

A COMPARISON OF SUBURBAN RESIDENTS'  
ATTITUDES TOWARD FREE-CIRCULATION  
NEWSPAPERS AND PAID-CIRCULATION  
NEWSPAPERS

By

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

American society constantly is changing. It seems no product or service can escape this change, including the newspaper industry. American society seems to demand that newspapers change to meet its needs and wants or perish.

The change that has affected the newspaper industry since the end of World War II is most evident in the shift of Americans from urban to suburban living.

In 1980, 48 percent of the country's population was living in definable suburban areas. As Americans moved to the suburbs, publications for these new markets sprang up (Gage, 1980). These new publications sprang up with ease due to widespread adoption of offset printing technology (Zerbinos, 1982).

The two above changes and increased advertising rates affected the newspaper industry, especially metropolitan dailies, regional newspapers, local dailies, weeklies, chains and group ownerships.

Growth of new communities was rapid. Dailies often missed this new target market, resulting in loss of circulation and identification with needs of suburbanites (Goldgraben, 1980). Thus, advertisers in very small areas turned to a new kind of publication because it was more affordable and targeted toward customers who lived near their stores and

visited their shopping areas. This new publication, "throwaway," still is stacked on counter tops, in racks, and thrown free to residential houses and apartments. The public either picks them up and reads them or throws them away. How the public actually feels about these new publications is unknown.

The idea of free circulation soon traveled into the weeklies. Between 1960 and 1980, weekly newspapers' circulations increased 102 percent, while daily newspapers' circulations increased by only 5.3 percent (Zerbinos, 1982). This increase in weeklies' circulation is somewhat mysterious. The American Newspaper Publishers Association reported weekly newspapers declined from 8,174 in 1960 to 7,954 in 1980.

It is suggested that weekly newspapers, faced with competition from zoned editions of metropolitan dailies and from shoppers' guides, community shoppers, free newspapers, and other giveaway papers, may have turned to free distribution to increase circulation and advertising revenues (Zerbinos, 1982). Data indicate that free-circulation newspapers were located primarily in urban and suburban areas where weeklies are likely to be competing with dailies and other media for advertising revenue.

A study that analyzed the increase in weekly circulation concludes that free circulation in suburban areas is more of a competitive tool than an economic advantage (Zerbinos, 1982). One researcher suggests that further research is needed to determine if competition can be a predictor of free circulation (Zerbinos, 1982). Competition might have been the original reason paid-circulation newspapers got into the free-shopper or free-newspaper business, but today newspapers like the Chicago Tribune and the Los Angeles Times are doing it for profits.

In an Editor and Publisher article, Victor Jose (1977), a free-newspaper owner, writes that "Free papers are the children of necessity" (p.20). He feels they have provided the only direct competition in the print field. He also points out, and this author agrees, that:

Any respectable newspaperman referred to free papers as 'throwaways'--that is, until paid papers began to start their own, and then they became 'shoppers,' although the spectrum ranges from 100 percent ad 'shopping guides' to 'free newspapers' carrying 25 percent news or more (p. 20).

### Definitions

Legal Publications, Newspapers, Shoppers, Free Newspapers, Newspapers Plus, Circulation, Coverage, Total Market Coverage, and Target Market Coverage are all important terms that have different definitions. The different definitions come from people with different points of view.

For example, what a legal publication is depends on if the person defining it is part of the judicial system, a newspaper owner, an owner of a free publication, or an advertiser. Societal power and billions of dollars in revenue ride on how some of these terms are defined.

Because of legal advertisements, low second-class mailing rates and tax exemptions, there is an ongoing struggle for owners of free publications to change the various states' and postal services' positions on how they define a newspaper. It seems all organizations and social systems have their policies, regulations and requirements for defining terms. Others just use personal interpretations. It all leads to confusion when one asks "what is a newspaper or legal publication?"

The following is an attempt to define some newspaper industry terms with other terms and some policies, regulations, laws,

requirements and interpretations. First, one should start with the primary term of what is a newspaper?

### What is a Newspaper?

"Journalistic dogma has held that a newspaper is not a newspaper because of news; it is a newspaper because it is paid for" (Jose, 1977, p. 20). The New Jersey state tax director ruled that, for a periodical to be classified as a newspaper and to be eligible for tax exemptions, advertisements must not be more than 65 percent of the total newspapers' content (White, Anzalone, and Barbour, 1980).

Free publications challenge the definition of a newspaper that is based on advertising content ratio. They claim there is no significant difference between receiving 100 percent of one's income from advertising or 85 percent as paid newspapers do (White et al., 1980).

Free-newspaper owners want the definition based on variables such as whether the publication qualifies for second-class mailing privileges, seriousness of the editorial content, extent of free circulation, control exerted by the advertisers of the content, and ability to provide a real public service (White et al., 1980.)

One researcher suggests a newspaper must be more than a "news" paper. It must be a marketplace of merchandising activity. "A good newspaper must tell how and where to spend money to fulfill its readers' needs and interests" (Joseph, 1979, p. 64).

The New Jersey Press Association (NJPA) has a thirty-four-year-old definition of a newspaper that prevents free-circulation newspapers from joining NJPA and makes any publication that cannot match these requirements ineligible for legal ads (Walker, 1975).

The provision stipulates that membership in NJPA be limited to newspapers of general circulation that regularly publish at least once a week. They must have a second-class mailing permit. They must have at least 75 percent paid circulation and an average news content which complies with applicable U.S. Postal Service regulations for second-class permit holders. They also must meet New Jersey Statutory qualifications for legal advertising (except in the case of out-of-state papers). Current postal regulations provide that newspapers must have an average of at least 35 percent news to qualify for second-class mail rates. The percentage dropped to 25 percent on January 1, 1976 (Walker, 1975).

The dispute over "what is a newspaper?" is not a new one. A suit against the state of New Jersey, which uses the NJPA definition to determine which newspapers are entitled to legal ads, was tried in Morristown, New Jersey. The suit was brought against the state by North Jersey Suburbanite, a give-away shopper paper, which charged the rule was unfair in that it barred free-circulation papers from getting legal ads. The NJPA defended the state at the cost of \$50,000 and won (Walker, 1975, p. 16).

Many newspapers do not comply with postal regulations. In 1976, Lloyd Burns, general manager of the New Jersey Press Association, said:

One-third of the association's newspaper members probably would be ineligible for membership if the definition were strictly enforced (Walker, 1975, p. 16).

Malcolm Borg, former owner of the Reporter, a voluntary paid-circulation weekly newspaper in Toms River, New Jersey, feels there is:

...no valid reason to draw a distinction between a shopper and a newspaper on the basis of news content or whether circulation is paid or free (Walker, 1975, p. 16).

Other states may vary from New Jersey, but the gist of the law stipulates that a newspaper that carries legal advertisements must meet certain requirements: 1) have a general paid circulation, 2) have an average news content of not less than some 25 percent, and 3) be at least two years a registered second-class mail matter permit-holder under the postal laws of the United States (Hunt and Cheney, 1982).

The Federal statute stipulates that a publication, to be entered and mailed at second-class rates, must have a legitimate list of subscribers and must not be designed primarily for advertising or for free circulation (Hunt and Cheney, 1982).

The state of New Jersey believes there are valid reasons for the statutes requiring certain achievements of papers wanting to be legal publications (Hunt and Cheney, 1982). The state believes a person who purchases a newspaper has more interest in its contents than a person who receives it without paying for it (Hunt and Cheney, 1982). Of course, free-newspaper people argue that some newspapers distributed without charge have a regular and interested readership and, in some instances, have a larger readership than paid newspapers serving the same areas (Hunt and Cheney, 1982). They point out that "Fixing a 25 percent ratio of news material does not necessarily identify a legitimate journalistic vehicle" (Hunt and Cheney, 1982, p. 135).

The ruling of the Superior Court of New Jersey declared the constitutionality of the statute. Of the free newspapers, the court wrote:

Despite the quantity of their non-advertising content, still, because of their relatively low ratio on nonadvertising copy and their free circulation, they retain the essential character of advertising media and are so identified by the public (Hunt and Cheney, 1982, p. 135).

The primary definition of a newspaper, then, is that it is paid for and that it contains a minimum of 25 percent news content. If this is what a newspaper is, what is a free publication?

### Free-Newspapers

Originally, shoppers' guides first were published as mimeographed sheets, released weekly by a handful of local merchants--usually grocers or discounters--to advertise weekly specials. They usually were placed under windshield wipers of cars, in mailboxes, and on driveways of residents around the merchant's place of business (White et al., 1980). This idea was adopted by weekly suburban presses, which included local advertising, news stories, press releases, and editorials. They often were offered editorial material by community volunteers who provided news for their columns.

Historically, success of the shoppers has been an ability to saturate markets and to achieve penetration daily newspapers have been unable to achieve. As major metro market populations shifted to the suburbs, free-circulation papers proliferated, attempting to meet the needs of the new-found suburbanites (Goldgraben, 1980). The suburbs once were considered second-rank, and suburban newspapers inferior to metro papers (Gage, 1980). This is not necessarily true today.

Most shoppers are distributed free. Most carry little news other than reprinting publicity releases issued by local merchants (Howard, 1975). In fact, the shoppers trade group, the National Association of Advertising Publishers, requires that the news content be below 25 percent and that circulation be either free or voluntarily paid, the latter being necessary to obtain total market coverage (Howard, 1975). Critics argue the news in shoppers is filler and lacks significant



editorial comment. They claim inclusion of filler is to allow shoppers the same tax privilege as daily newspapers have (White et al., 1980).

Shoppers are geographically targeted, and mass delivery techniques are employed, so that blanket coverage of the area is accomplished (White et al., 1980).

Gary Blackman, a national advertising representative for shoppers, states:

Not everybody subscribes to a paid community newspaper, not everyone bothers to pick up a metropolitan newspaper, but just about everybody gets a shopper. (Howard, 1975, p. 50)

He has no research data that can show that this statement is true.

Blackman sells his product to advertisers on a concept he calls "filling in the holes" (Howard, 1975, p. 50).

The image of shoppers several years ago was one of "throwaways." Today, they seem to have gained some respectability. They include tabloids, broadsheets, and mini-tabloids. Their editorial content ranges from nil to 30% and more. Some have canned features, have a working editorial staff, and take editorial stances on local issues (Goldgraben, 1980, p. 43).

Shoppers now are making a strong competitive bid for firms' advertising dollars, and daily newspapers are feeling the effects. To compete, daily newspapers have started to print and distribute their own shoppers, in many instances, embodied within the newspaper. Data indicate that 80 percent of a major daily's own shopper are distributed within the daily (White et al., 1980, p. 22).

Free circulation is not confined to newer, less-established newspapers. Older newspapers are heavily represented among free-circulation newspapers (Zerbinos, 1982). A survey of metro dailies shows many have adopted the concept to give suburban readers more news

from close to home (Gage, 1980). A Los Angeles Times official states that "Metros have to appeal to the suburban market because it's too big and too powerful to ignore." The L.A. Times recently has put a \$200,000,000 investment in building a suburban market (Gage, 1980).

Free-circulation newspapers are more likely to be part of a chain or group. Because the chain-owned newspapers can offer an advertiser larger circulation through combination rates, the chain-owned newspaper can make up in advertising revenues what it does not earn in subscription revenue. Group-owned, free-circulation newspapers constitute a barrier to entry into the industry because of their central printing capabilities. A study revealed that 12.6 percent of the weeklies had competition from other weekly publications (Zerbinos, 1982). This indicates that barriers to entry into the free-newspaper industry already are very high.

Shoppers and free newspapers are on the fourth tier of the publishing hierarchy. Metropolitan dailies are number one, regional papers are number two. Weekly newspapers are three, and free-circulation newspapers are number four (Alter, 1981). Of free newspapers, J.G. Scripps wrote in Editor & Publisher, "Free distribution is a disease which may be difficult to cure" (Jose, 1977, p. 20). If he meant they will grow like a cancer, he was correct.

When defining free or paid newspapers, the variables that most often emerge are free and paid circulation and the advertising and editorial ratio.

### Newspaper Circulation and Coverage

What is newspaper circulation and newspaper coverage or penetration? Most newspapers measure the number of copies sold or distributed and call this "circulation." Newspaper coverage represents the number of copies circulated, compared to the number of households in the trading community. Coverage represents "potential" rather than "actual" exposure, since everyone who receives a copy of a newspaper does not necessarily read it. For example, if a newspaper's circulation is 500,000 and the number of households in the trading area is 2,000,000, the coverage (and penetration) is 25 percent. One unit of circulation is equal to one household covered. So coverage based on circulation is a very rough comparison of the newspaper audience size related to the size of the market reflected by the number of households in that area.

This leads to the last two terms that need to be recognized and defined--"total market coverage" and "target market coverage."

### Total Market Coverage and

### Target Market Coverage

Total market coverage or penetration is when all households in a geographical area, such as the entire city, get a newspaper. Shoppers and free newspapers distributed free to all the households in a town is an example of total market coverage and penetration. Another example is when a daily newspaper prints its own shopper and includes the shopper in the paid-circulation edition as a separate section. It is delivered, usually on Wednesdays or Thursdays, to all the households that subscribe to the regular daily newspaper. The special section, which looks like a regular newspaper, also is distributed free to the rest of the community

that does not subscribe to the daily. This allows the advertisers to reach all the households in a community, thereby attaining total market coverage and penetration.

In the newspaper industry, target market coverage is when a publisher targets locations where the issue will be distributed. For example, a free shopper stacks his weekly issues inside convenience stores, grocery stores, restaurants, and other areas. He targets locations for distribution points, thereby being accessible to the establishments' patrons. They may or may not pick up and read the free shoppers. Metro dailies offer target market coverage to advertisers by zoning their papers geographically. On certain days, the suburban communities metro dailies service are offered local news and advertisements. Advertisers can buy one or all the zones on these predesignated days. The metros target the news content locally, and the advertisers target a suburb geographically. Both achieve target market coverage. Target market coverage is similar to, but should not be confused with, business, industrial, and specialty publications' target market concept. One targets reader "interest," newspapers target "geographically" and attempt to target reader "interest."

Target market coverage does not get a newspaper to every household in a geographical area; total market coverage does.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Comparison of Free- and Paid- Circulation Newspapers

According to 1986 statistics by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, there are over 63 million daily newspapers printed and distributed on weekdays and over 57 million printed and distributed on Sunday. There is a total of 1,688 Daily Newspapers grossing over 23 billion dollars in advertising volume annually. There are 783 daily newspapers printed on Sundays. Two percent of the dailies are tabloid size, and 98 percent are broadsheet size, averaging 56 pages on weekdays and 180 pages on Sunday. According to 1986 statistics by the American Newspaper Representatives (a division of National Newspaper Association), there are 8,182 paid weeklies in the United States. An Editor & Publisher article reported in 1977 that 7,530 paid weeklies and 6,000 free weeklies grossed 700 million dollars in advertising annually. The American Newspaper Representatives 1986 statistics also reported that thirty percent of the paid weeklies are tabloid, and 40 percent are mini-tabloids, averaging 24 pages. Over 55 percent of the free weeklies are tabloids, 38 percent are mini-tabloids, and 19 percent are broadsheets, averaging 32 pages per week.

Of the 6,000 free weeklies, it is not indicated how many are part of paid weeklies' or paid dailies' total market coverage program and how

many are legal newspapers. Barry Newton, marketing director of the Oklahoma Advertising Newspaper Bureau for the Oklahoma Press Association (OPA), indicated in 1985 that 66 of the 245 OPA members had total market coverage publications. Thirty-eight of the 66 OPA member newspapers with total market coverage publications are dailies. At least 5 of the 28 free-circulation weeklies are total market coverage publications, but are not legal newspapers. Roughly 27 percent of the Oklahoma Press Association members has a free newspaper in one form or another, according to this 1984 estimate.

Concerning the advertising/news ratio, on the average, 64 percent of the nation's daily newspaper space is advertising. Fifty-six percent of the space of paid weeklies is advertising and 74 percent of free weekly newspapers' space is advertising (Editor & Publisher, 1977, p. 17).

"Content Comparison of Free and Paid Circulation Weeklies" was a study conducted by Hunt and Cheney (1982). Their findings discovered that the free-circulation newspapers sampled have considerably more market penetration than the paid-circulation newspapers. Free newspapers out-circulate paid weekly newspapers by a ratio of more than three and a half to one. Paid newspapers provide the reader with slightly more pages, more news content and slightly less advertising content.

Hunt and Cheney's study revealed that paid newspapers averaged 36 pages to 32 pages for free newspapers and that paid newspapers contained twice as much news and editorial content as free weekly newspapers.

It is interesting that free weekly newspapers had fewer pages than paid weekly newspapers but had slightly more advertising column inches than paid weekly newspapers (Hunt and Cheney, 1982). This hints that

free newspapers are more profitable and are being accepted by advertisers.

Paid newspapers employed an average of 13.7 persons in their news departments to free weekly newspapers' 8.5 average. Paid weekly newspapers provided significantly more features, signed columns, editorials and syndicated materials than free weekly newspapers. The study showed no significant difference in classified advertising, bulletin board news and reader response features between the two types of newspapers. There was a significant difference in news and editorial content between paid and free weekly newspapers (Hunt and Cheney, 1982).

Hunt and Cheney (1982, p. 137) concluded that:

If legal advertising and notices are to be published so as to be available in a 'bona fide' newspaper, a paper of record, then the paid circulation papers do provide a significantly more 'newsworthy' publication than the free papers.

But, they also concluded that:

If legal advertisements and notices are to be published to be read and attended to by members of the community, and if one assumes that classified advertisements are an indication of a paper's success at reaching that community, then the two types of newspapers (free and paid weeklies) do not show a significant difference (Hunt and Cheney, p. 137).

### Barriers Against Legitimizing

#### Free Newspapers

Literature search uncovered several articles that indicate free newspapers have been subjected to government and industry regulations that keep them from becoming legitimate newspapers.

In one such Editor & Publisher article, Victor Jose (1977) writes that:

The net effect of the restrictions against free newspapers is a barricade against competition. He charges that Free Newspapers are: Barred from ABC (Audit Bureau of Circulations)

membership; this is due to newspaper pressure; they are kept from printing public notice ads (legals); they have no national ad network or sources; they are excluded from regular AP and UPI service; they are sometimes black balled by feature syndicates; and the most potent barrier is the second class mailing law (p. 20).

Jose argues that originally the second-class mailing law was conceived as a method of propagating information and culture throughout the far reaches of the young republic. "Today," Jose argues, "the law has come to operate as the keystone in the defense against unwanted free-circulation newspapers" (Jose, 1977, p. 20).

Jose (1977) also argues that competition is encouraged against free newspapers because the courts will not ban daily newspapers from starting their own shoppers. He feels this is the same as allowing them to start their own radio and TV stations. "Even more so," Jose (1977) writes, "because free papers are a more direct competitor" (p. 36). He feels that a daily starts a shopper only to avert or suppress competition and opens itself to anti-trust action.

Jose (1977) thinks the weekly markets are different. "When a paid weekly starts a shopper against a free weekly, it's pretty much a fair fight" (p.36). He feels this would not be the case with daily newspapers because they are already a dominant all-week publication with prestige and strong financing. "The daily can use its own shopper (or other forms of total market coverage," he writes, "as a lethal weapon against the independent free paper" (p. 36).

Since chains and group-owned newspapers are getting into the free-newspaper business in a big way, the competition will be even greater in the future--for everyone, not just free newspapers.

It is humorous to recall that when free papers first started, traditional newspaper people, including this author, thought shoppers



were a joke. One author described our attitudes perfectly when he wrote that all we had to do to get rid of free papers was to ignore them. This would damage their credibility, or better yet, cause them to go away (Stone, 1980).

#### Free-Circulation Participation

New enterprising entrepreneurs and existing expanding weeklies, many major dailies and communications chains are getting into the free-circulation business to augment their paid circulation. The total market coverage (or penetration) concept is now an accepted marketing strategy in the newspaper industry (Goldgraben, 1980). An example of this type of newspaper expansion and the total market coverage concept is the Los Angeles Times' venture into free circulation.

The Times, said to be pressured by its advertisers to reach the market being served by the free and paid-circulation weeklies, launched The Best of Times, a free weekly tabloid distributed to 124,000 homes in the San Gabriel Valley. The weekly is estimated to cover 94 percent of the potential Los Angeles market (Goldgraben, 1980). The reason advertisers insist on the tabloid is that the Los Angeles Times now has only a 30 percent share of the Los Angeles market (Goldgraben, 1980). Advertisers want more from their prestigious metro daily.

Another example and approach into the free-newspaper business can be seen at the Chicago-based Tribune Company. On August 15, 1980, the Tribune Company purchased the Pennysaver Publications, the publisher of a weekly seven-zone shopper reaching 155,000 homes in the southwest suburbs of Chicago, Illinois (Goldgraben, 1980). It now has 13 zones and has increased its circulation to 240,000. This approach allows the dailies to buy and start shoppers to compete with themselves. Another

example of the approach, with a twist, occurred when News American Publishing, owners of the Pennysaver, bought a group of paid weekly newspapers in the Houston area (Goldgraben, 1980). The free Pennysavers act as a supplement to the paid weeklies, whose main advertisers are chain stores and large retailers. Owning both the paid newspaper and free shopper allows advertisers to buy ads to fit their budgets. They can buy zones in the Pennysaver or space in the eight weeklies. The cost of ads ranges from \$18.00 to \$3,500.00.

Some newspaper chains are acquiring or creating shoppers. Some of the chains involved are Cox Enterprises, Harte-Hanks Communications, and Capital Cities Communications (Goldgraben, 1980). These companies go into markets where they do not publish their own paper, forcing many local dailies and weeklies to start their own shoppers to keep out competition (Alter, 1981).

"The point is," writes Ann Goldgraben (1980) in an Advertising Age article, "that the newspaper industry today is selling the proliferation of the shopper and free-circulation paper" (p. 44). She feels some in the newspaper industry are finding they have to free themselves from the traditions binding them.

This seems to be the philosophy of the Tribune Company. Tom Chaney, vice-president and director of marketing, states that the "Pennysaver enables them to serve the very small areas so an advertiser can get coverage he might not be able to afford in a metropolitan edition" (Alter, 1981, p.14). It gives the non-Tribune advertisers a chance to advertise in a place that meets their needs.

McAdams, of Field Suburban Publishing, stated it correctly when he said, "they are trying to offer a vast total package to the advertiser" (Alter, 1981, p. 14).

As early as 1975, Advertising Age reported that an effort was under way to establish a free-publication network (Howard, 1975). The network, called ADNet, was founded by Gary Blackman in Omaha, Nebraska. In 1974 he claimed he had assembled 2,000 shoppers with a combined circulation of 20 million.

What will free publications change next? William Branen, president of Southern Lakes Publishers of Burlington, Wisconsin, predicted that "many paid-circulation daily newspapers will eliminate their subscription charges" (Goldgraben, 1980, p. 43). He claims that subscription charges are becoming more and more difficult to collect and the dailies "will adopt the free circulation philosophy" (p.43). Profit will probably be the motive. Gary Chappell (1977) stated in an Editor & Publisher article that a well-run 20,000 free-circulation weekly should generate, through lineage and pre-prints, more than \$500,000 in 52 weeks, with an operation profit of more than \$300,000" (p. 12).

#### Media Planners' and Buyers' Opinions

The literature search uncovered no material relating to media planners' and buyers' attitudes toward free newspapers. However, information on how media planners and buyers look at and select newspapers is available. Since a newspaper is either free or paid for, similar techniques are applied. It should be mentioned here that postal receipts and publisher statements are about the only form of auditing that a free newspaper offers. The Audit Bureau of Circulation does not recognize "free circulation" as accountable, true circulation.

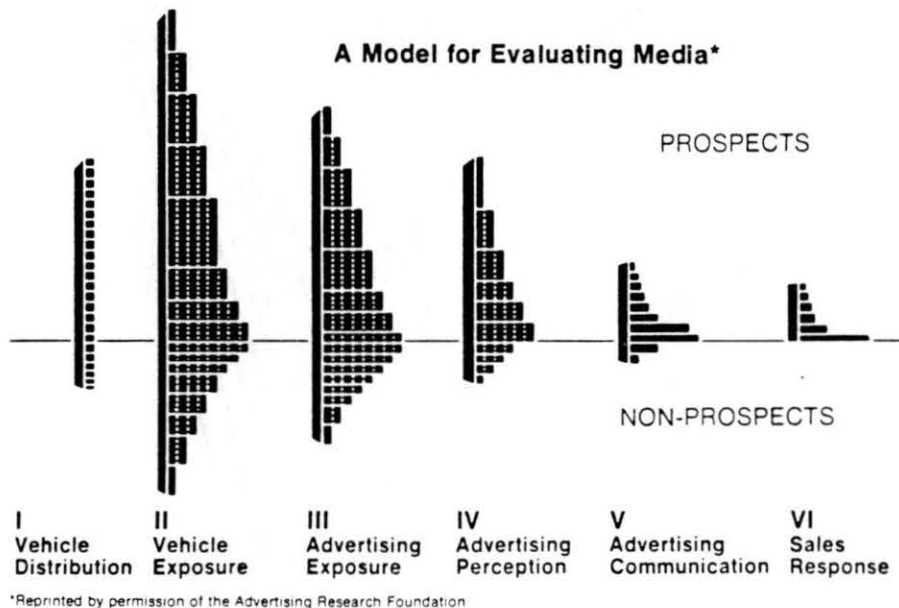
The national shopper advertising representative, Gary Blackman, argues, "Media buyers aren't interested in readership." He insists "they want success stories." This could be true in some cases, but one

writer pointed out that free newspapers' biggest handicap appears to be a lack of basic information about the medium itself (Howard, 1975, p. 50). No readership or demographic information is available because free newspapers are not as organized or as wealthy as are paid newspapers. This is changing somewhat with the entry of daily newspapers and chains into the free-newspaper business.

Larkin and Hect's study in 1979 determined that media buyers wanted much more detailed data on audience reach and audience demographics than they currently get from newspapers (Lynn, 1981). Heinberg discovered that some advertising agency representatives are downright hostile about the lack of newspaper readership data (Lynn, 1981). This is still a major concern in 1986.

Things may be looking up for media buyers since several pioneering press associations, those of Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Wisconsin, recently have sponsored state-wide readership surveys (Lynn, 1981). A close look at Oklahoma's state-wide survey, put out by the Oklahoma Press Association, revealed zero information or acknowledgement covering free newspapers' readership or the attitude of the respondents toward free- and paid-circulation newspapers. This seemed odd since 66 of their members have their own free publications in one form or another. Some are total market coverage publications, some are shoppers, and some are newspapers. The point is that free-newspapers are not mentioned in official state readership surveys. For whatever reason, the survey failed to recognize free newspapers in readership comparisons as it did other competitive media such as TV, radio, or direct mail (Oklahoma Press Association Survey, 1983). Free-newspaper data on total market coverage products were not provided for media buyers and planners.

To compare media, the Advertising Research Foundation first recommended that an advertiser define his market so that prospects could be differentiated from nonprospects. Once prospects were identified, it would be possible to compare media on the basis of which delivered the largest number. For comparative purposes, a model showing alternative response functions could be used. The model (Figure 1) consists of six stages of response functions ranging from a very mechanical, low-level response to the ultimate or ideal response (Sissors and Petray, 1976).



Source: Sissors, J.Z. and Reynold E. Petray.  
Advertising Media Planning (1976) p. 205

Figure 1. A Model for Evaluating Media

When using newspaper coverage in planning media, it sometimes is felt that a minimum coverage level in any individual market be no less than 50 percent. If it can be assumed that not all persons in all

households will be exposed to any given edition of a newspaper, then 50 percent is the lowest limit that seems practical. Perhaps only two-thirds of that 50 percent will be exposed. Some media planners often set much higher limits on local market coverage such as a minimum of 70 percent. In such cases, it may take two or even three newspapers in that community to attain a 70 percent unduplicated coverage (Scissors, 1976). This is why the total market coverage of free newspapers could appeal to media planners. However, they seem to know little about it since they base their decision on audited newspaper figures. Newspapers circulated free are not included in audit reports or media statistical directories like Standard Rate & Data.

In planning newspaper coverage, the final selection of a newspaper in a market is that of the buyer. The planners' responsibility is to state the coverage level that he thinks necessary to accomplish an objective. Once the coverage level is set, the buyer will attempt to implement the plan inasmuch as it is possible, for the money available (Jugenheimer and Turk, 1980).

At this point it is important to remember that an audience, or readers of a newspaper, whether the paper is free or paid, are not merely a collectivity of age, sex, and occupational categories that pose passively as targets for media planners, buyers, or advertisers (Lynn, 1981).

One research study concludes that media satisfy different audience needs and therefore are complementary rather than competitive in the minds of the audience (Lynn, 1981).

A media planner generally will compose a list of necessary attributes to be sought in the advertising media selection, then review the various media available in an attempt to find those that best match

those attributes (Jugenheimer and Turk, 1981). There are nine qualities that some media planners consider. As seen in Figure 2, the nine media characteristics are audience considerations, timing factors, geographic considerations, creative considerations, competitive factors, control considerations, mechanical and production factors, and financial considerations (Jugenheimer and Turk, 1981).

	Spot television	Network television	Spot radio	Network radio	Consumer magazines	Business publications	Farm publications	Sunday supplements	Daily newspapers	Weekly newspapers	Direct mail	Outdoor	Transit	Point of purchase
<b>AUDIENCE CONSIDERATIONS</b>														
Attentiveness of audience	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Interest of audience	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Avoids excess selection by audience	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Offers selectivity to advertiser	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Avoids waste	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Offers involvement	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Avoids distraction	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Avoids resistance	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Provides impact	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Offers prestige	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Good quality of audience data	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
<b>TIMING FACTORS</b>														
Offers repetition	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Avoids irritation	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Offers frequency	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Offers frequency of issuance	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Offers flexibility in scheduling	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Long life	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Low mortality rate	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Avoids perishability	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Allows long message	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Provides product protection	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
<b>GEOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS</b>														
Offers geographic selectivity	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Offers proximity to point of sale	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Provides for local dealer "tags"	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
<b>CREATIVE CONSIDERATIONS</b>														
Permits demonstration	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Provides impact	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Permits relation to editorial matter	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
<b>COMPETITIVE FACTORS</b>														
Light use of medium by competitors	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Low amount of total advertising	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
<b>CONTROL CONSIDERATIONS</b>														
Advertiser control of media content	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Favorable environment	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Advertiser control of location	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Amount of governmental regulation	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Number of other restrictions	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
<b>MECHANICAL AND PRODUCTION FACTORS</b>														
Ease of insertion	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
High reproduction quality	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Flexibility of format	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Avoids vandalism	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>														
Low total cost	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
High efficiency	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++

N - not a factor for this medium  
 V - varies from one vehicle to another within the medium.

Source: Jugenheimer, D.W. and Turk, P.B. Advertising Media. Columbus, Ohio: Grid Publishing Co., 1980

Figure 2. Sample of Comparative Evaluation of Available Media

With newspapers, media planners look closely at the circulation. Circulation to a media planner refers to the number of copies a publication sells compared to the number of persons who read those copies, the audience (Jugenheimer and Turk, 1980). It provides them with an idea of the publication's penetration into a geographical market.

Media planners also use Target Group Index when making media decisions. It gives detailed media habit information for all the product and service categories that it surveys and reports.

#### How the Public Views Free Newspapers

Two separate studies on how the public views free newspapers have similar conclusions. One was a 1977 Southern California study conducted by Dr. Edward Trotter. The other was a 1978 nation-wide study conducted by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau (Stone, 1980). These studies indicate that people read free newspapers and that free newspapers are regarded as newspapers by people. The studies revealed that advertisements in free newspapers can sell goods and services and that the throwaways are a real threat to daily paid newspapers (Stone, 1980).

The studies also indicated that free publications have an impact on the newspaper reading public. The majority of homes surveyed do receive free-distributed newspapers. They report that 65 to 75 percent of single-family dwelling units receive a free newspaper. More than half the people who have access to a free newspaper said they read it. Most who said they read free newspapers read them thoroughly or at least skim through them. Most of these same readers also subscribe to and read a daily newspaper (Stone, 1980).



Other individual findings of the two studies indicate that 48 percent of the residents found free home-delivered papers are useful or very useful. Thirty-three percent said they are a nuisance. Forty-one percent found the free newspapers in stores either useful or very useful. Forty-eight percent said they read the advertisements in home-delivered free newspapers compared with 84 percent who said they read the advertisements in the paid daily newspaper. Twenty percent had tried to buy from an advertisement in a free newspaper during the past year compared to 37 percent who said they tried to buy from a paid daily newspaper advertisement (Stone, 1980).

A Newspaper Advertising Bureau's national study found that 46 percent of the adults surveyed received one or more free papers at home. Forty-nine percent with annual incomes under \$8,000 had access to a free newspaper. Seventy-five percent with incomes over \$25,000 also had access to a free newspaper. This illustrates that free newspapers are targeting middle America and are a product of the suburbs. Even so, the study did show that the lower income group relied more upon free newspapers. All this says is that the free newspaper publishers are targeting middle America. It does not mean that the public accepts free newspapers. It does say, though, that lower income markets accept free newspapers more so than do other income levels.

The national study gives some insight on who reads the free newspapers on a nation-wide basis. Seventy-two percent of local paid-weekly readers read a daily four or more times a week compared to 69 percent of the local free-paper readers. The study shows that free newspapers are read thoroughly by 29 percent of all the respondents (Stone, 1980).

This leads one to ask if free newspapers are substituted for paid-daily newspapers. The California study showed that people used free

newspapers as a supplement for paid dailies rather than as a substitute (Figures 3 and 4).

<b>Reported use of newspaper ads</b>			
Type of paper	% who read ads	% who have placed ads	% who tried to buy from ads in last year
Daily .....	84%	39%	37%
Free home-delivery .....	48	12	20
Store shopper ...	n.a.	11	17

Source: Stone, G.C. "How the Public Views Shoppers." Advertising Age, Vol. 51, No. 32 (July 28, 1980)

Figure 3. Reported use of Newspaper Ads

<b>Readership of home-delivered papers</b>			
No. of papers received	% who read editorial	% who read advertising	% who read ads and editorial
None .....	8%	10%	7%
One .....	57	54	47
Two .....	60	59	53
Three .....	58	57	51

Source: Stone, G.C. "How the Public Views Shoppers." Advertising Age, Vol. 51, No. 32 (July 28, 1980)

Figure 4. Readership of Home-Delivered Papers

The data indicate that home-delivered free papers are read better than free papers that can be picked up in a store. The paid-daily newspaper was used most in all categories. It is interesting to note that

almost half the California respondents said they read a free home-delivered newspaper. It also is interesting to note in Figure 4 that almost as many people who received one newspaper read the news and editorial contents as did those people who received three newspapers. This suggests that most respondents read a newspaper whether free or paid for.

A Florida firm conducted a study to determine the attitudes and opinions of a randomized sample of respondents as to their shopping habits and preferences and their attitudes and opinions toward the advertising media. Free newspapers were part of this study.

On the average, the study claims only six percent of those who received a free newspaper discarded it without viewing it (White et al., 1980). This means 94 percent of their sample read free newspapers regularly. Comparing free-newspaper readers with nonreaders in terms of income, race, sex, age, and length of residency, the Florida study showed no discernible differences. The researchers admitted that results could be biased due to the sample being taken from a university community.

The Florida research firm also claims there is a psychological advantage in using free papers over paid papers. If the distribution is more effective around the retail business, the researchers feel people can relate a particular advertisement to advertisements of other local retailers as they "expound on the virtues of local buying" (White et al., 1980, p. 19). The Florida study also argues that the impact of shoppers is just beginning to be felt; that it takes time for consumers to get used to using a different advertising tool like free newspapers (White et al., 1980). The study claims there are 10,000 free-circulation newspapers in the United States which represent the most prosperous

and fastest growing segment of the newspaper industry for owners of free- and paid-circulation newspapers. The study argues that suburban society needs such papers that meet their needs (White et al., 1980).

Another study indicates that, in the minds of the reading public, there is no separation of a free newspaper from a paid-weekly or paid-daily newspaper (Editor & Publisher, 1977). Advertising Publishers, the free-newspapers' association, claims its study indicates that 48.8 percent of consumers pick up a community-free newspaper when they are in a buying mood compared to 39 percent who pick up a paid-circulation newspaper. This study also could be biased based on the fact that the free-newspaper association sponsored this research project. This suspicion is based on how associations are responsible for making their members business look good with statistics.

Of those who read a newspaper in a Newspaper Advertising Bureau test study, 85 percent claimed they read more than half a paid-daily newspaper, 88 percent claimed they read almost every page of a paid-weekly newspaper, and 50 percent claimed they read every page of a free newspaper (Editor & Publisher, 1977). This supports the free-newspaper association's claim that nearly half of all America now reads a free newspaper regularly.

The same Newspaper Advertising Bureau study also shows a majority of the nonreaders of free newspapers are not annoyed when one is delivered to their homes. Slightly less than half are annoyed. Thirty-nine percent of the sample really doesn't care, and 18 percent indicates it likes receiving the free newspapers whether read or not (Editor & Publisher, 1977).

What do paid-circulation newspapers' advertising managers think about free-circulation newspapers? A California study provides some insight.

Seventy-seven percent of the California newspaper advertising managers surveyed are aware of free-circulation newspapers in their area and agree that free newspapers affect their newspapers. Forty-six percent thought the free papers have decreased their paper's readership, and 77 percent thought they decreased their paper's advertising revenue. Forty-two percent felt their paper's rack sales decrease was due to free newspapers, and 23 percent thought free papers were responsible for changes in their newspaper's policies and plans. Thirty-one percent of the advertising managers admitted their paid newspapers were printing, or at least were financially involved with a free newspaper (Stone, 1980).

#### The Problem

The problem is that there are no real data that support the public's attitudes toward free-circulation newspapers. Several readership studies are available, but they tend to be biased. Also, readership data are based on rough indicators of the public's interests and needs (Lynn, 1981).

Community theorists long have held that being a member of a community encourages newspaper use. A study indicated that this was due to an increasing interest in the people and events of the community. Newspaper subscribing and reading are more prevalent among individuals who are in some way attached to a community served by local newspapers (Stam and Weis, 1982). Although this study was analyzing paid

newspapers, a similar attachment to free newspapers is possible by the community.

How attached are subscribers to their newspaper? How does one determine attachment? One study suggests that households which cancel one of the newspapers following a price increase reveal attachment. The retention of one or the other subscription or subscriptions is determined by the perceived relative usefulness of each newspaper (Riffe and Shaw, 1980). For example, if the metro paper is more highly prized, subscribers may discontinue the local paper, or vice versa. According to this premise, if a free newspaper is kept and other newspapers, whether paid or free circulation, are discontinued, then the free newspaper would be perceived as more useful to the reader. It would tend to be more important to the reader. This logic can never apply to free-circulation newspapers delivered to households because the people do not have a choice; it's free. They do not subscribe to it by paying a monthly fee. If they want to discontinue it, they simply stop reading it, but they still receive it.

In 1974, Katz, Blumer, and Gurevitch showed that contemporary media-use research is based on the premise that the audience is an active discriminator among media content rather than a passive target for messages (Lynn, 1981). Trodahl calls this the "information-seeking" theory. Becker states that use-gratification research relies heavily on the intuitively sound notion that media are a function of audience-need satisfaction (Lynn, 1981).

A study conducted by Frank and Greenberg in 1979 argues that in practice demographic and socio-economic data have been somewhat helpful in answering the "what" and "how" questions. This is because such data serve, to some extent, as surrogate indicators of interests and needs of

the public. People use media for a variety of reasons, including information, entertainment, and diversion (Lynn, 1981).

Since it is a well documented fact that people seek specific information from newspapers, (Lynn, 1981) and since one argues that free- and paid-circulation newspapers are both newspapers, people seek information from them. However, free and paid newspapers should differ in their contribution to these information needs unless they are identical, which they are not. They are not identical because they do not provide the same quality, quantity, and kind of information.

Editors, publishers, and advertising managers for both free- and paid-circulation newspapers will tell you that the information they provide is wanted by their public. They would lead one to believe that their newspaper's editorial and advertising content is desired by their geographical audiences.

If this is true, how true? How much does the public desire it? To the general public, just how important are all those news stories and advertisements? General public is mentioned here because free- and paid-circulation newspapers are distributed to geographical areas. Their markets are not segmented into specific categories. They target and reach a general market, not a segmented market.

If one could measure importance of information provided by each type of newspaper, then one possibly could get closer to the comparison of the public's real attitudes toward free- and paid-circulation newspapers.

Literature expresses a real need for clarification of the public attitudes toward free-circulation newspapers. Since more and more newspapers are getting into the free-circulation newspaper business, research that could possibly help determine the public's real attitudes

toward free newspapers is needed. This study attempts to measure the public's attitudes toward a free-circulation suburban weekly newspaper compared to a paid-circulation suburban daily newspaper and a paid-circulation metropolitan daily newspaper.

## Variables and Hypotheses

### Variables

The independent variables are types of newspapers and kinds of information. Types of newspapers has two levels: free- and paid-circulation newspapers. Kinds of information has two levels: news and advertising services.

The dependent variable is agreement on importance or value of the kinds of information the types of newspapers provide.

### Hypotheses

If suburban residents rated the type of newspapers in the order of perceived value, it stands to reason that the larger metropolitan daily would be rated first in the minds of the residents. The suburban dailies would be rated second. Free newspapers would be rated third, followed by shoppers in fourth place. This is today's belief because of the level of prestige the larger newspapers carry.

Likewise, if suburban residents rated the kind of information provided by these newspapers, the order of perceived value would be identical with the larger newspapers receiving the higher rating scores.

Hypothesis 1: Suburban residents' attitudes are significantly higher toward the paid-metropolitan daily newspaper than toward the paid-suburban daily newspaper.



Hypothesis 2: Suburban residents' attitudes are significantly higher toward the paid-metropolitan daily newspaper than toward the free-suburban weekly newspaper.

Hypothesis 3: Suburban residents' attitudes are significantly higher toward the paid-suburban daily newspaper than toward the free-suburban weekly newspaper.

Hypothesis 4: Suburban residents' attitudes are significantly higher toward the paid-metropolitan daily's advertising than toward the paid-suburban daily's advertising.

Hypothesis 5: Suburban residents' attitudes are significantly higher toward the paid-metropolitan daily's advertising than toward the free-suburban weekly's advertising.

Hypothesis 6: Suburban residents' attitudes are significantly higher toward the paid-suburban daily's advertising than toward the free-suburban weekly's advertising.

Hypothesis 7: Suburban residents' attitudes are significantly higher toward the paid-metropolitan daily's news than toward the paid-suburban daily's news.

Hypothesis 8: Suburban residents' attitudes are significantly higher toward the paid-metropolitan daily's news than toward the free-suburban weekly's news.

Hypothesis 9: Suburban residents' attitudes are significantly higher toward the paid-suburban daily's news than toward the free-suburban weekly's news.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY, DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

#### Methodology

##### Data Gathering

A sample of 91 persons was selected at random from a suburban city's telephone directory. The suburban directory had 95 pages of names listed, four columns per page, for a total of 380 columns. A sample of ten persons per page was selected (with one person from one page).

From a table of random numbers, six was drawn as the first sample page. Ten names were drawn from each of pages 6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36, 42, 48, 54, 60, 66, and 73. One name was drawn from page 79.

From a table of random numbers, the first number encountered from one through four was two. The names were drawn from the second columns.

There are an average of 71 names per column. From the table of random numbers, the first 10 numbers encountered from 1 through 71 was selected. A coin was flipped to see if the count would start from the top or the bottom. Heads, the count would start at the top; tails, it would start at the bottom. It was heads. Starting from the top of the second column of every twelfth page, the 5th, 9th, 10th, 21st, 32nd, 42nd, 53rd, 54th, 62nd, and 63rd names were drawn as the sample.

A coin was flipped to determine if the reserve sample should be drawn above or below the original name drawn. Heads it would be above;

tails, below. It was tails. The reserve names were drawn from below the original name.

#### Method of Measurement

Each respondent rated each newspaper's advertising and news service on nine ten-point semantic differential scales, as shown in Figures 5 and 6. News and advertising information scales were chosen because they represent the two major reasons people read newspapers. How people rate the two kinds of information the types of newspapers provide represent their attitudes toward the newspapers.

The interpretation key for a 10-point scale is shown in Table I.

#### Operational Definitions

On a ten-point scale, the respondents who rated the advertising and news services a 10 have an extremely high opinion of that specific advertising or news service provided by the free- or paid-circulation newspapers. On the other hand, if the respondent rated the advertising or news service provided by the free- and paid-circulation newspapers a 1, they had an extremely low opinion of that specific advertising or news service.

The combined mean rating of advertising and news services indicates respondents' degree of opinion toward the advertising and news services in free- and paid-circulation newspapers.

#### Design

The following relationships were tested for significance between the mean rating scores of free- and paid-circulation newspapers;

Uninformative Advertisements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Informative Advertisements
Advertisements do Not Hold Attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Advertisements do Hold Attention
Worthless Bargain Advertisements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Valuable Bargain Advertisements
Worthless Grocery Store Advertisements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Valuable Grocery Store Advertisements
Bad Classified Advertising	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Good Classified Advertising
Local Merchants Advertising Terrible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Local Merchants Advertising Great
Preprinted Inserts, Ad Circulars Uninteresting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Preprinted Inserts, Ad Circulars Interesting
Worst Place to Run Classified Ads	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Best Place to Run Classified Ads
Would Not Buy For Local Advertising	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Would Buy For Local Advertising

Figure 5. Nine 10-Point Advertising Information  
Semantic Differential Scales that were  
Repeated on each Type of Newspaper.

Worthless News Stories	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Valuable News Stories
Old News	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Current News
No Informative Local News on Front Page	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Informative Local News on Front Page
Bad Coverage of Local Sports Events	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Good Coverage of Local Sports Events
Not Enough Coverage of Local Public Schools	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Plenty Coverage of Local Public Schools
Terrible Coverage of Local City Government	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Excellent Coverage of Local City Government
Insufficient Local Religious Coverage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Sufficient Local Religious Coverage
Business News Not Well Covered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Business News Well Covered
Would Not Buy for Local News	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Would Buy for Local News

Figure 6. Nine 10-Point News Information Semantic Differential Scales that were Repeated on each Type of Newspaper.

TABLE I  
INTERPRETATION KEY FOR THE 10-POINT SCALE

---

Rating	Adverbial Qualifier
10	Extremely good opinion of
9	Very good opinion of
8	Good opinion of
7	Somewhat good opinion of
6	Slightly good opinion of
5	Slightly bad opinion of
4	Somewhat bad opinion of
3	Bad opinion of
2	Very bad opinion of
1	Extremely bad opinion of

---

between advertising information and news information; and interaction of types of newspapers and kinds of information (Figure 7).

Kinds of Information	<u>Types of Newspapers</u>		
	Free-Suburban Weekly	Paid-Suburban Daily	Paid-Metropolitan Daily
Advertising			
News			

Figure 7. 2 by 3 Factorial Design with Repeated Measures on Two Variables

#### Analysis

Chi-square tests were first run to test the reliability of the measuring instrument. The analysis on the semantic differential data was a treatments-by treatments-by-subjects analysis of variance. All respondents were measured on two variables--types of newspapers and kinds of information. It required a 91-by-2-by-3 paradigm. This analysis revealed any significant differences between the types of newspapers' mean rating scores, the kinds of newspaper information all three newspapers provide, and the interaction of these two variables. Post-hoc  $t$  tests were run for comparison of significant multiple means.

A Pearson  $r$  Product Moment Correlation was run to determine an index of the magnitude and direction of the relationship between advertising, news, and the type of newspapers.

A McQuitty's Elementary Linkage and Factor Analysis was run to determine which newspapers are similar and typical of those viewed similarly.

An advertising and news information profile analysis table was developed with the two types of semantic differential evaluation measuring instruments. This allowed a visual look at all three newspapers at once and their mean rating scores.

The analysis concluded with a readership survey.



## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

Eight analyses were run on the semantic differential data to determine if different attitudes exist toward a free-suburban weekly newspaper, a paid-suburban daily newspaper, and a paid-metropolitan daily newspaper. The eight tests and analyses were the chi-square, analysis of variance,  $t$  tests, eta correlation ratio, Pearson  $r$  Product Moment correlations, McQuitty's elementary linkage analysis, profile analysis, and readership survey. A brief interpretation of the results of the eight analyses follows.

#### Chi-Square Test

A chi-square test was first run to test reliability of the measuring instrument. With a sample size of 45 persons, the chi-square was run on each of the 10-point scales. The 10 interval rating points on each scale represented a category. Ten intervals equals 10 categories per scale. A chi-square test was run on each of the twenty-seven scales used in the interview. Although most of the scales were significant at the .01 level, some of the categories for some of the scales had expected counts of less than 5. This indicated the chi-square may not have shown reliability because the 10-point scale spreads the negative and positive sides of the scale too thin (1 means lowest rating and 10 means highest rating).

Since some of the scales might not be reliable, the 10 categories of each scale were collapsed into two. Categories 1 through 5 were collapsed into a negative category, and categories 6 through 10 were collapsed into a positive category. After this was accomplished, new chi-square tests were run on all the scales. With 1 degree of freedom, sample size 45, only two of the scales were highly significant at the .02 level. The remaining scales were highly significant at and beyond the .01 level (Tables IV-IX, Appendix).

The chi-square test shows responses to the semantic differential statements are clearly independent of each other and are a reliable means of measuring the suburban residents' attitudes toward the three newspapers.

#### Analysis of Variance Test

The analysis of variance tests revealed a significant difference between the three types of newspapers at the .001 level (Table XII, Appendix). This indicates that the suburban residents sampled have different mean attitudes toward the free-suburban weekly, the paid-suburban daily, and the paid-metropolitan daily (Table II).

The mean attitudinal difference was not significant between the advertising (6.3) and news (6.2) information provided by the newspapers. A difference was not found at an acceptable level of confidence. Overall, the suburban residents sampled did not have different mean attitudes toward advertising and news in the three types of newspapers (Table II).

However, there was significant interaction of type of newspaper and information at an extremely high level of .0001 (Table XII, Appendix). This significant difference indicates suburban residents

TABLE II  
 MEAN ATTITUDES TOWARD TYPES OF NEWSPAPERS  
 AND KINDS OF INFORMATION

Kind of Information	<u>Type of Newspaper</u>		
	Free-Suburban Weekly	Paid-Suburban Daily	Paid-Metropolitan Daily
Advertising	5.8	6.3	6.7
News	6.0	7.0	5.6
	5.9	6.7	6.2

have different mean attitudes toward the types of newspapers and the advertising and news information circulated in their community (Table II).

The paid-suburban daily's news was viewed more favorably than its advertising, while the paid-metropolitan daily's advertising was viewed more favorably than its news. The suburban residents did not view the free-suburban weekly's news and advertising differently (Table II).

#### Post Hoc $t$ Tests

Post hoc  $t$  tests were run on the independent variables that had significant F-ratios. The results allowed for a closer look at why these concepts differ (Table XIII, Appendix).

First, the types of newspapers: Their mean rating scores reflect the suburban residents' attitudes toward them. The first  $t$  test (Table XIII-Appendix) revealed a highly significant mean difference (.0001)

between the free- suburban weekly newspaper and the paid-suburban daily. The probability of obtaining a mean difference as large as .8 with 1 degree of freedom by chance alone is less than one time in 10,000 similar studies. Suburban residents have a more favorable mean attitude toward the paid-suburban daily than the free-suburban weekly. Residents have somewhat good opinions of the paid-suburban daily and just a slightly good opinion of the free-suburban weekly.

The second  $t$  test (Table XIII-Appendix) revealed no significant mean difference between the free-suburban weekly and the paid-metropolitan daily. The probability of obtaining a mean difference as large as .3 with 1 degree of freedom by chance alone is more than one time in twenty similar studies. Suburban residents do not have different attitudes toward the free-suburban weekly (5.9) and the paid-metropolitan daily (6.2). Residents have just a slightly good opinion of both the free-suburban weekly and the paid-metropolitan daily.

The third  $t$  test (Table XIII-Appendix) revealed a highly significant mean difference between the paid-suburban daily and the paid-metropolitan daily. The probability of obtaining a mean difference as large as .5 with 1 degree of freedom by chance alone is less than one time in 1000 similar studies. Suburban residents have a more favorable attitude toward the paid-suburban daily than the paid-metropolitan daily. Residents have somewhat of a good opinion of the paid-suburban daily and just a slightly good opinion of the paid-metropolitan daily.

#### Eta Test Between Types of Newspapers

A significant difference between at least two of the three treatment groups indicates there is a relationship between the independent and dependent variables; that is, the suburban residents'

attitudes toward the three types of newspapers are varied. An eta correlation ratio of  $(.4784^2 = .2289)$  indicates that only 23 percent of the variation in the residents' attitudes is accounted for by the types of newspapers. There is 77 percent of an unknown variable or variables that account for their attitudes. This could be the kind of information and quantity and/or quality of the information provided by each type of newspaper, or even some other unexplained variable.

t tests were run on interaction of advertising and news and types of newspapers. Mean attitude scores toward types of newspapers and kinds of information are revealed in Table II.

The first advertising t test (Table XIV-Appendix) revealed no significant mean difference between the free-suburban weekly's advertising (5.8) and the paid-suburban daily's advertising (6.3) at an acceptable level. The probability of obtaining a mean difference as large as .5 with 180 degrees of freedom by chance alone is more than 5 times in 100 similar studies. This is not an acceptable level of confidence. The residents' attitudes toward the free- (5.8) and paid- (6.3) suburban newspapers' advertising do not differ. Residents have just a slightly good opinion of the two newspapers' advertising.

The second advertising t test (Table XIV-Appendix) revealed a highly significant mean difference between the free-suburban weekly's advertising and the paid-metropolitan daily's advertising. The probability of obtaining a mean difference as large as .9 with 169.8 degrees of freedom by chance alone is less than four times in 10,000 similar experiments. Residents' mean attitudes favor the paid-metropolitan daily's advertising (6.7) more than they do the free-suburban weekly's advertising (5.8). They have a somewhat good opinion

of the paid-metropolitan's advertising and just a slight good opinion of the free-suburban weekly's advertising.

The third advertising  $t$  test (Table XIII-Appendix) revealed no significant mean difference between the paid-suburban daily's advertising and the paid-metropolitan daily's advertising. The probability of obtaining a mean difference as large as .4 with 180 degrees of freedom by chance alone is less than seven times in 100 similar experiments. This is not an acceptable level of confidence. The residents' attitudes toward the paid-suburban daily's advertising (6.3) and the paid-metropolitan daily's advertising (6.7) do not differ. Residents have a somewhat good opinion of the two newspapers' advertising.

The first news  $t$  test (Table XIV-Appendix) revealed a highly significant mean difference between the free-suburban weekly's news and the paid-suburban daily's news. The probability of obtaining a mean difference as large as 1.0 with 180 degrees of freedom by chance alone is less than two times in 10,000 similar experiments. This is an extremely acceptable level of confidence. The residents' attitudes toward the free-suburban weekly's news (6.0) is different than their attitudes toward the paid-suburban daily's news (7.0). Residents have somewhat of a good opinion of the paid-suburban daily's news and just a slight good opinion of the free-suburban weekly's news.

The second news  $t$  test (Table XIV-Appendix) revealed no significant mean difference between the free-suburban weekly's news and the paid-metropolitan daily's news. The probability of obtaining a mean difference as large as .4 with 180 degrees of freedom by chance alone is 13 times in 100 similar experiments. This is not an acceptable level

of confidence. The residents' attitudes toward the free-suburban weekly's news (6.0) and the paid-metropolitan daily's news (5.6) do not differ. Residents have just a slight good opinion of the two newspapers' news.

The third news  $t$  test (Table XIV-Appendix) revealed a highly significant mean difference between the paid-suburban daily's news and the paid-metropolitan daily's news. The probability of obtaining a mean difference as large as 1.4 with 180 degrees of freedom by chance alone is less than one in 10,000 similar experiments. This is an extremely acceptable level of confidence. The residents' attitudes toward the paid-suburban daily's news (7.0) is different than their attitude toward the paid-metropolitan daily's news (5.6). Residents have somewhat of a good opinion of the paid-suburban daily's news and just a slight good opinion of the paid-metropolitan daily's news.

#### Interaction Eta Test

The significant difference between at least two of the three treatment groups indicates there is a relationship between the independent and dependent variables; that is, the suburban residents' attitudes toward the advertising and news of the three types of newspapers are varied. An eta correlation ratio of .7185 indicates a high-marked relationship between the residents' attitudes and the advertising and news that the three types of newspapers provide.

The eta squared ( $.7185^2 = .5162$ ) indicates that more than 52 percent of the variation in the residents' attitudes are accounted for by the varied views of advertising and news information depending on the types of newspapers.

The rank-order analysis (Table XV-Appendix) reveals that residents rated the paid-metropolitan daily's advertising and the paid-suburban daily's news best. Overall, with advertising and news combined, the residents sampled rated the paid-suburban daily best of the three types of newspapers.

#### Pearson r Product-Moment Correlations

Pearson r Product-Moment correlations were used to determine an index of the magnitude and direction of the relationship between advertising, news, and the type of newspapers (Table XVI-Appendix).

The free-suburban weekly's advertising and the paid-suburban daily's advertising have a high, marked relation at .82450. Sixty-eight percent of the variation in attitudes toward advertising is shared by the two types of newspapers (Table XVI-Appendix).

Attitudes toward the paid-suburban and paid-metropolitan dailies advertising have a moderate but substantial relation at .66640. Forty-four percent of the variation in attitudes toward advertising is shared by these two types of newspapers (Table XVI-Appendix).

Attitudes toward the free-suburban weekly's and the paid-suburban daily's news moderately but substantially correlate at .52237. Twenty-seven percent of the variation in attitudes toward news is shared by these two types of newspapers (Table XVI-Appendix).

The free-suburban weekly's news and the paid-suburban daily's news have a moderate but substantial relation at .45691. Only 21 percent of the variation in news means rating scores are shared by these two types of newspapers (Table XVI-Appendix).

The paid-suburban daily's news and the paid-metropolitan daily's news have a definite but small relation at .36171. Only 13 percent of



the variation in news mean rating scores are shared by these two types of newspapers (Table XVI-Appendix).

#### McQuitty's Elementary Linkage and Factor Analysis

Column one of the intercorrelation matrix (Table III) reveals that the paid-suburban daily's advertising is most like the free-suburban weekly's advertising. Column three reveals that the paid-suburban daily's advertising is also most like the paid-metropolitan daily's advertising. Column four reveals that the free-suburban weekly's advertising is most like its news. Column five reveals that the paid-suburban daily's advertising is also most like its news. Column six reveals that paid-metropolitan daily's advertising is most like its news. The linkage analysis (Figure 8) displays the "most like" characteristics graphically. It also reveals that only one type emerged.

In the minds of respondents, the paid-suburban daily's advertising is the representative of all types of the other newspapers and kind of information as shown in Table XVll (Appendix).

The paid-suburban daily's advertising is the reference type of newspaper/information combination. In other words, the higher the paid-suburban daily's advertising was rated, the higher all the other types of papers and content were rated, and vice versa. Table XVIII (Appendix) shows that these types of newspapers are more correlated with the paid-suburban daily's advertising than the others. The newspapers' advertising and news are more like each other, on the average. These newspapers cluster together and are similar to each other in response.

TABLE III  
 INTERCORRELATION MATRIX: TYPES OF NEWSPAPERS  
 AND KINDS OF INFORMATION

	FSWA <sup>1</sup>	PSDA <sup>2</sup>	PMDA <sup>3</sup>	FSWN <sup>4</sup>	PSDN <sup>5</sup>	PMDN <sup>6</sup>
FSWA	1.0000	<u>0.8245</u>	0.5262	<u>0.6412</u>	0.5275	0.4366
PSDA	<u>0.8425</u>	1.0000	<u>0.6664</u>	0.5041	<u>0.6670</u>	0.4595
PMDA	0.5262	0.6664	1.0000	0.3679	0.3027	<u>0.5418</u>
FSWN	0.6412	0.5041	0.3679	1.0000	0.5224	0.4569
PSDN	0.5275	0.6670	0.3027	0.5224	1.0000	0.3617
PMDN	0.4366	0.4595	0.5418	0.4570	0.3617	1.0000
	3.9740	4.1215	3.4050	3.4926	3.3813	3.2565

- <sup>1</sup>Free-Suburban Weekly Advertising  
<sup>2</sup>Paid-Suburban Daily Advertising  
<sup>3</sup>Paid-Metropolitan Daily Advertising  
<sup>4</sup>Free-Suburban Weekly News  
<sup>5</sup>Paid-Suburban Daily  
<sup>6</sup>Paid-Metropolitan Daily

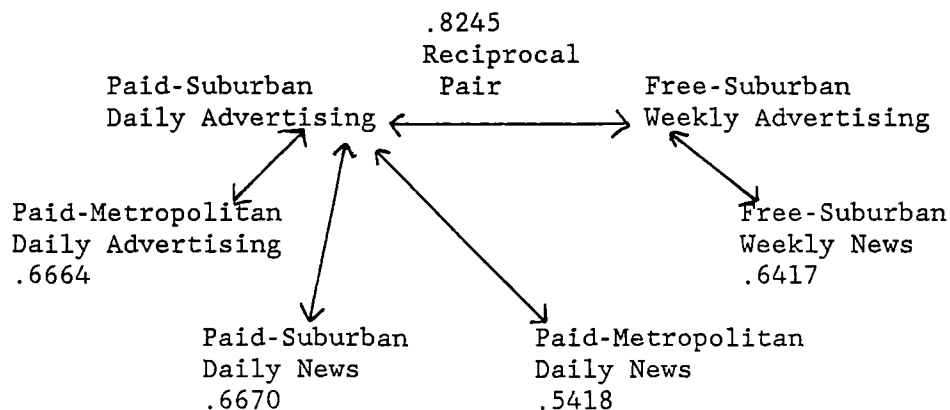


Figure 8. Type I Newspaper and Linkage Analysis

### Advertising Profile Analysis

The advertising profile analysis (Figure 9) offers some interesting graphic comparisons between the types of newspapers. The paid-metropolitan daily has an advantage in terms of "Informative Advertisements," "Advertisements that Hold Attention," "Good Classified Sections," "Preprinted Inserts and Circulars," and "Best Place to Run a Classified Advertisement." These are general advertising scales.

The paid-suburban daily has a slight advantage over the other two newspapers only in "Great Local Merchants' Advertisements," and "Would Buy It for Its Local Advertising." The paid-suburban daily has a slight advantage over the free-suburban weekly in all areas except "Informative Advertisements," "Advertisements' Ability To Hold The Readers' Attention," and "Valuable Grocery Store Advertisements."

The free-suburban weekly does not seem to have an advantage on any of the scales used in this profile analysis.

### News Profile Analysis

The news profile analysis (Figure 10) also offers some interesting graphic comparisons among the types of newspapers. The paid-metropolitan daily has the advantage in the first two scales, "Valuable News Stories," and "Current News." This was due probably to the fact that these scales referred to news in general and the remainder of the scales referred specifically to local suburban news. This is an important point because this research attempted to compare the metropolitan newspaper on a suburban basis, not metro-wide or state and regionally. This was done because the other two newspapers only circulate in one small geographical area, not regionally or state-wide.

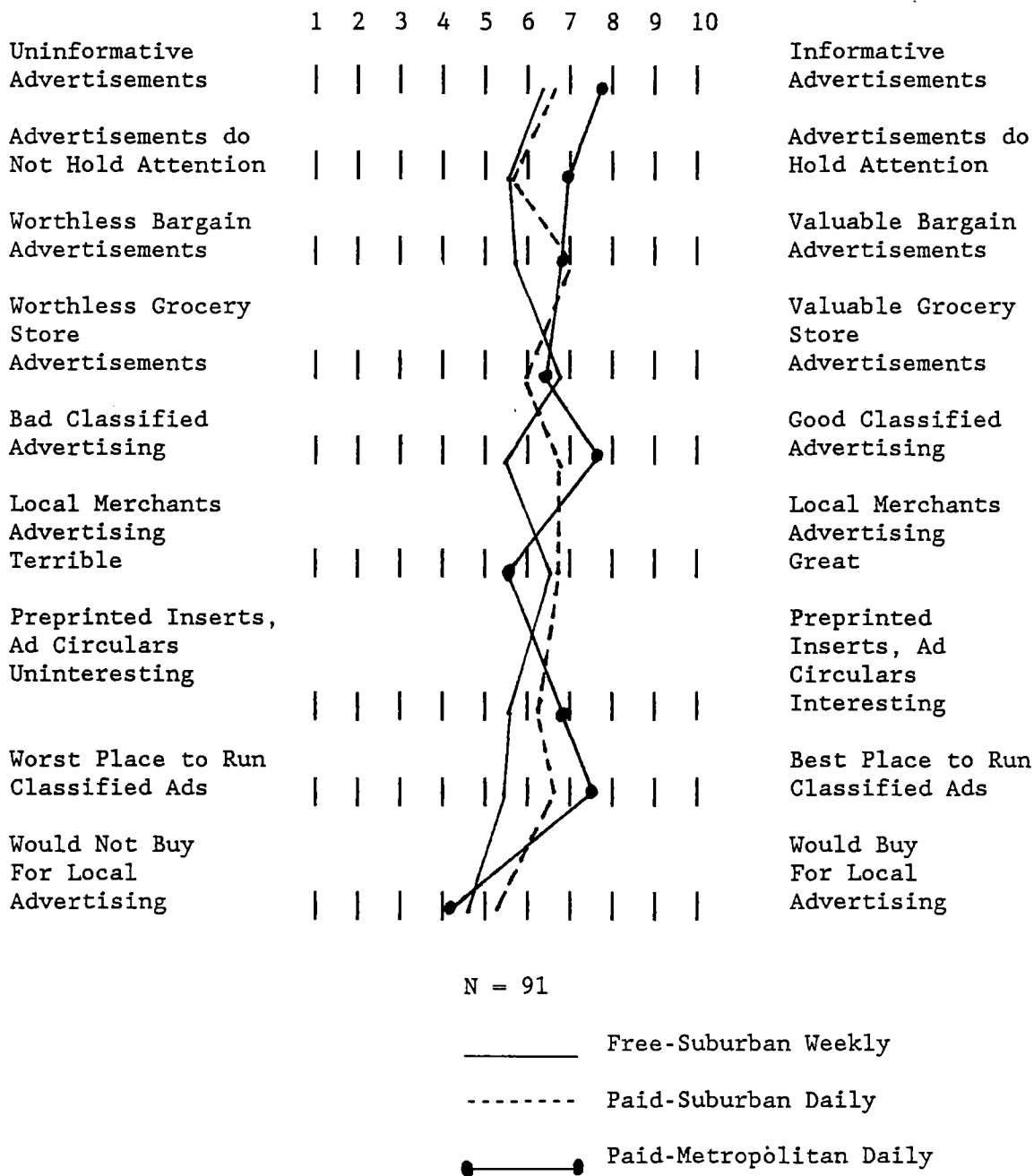


Figure 9. Mean Attitude Advertising Profile Analysis for Each Type of Newspaper

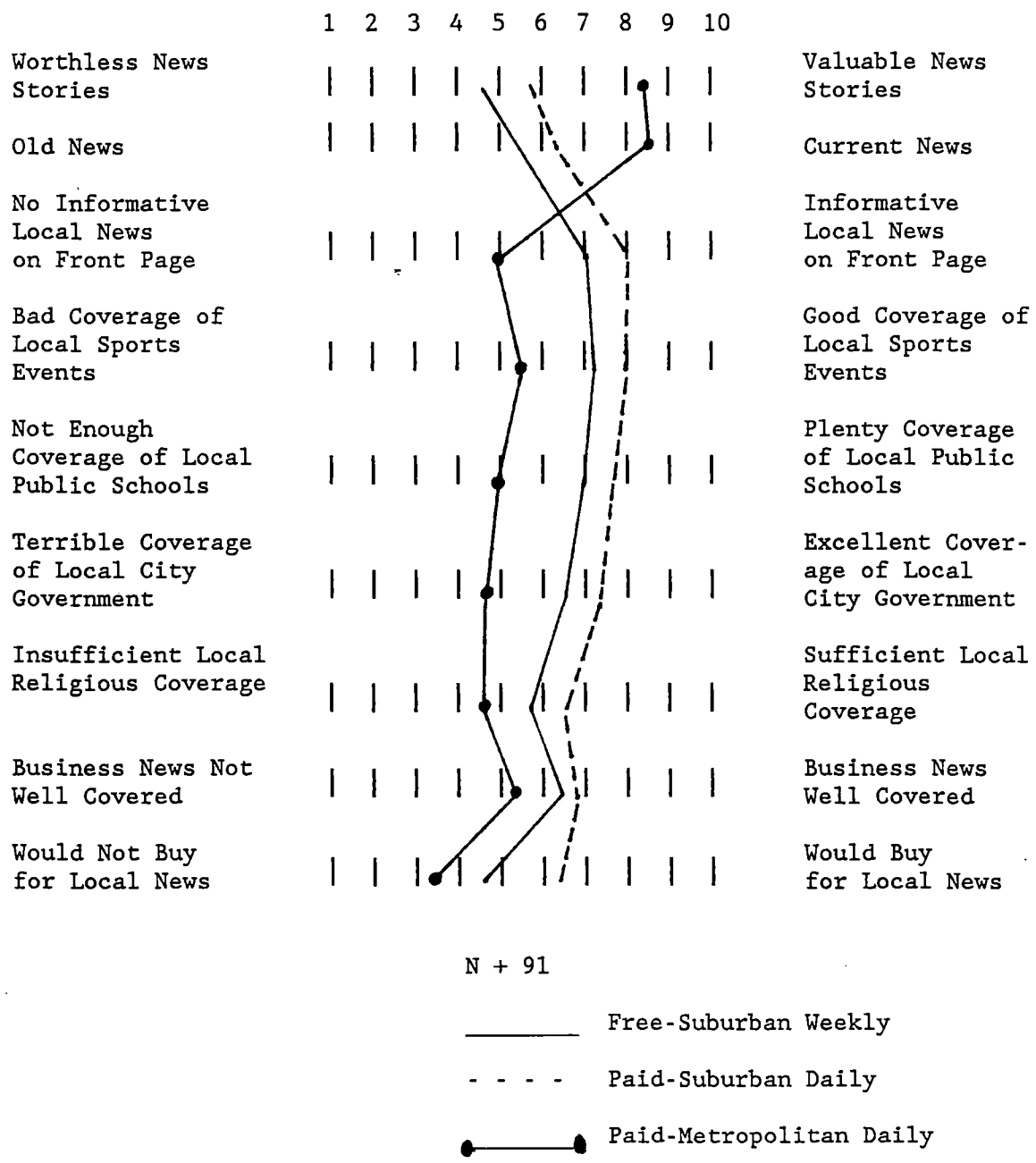


Figure 10. Mean Attitude News Profile Analysis for Each Type of Newspaper

With the news scales, the paid-suburban daily exceeded the metropolitan in all areas except the two scales mentioned above. It has a news advantage in all areas over the free-suburban weekly (Figure 10).

Although the free-suburban weekly did not have an advantage over the paid-suburban daily, it did have an advantage over the metropolitan-daily in all areas except "Valuable News," and "Current News" (Figure 10). Again, it should be pointed out that these two scales refer to news in general and the other scales refer to local-suburban news.

The profile clearly points out that residents view the metropolitan daily as doing a better job with news in general, but feel the free-suburban weekly does a better job with local suburban news. Still, they perceive the paid-suburban daily as doing the best job in covering and reporting local suburban news (Figure 10).

#### Readership Survey

The readership table (Table XIX-Appendix) indicates the paid-metropolitan daily is read once a day by 66 percent of the people interviewed. Twenty-eight percent reported reading the paid-suburban daily once a day. This is more than twice as many people reading the metropolitan daily than the suburban daily. In fact, 53 percent reported not reading the paid-suburban daily at all. Only four percent read the free-suburban weekly once a day.

More people read the free-suburban weekly (72 percent) once a week than any other type of newspaper or shopper. The metropolitan daily's Thursday-suburban section is read second most once a week by 68 percent of the people and the paid-suburban daily's free-total market coverage newspaper is read third most once a week by 45 percent of the people.

Again, more than 54 percent reported not reading the paid-suburban daily's free weekly total market coverage newspapers (Table XIX-Appendix).

Finally, 79 percent of the residents interviewed reported liking the news more than advertising (9 percent) and inserts (9 percent) (Table XX-Appendix).

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The sample of suburban residents rated three types of newspapers circulated in their community. One was a paid-circulation metropolitan daily, one was a paid-circulation suburban daily, and the third was a free-circulation suburban weekly. The residents rated each newspaper's advertising and news information on nine 10-point semantic differential scales.

The nine scales (Figures 5 and 6), contained mostly specific bipolar statements about the newspaper's local suburban advertising and news. A few general bipolar statements were included. The scales were designed to keep the comparison local since it would be impossible for the two suburban newspapers to be compared on a metropolitan, regional or state-wide basis.

The researcher was interested in determining how the three newspapers compared to each other in providing suburban residents with local advertising and news information. It must be pointed out that the suburban residents' attitudes toward the metropolitan newspaper is based on how well it provides local suburban advertising and news for this suburban community. Their attitudes cannot be generalized to how well they feel the metropolitan newspaper does its job in general. It should be judged only on how good a job it does providing suburban residents



with the kind of local advertising and news information they want. Likewise, this is only how the other two newspapers can be judged from the results of this study. This is pointed out in the hopes of alleviating any source of confusion on how the types of newspapers were compared.

Chi-square tests were run on each of the bipolar advertising and news scales. All scales were found to separate the attitudes significantly, and reliability of the measuring instrument was established (Tables IV-XI-Appendix).

The treatments-by-treatments-by-subjects analysis of variance (2 x 3 factorial analysis) indicated a significant difference among the three types of newspapers (Table XII-Appendix). This means that the suburban residents viewed the three newspapers to be significantly different. This supported Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3. However,  $t$  tests between the types of newspapers' mean ratings indicated not all the newspapers were perceived differently by the suburban residents. Residents saw the free-suburban weekly as being different from the metropolitan daily. This confirmed Hypothesis 3, but nullified Hypothesis 2. Another  $t$  test confirmed a difference but voided Hypothesis 1 by revealing that suburban residents' attitudes were significantly different toward the suburban and metropolitan daily, but the suburban daily had the higher mean attitude rating scores.

The eta correlation coefficient of .4784 revealed that the relationship between attitudes and types of newspapers were medium marked. The eta squared ( $.4784^2 = .2289$ ) indicated that 23 percent of variance in residents' attitudes was accounted for by the type of newspaper's they were referring to. Other unknown variables influenced much of the suburban residents' attitudes toward these newspapers. The

kind of information they provided accounted for part of the 77 percent unknown variance, but not all. In other words, there was more to influencing peoples' attitudes than just being a newspaper. A correlation ratio of .7185 confirmed this. The eta squared ( $.7185^2 = .5162$ ) indicated that 52 percent of the variation in the residents' mean attitudes were accounted for by the advertising and news information provided by the types of newspapers.

Hypothesis 4 was rejected because  $t$  tests between the metropolitan daily's (6.7) and the suburban daily's (6.3) mean rating scores did not differ significantly at an acceptable level. The residents did not see their advertising differently. They also did not see the free-suburban weekly's (5.8) and the suburban daily's (6.3) advertising differently, which accounted for Hypothesis 6 being rejected. Historically, the prestige of daily newspapers has been greater than that of free newspapers and shoppers.

Of the advertising hypotheses, the only one that was supported by the  $t$  tests was Hypothesis 5. Suburban residents' mean attitudes were significantly higher toward the metropolitan daily's advertising (6.7) than the suburban daily's advertising (5.8). Residents felt the metropolitan daily's advertising was significantly better than the free-suburban weekly's advertising.

Even though a highly significant mean difference was determined by a  $t$  test, the news Hypothesis 7 was rejected because the suburban daily (7.6), not the metropolitan daily (5.6), received the highest mean rating scores. Residents thought the two newspapers' local news coverage was different, but that the suburban daily's was better.

The news Hypothesis 8 was not supported. Residents' attitudes were not significantly higher toward the metropolitan daily's news (5.6)

and the free suburban weekly's news (6.0). The residents just slightly had a good opinion of the two newspapers' local news.

News Hypothesis 9 was supported by the  $t$  test. Suburban residents mean ratings were significantly higher toward the paid-suburban daily's news (7.0) than toward the free-suburban weekly's news (6.0).

Hypotheses 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8 were rejected. Hypotheses 3, 5, and 9 were supported by the statistical data. So what did this have to say about free-circulation newspapers compared to paid-circulation newspapers?

To determine how similar the free suburban weekly was to the suburban daily and the metropolitan daily, Pearson  $r$  Product-Moment correlations were calculated (Table XVI-Appendix). This test revealed that mean attitudes toward advertising in the free-suburban weekly and the suburban daily have a high marked relationship of .8245. The correlation squared indicated the two newspapers' and the residents' advertising mean ratings shared 68 percent of the variance. These high marks allowed one to infer these two newspapers' advertising is highly similar.

By comparison, the paid-suburban daily's advertising and the metropolitan daily's advertising correlation of .6664 was a moderate but substantial positive relation. Forty-four percent of these two newspapers' advertising rating-score variance is shared. Only 28 percent of the free-suburban weekly's advertising variance is shared by the metropolitan daily's advertising variance.

The news correlations were positive but not as substantial. The free-suburban weekly's news had a moderate, but substantial relationship with the paid-suburban daily's news ( $r=.5223$ ) and the metropolitan daily's news ( $r=.4569$ ). Only 27 percent of the free-suburban weekly's

news variance was shared by the suburban daily's news ratings. And just 21 percent of the free-suburban's weekly's news variance was shared by the metropolitan daily's variance. These were not real high estimates.

Inferences that can be made from these correlations is that in residents minds, the free weekly's advertising is more similar to the suburban daily than the metropolitan daily's advertising. The free-suburban weekly's news is more similar to the suburban daily's news than the metropolitan daily's news.

McQuitty's Elementary Linkage Analysis confirms these inferences (Figure 8). The paid-suburban daily's mean advertising rating and the free-suburban weekly's mean advertising rating correlated highest and were the reciprocal pair. This meant that, of the three types of newspapers and two kinds of information, the advertising of the free-suburban weekly's was more like the advertising of the suburban daily's than any of the other possible combinations.

It turned out that the typical representative of the three types of newspapers and type of information was the paid-suburban daily's advertising (Table XVIII-Appendix). The paid-suburban daily's advertising was most representative of all the other types of newspapers.

The profile analysis for advertising and news (Figures 9 and 10) indicated strengths and weaknesses of the three types of newspapers. The free-suburban weekly did have a definite strength over the metropolitan daily's coverage of local suburban news. The news profile analysis indicated the residents believed the paid-suburban daily did a little better job providing the news than did the free-suburban weekly. As far as providing advertising information, the suburban residents' rated the paid-suburban daily and the paid-metropolitan daily better than the free-suburban weekly.

The readership survey clearly revealed readership behavior patterns of suburban residents (Table XIX-Appendix). Sixty-six percent of those sampled read the paid-metropolitan daily once a day. Twenty-eight percent read the paid-suburban daily once a day and only 4 percent read the free-suburban weekly once a day.

The patterns were quite different when comparing weekly readership behavior. Seventy-two percent of the suburban residents read the free-suburban weekly once a week. Sixty-eight percent read the paid-metropolitan daily's Thursday suburban section once a week. Forty-five percent read the paid-suburban daily's free weekly total market coverage newspaper. Twenty-four percent read the paid-metropolitan daily once a week. Twenty-one percent read the Thrifty Nickel shopper, and 19 percent read the paid-suburban daily once a week.

Also interesting was the percentage of suburban residents sampled who did not read these publications. Fifty-four percent did not read the paid-suburban daily's free weekly total market coverage newspaper. Fifty-three percent did not read the the paid-suburban daily. Thirty percent did not read the paid-metropolitan daily's Thursday's suburban section. Twenty-four percent did not read the free-suburban weekly. And only 10 percent did not read the paid-metropolitan daily.

On a weekly basis, the free-suburban weekly had more readers than did the other types of newspapers. On a daily basis, the paid-metropolitan daily had more readers than the other types of newspapers.

#### Conclusions

This investigation studied a sample of suburban residents' attitudes toward three types of newspapers--a free-suburban weekly, a paid-suburban daily, and a paid-metropolitan daily.

Overall, the residents rated the paid-suburban newspaper higher than the free-suburban weekly and paid-metropolitan daily. They rated the paid-suburban daily significantly better than the free weekly but not significantly higher than the paid-metropolitan daily. However, they did not rate the paid-metropolitan daily better than the free-suburban weekly.

It must be pointed out that, overall, the residents did not rate any of the newspapers very high. On a ten-point scale, the highest overall rating was 6.7. This meant they only had a somewhat good opinion of the paid-suburban daily newspaper.

This indicated the suburban residents did not have a very high opinion of any of the three types of newspapers when it came to providing local suburban advertising and news information. This did not mean the suburban residents did not have a good opinion of the paid-metropolitan daily. It meant they did not feel the paid-metropolitan daily provided outstanding or superior local suburban advertising and news information (this point needs to be clear). The suburban residents might have had an extremely good attitude toward the metro-wide and state-wide information provided by the metropolitan daily, but not the local-suburban information it provides. Perhaps they did not really require or want more or better local-suburban information.

The suburban residents rated the paid-metropolitan daily's advertising higher than the other two types of newspapers' advertising. It was significantly higher than the free-suburban weekly's advertising but not the paid-suburban daily's advertising. Again, residents did not have a very good opinion of any of the three newspapers' advertising. They rated the paid-metropolitan daily's advertising the highest at 6.7, translated as a somewhat good opinion.

The news information was similar. The suburban residents rated the paid-suburban daily's local suburban news significantly higher than the other two types of newspapers' news, but the rating was again at 7.0, somewhat good. The residents did rate the free-suburban weekly's news about the same as the paid-metropolitan daily's news. Both had a slightly good opinion rating.

It seemed, overall, that the paid-suburban daily did a better job for the suburban residents. The free-suburban weekly did not excel over the other two types of newspapers in any areas when looking at it from a statistical standpoint. But the profile analysis visually showed that the free-suburban weekly is not out of the competitive picture. It was in close proximity to the two daily newspapers. In fact, the news profile showed that the free-suburban weekly was doing a much better job providing local-suburban news than the paid-metropolitan daily. And in some areas of advertising, it was running head-to-head with both paid dailies.

One interesting point is that, when the respondents were asked to rate on a ten-point scale whether they would buy the newspapers for their local suburban advertising, all three types of newspapers received a "would not buy" rating. When the same question was asked about the local suburban news, the residents indicated they "would not buy" the free-suburban weekly and the paid-metropolitan daily for its local suburban news. They just slightly agreed to buy the paid-suburban daily for its local suburban news. This told one that the suburban residents might not really have been interested in any of the types of newspapers' local suburban advertising and news information. This could explain why the free-suburban weekly was rated with the other two types of newspapers. Then again, it could be saying that none of the three types

of newspapers did a good job of providing the kind of local suburban advertising and news information the residents want or need. Or, it could mean the competition is so fierce in this suburban community that the advertising dollars and readership were spread much too thin among the three types of newspapers.

The readership survey indicated that the suburban residents read the paid-metropolitan daily more each day than they did the other two types of newspapers. Comparing just the weekly readership, the survey indicated the suburban residents read the free-suburban weekly more than the other types of newspapers.

This research suggested that residents' attitudes toward free-circulation newspapers and paid-circulation newspapers differed only somewhat with the kinds of information they provided. There was only slight evidence that suggested that suburban residents had substantially better attitudes toward the newspapers they paid for than they did toward newspapers they got free. They seemed to see similar value in both types of newspapers.

#### Recommendations

It is recommended that a newspaper interested in the suburban market should look closer at the kinds and amounts of local suburban information that is wanted or needed as compared to metropolitan, regional and state-wide markets. Questions also should be asked about the suburbanites. Do they see themselves as residents of a metropolitan community or of a local community or both? What kinds of information do these two types of communities want? How much will they be willing to pay for it? What do they expect from free- and paid-circulation



newspapers? How much information do they expect? Do they want local news and advertising; if so, what kind and how much?

It appears the suburban markets are still unsettled. The barriers to entering these new markets still might not be too great. The newspapers that can predict and deliver the expectations of these suburban residents have a better chance of success.

It is also recommended that all three of the newspapers should try to do a better job of gathering and reporting local news and advertising if they want to improve the suburban residents' attitudes toward them.

The researcher highly recommends that a similar study or studies be conducted in other areas to indicate how representative this study's findings are. Studies that might look at particular types of advertisements (e.g. grocery, automotive, etc.) and news (e.g. schools, crime, etc.) should also be conducted.

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APPENDIX

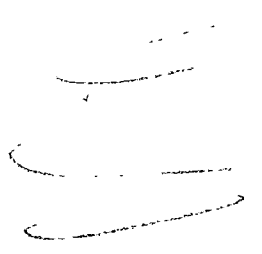


TABLE IV  
RESULTS OF THE CHI-SQUARE RELIABILITY TEST  
FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION MEASURING  
INSTRUMENT/FREE-SUBURBAN WEEKLY

Scales	Sample Size	Degree of Freedom	Chi Square Value	Probability*
1	45	1	19.368	0.000
2	45	1	30.633	0.000
3	45	1	25.047	0.000
4	45	1	27.751	0.000
5	45	1	27.253	0.000
6	45	1	22.544	0.000
7	45	1	30.633	0.000
8	45	1	18.787	0.000
9	45	1	27.253	0.000

\* Critical value from chi-square table at 1 DF, .001 level = 10.839.

TABLE V  
 RESULTS OF THE CHI-SQUARE RELIABILITY TEST  
 FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION MEASURING  
 INSTRUMENT/PAID-SUBURBAN DAILY

Scales	Sample Size	Degrees of Freedom	Chi Square Value	Probability*
1	45	1	16.052	0.000
2	45	1	30.633	0.000
3	45	1	12.298	0.000
4	45	1	27.751	0.000
5	45	1	27.751	0.000
6	45	1	15.652	0.000
7	45	1	30.416	0.000
8	45	1	22.544	0.000
9	45	1	27.284	0.000

\* Critical value from chi-square table at 1 DF, .001  
 level = 10.83

TABLE VI  
 RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE RELIABILITY TEST  
 FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION MEASURING  
 INSTRUMENT/PAID-METROPOLITAN DAILY

Scales	Sample Size	Degrees of Freedom	Chi Square Value	Probability*
1	45	1	7.929	0.005
2	45	1	12.298	0.000
3	45	1	10.761	0.001
4	45	1	15.652	0.000
5	45	1	9.228	0.002
6	45	1	27.751	0.000
7	45	1	11.383	0.001
8	45	1	9.228	0.002
9	45	1	5.380	0.020

\* Critical value from chi-square table at 1 DF, .02 level = 5.41, .05 level = 3.84.

TABLE VII  
 RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE RELIABILITY TEST  
 FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION MEASURING  
 INSTRUMENT/ALL THREE TYPES  
 OF NEWSPAPERS COMBINED

Scales	Sample Size	Degree of Freedom	Chi Square Value	Probability*
1	45	1	15.652	0.000
2	45	1	24.418	0.000
3	45	1	13.962	0.000
4	45	1	31.455	0.000
5	45	1	33.872	0.000
6	45	1	28.696	0.000
7	45	1	33.872	0.000
8	45	1	19.439	0.000
9	45	1	27.664	0.000

\* Critical value from chi-square table at 1 DF, .001 level = 10.83



TABLE VIII  
 RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE RELIABILITY TEST  
 FOR NEWS INFORMATION MEASURING  
 INSTRUMENT/FREE-SUBURBAN  
 WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

Scales	Sample Size	Degree of Freedom	Chi Square Value	Probability*
1	44	1	18.427	0.000
2	44	1	26.327	0.000
3	44	1	18.452	0.000
4	44	1	18.452	0.000
5	44	1	13.211	0.000
6	44	1	22.759	0.000
7	44	1	20.479	0.000
8	44	1	13.211	0.000
9	44	1	11.023	0.001

\* Critical value from chi-square table at 1 DF, .001 level = 10.83

TABLE IX  
 RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE RELIABILITY TEST  
 FOR NEWS INFORMATION MEASURING  
 INSTRUMENT/PAID-SUBURBAN  
 DAILY NEWSPAPER

Scales	Sample Size	Degree of Freedom	Chi Square Value	Probability*
1	44	1	15.365	0.000
2	44	1	30.462	0.000
3	44	1	16.500	0.000
4	44	1	6.947	0.008
5	44	1	9.778	0.002
6	44	1	12.941	0.000
7	44	1	14.143	0.000
8	44	1	9.818	0.000
9	44	1	13.200	0.000

\* Critical value from chi-square table at 1 DF, .01  
 level = 6.64

TABLE X  
 RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE RELIABILITY TEST  
 FOR NEWS INFORMATION MEASURING  
 INSTRUMENT/PAID-METROPOLITAN  
 DAILY NEWSPAPER

Scales	Sample Size	Degree of Freedom	Chi Square Value	Probability*
1	44	1	6.947	0.008
2	44	1	8.324	0.004
3	44	1	23.467	0.000
4	44	1	20.842	0.008
5	44	1	26.327	0.002
6	44	1	23.273	0.000
7	44	1	15.655	0.000
8	44	1	23.467	0.000
9	44	1	5.350	0.021

\*Critical value from chi-square table at 1 DF, .05 level  
 = 3.84

TABLE XI  
RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE RELIABILITY TEST  
FOR NEWS INFORMATION MEASURING  
INSTRUMENT/ALL THREE TYPES  
OF NEWSPAPERS COMBINED

Scales	Sample Size	Degree of Freedom	Chi Square Value	Probability*
1	44	1	20.842	0.000
2	44	1	25.143	0.000
3	44	1	27.704	0.000
4	44	1	16.500	0.008
5	44	1	25.143	0.002
6	44	1	30.462	0.000
7	44	1	20.497	0.000
8	44	1	22.759	0.000
9	44	1	33.440	0.000

\*Critical value from chi-square table at 1 DF, .001 level  
= 10.83

TABLE XII  
 RESULTS OF ANALYSIS VARIANCE FOR SEMANTIC  
 DIFFERENTIAL DATA FOR TYPES OF  
 NEWSPAPERS AND KINDS  
 OF INFORMATION

Source of Variance	Degree of Freedom	Sums Square	Mean Square	F Ratio	Probabil-ity of Chance
Total	545.00	1735.95	3.19		
Between Subject	90.00	957.80	10.63		
Types Of Newspapers	2.00	49.89	24.95	13.36	<.0010
Advertising and News	6.00	0.21	0.21	0.11	.7370
Interaction of Types and Advertising and News	2.00	79.27	39.64	48.02	<.0001
Error Types of Newspapers	180.00				
Error Ad/News Information	90.00				
Error Interaction	180.00				

TABLE XIII  
RESULTS OF  $t$  TESTS BETWEEN DIFFERENT MEANS  
OF TYPES OF NEWSPAPERS

Type of Newspaper Comparing	Mean	Degree of Freedom	T- Ratio	Probability
Free-Suburban Weekly Paid-Suburban Daily	5.9 6.7	1	3.95	.0001
Free-Suburban Weekly Paid-Metropolitan Daily	5.9 6.2	1	1.20	.206
Paid-Suburban Daily Paid-Metropolitan Daily	6.7 6.2	1	2.69	.008

TABLE XIV  
 SIX RESULTS OF  $t$  TESTS COMPARING INTER-  
 ACTION MEAN ATTITUDES OF ADVERTISING  
 AND NEWS WITH TYPES OF NEWSPAPERS  
 AND NEWS OF OTHER PAPERS

Kind of Information	Mean	Degree of Freedom	T-Ratio	Proba- bility
<u>Advertising</u>				
Free-Suburban Weekly	5.8	180.0	1.8496	.0660
Paid-Suburban Daily	6.3			
Free-Suburban Weekly	5.8	169.8	3.5973	.0004
Paid-Metropolitan Daily	6.7			
Paid-Suburban Daily	6.3	180.0	1.8153	.0711
Paid-Metropolitan Daily	6.7			
<u>News</u>				
Free-Suburban Weekly	6.0	180.0	3.7952	.0002
Paid-Suburban Daily	7.0			
Free-Suburban Weekly	6.0	180.0	1.5368	.1261
Paid-Metropolitan Daily	5.6			
Paid-Suburban Daily	7.0	180.0	5.2194	.0001
Paid-Metropolitan Daily	5.6			

TABLE XV  
 RANK ORDER OF MEAN ATTITUDES TOWARD TYPES OF  
 NEWSPAPERS BY ADVERTISING, NEWS, AND  
 ADVERTISING AND NEWS COMBINED

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	Mean
<hr/>	
<u>Advertising</u>	
1. Paid-Metropolitan Daily	6.7
2. Paid-Suburban Daily	6.3
3. Free-Suburban Weekly	5.8
 <u>News</u>	
1. Paid-Suburban Daily	7.0
2. Free-Suburban Weekly	6.0
3. Paid-Metropolitan Daily	5.6
 <u>Combined</u>	
1. Paid-Suburban Daily	6.7
2. Paid-Metropolitan Daily	6.2
3. Free-Suburban Weekly	5.9

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TABLE XVI  
 CORRELATIONS COEFFICIENTS OF ADVERTISING,  
 NEWS, AND TYPES OF NEWSPAPERS

	Advertising r	Correlations		r <sup>2</sup>
		r <sup>2</sup>	News r	
Free-Suburban Weekly Paid-Suburban Daily	.82450	.6798	.52237	.2729
Free-Suburban Weekly Paid-Metropolitan Daily	.52617	.2769	.45691	.2088
Paid-Suburban Daily Paid-Metropolitan Daily	.66640	.4440	.36171	.1308

TABLE XVII  
TYPE 1 NEWSPAPER INTERCORRELATION MATRIX

	FSWA <sup>1</sup>	PSDA <sup>2</sup>	PSDN <sup>3</sup>	PMDA <sup>4</sup>	FSWN <sup>5</sup>	PMDN <sup>6</sup>
FSWA	1.0000	.8245	.5275	.5262	.6412	.4366
PSDA	.8245	1.0000	.6670	.6664	.5041	.4595
PSDN	.5275	.6670	1.0000	.3027	.5224	.3617
PMDA	.5262	.6664	.3027	1.0000	.3679	.5418
FSWN	.6412	.5041	.5224	.3679	1.0000	.4510
PMDN	.4366	.4595	.3617	.5418	.4570	1.0000
	3.9740	<u>4.1215</u>	3.3813	3.4050	3.4926	3.2506

- <sup>1</sup>Free-Suburban Weekly Advertising  
<sup>2</sup>Paid-Suburban Daily Advertising  
<sup>3</sup>Paid-Suburban Daily News  
<sup>4</sup>Free-Suburban Weekly News  
<sup>5</sup>Paid-Suburban Daily News  
<sup>6</sup>Paid-Metropolitan Daily News

TABLE XVIII  
TYPAL RELEVANCIES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE  
TYPE 1 NEWSPAPERS

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	Paid-Suburban Daily Advertising
Free-Suburban Weekly Advertising	.8245
Paid-Suburban Daily Advertising	1.0000
Paid-Metropolitan Daily Advertising	.6664
Free-Suburban Weekly News	.5041
Paid-Suburban Daily News	.6670
Paid-Metropolitan Daily News	.4595

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TABLE XIX  
READERSHIP OF TYPES OF NEWSPAPERS CIRCULATED

Type of Newspapers	% Readership Once/Day	% Readership Once/Week	% Do Not Read
<u>Paid Circulation</u>			
<u>Newspapers</u>			
Paid-Suburban Daily	28	19	53
Paid-Metropolitan Daily	66	24	10
Paid-Metropolitan Daily's Thursday Sec.	2	68	30
<u>Free-Circulation</u>			
<u>Newspapers</u>			
Free-Suburban Weekly	4	72	24
Paid-Suburban Daily's Free Weekly *TMC	1	45	54
<u>Paid Shoppers</u>			
<u>Bargain Post</u>	1	7	92
<u>Free Shoppers</u>			
<u>Thrifty Nickel</u>	2	21	77
<u>Trading Post</u>	1	2	97

\*Total market coverage

TABLE XX  
KIND OF INFORMATION LIKED MOST IN NEWSPAPERS

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Kind of Information	% Like Most
Advertising	9
News	79
Inserts	9
All	3

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2

VITA

Rodney Leroy Osborne

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: A COMPARISON OF SUBURBAN RESIDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD FREE-CIRCULATION NEWSPAPERS AND PAID-CIRCULATION NEWSPAPERS

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