above the a priori criterion for the Peoria sample (.63); the lowest factor score among

the three test subject groups was the ISU sample (.58), which was slightly below McCroskey and Jenson's suggested criterion for the inclusion of a scale item.³¹ The two highest factor scores for this item in the McCroskey and Jenson study were achieved with groups of randomly selected adults, while the lowest factor score (ISU sample) was achieved with predominantly white college students taking basic communications courses (which reflects a similar composition of subjects for this study).³² This appears to indicate that "knowledgeability" is less a criteria for college students perceiving newscaster credibility than it is for adults. In addition, it appears that the perception of newscasters, especially nightly news anchors, have drastically shifted in the last ten years from an "investigative reporter" or "journalist" (implying knowledgeability) to a news "personality," whose attributes are more conducive to an attractive, amiable TV host.³³ This aspect, in conjunction with the subject population (college students) and the implied perceptions of a newscaster probably account for the further loss of measured meaning for this scale item within the dimension of "Competence."

Testing Design For The Experiment

Stimulus

To avoid confounding the variables in this study, the

same simulated newscast shown to the pre-test subjects was also shown to all treatment groups in the experiment. To manipulate viewer perceptions of the newscaster as either a local or a national newscaster, the appropriate verbal statement was made to each test group in the experiment before the videotape was shown (see Appendix A).

Selection of Subjects

Subjects for the actual experiment were chosen from the introductory speech communications classes at the University of Southern Mississippi utilizing the block sampling technique (see studies by Ostermeier, Taylor and Blue as previously noted). These class sections were chosen at random by using a computer's random seed generator function to produce a set of ten random numbers from fifteen class sections offered during the Spring 1984 session.

The experimental design contained four treatment groups. Each treatment group consisted of 52 subjects ($S_s=52$), which is considered a statistically reasonable number for analysis of variance statistical procedures. The total number of subjects for this study was 208.

Testing Procedures

The test subjects were assigned the following treatment groups (see Figure 3):

Group I

Subjects (Ss=52) viewed a newscast segment featuring a "local" news anchorman on a conventional television set (25-inch picture size measured diagonally).

Group II

Subjects (Ss=52) viewed a newscast segment featuring a "local" news anchorman on a widescreen television system (6-feet in picture size measured diagonally).

Group III

Subjects (Ss=52) viewed a newscast featuring a "national" news anchorman on a conventional television set (25-inch picture size measured diagonally).

Group IV

Subjects (Ss=52) viewed a newscast featuring a "national" news anchorman on a widescreen television system (6-feet in picture size measured diagonally).

After the Human Subject Committee's approved verbal statement was read aloud and the instructions and testing instrument distributed, treatment group subjects saw the videotape at their regularly assigned class time. Subjects in groups 3 and 4 were told that they were going to see a "local" newscaster from another market. Subjects in treatment groups 1 and 2 were told that they were going to see a demonstration tape of a newscaster that was just hired by the CBS Television Network. Treatment groups 1 and 3 saw the stimulus material on a standard 25" television set, while treatment groups 2 and 4 saw the stimulus material on a

widescreen television projection system.

All subjects were told to rate only the anchorman seen in the segment and not any other newsperson (e.g., reporters, correspondents, etc.) who contributed on-camera or voice-over news stories during the segment.

Since the same simulated newscast was shown to all pre-test subjects and to all four groups, it was reasoned that no confounding of the variables took place as a result of other newspersons or additional news content in the segment. If such material affects the credibility of a news source, the effects were held constant in the pre-test and across all four treatment groups in the experiment. Later experiments could be conducted to determine if such material affects the credibility of a newscaster in any way.

All test subjects were seated no further away than 25-feet from either the conventional television screen or the widescreen television system. After viewing the news segment, the subjects rated the anchorman in the newscast with the testing instrument. After completing the rating scales, the test subjects answered questions pertinent to the viewing situation (see Appendix F). These questions asked for personal data (e.g., sex, age, college classification), how many hours of television were watched by the subject each day, when they watched news programs and at what times they watched them.

After the students rated the newscast, they were either dismissed from the testing area or the class resumed,

depending upon the wishes of the instructor in charge of the class.

FIGURE 3
DESIGN OF THE EXPERIMENT

Treatment Groups

Group 1 Ss=52

Standard
Television
Set

NATIONAL
NEWSCASTER

Group 2 Ss=52

Widescreen
Television
System

NATIONAL
NEWSCASTER

Group 3 Ss=52

Standard
Television
Set

LOCAL
NEWSCASTER

Group 4 Ss=52

Widescreen
Television
System

LOCAL
NEWSCASTER

Notes

¹Thomas R. Donohue, "Perceptions of Violent TV News-film: An Experimental Comparison of Sex and Color Factors," Journal of Broadcasting 20 (Spring 1976), p. 186-87.

²Thomas R. Donohue, "Viewer Perceptions of Color and Black and White Paid Political Advertising," Journalism Quarterly 50 (Winter 1973), pp. 660-65.

³Thomas R. Donohue, "Violent TV News Film," pp. 185-186.

⁴Mary I. Blue, "Factors of Believability of Television Newscasters," Diss., Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1981, p. 102.

⁵Keith P. Sanders and Michael Pritchett, "Influence of Appearance on Television Newscaster Appeal," Journal of Broadcasting 15 (Summer 1971), p. 298.

⁶James C. McCroskey and Thomas A. Jenson, "Image of Mass Media News Sources," Journal of Broadcasting 19 (Spring 1975), p. 171.

⁷McCroskey and Jenson, p. 171.

⁸McCroskey and Jenson, p. 172.

⁹McCroskey and Jenson, pp. 172-73.

¹⁰David M. Klein, "Para-Proxemic Attributions: An Investigation into the Relationship Between Close-up and Extreme Close-up Camera Shots and Audience Response," Diss., Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1980, p. 33.

¹¹Gary Cronkhite and Jo Liska, "A Critique of Factor Analytic Approaches to the Study of Credibility," Communication Monographs 43 (June 1976), p. 93.

¹²Cronkhite and Liska, p. 102.

¹³James C. McCroskey and Thomas J. Young, "The Use and Abuse of Factor Analysis in Communication Research," Human Communication Research 5 (Summer 1979), p. 379.

¹⁴Cronkhite and Liska., p. 101.

¹⁵McCroskey and Young, p. 379.

¹⁶McCroskey and Young, p. 380

¹⁷McCroskey and Young, p. 380.

¹⁸McCroskey and Young, p. 380.

¹⁹McCroskey and Jenson, p. 171.

²⁰McCroskey and Young, p. 377.

²¹Terry Ostermeier, "The Effects of Type and Frequency of Reference Upon Perceived Source Credibility and Attitude Change," Speech Monographs 34 (June 1967), pp. 137-144.

²²Pat M. Taylor, "An Experimental Study of Humor and Ethos," Southern Speech Communication Journal 39 (Summer 1974), pp. 359-66.

²³Blue, pp. 56-57.

²⁴Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavior Research (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1973), pp. 442-43.

²⁵Kerlinger, p. 446.

²⁶Kerlinger, pp. 454-455.

²⁷Norman Nie, C. Hadlai Hull, SPSS Update: New Procedures and Facilities for Releases 7 and 8 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1979), pp. 110-44.

²⁸Figures for the national viewing average have fluctuated considerably from one survey to another (i.e. Nielson vs. Roper). The researcher has decided to use the Roper Organization's figures, a more conservative estimate. For more information, see pamphlet by Burns W. Roper, Trends in Attitudes Toward Television and Other Media: A Twenty-Four Year Review. New York: The Roper Organization Inc., 1983, pp. 7-8. Available from the Television Information Office, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. All figures referenced in the "Questionnaire Analysis" section are from this pamphlet.

²⁹Roper Organization, pp. 5-6.

³⁰Blue, pp. 69-70.

³¹McCroskey and Jenson, p. 176.

³²See McCroskey and Jenson, p. 171; and McCroskey and Young, "The Use and Abuse of Factor Analysis in Communication Research," p. 380.

³³In a 1984 interview with Walter Cronkite, Cleveland Amory reported, "For one thing, he [Cronkite] said, he saw a trend toward more feature stories than news. For another, he [Cronkite] saw a 'cockeyed system' for news programming in which standards were constantly being lowered without any realization by management that it was happening--something he blamed on the fact that both management in general and the people coming into TV news in particular were no longer journalistically trained. He [Cronkite] also spoke of a trend in anchorpersons toward 'the handsome and the beautiful, the well-coiffed and the vacuous.' On one occasion, he [Cronkite] even told of a California newscaster who had tap-danced the news;" see Cleveland Amory, "What Walter Cronkite Misses Most," Parade, 11 March 1984, pp. 4-5.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Statistical Package and Computer Specifications

A number of statistical procedures were employed to produce the results reported in this chapter. They included descriptive and frequency statistics and both one-way and two-way analysis of variance.² The statistical package used was SPSS Version 7.05 installed on a Xerox mainframe computer at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Coding and Data Entry

Coding Test Scores

Coding of the test instruments and questionnaire data was accomplished by employing transparent plastic overlays. One sheet was designed to score the semantic differential which displayed an outline of the values for each of the scale items. This made coding much easier and more efficient. It also helped to eliminate errors, since the

polarity of adjective pairs was randomly mixed on the testing instrument.

The questionnaire portion was also scored using the transparent sheet with an overlay of outlined score values for each of the categories.

The Program GENERATE/BAS

A micro computer was employed to assemble and run a short computer program entitled GENERATE/BAS for the purpose of data entry using error parameters and to generate a series of disk files with various combinations of the data.

The data entry portion of the program asked the operator for the value of each scored item on the questionnaire and the semantic differential on the reverse side of the sheet. If a mistake was made at any point during the data entry process, the operator could key the computer to erase the mistake and then enter the correct value. In addition, data entry value parameters were included in the programming. This enabled the computer program assembling the data strings for the SPSS command file to refuse any data values higher or lower than those specified for that category. The computer would merely prompt the operator to enter the correct value, which would be within the range of the predetermined parameters for that value.

When the data entry was completed, the computer generated several disk files simultaneously. The first file

compiled was a list of "data" statements which could be easily manipulated at a later date using a simple program written in the BASIC computer language. The second file contained the questionnaire data and the scored values for all eighteen scale measures for all subjects. The third file contained the questionnaire data but only the scale sums of all subjects for each of the dimensions of credibility as defined by McCroskey and Jenson: "Competence," "Character/Sociability," "Composure" and "Extroversion." The fourth file contained the questionnaire data but only an overall sum of all eighteen scale measures for all subjects. The simultaneous compilation of these four files greatly reduced the operation time of the SPSS statistical package in generating the various results for this experiment.

Assessment of Reliability

To determine the reliability of the final testing instrument, the same procedure was used as with the pre-test scales. All eighteen scales from all subjects were run through SPSS's sub-program RELIABILITY.⁴ The results revealed Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient at .88947 and the Standardized Item Alpha at .88999, indicating the final testing instrument administered to the test subjects was sufficiently reliable. Coefficients at or exceeding .75 indicate a reliable instrument (see Table 6).

TABLE 6
RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS FOR
THE TESTING INSTRUMENT

	SCORE
Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	.88947
Standardized Item Alpha	.88999

Questionnaire Data Analysis

The questionnaire data revealed an increase in the female to male ratio (60.2% females and 43.3% males for the experimental groups) over the pre-test findings (47.8% females and 51.7% males). The majority of subjects in the experimental groups were younger (age 16-20: 73.1%) and were comprised mostly of freshmen and sophomores. By comparison, the pre-test subjects were generally older (age 21-25: 61.2%) and were comprised of mostly juniors and seniors.

The only major difference between the pre-test group and the experimental groups was the test subjects major source of news information. Subjects in the experimental groups reported a substantial increase in news gathering from radio (32.8%) over pre-test subjects, whose percentage of 18.0% reflected similar findings reported in the Roper Organization's 1982 poll.⁹

Viewing habits remained virtually unchanged between the two groups and compared favorably with Roper's findings. The largest percentage of subjects in both groups (pre-test: 44.7%; experiment: 44.3%) said they watched television between 3 and 4 hours per day. Roper's current findings (1982) report that the average number of viewing hours per day for college students is 2 hours and 18 minutes, or approximately 30-minutes less than the national average. However, The Roper Organization admits that the viewing time it has calculated for the average day is less than other studies:

Because hours of viewing reported in this series of studies have consistently been lower than those reported in more objective measurements, in this year's study we asked about hours of viewing in two different ways. One half of the sample was asked the traditional question ["On an average day, about how much time, if any, do you personally spend watching TV?"]. The other half of the sample was asked two new questions about time spent watching television--one on how much time was spent on the average day watching news, documentaries and information programs, followed by the other on how much time was spent on the average day watching entertainment shows, movies, sports, etc.⁶

This adjusted figure brings the Roper national average up to 4 hours and 3 minutes.⁷ Subtracting 30-minutes from the adjusted national average (4:03) yields 3:33, a figure approximating the average viewing day for college students. This figure coincides with the results reported in the questionnaire data for both the pre-test subjects and for

TABLE 7
SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

SEX:

Males (87) = 43.3% (51.7%) Females (121) = 60.2% (47.8%)
N/A (0) = 0.0% (0.5%)

AGE and CLASSIFICATION

Under 16 (0) = 0.0% (0.0%)	Freshman (71) = 35.3% (5.5%)
16-18 (43) = 21.4% (6.0%)	Sophomore (70) = 34.8% (14.9%)
19-20 (104) = 51.7% (25.3%)	Junior (38) = 18.9% (33.3%)
21-25 (49) = 24.4% (61.2%)	Senior (28) = 13.9% (38.3%)
26-30 (3) = 1.5% (4.0%)	Graduate (1) = 0.5% (7.5%)
Over 30 (9) = 4.4% (3.0%)	N/A (0) = 0.0% (0.5%)
N/A (0) = 0.0% (0.5%)	

1. Where Do You Get Most Of Your News From?

Newspapers (20) = 10.0% (11.9%)	Magazines (6) = 3.0% (1.5%)
Radio (66) = 32.8% (17.9%)	TV (114) = 56.7% (59.2%)
Other (1) = 0.5% (0.5%)	N/A (1) = 0.5% (9.0%)

2. How Many Hours Of Television Do You Watch Per Day?

Under 1 (29) = 14.4% (9.0%)	1-2 (62) = 30.8% (29.4%)
3-4 (89) = 44.2% (44.8%)	5-6 (21) = 10.4% (10.4%)
6-7 (4) = 2.0% (2.0%)	Over 7 (3) = 1.5% (4.0%)
N/A (0) = 0.5%	

3. During What Times Of The Day Do You Watch Television News?

Mornings (13) = 6.5% (7.0%)	Afternoons (19) = 9.5% (8.0%)
Early Eve (95) = 47.3% (43.3%)	Late Night (74) = 36.8% (24.4%)
None (7) = 3.5% (1.5%)	N/A (0) = 0.0% (15.9%)

Notes: (1) Numbers in first set of parentheses indicate the number of subjects responding to that category.

(2) Percentages inside parentheses are pre-test findings.

subjects participating in the experiment.

Descriptive and Frequency Statistics

Descriptive and frequency statistics revealed that most of the scales were skewed toward the positive adjective pole with extreme cases tending toward the negative adjective pole. This observation, in addition to the overall collapsed mean of 4.887, indicated an overall credible perception of the newscaster by test subjects viewing the simulated news segment (which was also the case with the pre-test findings: 4.716).

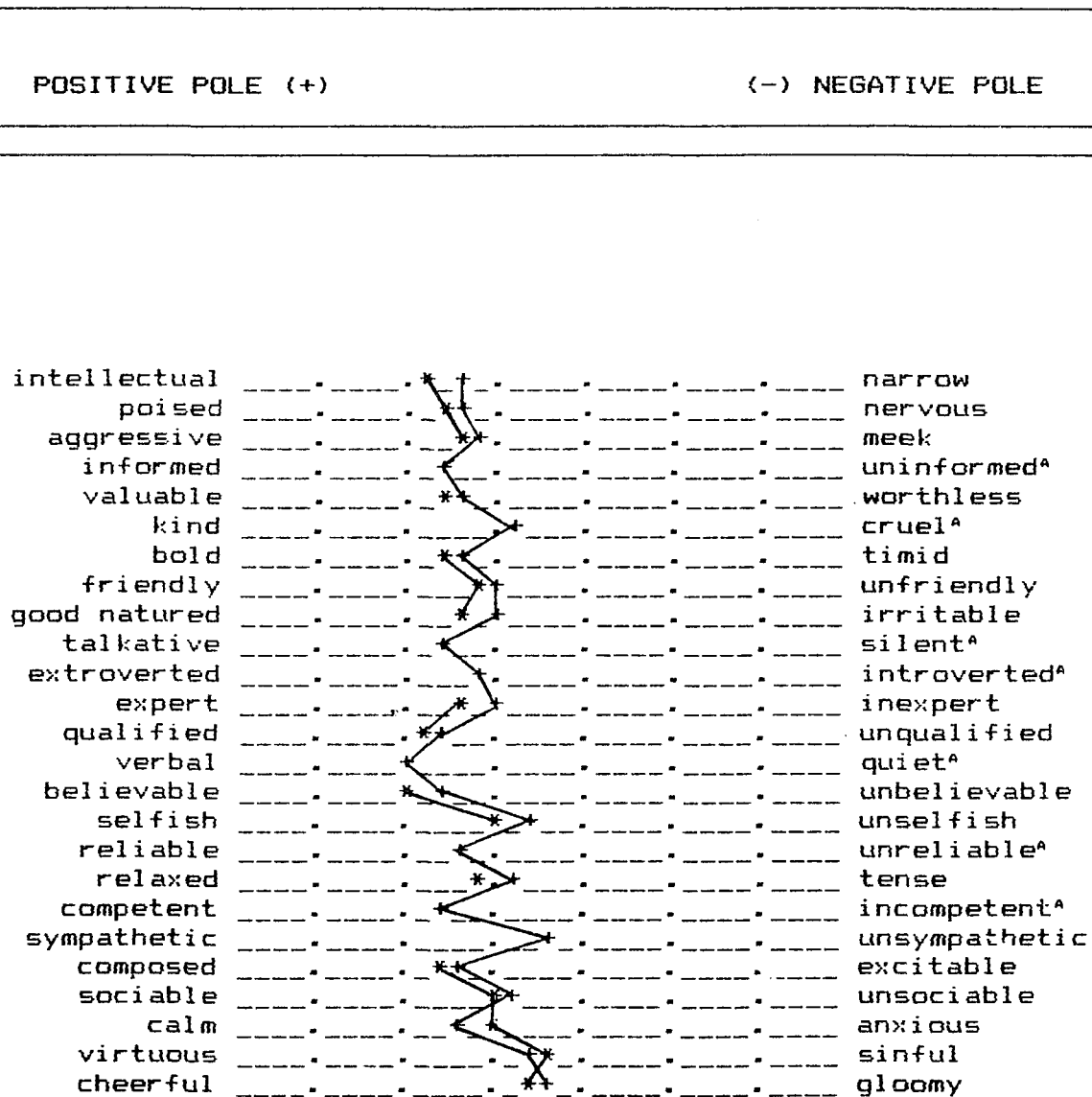
When the individual scale means were compared to pre-test means, it was revealed that, overall, the experimental groups judged the newscaster slightly more credible. For a representational comparison, between the pre-test and experimental groups' scale means, see Figures 4 and 5.

One-Way Analysis of Variance

Rationale

When stating the null hypothesis, it is best to take the purist approach and assume from the outset that all treatment groups are from the same population predicating no significance between them. To test the null hypothesis using this approach, all treatments groups were compared utilizing the

FIGURE 4

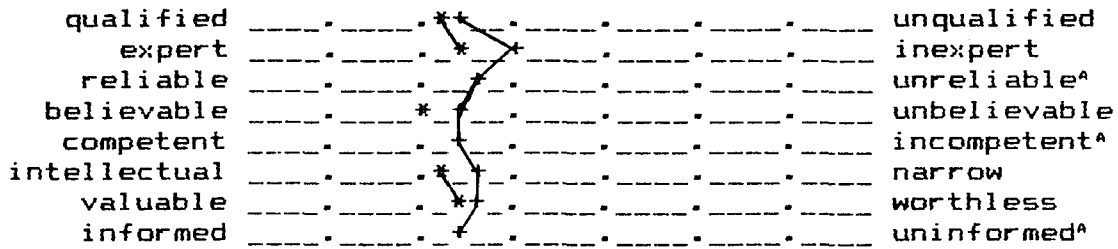
SCALE ITEM COMPARISON BETWEEN THE
PRE-TEST AND EXPERIMENT MEANS

Notes: (1) Cross(+) = PRETEST; Asterisk(*) = EXPERIMENT
 (2) ^AIndicates scale item omitted from experiment.

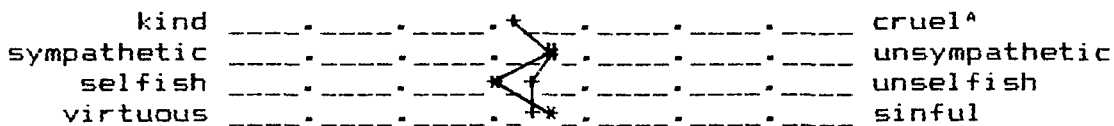
FIGURE 5

SCALE ITEM COMPARISON BETWEEN PRE-TEST AND EXPERIMENT MEANS (BY DIMENSIONS)

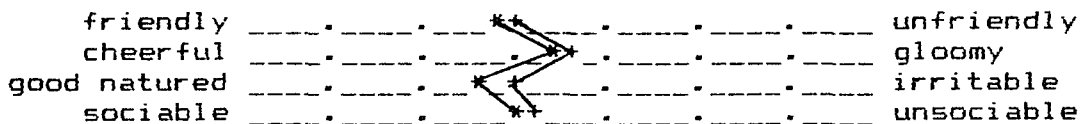
COMPETENCE



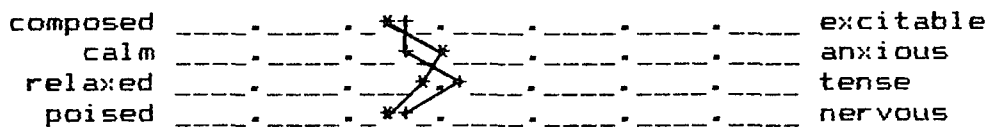
CHARACTER



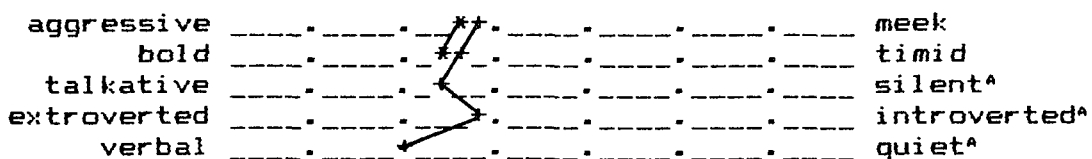
SOCIABILITY



COMPOSURE



EXTROVERSION



Notes: (1) Cross(+) = PRE-TEST; Asterisk(*) = EXPERIMENT
 (2) # = Both PRE-TEST and EXPERIMENTAL GROUP
 (3) ^AIndicates scale items omitted from experiment

SPSS ONEWAY statistical sub-program.* In doing so, ONEWAY processed the scale mean scores across each of the four treatment groups for the purpose of analyzing the differences within subjects and between subjects.

Results: Collapsed Scale Means

All 18 scales were collapsed into a single mean score for each subject within each of the four treatment groups. These collapsed scores were then subjected to one-way analysis of variance.

Mean scores for each of the groups were as follows:

GROUP 1 (NAT/STD) = 4.907 GROUP 2 (NAT/WIDE) = 4.744

GROUP 3 (LOC/STD) = 4.972 GROUP 4 (LOC/WIDE) = 4.842

Table 8a reveals no significant differences were observed between each of the four treatment groups, thus confirming the null hypothesis.

Results: By Dimensions of Credibility

All 18 scales were collapsed into their respective dimensions of credibility for each subject within the four treatment groups. One-way analysis of variance was performed on the four dimensions of credibility across all treatment groups.

TABLE 8a
 ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:
 FOUR TREATMENT GROUPS

Collapsed Mean Scores

SOURCE	D.F.	SS	MS	F-RATIO	F-PROB
BETWEEN GROUPS	3	476.8738	158.958	.675477	.5680
WITHIN GROUPS	204	48006.72	235.327		
TOTAL	207	48483.60			

TABLE 8b
 ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:
 FOUR TREATMENT GROUPS

"Competence" Dimension

SOURCE	D.F.	SS	MS	F-RATIO	F-PROB
BETWEEN GROUPS	3	41.61699	13.8723	.428128	.7331
WITHIN GROUPS	204	6610.070	32.402		
TOTAL	207	6651.688			

TABLE 8c
 ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:
 FOUR TREATMENT GROUPS

"Character/Sociability" Dimension

SOURCE	D.F.	SS	MS	F-RATIO	F-PROB
BETWEEN GROUPS	3	65.70871	21.9029	.433545	.7292
WITHIN GROUPS	204	10306.19	50.5205		
TOTAL	207	10371.89			

TABLE 8d
 ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:
 FOUR TREATMENT GROUPS

"Composure" Dimension

SOURCE	D.F.	SS	MS	F-RATIO	F-PROB
BETWEEN GROUPS	3	143.5843	47.8614	2.01612	.1128
WITHIN GROUPS	204	4842.824	23.7393		
TOTAL	207	4986.410			

TABLE 8e
 ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:
 FOUR TREATMENT GROUPS

"Extroversion" Dimension

SOURCE	D.F.	SS	MS	F-RATIO	F-PROB
BETWEEN GROUPS	3	22.74417	7.58139	1.44405	.2311
WITHIN GROUPS	204	1071.020	5.25010		
TOTAL	207	1093.746			

TABLE 8f
 ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE:
 FOUR TREATMENT GROUPS

Scale Item "composed/excitable"

SOURCE	D.F.	SS	MS	F-RATIO	F-PROB
BETWEEN GROUPS	3	18.07665	6.02555	2.70385	.0466*
WITHIN GROUPS	204	454.6152	2.22851		
TOTAL	207	472.6919			

* Denotes significance at the .05 level

Tables 8b to 8e reveal that no significant differences were observed between the four dimensions of credibility.

Results: By Individual Scale Item Means

Out of 18 scale items, only one item, "composed-excitabile" in the "Composure" dimension, was shown to be significant ($p < .05$); see Table 8f.

Closer inspection of this item revealed that GROUP 3 (LOC/STD mean = 5.654) and GROUP 4 (LOC/WIDE mean = 5.500) were statistically significant from the other two treatment groups (NAT/STD mean = 4.962; NAT/WIDE mean = 5.038). This suggests that subjects perceived the "local" newscaster as significantly more composed than the "national" newscaster. This significant difference is clearly attributed to the newscaster treatment and not to TV screen size.

Two-Way Analysis of Variance Procedures

Rationale

The individual components of each treatment group, newscaster type and television treatment, were subjected to a two-way analysis of variance. By doing so, main effects and two-way interactions, if any, could be observed for the collapsed mean scores, dimension means, and means of the individual scale items. The researcher believed this test

for significance was a more precise way of observing the variables and any interactions between them.

In order to accomplish this, Groups 1 through 4 were recoded for NTYPE (Newscaster Treatment: 1 = "national," 2 = "local") and TV (Screen Size: 1 = "standard screen," 2 = "widescreen").

Results: Collapsed Scale Means

Table 9a reveals no significant differences between newscaster treatment and screen size, either for main effects or two-way interactions, supporting the null hypothesis.

Results: By Dimensions of Credibility

Table 9d reveals a main effect for newscaster treatment in the "Composure" dimension ($p < .05$). This indicates that overall, subjects perceived the "local" newscaster treatment ("local" newscaster mean = 5.115) as more "composed" than the "national" newscaster treatment ("national" newscaster mean = 4.772).

No other dimensions of credibility revealed significant differences for either main effects or two-way interactions.

Results: By Individual Scale Item Means

As expected, at least one of the scale items within the

TABLE 9a
TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Collapsed Mean Scores					
SOURCE OF VARIATION	SS	DF	MS	F	SIGNIF OF F
MAIN EFFECTS	472.01929	2	236.00964	1.003	.36862
NTYPE	111.07692	1	111.07692	.472	.49284
TV	360.94238	1	360.94238	1.534	.21697
2-WAY INTERACTIONS	4.9230957	1	4.9230957	.021	.88514
NTYPE TV	4.9230766	1	4.9230766	.021	.88514
EXPLAINED	476.94531	3	158.98177	.676	.56792
RESIDUAL	48006.750	204	235.32719		
TOTAL	48483.695	207	234.22075		

TABLE 9b
TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

"Competence" Dimension					
SOURCE OF VARIATION	SS	DF	MS	F	SIGNIF OF F
MAIN EFFECTS	29.576920	1	14.788460	.456	.63421
NTYPE	3.2500000	1	3.2500000	.100	.75179
TV	26.326920	1	26.326920	.812	.36845
2-WAY INTERACTIONS	12.019241	1	12.019241	.371	.54317
NTYPE TV	12.019231	1	12.019231	.371	.54317
EXPLAINED	41.597656	3	13.865885	.428	.73320
RESIDUAL	6610.0977	204	32.402435		
TOTAL	6651.6953	207	32.133789		

TABLE 9c
TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

"Character/Sociability" Dimension

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SS	DF	MS	F	SIGNIF OF F
MAIN EFFECTS	53.615387	2	26.807693	.531	.58904
NTYPE	9.3076925	1	9.3076925	.184	.66821
TV	44.307693	1	44.307693	.877	.35013
2-WAY INTERACTIONS	12.019226	1	12.019226	.238	.62625
NTYPE TV	12.019231	1	12.019231	.238	.62625
EXPLAINED	65.636719	3	21.878906	.433	.72955
RESIDUAL	10306.191	204	50.520538		
TOTAL	10371.828	207	50.105438		

TABLE 9d
TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

"Composure" Dimension

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SS	DF	MS	F	SIGNIF OF F
MAIN EFFECTS	143.54808	2	71.774033	3.023	.05082
NTYPE	98.312500	1	98.312500	4.141	.04314*
TV	45.235580	1	45.235580	1.906	.16897
2-WAY INTERAC.	.48065186E-02	1	.48065186E-02	.000	.98866
NTYPE TV	.48076920E-02	1	.48076920E-02	.000	.98866
EXPLAINED	143.55469	3	47.851563	2.016	.11289
RESIDUAL	4842.8320	204	23.739365		
TOTAL	4986.3867	207	24.088821		

* Denotes significance at the .05 level

TABLE 9e

TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

"Extroversion" Dimension

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SS	DF	MS	F	SIGNIF OF F
MAIN EFFECTS	18.125000	2	9.0625000	1.726	.18056
NTYPE	17.889420	1	17.889420	3.407	.06635
TV	.23557693	1	.23557693	.045	.83245
2-WAY INTERACTIONS	4.6201935	1	4.6201935	.880	.34931
NTYPE TV	4.6201925	1	4.6201925	.880	.34931
EXPLAINED	22.745361	3	7.5817871	1.444	.23108
RESIDUAL	1071.0195	204	5.2500954		
TOTAL	1093.7649	207	5.2838879		

TABLE 9f

TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Scale Item "composed/excitable"

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SS	DF	MS	F	SIGNIF OF F
MAIN EFFECTS	17.384613	2	8.6923065	3.901	.02176
NTYPE	17.307693	1	17.307693	7.766	.00582**
TV	.76923072E-01	1	.76923072E-01	.035	.85279
2-WAY INTERACTIONS	.69230652	1	.69230652	.311	.57789
NTYPE TV	.69230771	1	.69230771	.311	.57789
EXPLAINED	18.077148	3	6.0257158	2.704	.04655
RESIDUAL	454.61572	204	2.2285080		
TOTAL	472.69287	207	2.2835398		

** Denotes significance at the .01 level

dimension of "Composure" was highly significant for main effects ($p < .01$); see Table 9f. The scale item, "composed-excitabile," revealed that subjects found the "local" newscaster ("local" newscaster mean = 5.577) much more composed than the "national" newscaster ("national" newscaster mean = 5.000).

In addition, although no other scale items within the dimension of "Composure" were significant for either main effects or two-way interactions, it was observed that scale means were consistently higher (more credible) for the "local" newscaster than for the "national" newscaster. No other scale items revealed significance for either main effects or two-way interactions between newscaster treatment and the screen size treatment.

Summary of the Findings

One-way analysis of variance procedures revealed no significant differences between the four treatment groups either overall or by the dimensions of credibility. All scale items, except one, revealed no significant differences. The item that was shown to be significant ($p < .05$), "composed-excitabile," indicated that subjects were split on who was more "composed," the "national" newscaster or the "local" newscaster.

Two-way analysis of variance basically revealed the same results as the one-way analysis of variance. No significant

differences were observed between variables using the collapsed scale means. The scale item, "composed-excitabile," was again shown to be significant ($p < .01$). The two-way analysis of variance also revealed significance ($p < .05$) in the "Composure" dimension, obviously attributable to the highly significant "composed-excitabile" scale item. Since no other scale items in this dimension were significant, it is possible that error was the cause of this significant two-way interaction (see Kerlinger, pp. 267-68).

Notes

¹Norman H. Nie, C. Hadlai Hull, Jean G. Jenkins, Karin Steinbrenner and Dale H. Bent, SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975), pp. 181-202.

²Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner and Brent, pp. 398-33.

³James C. McCroskey and Thomas A. Jenson, "Image of Mass Media News Sources," Journal of Broadcasting 19 (Spring 1975), p. 176.

⁴Norman H. Nie, C. Hadlai Hull, SPSS Update: New Procedures and Facilities for Releases 7 and 8 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1979), pp. 110-44.

⁵See pamphlet by Burns W. Roper, Trends in Attitudes Toward Television and Other Media: A Twenty-Four Year Review, a report by the Roper Organization, Inc., 1983, p. 6. Available from the Television Information Office, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.

⁶Roper Organization, p. 7.

⁷Roper Organization, p. 8.

⁸Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner and Brent, pp. 422-33.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

It should be of no surprise that the effects of widescreen television would be studied in the year that George Orwell predicted Big Brother's control of society from a widescreen television-type device. Although the Orwellian account is certainly more fiction than fact, television's steadily increasing credibility as a news medium and the introduction of widescreen television has raised issues about the combination of content presentation and technology that seemed worthy of investigation.

This study reasoned that there could be differences in perception when viewing material on two different sized screens, and that if differences were found, they would effect newscaster credibility. It was also reasoned that the widescreen effects, if any, might show an inverse relationship. In other words, there could be a decrease in credibility, suggesting a diffusion effect.

In addition, there have been no studies investigating differences in credibility between local and national newscasters. It was of interest to this researcher to investigate whether viewers held predisposed attitudes (as a

result of pre-established criteria) for rating the credibility of different newscaster types.

The Research Questions

Research Questions #1, #3 and #4

1. What are the effects of the widescreen television image on both local and national newscaster credibility?
3. What specific dimensions of newscaster credibility are affected by widescreen television?
4. What specific scale items of credibility are affected by the widescreen television image?

Results obtained from one-way and two-way analysis of variance procedures revealed no significant differences for either main or two-way interaction effects as a result of the stimulus material viewed on a widescreen television system. It was theorized that certain non-verbal cues contributing to one or more "indexing" effects, as investigated by Tannenbaum,¹ might become magnified--and therefore enhanced--on the widescreen television system creating perceptual differences in the ascertainment of credibility of the newscaster.

Non-verbal cues, and those possibly contributing to one or more "indexing" effects, were apparently perceived, processed and encoded by all treatment groups regardless of screen size. This indicates that viewers are highly

discriminant in their perception of the visual images and are able to scrutinize the image for all necessary information regardless of screen size. As long as the image is well within view and clearly seen, as was the case with both the standard 25" television set and the 6' widescreen system, viewers apparently had no trouble in encoding the image without any loss of information. This also suggests that the magnification of signs and cues does not add any additional information nor does it enhance the effect of signs or cues already inherent in the visual material.

The "Composed-Excitable" Scale Item

The one-way analysis of variance procedure revealed only one scale item, "composed-excitable," to be significant at the .05 level of significance. Two-way analysis of variance procedures revealed this item to be highly significant ($p < .01$). In addition, a significant main effect ($p < .05$) was observed on the "Composure" dimension which was obviously attributable to this one scale item.

Closer inspection of the "composed-excitable" item revealed that test subjects found the "local" newscaster much more composed than the "national" newscaster. Apparently, subjects' perceptions were split as a result of the newscaster treatment given.

Since the other scale items within this dimension ("calm-anxious," "relaxed-tense" and "poised-nervous") were

not found to be significant, significance for the "composed-excitable" item was probably due to error.

Consider what Kerlinger says about observing significance for an interaction:

There are, rather, three possible causes of a significant interaction. One is "true" interaction, the variances contributed by the interaction that "really" exists between two variables in their mutual effect on a third variable. Another is error. A significant interaction can happen by chance, just as the means of experimental groups can differ significantly by chance. A third possible cause of interaction is some extraneous, unwanted, uncontrolled effect operating at one level of an experiment but not at the other.²

Research Question #5

5. Is there a "diffusion" effect (or negative effect) which is observable on any of the dimensions of newscaster credibility as a result of the newscaster becoming larger on the widescreen television?

Although no significant differences were found to support this proposition, it was observed that the overall scale means revealed an interesting trend: the widescreen groups (Groups 2 and 4), regardless of treatment, reported consistently lower means than groups that viewed the stimulus material on a standard 25" television set. The same was true for three out of the four dimensions of credibility ("Competence," "Character/Sociability," and "Composure") and for 11 out of the 18 scale items.

This may suggest a "diffusion" effect but one which is

not significant for credibility. Further study in areas other than credibility (e.g., organizational and/or aesthetic dimensions) is warranted.

Research Question #2

2. Is there a significant difference in credibility between "local" and "national" newscasters?

One might imagine that a "national" newscaster would be judged higher in credibility simply on the basis of being a known personality, more respected because of success, position and salary, and because of the high degree of responsibility in dispersing news information on a national level. And, as McCroskey and Jenson note, "what the listener [viewer] or reader brings to the media situation . . . is a much more important determinant of media impact than anything in the media itself."³ This suggests that different groups of viewers watching the same material but with different treatments--such as believing the newscaster to be of "local" or "national" status--should rate the material according to the treatment given. Therefore, any differences observed would be a direct function of subjects' predispositional attitudes (a result of pre-established criteria) toward the treatment of the stimuli. If no differences were observed, then it can be said that there were no prior predispositional attitudes dependent upon specific criteria used for that treatment independent of stimulus. Since each group brought

its own experience and knowledge about "local" or "national" newscasters to the viewing situation, it was of interest to this study to determine if any differences could be observed between newscaster treatments.

Two-way analysis of variance revealed no significant main effects suggesting there was no difference in credibility when viewers rated either the "local" or "national" newscaster (see Tables 9a through 9f).

Conclusions

The results of this study show that widescreen television does not enhance or diffuse the credibility of a newscaster. The concept of Big Brother viewed on a large screen in the Orwellian sense does not, at least, affect the credibility of a newscaster, either on a local or national level.

Two-way analysis of variance provided no evidence to support strong predispositional attitudes (e.g., that national newscasters are assumed to be automatically more credible than local newscasters) held by viewers overall regarding the credibility of either a local or national newscaster.

Implications for Further Research

This study opens up several avenues of research concerning the effects of the new technologies on the

communication process. Although the widescreen television system does not appear to enhance or diffuse the credibility of a newscaster, such effects might be observable in other experiments employing organizational or aesthetic concepts.

Notes

¹Percy H. Tannenbaum, "The Indexing Process in Communication," Public Opinion Quarterly 19 (Fall 1955), p. 299.

²Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavior Research (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1973), pp. 267-68.

³James C. McCroskey, Virginia P. Richmond, and John Daly, "The Development of a Measure of Perceived Homophily in Interperson Communication," Human Communication Research 1 (Summer 1975), pp. 330-32.

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APPENDIX A

HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION REVIEW COMMITTEE
NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

Donald R. Mott :

Your project entitled The Effects of Widescreen Television on Local and
National Newscaster Source Credibility: An Experimental Study

has been determined to fall under one of the following categories:

- 1. Approved under the provisions for Expedited Review.
- 2. Approved by the HSPRC.
- 3. Disapproved by the HSPRC.
- 4. Exempt from formal HSPRC action.

Any deviation from the proposed protocol which may change this determination should be reported to the committee before the change is implemented.


Chairman's Signature

12-20-83
Date

ORAL PRESENTATION

(pre-test only)

This class has been randomly selected to take part in a study. What you are going to do is very simple. You will see a ten minute clip of a newscast videotaped last October. After viewing the video tape, you will indicate your feelings and perceptions of the anchorman in the newscast using a simple form. The form contains twenty-five adjective pairs that are complete opposites of each other. Several examples are: good-bad, pleasant-unpleasant, cold-hot, etc.

The form is confidential. It will not require that you give your name or any other identifier, such as a USM student ID number or Social Security number. In addition, there are no risks to you as test subjects.

(read either Part A or Part B...)

A. If you do not wish to be part of this research study group, you are excused from the class without any penalty to you. Since the class will be dismissed after the testing is completed, you do not have to return until the next regularly scheduled class meeting. Please leave quietly.

B. If you do not wish to be part of this research project, you are temporarily excused from the class without penalty. Since the instructor wishes to continue the class after the testing is completed, please return to this classroom in approximately twenty-five minutes. Please leave quietly.

(pass out testing instrument...)

Please read the first sheet carefully. It explains how to fill out the testing form correctly. When everyone has read the instructions, we will view the video tape.

Signature of Person Obtaining
the Consent on Behalf of the
Institution

Signature of Auditor-Witness

Date

ORAL PRESENTATION

(Local Newscaster Bias)

This class has been randomly selected to take part in a study. What you are going to do is very simple. You will see a ten minute clip of a newscast. After viewing the video tape, you will indicate your feelings and perceptions of the anchorman in the newscast using a simple form. The form contains eighteen adjective pairs that are complete opposites of each other. Several examples are: good-bad, pleasant-unpleasant, cold-hot, etc.

The form is confidential. It will not require that you give your name or any other identifier, such as a USM student ID number or Social Security number. In addition, there are no risks to you as test subjects.

(read either Part A or Part B...)

A. If you do not wish to be part of this research study group, you are excused from the class without any penalty to you. Since the class will be dismissed after the testing is completed, you do not have to return until the next regularly scheduled class meeting. Please leave quietly.

B. If you do not wish to be part of this research project, you are temporarily excused from the class without penalty. Since the instructor wishes to continue the class after the testing is completed, please return to this classroom in approximately twenty-five minutes. Please leave quietly.

(pass out testing instrument...)

Please read the first sheet carefully. It explains how to fill out the testing form correctly. When everyone has read the instructions, we will view the video tape.

This news segment has been sent to us by a local television station in a large metropolitan market. They have sent us the tape so that we may provide feedback on their nightly news anchorman.

Signature of Person Obtaining
the Consent on Behalf of the
Institution

Signature of Auditor-Witness

Date

ORAL PRESENTATION

(National Network Newscaster Bias)

This class has been randomly selected to take part in a study. What you are going to do is very simple. You will see a ten minute clip of a newscast videotaped last October. After viewing the video tape, you will indicate your feelings and perceptions of the anchorman in the newscast using a simple form. The form contains twenty-five adjective pairs that are complete opposites of each other. Several examples are: good-bad, pleasant-unpleasant, cold-hot, etc.

The form is confidential. It will not require that you give your name or any other identifier, such as a USM student ID number or Social Security number. In addition, there are no risks to you as test subjects.

(read either Part A or Part B...)

A. If you do not wish to be part of this research study group, you are excused from the class without any penalty to you. Since the class will be dismissed after the testing is completed, you do not have to return until the next regularly scheduled class meeting. Please leave quietly.

B. If you do not wish to be part of this research project, you are temporarily excused from the class without penalty. Since the instructor wishes to continue the class after the testing is completed, please return to this classroom in approximately twenty-five minutes. Please leave quietly.

(pass out testing instrument...)

Please read the first sheet carefully. It explains how to fill out the testing form correctly. When everyone has read the instructions, we will view the video tape.

The anchorman you are about to see has been recently hired by the CBS Television Network. The Network has sent us his demonstration tape so that we might provide accurate feedback on his performance.

Signature of Person Obtaining
the Consent on Behalf of the
Institution

Signature of Auditor-Witness

Date

APPENDIX B

DAN RATHER NEWS COPY

(Taped Tuesday, October 11, 1983, 5:30PM EST)

1. No beginning on tape -- (starts in Leslie Stahl's actuality)
2. ... Actuality on Cruise Missiles (Leslie Stahl). Starts into the story -- (Time-- ?)

Rather: President Reagan today advertised his improved relations with mainland China to offset his troubles with Moscow. The President met at the White House with Chinese foreign minister Woo, to discuss closer political, military, strategic and trade relations. Woo is beginning 3 days of official talks in Washington.

Rather: This summer rainy season has just ended in El Salvador, and with it has ended a 4-month lull in the fighting there. The summer of relative peace had led to some optimism that the U-S backed army might be winning the war. But as Gary Sheppard reports from Usulután (Oo-Sa-La-Tan') province, east of the capitol, that optimism may be evaporating in the current dry season.

3. Actuality by Gary Sheppard (Time-- 80 sec.)

Rather: The war being fought against the El Salvador government is, to some eyes, classic revolution. A rebel force virtually choosing its battle grounds -- hitting -- then running. Bruce Morton in Washington narrates this rare look behind rebel lines in El Salvador.

4. Actuality by Bruce Morton (Time-- 2:00)

5. Commercial.

Rather: In most of American television, commercials are one thing -- programs another. They are divided and separate. But there are exceptions. And some parents complain that some Saturday morning children's cartoon shows are among the exceptions. They claim the commercials -- and the programs they are in -- amount to one continuous advertising pitch, taking advantage of unsuspecting children. Eric Engberg reports on the renewed heat the Federal Communications is taking about this.

6. Actuality by Eric Engberg (Time-- 95 sec.)

Rather: As first reported by CBS's Rita Braver for this broadcast last night, the justice department today -- indeed -- announced a string of organized crime indictments,

indictments allegedly linking mid-West mobsters in several cities," to hidden and illegal interest in Las Vegas casinos. Tonight, Ned Potter follows up with more on a 15-name indictment list that one Federal official calls a Who's Who of organized crime in the mid-West.

7. Actuality by Ned Potter (Time-- 90 sec.)

Rather: The U-S Court of Military appeals, the nation's highest military court, today struck down the military capital punishment law as too vague. And the military court gave Congress or the President 90 days to rewrite the law, which currently says simply, that the death penalty is permitted -- quote -- as the court's martial shall direct. There are now 7 people on the military's death row.

Rather: Without much fanfare, something has been added recently to the military draft registration program -- draft registration "cards." These are now being mailed to young men at the rate of 5-thousand a day. Since there is no outright military draft, right now, the cards don't have to be carried at all times. Instead, Selective Service says, the wallet-sized cards are for convenience for young men who want handy proof that they have registered -- Proof they must supply to be eligible for federal student aid and for federal job training programs.

8. Commercial.

Rather: A 3-ship, U-S Navy amphibious group carrying 2-thousand Marines, is on route now to the Indian Ocean reportedly to take up position off the Strait of Hormuz (Hor-Moos), the entrance to the Persian Gulf. There is speculation that this move maybe linked to threats by Iran to blockcade the strait and cut off the movement of oil tankers. Iran has warned it will do this if Iraq uses its new French jets and missiles in their 3-year-old war.

Rather: The day old government of Israeli Prime Minister Shamir today took drastic emergency measures and plunged the country into economic turmoil. It devalued by almost a 4th the value of the currency and raised by half the cost of basic foods. Bob Faw reports from Tel Aviv.

9. Actuality from Tel Aviv (Time-- 1:50)

Rather: Burma state radio said today that government policed clashed with 3 people identified as Korean terrorists, killing one and capturing another. The 3rd escaped. There was unofficial speculation that the 3 were involved in Sunday's terrorist bombing in Rangoon of 16 Koreans including 4 cabinet ministers. The Burmese radio report did not specify whether the 3 terrorists were from North or South Korea. In Sol, today, the bodies of the 16 South Koreans

killed in that bombing were returned home. Hundreds of government officials and grieving relatives were at the airport ceremony as Honor Guards carried the caskets draped with the South Korean flag.

10. Commercial.

Rather: The U-S Olympic committee this week began following up on the drug crackdown -- recently started at the Pan American games -- determined to avoid any drug related controversy among U-S athletes at next year's Olympics, the committee has announced a strict drug testing program for all American hopefuls. Fail your final drug test and you don't make the team. It's that simple. One official said the image of what he called the -- "chemical athlete must be obliterated." One thing doctors will be looking for is the presence of illegal steroids. Bruce Hall has been investigating and finds those bulk-builders are as easy to obtain as taking candy from a baby.

11. Actuality by Bruce Hall (Time-- 2:30)

12. Commercial.

Rather: House by house and store by store the refrigerators and lights are coming back on in downtown Los Angeles. Two square miles were blacked out last night when a fire and

explosion knocked out a power station. Out came candles to help writers and editors of the Associated Press report the story they were living. No injuries are reported, but this morning's rush hour was a bit confusing with no traffic lights on call. But real damage was done in the Los Angeles garment district which reported millions of dollars of lost production.

Rather: Also in Los Angeles, the story of James Hawkins. As Terry Drinkwater reports, Mr. Hawkins has been enduring a lot worse than blackouts for nearly half a century.

13. Actuality by Terry Drinkwater (Time-- 2:05)

Rather: And that's the CBS Evening News for this Tuesday. Dan Rather reporting from New York. Thank you for joining us. Good night.

APPENDIX C

EDITED COPY FOR SIMULATED NEWSCAST

Simon: President Reagan today advertised his improved relations with mainland China to offset his troubles with Moscow. The President met at the White House with Chinese Foreign Minister Woo to discuss closer political military, strategic and trade relations. Woo is beginning three days of official talks in Washington.

Simon: Burma state radio said today that government policed clashed with 3 people identified as Korean terrorists, killing one and capturing another. The 3rd escaped. There was unofficial speculation that the 3 were involved in Sunday's terrorist bombing in Rangoon of 16 Koreans including 4 cabinet ministers. The Burmese radio report did not specify whether the 3 terrorists were from North or South Korea. In Sol, today, the bodies of the 16 South Koreans killed in that bombing were returned home. Hundreds of government officials and grieving relatives were at the airport ceremony as Honor Guards carried the caskets draped with the South Korean flag.

Simon: This summer rainy season has just ended in El Salvador, and with it has ended a 4 month lull in the fighting there. The summer of relative peace had led to some optimism that the U-S backed army might be winning the war.

But as Gary Sheppard reports from Usulután (Oo-Sa-La-Tan') province, east of the capitol, that optimism may be evaporating in the current dry season.

3. Actuality by Gary Sheppard (Time-- 80 sec.)

Simon: A 3-ship, U-S Navy amphibious group carrying 2-thousand Marines, is on route now to the Indian Ocean reportedly to take up position off the Strait of Hormuz (Hor-Moos), the entrance to the Persian Gulf. There is speculation that this move maybe linked to threats by Iran to blockcade the strait and cut off the movement of oil tankers. Iran has warned it will do this if Iraq uses its new French jets and missiles in their 3-year-old war.

Simon: The war being fought against the El Salvador government is, to some eyes, classic revolution. A rebel force virtually choosing its battle grounds -- hitting -- then running. Bruce Morton in Washington narrates this rare look behind rebel lines in El Salvador.

4. Actuality by Bruce Morton (Time-- 2 minutes)

Simon: The U-S Court of Military appeals, the nation's highest military court, today struck down the military capital punishment law as too vague. And the military court gave Congress or the President 90 days to rewrite the law,

which currently says simply, that the death penalty is permitted -- quote -- as the court's martial shall direct. There are now 7 people on the military's death row.

Simon: The U-S Olympic committee this week began following up on the drug crackdown -- recently started at the Pan American games -- determined to avoid any drug related controversy among U-S athletes at next year's Olympics, the committee has announced a strict drug testing program for all American hopefuls. Fail your final drug test and you don't make the team. It's that simple. One official said the image of what he called the -- "chemical athlete must be obliterated." One thing doctors will be looking for is the presence of illegal steroids.

Simon: Without much fanfare, something has been added recently to the military draft registration program -- draft registration "cards." These are now being mailed to young men at the rate of 5-thousand a day. Since there is no outright military draft, right now, the cards don't have to be carried at all times. Instead, Selective Service says, the wallet-sized cards are for convenience for young men who want handy proof that they have registered -- proof they must supply to be eligible for federal student aid and for federal job training programs.

Simon: House by house and store by store the refrigerators

and lights are coming back on in downtown Los Angeles. Two square miles were blacked out last night when a fire and explosion knocked out a power station. Out came candles to help writers and editors of the Associated Press report the story they were living. No injuries are reported, but this morning's rush hour was a bit confusing with no traffic lights on call. But real damage was done in the Los Angeles garment district which reported millions of dollars of lost production.

Simon: In most of American television, commercials are one thing -- programs another. They are divided and separate. But there are exceptions. And some parents complain that some Saturday morning children's cartoon shows are among the exceptions. They claim the commercials -- and the programs they are in -- amount to one continuous advertising pitch, taking advantage of unsuspecting children. Eric Engberg reports on the renewed heat, the Federal Communications is taking about this.

6. Actuality by Eric Engberg (Time-- 95 sec.)

###

APPENDIX D

INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this study is to measure the "meanings" of certain things to various people by having them judge them against a series of descriptive scales. In answering these questions, please make your own judgments on the basis of what these things mean to you. On the following pages you will find a concept to be judged and beneath it a set of scales. You are to rate the concept on each of these scales.

Here is how to use the scales:

If you feel that the concept at the top of the scales is very closely related to one end of the scale, you should place your check-mark as follows:

Fair X : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Unfair

Fair ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : X Unfair

If you feel that the concept is moderately related to one or the other end of the scale (but not extremely), you should place your check-mark as follows:

Strong ___ : X : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Weak

Strong ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : X : ___ Weak

If the concept seems only slightly related to one side as opposed to the other side (but is not really neutral), then you should check as follows:

Active ___ : ___ : X : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Passive

Active ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : X : ___ : ___ Passive

The direction toward which you check, of course, depends upon which of the two ends of the scale seem most characteristic of the thing you're judging.

If you consider the concept to be neutral on the scale (in other words, both sides of the scale equally associated with the concept) or if the scale is completely irrelevant, or unrelated to the concept, then you should place your check-mark in the middle space:

Safe ___ : ___ : ___ : X : ___ : ___ : ___ Dangerous

IMPORTANT: 1) Place your check-marks in the middle of the spaces, not on the boundaries:

this not this
 ___ : ___ : X : ___ : ___ : X : ___

- 2) Be sure to check every scale for every concept--do not omit any.
- 3) Never put more than one check-mark on a single scale.

Sometimes you may feel as though you've had the same item before on the questionnaire. This will not be the case, so please do not look back and forth through the items. Also, do not try to remember how you checked similar items earlier in the questionnaire. Make each item a separate and independent judgment. Work at a fairly quick speed through this questionnaire. Do not worry or puzzle over individual questions, as there are no "right" answers. It is your first impressions, the immediate feelings about the questions, that we want. On the other hand, please do not be careless, because we want your true impressions.

APPENDIX E

Classification Measures

(please circle correct information)

1. What is your sex?

male

female

2. What is your age?

under 16 16-18 19-20 21-25 26-30 over 30

3. What is your classification?

freshman sophomore junior senior graduate

4. Where do you get most of your news from?

newspapers magazines radio television other

5. How many hours of television do you watch per day?

under 1 1-2 3-4 5-6 6-7 over 7

6. During what times of the day do you watch television news?

mornings afternoons early-evening late-night none

7. How many hours per week do you spend watching television? _____

PLEASE.....

Make sure you have filled in ALL scales on the reverse side of this sheet and ALL information requested in the classification measures above before turning in your form.

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your cooperation!

APPENDIX F

INSTRUMENT

NOTE: These scales should only be used for the news anchorman.

The news anchorman I just saw seemed:

Intellectual ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Narrow
 Nervous ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Poised
 Meek ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Aggressive
 Valuable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Worthless
 Timid ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Bold
 Friendly ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Unfriendly
 Irritable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Good Natured
 Expert ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Inexpert
 Unqualified ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Qualified
 Believable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Unbelievable
 Selfish ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Unselfish
 Tense ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Relaxed
 Unsympathetic ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Sympathetic
 Composed ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Excitable
 Sociable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Unsociable
 Anxious ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Calm
 Sinful ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Virtuous
 Cheerful ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Gloomy

Classification Measures

(please circle correct information)

1. What is your sex? (circle)

male	female
------	--------

2. What is your age? (circle)

under 16	16-18	19-20	21-25	26-30	over 30
----------	-------	-------	-------	-------	---------

3. What is your classification? (circle)

freshman	sophomore	junior	senior	graduate
----------	-----------	--------	--------	----------

4. Where do you get most of your news from? (circle one only)

newspapers	magazines	radio	television	other
------------	-----------	-------	------------	-------

5. How many hours of television do you watch per day? (circle one)

under 1	1-2	3-4	5-6	6-7	over 7
---------	-----	-----	-----	-----	--------

6. During what time of the day do you watch the most television news?
(circle one only)

mornings	afternoons	early-evening	late-night	none
----------	------------	---------------	------------	------

PLEASE.....

Make sure you have filled in ALL scales on the reverse side of this sheet and ALL information requested in the classification measures above before turning in your form.

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your cooperation!

APPENDIX G

VIDEOTAPE EVALUATION FORM

Directions: After viewing the videotape, please answer all questions contained within this questionnaire.

A. What is your position? ANCHOR

B. How long have you been a professional broadcaster? _____

20 YEARS

1. Please rate the newscaster featured in the videotape segment by circling one of the following:

Very Prof.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Fairly Prof.	Marginally Prof.	Marginally Unprof.	Fairly Unprof.	Very Unprof.
---------------	--------------------------------------------------	---------------------	-----------------------	-------------------	-----------------

2. In your opinion as a professional broadcaster, how would you rate the technical quality (PICTURE, SOUND, EDITING, etc.) of the videotape? (circle one):

VERY GOOD FAIRLY GOOD ACCEPTABLE NOT GOOD

3. In your opinion as a professional broadcaster, do you feel this videotape news segment looks either contrived or simulated in any way? (circle one):

YES NO DON'T KNOW

Larry Johnson

Signature
(optional)

VIDEOTAPE EVALUATION FORM

Directions: After viewing the videotape, please answer all questions contained within this questionnaire.

- A. What is your position? News Producer
- B. How long have you been a professional broadcaster? _____
20 years
-

1. Please rate the newscaster featured in the videotape segment by circling one of the following:

Very Prof.	Fairly Prof.	Marginally Prof.	Marginally Unprof.	Fairly Unprof.	Very Unprof.
---------------	-----------------	---------------------	-----------------------	-------------------	-----------------

2. In your opinion as a professional broadcaster, how would you rate the technical quality (PICTURE, SOUND, EDITING, etc.) of the videotape? (circle one):

VERY GOOD	FAIRLY GOOD	ACCEPTABLE	NOT GOOD
-----------	-------------	------------	----------

3. In your opinion as a professional broadcaster, do you feel this videotape news segment looks either contrived or simulated in any way? (circle one):

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

John Rush
 Signature
 (optional)

VIDEOTAPE EVALUATION FORM

Directions: After viewing the videotape, please answer all questions contained within this questionnaire.

A. What is your position? reporter

B. How long have you been a professional broadcaster? 4 yrs

1. Please rate the newscaster featured in the videotape segment by circling one of the following:

Very Prof.	Fairly Prof.	Marginally Prof.	Marginally Unprof.	Fairly Unprof.	Very Unprof.
---------------	-----------------	---------------------	-----------------------	-------------------	-----------------

2. In your opinion as a professional broadcaster, how would you rate the technical quality (PICTURE, SOUND, EDITING, etc.) of the videotape? (circle one):

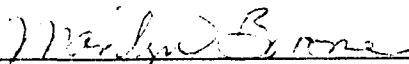
VERY GOOD
 FAIRLY GOOD
 ACCEPTABLE
 NOT GOOD

3. In your opinion as a professional broadcaster, do you feel this videotape news segment looks either contrived or simulated in any way? (circle one):

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW



 Signature
 (optional)

VIDEOTAPE EVALUATION FORM

Directions: After viewing the videotape, please answer all questions contained within this questionnaire.

- A. What is your position? News Director
- B. How long have you been a professional broadcaster? _____
6 years
-

1. Please rate the newscaster featured in the videotape segment by circling one of the following:

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Very Prof.	<input type="radio"/> Fairly Prof.	<input type="radio"/> Marginally Prof.	<input type="radio"/> Marginally Unprof.	<input type="radio"/> Fairly Unprof.	<input type="radio"/> Very Unprof.
---------------------------------------------	------------------------------------	----------------------------------------	------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------------------

2. In your opinion as a professional broadcaster, how would you rate the technical quality (PICTURE, SOUND, EDITING, etc.) of the videotape? (circle one):

VERY GOOD FAIRLY GOOD ACCEPTABLE NOT GOOD

3. In your opinion as a professional broadcaster, do you feel this videotape news segment looks either contrived or simulated in any way? (circle one):

YES NO DON'T KNOW

[Handwritten Signature]
 Signature
 (optional)

VITA

Donald R. Mott was born on February 18, 1950 and raised in New York. In 1972, he completed his undergraduate degree in Communication at the University of Southern Mississippi. After working professionally in television and motion pictures, Mr. Mott completed advanced degrees in Drama and Communications at the University of New Orleans. He currently holds both a Masters and a Master of Fine Arts degree from there. After seven years of teaching at the University of Southern Mississippi in the areas of film and television production, Professor Mott went to Louisiana State University for his doctorate in Speech with emphasis in broadcasting studies with minor emphases in communication theory and theater. His minor was in philosophy. Professor Mott is an associate professor at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green.

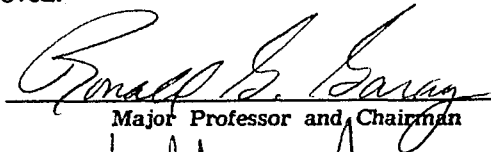
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

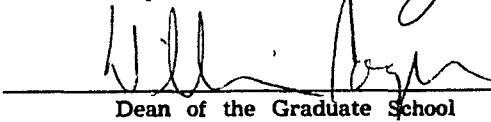
Candidate: Donald R. Mott

Major Field: Speech


Title of Thesis: The Effects of Widescreen television on Local and National Newscaster
Credibility: An Experimental Study

Approved:

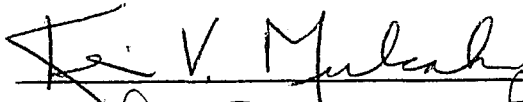

Major Professor and Chairman

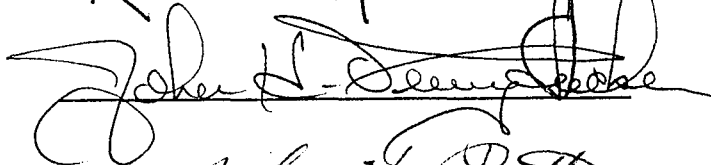

Dean of the Graduate School

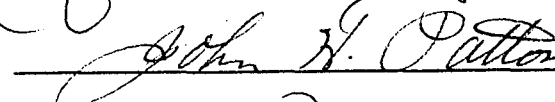
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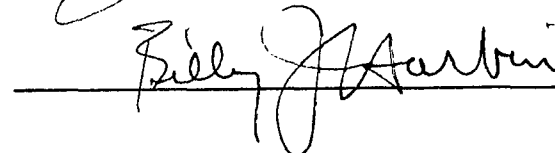












Date of Examination:

June 29, 1984