

By David Weaver, Dan Drew and G. Cleveland Wilhoit

U.S. Television, Radio and Daily Newspaper Journalists

*Differences between broadcast
and print journalists may not
be as great as assumed.*

► As Americans report increasing reliance on television for their public affairs information,¹ critics continue to express concern about the quality of news provided by television. Some of that concern is directed toward the journalists who work in the broadcast media. Edwin Diamond, for

example, points out that the first generation of journalists to work in television news was trained in print.² Now he worries that television employs a generation of editorial people whose experience has been totally in broadcast, and he suggests that they may "have keen eyes for format but not real ear for content."³

This concern about possible differences between print and broadcast journalists is not new, however. Ismach and Dennis surveyed newspaper and television reporters in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and compared the two samples on a number of indicators of professionalism. They found that the television people held fewer college degrees, were younger and belonged to fewer professional organizations than those working in print. The two groups were quite similar, though, in attitudes about their work roles.⁴

When Becker reanalyzed the results of a national survey by Johnstone et. al.,⁵ however, he found that broadcast reporters were more likely than newspaper reporters to reject the neutral role of the press. In addition, Becker concluded that broadcast journalists from smaller organizations tended to be less professionally oriented than their print counterparts.⁶

Pollard used a scale developed by McLeod and Hawley⁷ to measure the professionalism of a sample of Canadian journalists. When he compared the results across media (radio, television and daily newspapers), Pollard found that some essential professional attributes — desires for autonomy, expression, growth and

¹ Roper Organization Inc., *Trends in Attitudes Toward Television and Other Media: A Twenty-four Year Review*. (New York: Television Information Office, 1983). Although this report shows increasing percentages of the public saying they rely on television for "most of your news about what's going on in the world today," this measure has been criticized by several scholars as not being a valid indicator of actual frequency of use of TV news. See, for example, Robert L. Stevenson and Kathryn P. White, "The Cumulative Audience of Network Television News," *Journalism Quarterly*, 57:477-81 (Autumn 1980); R.C. Adams, "Newspapers and Television as News Information Media," *Journalism Quarterly*, 58: 627-29 (Winter 1981); John P. Robinson, "Daily News Habits of the American Public," *American Newspaper Publishers Association News Research Report*, No. 15, September 22, 1978. Adams found that a majority of respondents in three southern California communities named a local newspaper as the source of most information about local events and activities, and Robinson found that on a typical day, more people read a newspaper than watch a television news program. Thus, even if more Americans report reliance on television for news, this perception may not be grounded in actual frequency of use of TV news, especially when it comes to local news.

² Edwin Diamond, *Sign Off: The Last Days of Television*, Cambridge: (MIT Press, 1982) p. 6.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Arnold H. Ismach and Everette E. Dennis, "A Profile of Newspaper and Television Reporters in a Metropolitan Setting," *Journalism Quarterly*, 55:739-43, 898 (Winter 1978).

⁵ John Johnstone, Edward Slawski and William Bowman, *The News People* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), pp. 4-11.

⁶ Lee Becker, "Print or Broadcast: How the Medium Influences the Reporter," in James S. Ettema and D. Charles Whitney, eds., *Individuals in Mass Media Organizations: Creativity and Constraints* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1982).

⁷ Jack McLeod and Searle E. Hawley, Jr., "Professionalism Among Newsmen," *Journalism Quarterly*, 41:529-38 (Autumn 1964).

► The authors are professors of journalism at Indiana University.

influence — were shared widely. More significantly, the broadcast journalists were “relatively more professional” than their print colleagues.⁸

While these studies have provided insights into the demographic characteristics, attitudes and values of broadcast journalists, most have used local samples, and the data in some cases are more than a decade old. Also, when both radio and television have been included in the data analysis, they have been lumped together, rather than analyzed separately. Yet, with the disparity in pay between the two and the tendency, observed in some broadcast journalism classes, for students to set their sights on a career in television rather than radio, one might expect these two groups to be quite distinct. This present study draws a national profile of radio and television journalists and compares them, on several possible indicators of professionalism, with the people who work at daily newspapers.

Method

This project is part of a larger survey designed to be a partial replication of the 1971 national survey of 1,328 U.S. journalists by sociologist John Johnstone and his colleagues.⁹ In this study and in the larger survey, we followed closely the definition of a journalist used by Johnstone *et al.*, as well as their sampling plan, to be able to compare our results with theirs. We also used many of the same questions as Johnstone, as well as some questions from a study of 489 journalists in eight U.S. daily newspapers by Judee and Michael Burgoon and Charles Atkin.¹⁰

Population. As in the Johnstone study, the population of our study is “the full-time editorial manpower responsible for the information content of English-language mass communications in the United States.”¹¹ In other words, we are concerned here only with journalists who work for public communications media targeted at general audiences rather than special interest groups. These media include daily and weekly newspapers, news magazines, radio and television stations and news agencies (such as The Associated

Press) circulating in the United States. For findings concerning other kinds of journalists, see Weaver and Wilhoit, *The American Journalist*.¹² Our survey includes only full-time editorial personnel.

Definition of Journalist. Following Johnstone, we defined journalists as those who have editorial responsibility for the preparation or transmission of news stories or other information — all full-time reporters, writers, correspondents, columnists and editors. In broadcast organizations, only editorial staff in news and public affairs were included, not camera operators or audio technicians.

Sampling. We used a three-stage sampling plan similar to that used by Johnstone and his colleagues in 1971 to draw our national sample of journalists:

1) The first step was to compile lists of daily and weekly newspapers, news magazines, news services and radio and television stations in the United States. We used the 1982 *Editor & Publisher Year Book* for our lists of daily and weekly newspapers and news services, the 1982 *Broadcasting-Cablecasting Yearbook* for our lists of radio and television stations, and the 1982 *Ayer Directory of Publications* for our lists of news magazines.

2) The second task was to obtain lists of all journalists working fulltime for the 586 organizations in our sample. This was done by letter and telephone calls to all editors or news directors of these organizations. The letter defined what we meant by editorial personnel, and the lists of employees were audited by job title. We obtained numbers of personnel from 523 of the 586 organizations in our sample, a response rate of 89.2%. The most nearly complete response was from radio stations (95.6%) and the lowest from news services (74.6%).

⁸ George Pollard, “Professionalism among Canadian Newsworkers: A Cross-Media Analysis,” *Gazette*, 36:21-38 (1985).

⁹ Johnstone, *et al.*, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ Judee K. Burgoon, Michael Burgoon and Charles K. Atkin, “The World of the Working Journalist” (New York: Newspaper Advertising Bureau, 1982).

¹¹ Johnstone *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹² David Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, *The American Journalist* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986).

3) The third task was to draw a representative national sample of individual journalists from the lists of names we collected in Step 2. We used the total number of journalists working for the organizations that responded to estimate the total number of journalists working for news media throughout the U.S.¹³ Then we calculated the percentages of all journalists working for the various media and used these percentages to determine how many journalists to include in our sample from the various media. The total sample numbered 1,251 journalists, comparable to Johnstone's sample of about 1,300. We slightly undersampled broadcast journalists (27.7% of our sample, as compared to 31.1% called for) and weekly newspaper journalists to allow for oversampling of news magazine and news service journalists who are much fewer in number than the other kinds of journalists. Because this present article is based mainly on the broadcast journalists, this undersampling has no effect on this study.

Interviewing. From a systematic random sample of 1,251 U.S. journalists, telephone interviews were completed with 1,001 for an overall response rate of 80.0% for individual journalists. We requested three callbacks for each journalist, but up to 13 were made for some. Before these interviews were conducted by Market Interviews (a subsidiary of Market Opinion Research in Detroit, Michigan) in December of 1982 and January and February of 1983, we sent a letter to each of the 1,251 journalists in our sample in November 1982 telling them about the study and how they were selected into the sample. We estimated the length of the interview to be one-half hour (actual

interviews ranged from 20 to 40 minutes) and we urged them to participate.

This article is based primarily on the 119 radio, 121 television, and 463 daily newspaper journalists interviewed from the total of 1,001.

Demographics

As would be expected, there is a large difference in editorial staff size when radio, television and daily newspapers are compared. The median number of people on the radio news staff is three, contrasted with a figure of 22 for television and 42 for newspapers. As was the case in the Becker study,¹⁴ staff size is used as a control variable. The median is the dividing line in this study between small and large organizations.

The journalistic work force in all three media is predominately male. Twenty-six percent of those working in radio are women compared to 33% for television and 34% for daily newspapers. These are below the 1980 census figures for the percentage of women employed in the full-time U.S. labor force (43%),¹⁵ but in general are higher than the proportion of women in some comparable professional groups.¹⁶ The Johnstone *et al.* data listed 5% of those working in radio, 10% of the people working in television and 22% of those in daily newspapers as female.¹⁷

Analysis of the age distribution for the sample shows that broadcast journalists as a group are younger than their print counterparts. The median age for a newspaper worker is 33 compared to a median age of 28 in radio and television.

There are significant differences also in the racial composition of journalistic groups working for the three media. (Cramer's $V = .10$, $p < .06$). Nearly 8.5% of television journalists are black compared to only two percent of newspaper journalists and two and one-half percent of radio people. Less than one percent of the work force in each medium is Hispanic. The census figures for 1980 indicate that nearly 12% of the U.S. population is black and 6.5% is Hispanic.¹⁸

In terms of political party identification, a plurality of the people in the sample

¹³ For more details on how we estimated the number of journalists working for U.S. news media, see Weaver and Wilhoit, *op. cit.*, Appendix I.

¹⁴ Becker, *op. cit.*

¹⁵ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1982-1983, 103d ed., p. 379.

¹⁶ For example, 26.3% of the full-time instructional faculty at colleges and universities in 1980-81 were women. These figures are cited in: Martin J. Finklestein, *The American Academic Profession* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1984).

¹⁷ Johnstone, *et al.*, *op. cit.*

¹⁸ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *op. cit.*, pp. 32, 33, 54, 55.

labeled themselves independents. There were some slight differences by medium in 1982-3, however (Cramer's $V = .10$, $p < .05$). There were more Republicans in radio than in television or daily newspapers and more Democrats in daily newspapers than in either broadcast medium (see Table 1). Although the distribution of political party identification does not vary by organization size for the broadcast media, it does for newspapers. Forty-eight percent of the newspaper people in large organizations called themselves Democrats compared to 35% of those in small organizations, while 11% of the print people on large newspapers called themselves Republicans, compared to 23% at small papers (Cramer's $V = .19$, $p < .0007$).

Working Patterns

Because they have fewer people on staff, broadcast journalists are less likely to have responsibility for following a beat than those working for daily newspapers. Thirty-one percent of the television reporters, 35% of the radio journalists and 60% of the daily newspaper people say they work a beat. Radio reporters are more likely to attend to traditional geographical beats such as city hall and the police department, indicating an emphasis on spot news coverage. Television, on the other hand, uses its beat reporters most frequently for consumer-oriented coverage. None of the television journalists in the sample listed state government as a beat.

Regardless of the beat system, journalists seem to feel that they have quite a lot of freedom to determine story coverage. When asked how often they are able to get a subject covered if they come up with a good idea for a story, 56% of the television people say "almost always" while 35% say "more often than not" and only 7% say "occasionally." No significant differences appear when television, radio and daily newspapers are compared on this question.

There are some differences by medium, however, when journalists are asked how much freedom they usually have in selecting the stories on which they work (Cramer's $V = .15$, $p < .0006$). Seventy-one percent of those in radio news say they

have "almost complete freedom." Some 60% of the daily newspaper people and 48% of the television journalists chose that response. Apparently because of the smaller staff size in radio, there is less supervision than in newspapers or television. Also, the logistical problems of shuffling television crews around a city probably keep much of the responsibility for story selection in the hands of assignment editors.

The same pattern appears when journalists are asked how much freedom they have in deciding "which aspects of a story should be emphasized." Seventy-three percent of the radio, 67% of the daily newspaper, and 64% of the television journalists say "almost complete freedom."

The broadcast media are quite different from print when it comes to the amount of editing stories receive (Cramer's $V = .24$, $p < .0001$). Nearly 56 percent of the radio people and 42 percent of the television journalists report that their stories receive "no editing at all" from others in their organization. Only 18% of the daily newspaper responses fall into that category, while 68% of the print people say there is "some editing" and 14% say there is "a great deal."

In addition, journalists in all three media receive feedback from a number of other sources. Respondents are more likely to say they hear from members of the audience than from others in their own organizations. When organization size is controlled, there are some slight differences between print and television. More television employees in large organizations (60%) than TV journalists in small organizations (50%) report regular feedback from the audience (Tau $c = .15$, $p < .06$). The reverse is true for newspaper employees with 46% in large organizations and 55% on small papers saying they have regular contact with the audience.

When supervisors edit stories, they turn up a list of complaints familiar to most journalism professors. Table 2 shows that problems with grammar and syntax head the list, followed by spelling (for newspapers and radio), awkward writing and repetition. The most commonly cited

TABLE 1

Political Distribution of Journalists by Medium

(Percentages)

	Television (N=116)	Radio (N=116)	Daily Newspaper (N=455)	General Public ^a
Democrat	36	30	41	45
Republican	22	30	17	25
Independent	41	38	40	30
Other	1	2	2	

Column totals may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

^aFrom George H. Gallup, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1983*. Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1984, p. 82.

TABLE 2

The Most Commonly Mentioned Faults in Stories

(Percentages)

	Television (n=88)	Radio (n=86)	Daily Newspaper (n=310)
Grammar, syntax	17	26	21
Awkward writing	9	8	5
Repetition	8	7	7
Hasty writing	6	2	0
Poor broadcast style	6	5	0
Unclear writing	5	5	5
Poor production	4	1	0
Camera work	4	0	0
Spelling	2	11	18
Poor organization	2	5	5

Columns do not add up to 100% because not all responses are listed.

problems in broadcasting deal with writing rather than reporting or production.

Attitudes Toward the Job

The majority of the respondents to this survey say they are satisfied with their jobs, and there are no significant differences by type of medium (see Table 3). Size of organization has no significant relationship with job satisfaction in broadcast-

ing, but more print journalists who work for the larger firms report a high level of satisfaction than those who work for the smaller ones (Tau $c = .09$, $p < .04$).

A series of questions also probed further to determine the factors journalists use to judge the attractiveness of jobs. Table 4 shows the percentages who rate these items "very important."

TABLE 3

Job Satisfaction

(Percentages)

	Television (n=121)	Radio (n=119)	Daily Newspaper (n=463)
Very Satisfied	36	42	40
Fairly Satisfied	47	40	44
Somewhat Satisfied	16	16	15
Very Dissatisfied	2	2	1

Columns may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

TABLE 4

Factors Journalists Consider Very Important For Judging Jobs

(Percentages)

	Television (n=121)	Radio (n=119)	Daily Newspaper (n=463)
Pay	26	22	22
Benefits	27	28	26
Freedom from Supervision	31	37	40
Helping People	68	67	57
Editorial Policies	55	47	54
Autonomy	53	41	53
Job Security	48	71	57
Chance to Get Ahead	54	59	43
Chance to Develop a Specialty	58	48	44

The figures indicate that money is not the major yardstick for journalists. They are more likely to stress the opportunity to help people. Small-market broadcasters are more likely than small-market newspaper workers to say this is very important (Cramer's $V = .14$, $p < .0007$), but this difference is not present in large organizations. The radio people are most concerned about job security (Cramer's $V = .12$, $p < .03$), and radio and newspaper employees in small organizations are more likely than their counterparts in large organizations to rate job security as important. Also, radio journalists in large

organizations are most likely to value a chance to get ahead (Cramer's $V = .15$, $p < .004$).

Finally, more broadcast than print journalists say the opportunity to develop a specialty is very important. This difference probably reflects the fact that newspaper reporters are more likely to cover a beat, which forces one to develop a specialty.

Still another measure of job satisfaction is the future plans of those currently working in the field. Nearly 84% of the television journalists say they plan to be working as journalists five years from now, and

TABLE 5

Percentage of Journalists Who Agree With Statements About The Audience

	Television (N=121)	Radio (N=119)	Daily Newspaper (N=459)
Audience most interested in breaking news	85	83	75
Audience not interested in social problems	30	36	28
Audience is gullible	19	22	14

only 12% hope to be elsewhere. The figures do not differ significantly for radio or daily newspapers.

Although most respondents want to continue to work as journalists, some would like to move to a different medium. Seventeen percent of those in radio would like to cross over to television, while only 2% of those in television would rather be in radio. There is little desire on the part of broadcast journalists to work in print, and vice versa.

If there is any one factor that could persuade the journalists to leave their chosen field, however, it is pay. Some 39% of the television people say they might be tempted to leave journalism for a higher paying job. Other factors that might tempt them to leave are a new challenge (8%), lack of freedom (7%), burnout (6%) and better job security (6%). Responses for radio and daily newspapers are not significantly different from those for television.

People who actually plan to leave journalism in five years list a number of fields as their alternative choices, including teaching, public relations, performing, production, self-employment and retirement. Public relations is the most popular option. It is cited by 22% of the journalists who desire a change.

Perceptions of Audience

One indication of a journalist's view of his or her function in society is the perception of audience interests. Respondents to this survey were given a series of three statements about the audience and asked to agree or disagree using a five-point scale.

Nearly 85% of the television journalists agree "somewhat" or "strongly" with the first statement, "Audience members are more interested in the day's breaking news than in analysis of long-term trends" (see Table 5), and responses of the radio people do not differ significantly. Daily newspaper employees are less likely (75%) to agree (Cramer's $V = .13$, $p < .004$). Those who work for small newspapers and radio stations are more likely than their peers who work for large organizations to endorse that opinion (Tau $c = -.16$, $p < .04$).

There are no significant differences by medium when survey participants respond to the statement, "The majority of audience members have little interest in reading about social problems such as racial discrimination and poverty." Only about a third of the journalists agree. Television journalists in the large organizations express stronger opposition to the statement than TV people in small stations (Tau $c = -.20$, $p < .03$).

Journalists in all three media express little support for the idea that the audience is gullible and easily fooled. Newspaper people in large organizations are more likely to say they strongly disagree than their peers who work for small firms (Tau $c = -.10$, $p < .02$). For radio employees, however, the strongest disagreement is in the smaller organizations (Tau $c = -.20$, $p < .02$).

Another series of questions in this survey concerned the importance of various roles that traditionally have been associated with the news media. Journalists were asked, for example, to indicate on a

four-point scale how important they think it is for the news media to "get information to the public quickly." Factor analysis of the responses indicated the existence of three main role types that are labeled "adversary," "disseminator," and "interpreter." The adversaries say it is extremely important to be skeptical of public officials and business leaders. Interpreters say it is extremely important to investigate claims and statements made by the government, analyze complex problems and discuss national policy. The disseminators, on the other hand, say it is important to get information out quickly and to concentrate on the widest possible audience.

There is a great deal of overlap among these roles, but differences do show up by medium and organization size. Regardless of organization size, newspaper journalists are more likely than the broadcast people to embrace the adversary role. Television employees who work for large organizations are about twice as likely as those who work for small firms to rate adversary behavior as extremely important. The disseminator role is supported strongly by radio journalists when compared with their television and print counterparts in large organizations. In smaller organizations, however, the figures are not significantly different. Newspaper journalists give strongest support to the interpretive role, followed by television and radio. These data seem to indicate that perceptions of journalistic role held by the television people are similar to those of their print counterparts, especially in large markets. Radio people, on the other hand, support a more passive view of the journalists' function. (See Table 6.)

The television employees also express opinions similar to those voiced by newspaper people on the topic of ethics. Because some have criticized journalists, especially those who work for television, for a lack of ethics in reporting,¹⁹ this study analyzed opinions about controversial reporting methods and compared them by medium and organization size. The respondents were asked to indicate on a three-point scale whether the following practices are justified on occasion: using

confidential documents without authorization, using personal documents or photographs without authorization and seeking employment with a firm in order to gather inside information. Answers to the question were added to create an ethics scale. The patterns of responses are the same for both large and small organizations. About 20% of the television and newspaper people in small organizations say these practices are justified on occasion but only 2% of the radio people approve of them (Cramer's $V = .20$, $p < .0003$). Journalists in the larger organizations are somewhat more likely to voice approval, with 36% of the newspaper, 30% of the television, and 11% of the radio journalists saying they are justified (Cramer's $V = .23$, $p < .0001$).

Other Indicators

The survey asked a number of questions about other variables that traditionally have been seen as indicators of professionalism in a field.²⁰ One is an individual's motivation for choosing a career. Encouragement from elementary and high school teachers is listed most frequently by TV personnel while a long-standing desire to enter the field was the single largest attraction for radio journalists. "Always liked to write" heads the list for the daily newspaper people.

The educational background of journalists in this study also varies by medium (Cramer's $V = .18$, $p < .001$). Television personnel earned the most college degrees, followed by employees in daily newspapers and radio. Although organization size does not account for the percentage of college diplomas held by television people, it does so for radio — with more degrees in the larger organizations (Tau $c = .26$, $p < .001$). Newspapers show the same pattern (Tau $c = .11$, $p < .01$). (See Table 7).

As might be expected from the discussion of age at the beginning of this paper, the typical newspaper journalist has more

¹⁹ "Journalism Under Fire," *Time* December 12, 1983, pp. 76-93.

²⁰ Michael W. Singletary, "Commentary: Are Journalists 'Professionals'?" *Newspaper Research Journal*, April 1982, p. 75.

TABLE 6
Percentages of Journalists Who Strongly Endorse Various
Journalistic Roles

	Adversary	Disseminator	Interpretative
Large Organizations	Newspaper 26%	Radio 67%	Newspaper 78%
	Television 23%	Television 46%	Television 61%
	Radio 7%	Newspaper 44%	Radio 37%
	a	b	c
Small Organizations	Newspaper 18%	Newspaper 61%	Newspaper 60%
	Television 11%	Radio 62%	Television 44%
	Radio 11%	Television 42%	Radio 31%
	d	e	f
a Cramer's V = .21, p < .000		d Cramer's V = .15, p < .006	
b Cramer's V = .14, p < .01		e Cramer's V = .11, p < .10	
c Cramer's V = .25, p < .0000		f Cramer's V = .18, p < .0002	

This table shows the percentage of journalists who score in the top quartile of a scale for each role type created by adding the responses to questions associated with that role.

TABLE 7
Education Levels of Journalists
(Percentages)

	Television	Radio	Daily Newspaper
Some High School	0	3	0
Completed High School	0	13	7
One to Three Years College	20	32	18
College Graduate	62	40	57
Some Graduate School	11	5	7
Advanced Degree	7	8	10

Columns may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

journalistic experience (13 years) than the typical radio (nine years) or television journalist (eight years). (ANOVA, $p < .001$).

In terms of keeping up with professional reading, the newspaper and television respondents are ahead of the radio journalists. Newspaper and television personnel read more newspapers, general magazines and professional journals such as *Colum-*

bia Journalism Review, *Quill* and *Washington Journalism Review* than the radio people (all ANOVA p values < .05). There is no difference by medium, however, in the average number of professional organizations journalists have joined. The mean for each group is about sixth-tenths of one organization, indicating that journalists are not generally joiners of professional groups.

Conclusions

This comparative study of U.S. television, radio and daily newspaper journalists indicates that television journalists are strikingly more similar to daily newspaper journalists in size of editorial staff, in political party affiliation, perceptions of journalistic roles and ethics, education levels and professional reading patterns than they are to radio journalists, supporting the findings of earlier studies by Ismach and Dennis, and Pollard.²¹ This suggests that the traditional "print-broadcast" distinction frequently made between journalists is often not valid.²² The differences between radio and television journalists in the United States are substantial according to our national data from 1982-83. Because of these differences in some of the indicators of professionalism, scholars and practitioners of journalism should use care in categorizing journalists as either print or broadcast.

Our study also suggests that differences between the professionalism of newspaper

and television journalists are less than those between television and radio journalists. We did find some differences between print and broadcast journalists, including age, racial composition, coverage of a beat, amount of editing of stories and importance of developing a specialty, but these differences tended to be in demographics and working patterns rather than in indicators of professionalism such as perceived roles, ethics, education and professional reading habits.

The implications of these findings for quality and kind of news reporting cannot be systematically examined in this study because we did not collect samples of the content of the media included here. Further research is needed to test the hypothesis that more investigative and interpretive reporting is done by daily newspaper and television journalists than by radio reporters.

²¹ Ismach and Dennis, *op. cit.*, and Pollard, *op. cit.*

²² Becker, *op. cit.*

SOCIAL CORRELATES OF PUBLIC ATTITUDES

(Continued from page 682)

There are obviously many more social and individual factors which may color perceptions of information age issues. Ethnic background, for example, affects how advantageously one is located that blacks and Hispanics perceive the same gaps arising between themselves and the dominant culture that lower S.E.S. groups in general see.³⁰ Another factor may be occupation, specifically the extent to which one engages in information-related work. One's attitudes toward information society issues may depend on whether technology is likely to enhance one's work, alter it, or eliminate it altogether.

In any case, a focus on individual perceptions and behaviors relating to the new

communication technologies will help determine to what extent and in what form predictions by manufacturers and futurists are filtering down to the public. The extent to which individuals regard technology as enhancing equity, personal control, and freedom from intrusions may serve as an important predictor of the eventual social impact of the new communication age.

³⁰ Non-white respondents combine pessimism regarding the distributional aspects of the new technologies with optimism toward its potential personal benefits, even after controlling for S.E.S. A report to the Gannett Foundation is available from the authors.