

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: REDEFINING WOMEN’S NEWS: A CASE STUDY OF
THREE WOMEN’S PAGE EDITORS AND THEIR
FRAMING OF THE WOMEN’S MOVEMENT

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For many decades the main area of journalism to which women could contribute was women’s pages in newspapers. These sections, which ran from the late nineteenth century until the late 1960s, have been overlooked by journalism historians as containing significant content. While it was true that many sections concentrated on news of weddings, society events, routine notices of club meetings, fashion and recipes, other sections contained news of political and social issues that were important to women – especially throughout the 1960s when the women’s pages were often the only way that women could learn about the women’s liberation movement.

This study details the lives of three progressive women’s page editors: Vivian Castleberry, Dorothy Journey and Marjorie Paxson. Throughout their long journalism careers and in their private lives, they strove to redefine news for women by rejecting the limitations of traditional women’s sections. In addition to examining their lives through a biographical approach, this dissertation uses framing and feminist theories to analyze the content of the women’s sections edited by the three women. This study also includes an

examination, using framing theory, of the winning submissions in the Penney-Missouri award competition from 1960 to 1971. These awards, which have not been studied previously, were meant to raise the standards of women's pages by recognizing sections that went beyond traditional content.

I found Penney-Missouri award winners, which included Castleberry, Journey and Paxson, framed women's news differently than male journalists framed news pertaining to women. Women's page editors attempted to balance conflicting messages of staying at home versus fighting for change that were being given to women during the women's movement. They did not focus on friction when they covered it. They created their own issue-based frame that took the women's movement seriously without excluding women who wanted to remain homemakers.

The findings support a revision in the history of women's pages and their role in the women's liberation movement. While traditional women's pages filled with society, home and wedding news, appeared in many newspapers, some sections were progressive in content and writing style. Not recognizing the differences among women's page editors at various newspapers leads to the invisibility of women in journalism history and overlooks the important role played by women in pressing for change.

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EDITORS AND THEIR FRAMING OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

by

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The Women's Page

Peau de soie could have been
Foie de gras for all I knew
But syntax made the words go round
As I typed from the form that asked
About the bride's gown and the groom's
Best man, and at sixteen,

Doing a journalist's job,
I prided myself on the active verb
In the headline layout, proofed
The copy upside down and mirror – reversed
In the typeset columns of cooling lead
As the deadline of noon heated up –

The words as unreal to me as they were,
Perhaps, to the girl and boy
Who'd filled them out; and the women's page
No stranger phenomenon than the fact
That the *Wall Street Journal* rejected
Girls for their summer internships.

For I could smell the black ink
And was deaf from the roar
Of the printing press, as I sweated
Next door while the one floor fan
Turned its slow attention from one
To another of the newsroom staff;

Even today I remember the heady freedom
Of asking the judge's wife
What she did with her time and wiring
The *Chattanooga Times* fifteen hundred words
On the opening of Loweman's
Department store, and what

Sex or history or economics had to do
With my summer job I never asked,
Though I learned, after I wrote up
The weather forecast, to look outside;
And when I called the next-of-kin,
To get the name spelled right.

-- Robin Chapman, "The Women's Page"

Chapter One

Women's Pages and Three Influential Editors

Back in 1900 the suffrage leader, Susan B. Anthony, said: 'As long as newspapers and magazines are controlled by men, every woman upon them must write articles which are reflections of men's ideas. As long as that continues, women's ideas and deepest convictions will never get before the public.' Well, in the 78 years that have followed, little has changed.¹

Those words were spoken by women's page editor Dorothy Journey in 1978 while on a panel called "The Strengths and Shortcoming of the Press."² She was attacking her own domain of newspapers, a domain she fought to enlarge so women's ideas would have a place. Her efforts met with only limited success. But her story and that of other women's page editors like her represent an overlooked chapter in American journalism history. This dissertation is that story.

Women's pages are rarely referenced in journalism history texts, yet for much of newspapers' history, the only places in newspapers that at least some women's ideas and activities could be found were in the women's pages. By 1900 most newspapers had women's sections and they were staffed by women journalists. These sections continued to be the main venues for women journalists for much of the twentieth century, although occasionally women journalists did make it to the front pages where the most important news is showcased. In the 1930s, some women in Washington who had been resigned to feature-writing beats and women's pages were given the chance to cover news on a national stage thanks to Eleanor Roosevelt.³ As first lady from 1933 to 1945, she held women-only White House press conferences to help women hold their place in journalism during Depression-era employee cutbacks. These conferences produced a few front page news articles, but most of the stories from them ended up on women's pages.⁴

Newspapers were forced to hire women when men went into military service during World War II. But, after the war ended in 1945, the opportunities for female journalists suddenly dried up. It wasn't until the women's movement beginning only in the late 1960s that the barriers of discrimination were truly addressed – and even then change was slow. Messages from the women's movement were seen on television and in the pages of magazines and newspapers as feminist leaders like Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem used their journalism experience to put their issues before the public. These messages influenced women journalists themselves in a variety of conflicting ways.

The women's movement placed women journalists in an awkward position. They were covering issues that impacted their lives while still attempting to adhere to the professional ideal of being objective and giving both sides of controversial topics.⁵ For many women page reporters and editors, the ability to write about the movement, and other topics, was limited as well as by the conventions of the sections on which they worked. For many years, these sections were little more than society and homemaking sections, containing stories about elite social events, photos of brides from wealthy families, and household hints of varying worth. But, not all sections were so narrow in their coverage. A few progressive editors had pioneered in broadening their content, making the sections viable places for news of the women's movement.

In the 1950s and 1960s, increased attention to women's pages at several newspapers, most notably the *Dallas Morning News*, the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Miami Herald*, brought about concentrated efforts to upgrade the sections. Rather than following the model of the time that was based on fashion, food, furnishings and family, at these and at several other newspapers, the women's sections presented investigative

pieces and unique human-interest stories. These sections broke barriers that had suppressed news of indignities to women and exposed topics that had been hidden such as violence against women, gender inequalities in financing and sexual harassment. The changes in these sections came about because of the determination of editors who wanted to change definitions of women's news and were determined to do so in spite of resistance from male management. Three women's editors who led the fight at several newspapers were Vivian Castleberry, Dorothy Journey and Marjorie Paxson. Their efforts will be described in this dissertation.

Unfortunately, little research has been done on women's pages despite the important role they played in journalism for many women.⁶ Scholars who have documented the women's movement have left out the role of women's page editors; instead, they have focused on the derogatory, or non-existent, coverage of women in the news sections. This dissertation will help to fill that void in journalism and women's history by documenting the impact of Castleberry, Journey and Paxson, who tried to connect their sections to the women's movement.

The three editors studied here believed in many of the goals of the women's movement including the improvement of working conditions for women, the establishment of domestic violence centers and the need for more women in politics. They themselves had fought against societal limitations for women in their newsrooms and in their section pages. At the same time they were advocates for women's rights, they were also receptive to their readers who were uncomfortable with some aspects of the women's movement such as the perceived devaluing of homemakers.⁷ Therefore, the editors walked a fine line, trying to expose their readers to ideas about equality for

women, while not driving away readers who were concerned by the negative representations of feminists created by some media outlets. While the three women's page editors presented here had progressive ideas about what women could do, they did not want to devalue the more traditional homemaker roles that many of the readers held. This meant they tried to balance the content of their sections between stories about the home and stories about the women's movement. At times this meant women were sent limiting stereotypical messages. Yet, they were also told about the changing roles of women and the developing opportunities for them.⁸

To update and improve their sections, women's page editors, long given little power, had to fight male editors to make changes. They pressed to cover serious news, including the events and the issues of the contemporary women's movement such as equal employment rights, violence against women and reproductive choices. Yet, ironically, the women's page editors often did not receive support from leaders of the women's movement. The editors were criticized for heading segregated sections that the leaders viewed as betraying the movement, supporting a system that kept women's stories off of the front pages.

The decision to eliminate women's pages, a step taken by most newspapers in the late 1960s and 1970s, was influenced by leaders of the women's movement. They argued that news about and for women should be on the front pages. The placement of stories about successful women in women's sections, rather than on the business pages where news about successful men was found, angered leaders of the women's movement.⁹ With women's movement leaders calling for the sections' demise, male managing editors, who often were either indifferent or hostile to the sections, now took advantage of the

opportunity to dramatically alter them. They were renamed “style” or “living” sections, and used for entertainment-oriented content. The sections were given new, usually male, editors and often the women’s page editors were fired or demoted. While the argument that women needed to be on the front pages sounded compelling, making that happen turned out to be very difficult. In the ensuing years, “Women, Men and the Media,” the annual studies of the placement of news articles about gender coverage, originated by Nancy Woodhall and Friedan, found that news about women still had not made its way to the front pages of newspapers.¹⁰

Some women journalists who worked for women’s pages found their assignments stifled them and agreed with movement leaders that the sections should be abolished. Other editors, like Journey and Paxson, did not agree with women’s movement leaders who wanted to simply eliminate the sections. They saw value in the sections and knew that they could and did provide a voice and presence for the women’s movement. Colleen Dishon, a women’s page editor at the *Milwaukee Journal* and the *Chicago Tribune*, also did not support abolishing the sections. (Years later she would lead the revival of a modern women’s section at the *Chicago Tribune*.) She wanted to see more issue-oriented sections instead, commenting:

“I see an unmistakable opportunity for women’s pages to report in depth the changes in women’s world and the problems women face. We can use our space to report on discrimination, women in poverty, infant deaths, politics - all of the things that are vital to women and to everyone in society.”¹¹

These were the kinds of issues that Castleberry, Journey and Paxson believed the women’s pages should cover. Kay Mills called Castleberry and Journey “far-sighted editors” who used their limited power to cover “financial or education issues affecting women in their sections in the 1950s and 1960s. Only then did city-side reporters begin to

venture into this territory as well.”¹² Cokie Roberts has said that “Jurney and her contemporaries used the women’s pages to underline women’s problems.”¹³ Jurney and Castleberry, along with Paxson, saw stories where their male peers did not. According to Mills, some women reporters said they remembered “the glazed looks that came over editors’ eyes when they suggested stories on child care or women in politics”¹⁴ in the early 1970s. It was women’s page editors who pursued these topics. Some of these editors encouraged their reporters to cover news differently from male reporters. “Many female editors ask questions that their male counterparts do not ask, and thus their editing may seem different even though both have the same training in the elements that make up a news story,” Mills contended.¹⁵ These editors created a new framework for what constituted news. “Sometimes having a woman strategically placed in the news hierarchy determines whether an entire set of stories is done, and once completed, prominently displayed,” she said.¹⁶

Archived letters and media interviews reflect the effect that the work of Castleberry, Jurney and Paxson had on newspaper content. Their sections included stories that were part of the women’s movement’s platform – stories about birth control, day care, pay equity and domestic violence. Their stories reached large audiences and impacted the work of other editors and women leaders.¹⁷ The circulation of their papers was high so the work of the women editors reached large segments of their own communities and sometimes beyond them. This was because leading women’s page editors read each other’s publications to find content ideas.¹⁸ At one point, Castleberry visited the *Miami Herald* for 10 days to learn more about women’s news from Jurney.

In fact, the women's pages were inherently connected to the women's movement that needed the media to spread its message. Some women's page editors held workshops and seminars to encourage women in their communities to get involved in public issues and make their voices heard in the media, as will be described in later chapters. They taught women media rules and helped them find media access. They were advocates for women even if they were not accepted by feminist leaders. "They were women who worked in a male-dominated environment, yet fought for what they knew was important for their female readers," one researcher said.¹⁹

Castleberry, Journey and Paxson saw great potential in women's pages but were caught in the controversy over the elimination of the sections to their detriment. The three worked to empower women in their communities and to include women's voices in newspapers. Their efforts helped to define feminist concepts as they endeavored to add to women's knowledge about their lives. I chose these three women because of their unique approach to the content of news for women, because of their attempts to educate other women's page editors and managing editors about the importance of women's news and because of the availability of documentation about their lives.

Castleberry was a significant journalist due to her writing for and editorship of a section that won Press Club of Dallas awards, state United Press awards and Penney-Missouri awards, which recognized top women's sections. She was also active in publicizing women's issues in Dallas and nationally during her tenure at the *Dallas Times Herald*, helping to establish women's centers and networking opportunities for women. Upon her retirement in 1984, she became active in international campaigns that related to women. Of the three women studied, she is the only one who was married and had

children – an important point because she had to approach management issues differently than the other women’s editors due to her own family situation. She enjoyed her position as women’s page editor and was not eager to move to another section. According to Castleberry:

Women’s pages had a stigma attached to them (because people thought) if you’re any good at all you don’t stay in women’s news, you want to cover politics or you want to get out ... to chase the cops and robbers ... And I kept refuting that and I kept saying I’m where I want to be ... This is where the heart and soul of humanity is.²⁰

Of the three editors, Journey was the most well known. Her high profile, award-winning work in newspapers during her long journalism career and her newspaper research on gender issues in her retirement make her significant for study. Among her many achievements, Journey won Penney-Missouri awards and was named a Michigan Woman of Achievement. During a career at seven newspapers from 1930 through 1975, she was a women’s page editor, a city editor and a managing editor. Journey became a “first” in many journalism organizations, including being the first female board member of the Associated Press Managing Editors organization. She was described as the “godmother” of women’s pages by journalism researcher Jean Gaddy Wilson.²¹

Paxson was an award-winning women’s section editor, who went on to be named a publisher of two newspapers owned by the Gannett Company, the *Public Opinion* in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania and the *Muskogee Phoenix* in Muskogee, Oklahoma. She was the national president of the Women in Communications organization from 1963 to 1967, pivotal years when that organization of women journalists focused on trying to encourage professionalism. She won a Penney-Missouri award. She established the

National Women in Media Collection at the University of Missouri. She also worked briefly for Journey.

In addition to studying the impact of the women's movement on women's sections, this dissertation will explore the role of the Penney-Missouri Awards, which were established to improve the content of women's sections. These awards were important because they were established to promote women's pages as vehicles for credible journalism. The judges set high standards for the sections at a time when women's roles in society were changing. The message that the awards sent was that women journalists could and should address serious issues and tell the stories that weren't being told in other sections of the newspaper. A thematic analysis of the winning women's sections in the Penney-Missouri competition is included in this dissertation, based on archival materials located at the University of Missouri. I examined all of the sections that were archived. (A complete list of winners is available in the appendix of this dissertation.) While the rules stated that the women's page editors had to submit copies of their sections for several days, only copies of sections for one day were archived and the dates were not recorded, making it difficult for researchers to evaluate the overall content of these women's pages.

The Media and the Women's Liberation Movement

To understand the importance of studying the work done by Castleberry, Journey and Paxson, it is necessary to look at general coverage of the women's movement by the mainstream media. In her analysis of women and the media, Douglas wrote, "What the mass media don't convey, is that feminism is an ongoing project, a process, undertaken on a daily basis by millions of women of all ages, classes, ethnic and racial backgrounds,

and sexual preference.”²² Her words echo many of the comments of media researchers and feminist historians, who have said that journalists misrepresented the goals and ideas of the women’s movement of the 1960s and 1970s.²³ These views were reinforced by the structure of the news organizations “which were rigidly hierarchical and male-dominated,” according to Susan Douglas.²⁴

The media’s coverage in general helps to shape how an issue or event is remembered. This was true in the case of the women’s movement. A historian who looked at newspaper and magazine articles from the late 1960s and early 1970s would fail to gain an accurate picture of that social movement. For example, consider the following female reaction to a male journalist’s reporting of one event that represented the women’s movement:

That evening, seated in front of the television set, switching dials to catch the news coverage of the (Women’s Strike for Equality) march on all three networks, I received my first taste of media distortion of the women’s rights movement. Cameras moved in for tight shots of stringy haired, bra-less women in T-shirts with angry signs. With my own eyes I had seen a cross-section of women at the march, including establishment types, career women and many older citizens. But none of these women was represented that evening on TV.²⁵

Although the above example was from the broadcast media, the same misleading concepts and images were found in newspapers. Women’s page journalists who wanted to report on the movement had to battle both their management for better gender coverage and the leaders of the women’s movement for credibility. In 1970, Janet Sanford, then women’s editor of the *Phoenix Gazette*, went to cover a speech by Steinem. After learning of Sanford’s identity, Steinem, often considered one of the leading figures in the women’s movement, responded: “That shows what your paper thinks about women’s issues.”²⁶ In other words, she saw being covered in the women’s

pages as an insult, a slight. She and other movement figures believed that real news was found only in other sections of the newspaper.

The purpose of this dissertation is to provide insight into how three women's page editors had an impact on social change and how they challenged dominant ideals.²⁷ This research adds to the story of journalism history by including study of women's editors, figures traditionally obscured because they lacked power within news organizations. Much of history has been defined by those with power.²⁸ That means that most of those depicted in journalism history have been powerful male editors. Those outside of the traditional power structure have been unlikely candidates to have their stories told. This dissertation is designed to analyze the importance of three women's page editors using them as case studies of the possibilities presented by women's pages. In doing this dissertation I am asking the following questions:

1) How were Castleberry, Journey and Paxson caught in feminist expectations of the media although they were feminists themselves?

Using a textual analysis of oral history transcripts of Castleberry, Journey and Paxson, as well as their personal papers which have been archived in the Western Historical Manuscript collection at the University of Missouri, I am looking at the role these women's page editors played in a period when their sections were renamed and redesigned. I will look at their career paths, personal lives and journalistic views in relation to the principles of the women's movement. I am employing archival methodology used by historians in fleshing out the biographical studies of these women.

2) What impact did Castleberry, Journey and Paxton, as well as other top women's page editors, have on definitions of women's news in the 1960s?

Using a thematic approach based on framing theory, I am examining the topics in women's sections that earned the J.C. Penney-Missouri Awards in the 1960s. These awards were the only national awards of the time period for women's sections. I am looking at how winning women's page editors framed women's news in terms of topics, and how they balanced the conflicting messages to women of the value of staying at home versus the value of seeking social change.

3) At a time when many women's page editors were not embraced by feminist leaders, how did these three leading women journalists impact the women's movement and act as activists for women?

By analyzing oral history transcripts of interviews with Castleberry, Journey and Paxson, as well as studying the correspondence of the women, I will look at how they strived to represent the needs of women throughout their careers and in their retirement. My use of this material allows the women an opportunity to speak for themselves.

Answers to these questions will add to the work done by Mills,²⁹ Rodger Streitmatter,³⁰ and Jan Whitt,³¹ covered in detail in chapter two. Their research has looked at the topics covered in women's sections, but not at the impact of the women's movement itself on the sections. Past research has looked at the strategies Castleberry, Journey and Paxson used with management at their newspapers to upgrade in their sections, but the research has not looked specifically at their own roles as activists.

Theory and Methodology

Framing theory is often used to examine the creation and impact of news. My intent is to explore the women's news frames used by the three prominent women's page editors I've chosen to study. To a degree, a reporter can frame an event in the same way that a photographer can frame a photograph. Each reporter decides what aspect he or she will highlight and what aspects he or she will leave out.³² Using the "constructionist" approach to news, W.A. Gamson and A. Modigliani argue that that the media contain frames that define issues in a symbolic way.³³ "Media discourse can be conceived of as a set of interpretative packages that give meaning to an issue. A package has an internal structure. At its core is a central organizing idea, or frame, for making sense of relevant events, suggesting what is at issue."³⁴

With the context of the women's movement and the function of the media in mind, the question of how women's page editors looked at women's news differently from other section editors can be examined through framing theory. Determining what is news is really determining "does this mean something?"³⁵ When journalists decide to cover an event or a topic, they are saying that the event or topic means something. The perspective from which the journalist approaches a story gives or takes away credibility. The journalist's perspective can be examined by using framing theory. According to Pippa Norris, "Frames represent consistent, predictable narrative stories that are embedded in the social construction of reality. Without such devices, journalists – and readers – could lack coherent news narratives that link disparate facts."³⁶ Todd Gitlin defined media frames as "persistent patterns of selection, emphasis, and exclusion that furnish an interpretation of events."³⁷

Gaye Tuchman explained the concept of framing with the social construction of reality model that exists within media accounts of issues. By choosing which details to include and which to exclude, the journalist defines what is news – what is worthy of recognition. By doing this, reporters “select some aspect of a perceived reality and make it more salient in a communicating text, in such a way to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.”³⁸ This process is not usually deliberate but rather journalists follow the reporting model that was established by past practice, keeping in mind concepts of news values and media competition. The social narratives that are created by the packaging of a story validate the expected frames of new stories that continue to legitimize particular interpretations of issues and events over others.³⁹

Robert Entman determined that framing provides a way to think about issues and events. The reporting of the issue or event puts a focus on some issues and events and pushes others into the background. Entman wrote that “Frames, then, define problems – determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values.”⁴⁰ These frames provide a way to understand issues and events. There is a large body of research that is based on framing theory. Taylor investigated the portrayal of stem cell research and found that a frame of uncertainty dominated coverage.⁴¹ Julie Lane looked at the media’s coverage of Title IX and found that journalists used a frame that emphasized the concerns of male athletic programs and disregarded the arguments of women’s groups.⁴² Linda Jean Kensicki researched the coverage of the Deaf President Now movement and found positive framing in photos and written content.⁴³

Framing theory can be applied to the media's coverage of the women's movement. Patricia Bradley compared the media's coverage of the women's movement to that of the civil rights movement. She noted the way the media creates a sense of balance by portraying one camp as "radical" (the Black Panthers for the civil rights movement, Kate Millet for the feminist movement) and the other as "liberal" (peaceful civil rights marchers, Gloria Steinem). As part of the coverage, one group was labeled as good and the other as bad. She described this as a form of framing: "The framing of some aspects of feminism as logical outgrowths of U.S. liberalism gave institutional approval to the negative framing of everything else."⁴⁴ She found that throughout the 1970s, the coverage of feminists deemed "radical" (often times because they called themselves radical) continued to be negative.

My research will look at the way women's pages used frames for the construction of a different kind of women's news. While sources may present information in a certain way, hoping that their message will be presented in a positive light, in general it is up to the journalist to accept or reject that frame.⁴⁵ These frames are often based on traditional news values, such as conflict or prominence.⁴⁶ In employing them, the reporters and editors are participating actively in the news-making process as "they both make and consume their society's culture."⁴⁷

For example, many mainstream publications and networks put members and events of the women's movement into similar frames. Many women within the movement criticized the mainstream media for stereotyping feminists within these frames. In *Where the Girls Are*, Douglas defined the representations of feminists used by the mainstream media as "fanatics, braless bubbleheads, Amazons, the angries and a band

of wild lesbians. ...They are shrill, overly aggressive, man-hating, ball-busting, selfish, hairy, extremist, deliberately unattractive women with absolutely no sense of humor who see sexism at every turn.”⁴⁸ What Douglas’s media history does not include is the representation found in the women’s pages. In fact, the only reference she makes to women’s pages is that in the 1960s, “women journalists were confined to writing about spring hats and thirty-one new ways to cook squash.”⁴⁹ This is a typical oversimplification of the content of women’s sections and an incomplete look at news sections that were involved in change.

To some degree, conventional news framing limited the representation of women during the women’s movement and continues to do so today. The emerging role of women in the 1960s and 1970s went against most of the frames traditionally used by the media which served to confine women to stereotypical roles. According to women historians Linda Witt, Karen Paget and Glenna Matthews, “The press coverage of women in politics is an artifact of this country’s age-old but unresolved debate over women citizens’ proper role versus ‘proper women’s’ place.”⁵⁰ (In a more recent example, these were the images used by the *New York Times* in referring to Illinois’s 1992 senatorial candidates Carol Moseley-Braun and Richard Williamson: “She is commanding and ebullient, a den mother with a cheerleader’s smile; he, by comparison, is all business, like the corporate lawyer he is.” It took 22 paragraphs before the reporter wrote about Moseley-Braun’s career as a lawyer and formal federal prosecutor.⁵¹)

Framing theory creates a structure to simplify, prioritize and structure events.⁵² This structure is reinforced through traditional concepts and images. This explains why, at the time of the women’s movement, some news was considered “women’s news” and

other news considered front page news. According to Gitlin, “Media frames are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol handlers routinely organize discourse.”⁵³ These frames are created by journalists through their interactions with sources, their audiences and other journalists.⁵⁴ How news stories are made and how pieces of information are selected is a value-laden process that can distort or ignore what could be news.⁵⁵

Daniel Hallin⁵⁶ defined three categories for news involving a social movement: consensus, legitimate controversy and deviance. Each of these categories can be looked at as frames through which journalists saw the women’s movement. Research has found that reporters have a tendency to seek out evidence that confirms the theory that they already hold.⁵⁷ Because women’s movement participants were fighting a controversial battle against a long-established patriarchal structure, there was little consensus regarding them. Instead, their actions and beliefs of feminists were defined as either legitimate controversy or deviance. At the beginning of the movement, leaders designed deviant actions, such as protests and sit-ins, because these kinds of events qualified as newsworthy.⁵⁸ And, because of the hard news value of protests, coverage tended to be in news sections rather than the women’s sections. On the other hand women’s page journalists for the most part framed women’s liberation as a legitimate controversy. They recognized the arguments of the women’s movement because these editors and reporters shared many of the same concerns.

Oral Histories

In *Perspectives on Mass Communication History*, William David Sloan addressed the lack of attention historians have paid to women journalists. He reviewed several areas

of research and suggested research questions for further study, including one particularly germane to this dissertation: Why did most 'women's pages' die?⁵⁹ Feminist approaches have been used in this dissertation to answer the question by concentrating on case studies of women editors. I am applying the concepts of Marjorie DeVault, a feminist researcher, who wrote that what makes an approach feminist "is a commitment to finding women and their concerns."⁶⁰ This dissertation is based on the stories of Castleberry, Journey and Paxson, who spent their careers trying to give voice to women's concerns. They all identified themselves as feminists and were a part of the movement in their own ways, including covering movement news and being active in local women's organizations. This dissertation, based heavily on the personal narrative, gives voice to these three women who worked to give others voice. As Marjorie DeVault said, "I see feminism, at its core, as a practice of speaking truth. Its central ideas have arisen from systematic attention to previously unacknowledged experiences."⁶¹ By telling the stories of these editors, women's concerns of the 1950s and 1960s are being documented.

As will be shown in chapter three, research on the media's representation of the women's movement has been limited usually to stories found in news sections in a small number of major newspapers. This dissertation seeks to broaden that research. It fits under the definition of feminist research which strives to "break not only with the male orientation of traditional histories but also with the underlying assumption that the lives of the elite represented everyone's past,"⁶² as described by historian Judith Zinsser. (The few times in which women have been included in the list of journalism history 'greats,' they have not been women's page editors.⁶³) Furthermore, the research seeks to "do the

work of ‘excavation,’ shifting the focus of standard practice from men’s concerns in order to reveal the locations and perspectives of women,”⁶⁴ as described by DeVault.

The primary historical sources used in this dissertation are drawn heavily from the oral history transcripts of the Women in Journalism project of the Washington Press Club Foundation. Oral histories fit into the feminist scholarship that focuses on the narratives of what women accomplished and how they viewed their lives.⁶⁵ According to Sanger, “the feminist embrace of oral history emerged from a recognition that traditional sources have often neglected the lives of women, and that oral history offered a means of integrating women into historical scholarship, even contesting the reigning definitions of social, economic and political importance that obscured women’s lives.”⁶⁶ Oral histories are known for giving voice to otherwise voiceless groups and individuals. According to Thompson, “Through an emphasis on the underclass, the underprivileged, and the defeated, official history may be challenged and a more realistic and fair reconstruction of the past is produced.”⁶⁷ The use of oral histories in this dissertation provides a story of women’s pages at metropolitan newspapers apart from the East and West coasts, the areas most often studied by journalism historians.

Oral histories are important to understanding women’s role in history.⁶⁸ Because women’s accomplishments are often compared to those of men, the different experiences of women have been overlooked. According to researchers Kathryn Anderson and Dana Jack, “A woman’s discussion of her life may combine two separate, often conflicting, perspectives: one framed in concepts and values that reflect men’s dominant position in the culture, and one informed by the more immediate realities of a woman’s personal experience.”⁶⁹

The use of extended interview excerpts is intended to “honor women’s voices,”⁷⁰ as suggested by Gesa Kirsch. This dissertation includes several extended excerpts from the Women in Journalism project, which allows the stories of women journalists’ lives to be preserved. “Feminists remain concerned about the power dynamics involved in the politics of interpretation,”⁷¹ according to Kirsch. In her research, Kirsh used an example of a researcher who conducted an oral history interview. After reading a report of the research, the interviewee responded that her words had been exploited and made to fit the agenda of the researcher.⁷² This probability is lessened in the interpretation done in this dissertation because the mission is the same as that of the Women in Journalism project, as will be described below. Although there are often opportunities for exploitation of a subject and her story, the professional journalism background of these three women as interviewers themselves and the clear mission of the Women in Journalism project lessen the risk in this case. In Brennen’s work in conducting oral histories with former Gannett newswriters, she wrote that she learned that “journalistic conventions related to the collection, assessment, and corroboration of information influenced these reporters in ways that now makes them excellent oral history subjects.”⁷³ The same concept is true of these three women.

Women in Journalism

Because women have often been left out of historical accounts, it is difficult to fully document the lives of many women who have made significant contributions to journalism. In 1986, the Washington Press Club Foundation began the “Women in Journalism” oral history project to recognize sixty women who made a difference in journalism, beginning in the 1920s. According to the Foundation, the project was

intended to “provide an important documentary record of the experiences of women in seeking acceptance in journalism and the impact that this development has had on the reporting and editing of the nation's news.”⁷⁴ It should be noted that the only women’s page editors who were included in this group were Marie Anderson, Vivian Castleberry, Dorothy Journey and Marjorie Paxson. (Anderson’s transcript was not usable as she was suffering from Alzheimer’s Disease at the time of the interview.) According to Penney Bender Fuchs’s article on the project’s archive, the stories the women told revealed “how women helped to broaden the definition of news, stretching it beyond the coverage of government and scandal to include stories on people, their lives, and closeted social problems such as rape and domestic violence.”⁷⁵ She wrote that the flaw of the collection was that interviewees’ memories might have faded and that their stories might take on “rosier hues” than should be the case when read by others. I argue that while the three editors studied in this dissertation may have forgotten some details of their lives, a study of the sections that they oversaw prove that they encouraged progressive content as described by the editors themselves. Also, the women did not appear to tone down their comments in their interviews since they were openly critical of many of the male editors they worked for at their newspapers.

The interview transcripts provide a large body of primary source material that document journalistic and societal change, and how women influenced news. Each subject was chosen based “on the woman's importance in her field; the perceived excellence of her work; her connection with people and events of historical significance; and her impact on the careers of other women, on the broader field of journalism, on her own institution, and on the wider community.”⁷⁶ Each of the women was interviewed by

a woman historian. According to the Foundation, the transcripts “offer an important slice of American social history as the interviewees express the richly textured life of a major profession that, like other professions, has struggled to adapt to the changing conditions of a world in transition.”⁷⁷

The other primary source materials used in this dissertation are available at the National Women & Media Collection, located in the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri, Columbia, and the School of Journalism there. According to its mission papers, the National Women & Media Collection “documents the roles women have played and are playing in media fields, both as media employees and as objects of coverage, how those roles have altered over time, and how attitudes of and towards women have changed.”⁷⁸ Included in this collection are reports, personal and professional correspondence, speeches and committee files. Many of these documents are not indexed. The collection was created in 1987 based on a monetary donation from Paxson. Other primary source material included email and phone interviews with Paxson and former Penney-Missouri award judges. These sources, while not vast, offer details about the three women being studied who were ahead of their time. It should be noted that limited sources are typical when attempting to recreate the history of women.⁷⁹

Chapters

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters as follows. Chapter Two, “Women’s Pages in Review: What the Literature Reports,” reviews the literature on newspapers and the women’s movement, as well as the limited research done on women’s pages and women’s page editors. It includes academic and industry research in order to provide context for the work of Castleberry, Journey and Paxson.

Chapter Three, “Framing the Women’s Movement,” further outlines the intersection of the women’s movement and the media. Several studies have examined the ways that the mass media have portrayed the women’s movement and women’s movement leaders.⁸⁰ Few studies, however, have looked at how women’s pages covered the movement. This chapter looks at what was reported within the women’s sections to give additional context for the work of Castleberry, Journey and Paxson.

Chapter Four, “Honoring the Best: Penney-Missouri Awards,” is a thematic analysis based on framing theory of winning women’s pages in the J.C. Penney Missouri Awards competition, as well as a history of this program that previously has not been documented. These awards demonstrated how some women’s page editors created their own frames for women’s news.

Chapters Five through Seven present the biographical narratives of three progressive women’s page editors, Journey, Paxson, and Castleberry, showing how they both influenced and reacted to the women’s movement.

Chapter Eight is a conclusion that details the news frames used by Journey, Paxson, and Castleberry and shows how their lives – and their feminism – impacted those frames, particularly during the women’s movement. An explanation of the frames used by Penney-Missouri award winners is also explained. The chapter also examines the implications of the research findings, explores limitations and suggests areas for further study.

¹ Dorothy Journey, “Talk at Carolina Symposium,” University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, March 28, 1978. Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Journey file, folder 61 , 1.

² Journey, “Talk at Carolina Symposium,” 3.

³ Kay Mills, *A Place in the News: From the Women’s Pages to the Front Pages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 37.

⁴ Maurine Beasley and Sheila Gibbons. *Taking Their Place: A Documentary History of Women and Journalism* (Washington, D.C.: The American University Press, 1993), 13-14.

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- ⁵ Ibid, 2.
- ⁶ Mei-ling Yang, "Women's Pages or People's Pages: The Production of News for Women in the *Washington Post* in the 1950s," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 73 (1996): 364-378.
- ⁷ Camille Paglia, "Did the Homemaker Heroine Cook Her Own Goose," *Interview* (June 2004): 56.
- ⁸ Susan Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Random House, 1995), 9.
- ⁹ Mills, 92.
- ¹⁰ A summary of the findings and details of the methodology are explained in M. Junior Bridge's "Slipping From the Scene: News Coverage of Females Drops," in *Facing Difference: Race, Gender, and Mass Media* (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 1997) 102-112.
- ¹¹ Colleen 'Koky' Dishon, "We've Come a Long Way – Maybe," *Media Studies Journal* 11 (1997): 93-102.
- ¹² Kay Mills, "What Difference Do Women Journalists Make?" in *Women, Media and Politics*, ed, Pippa Norris, (Oxford University Press, 1996), 43.
- ¹³ Cokie Roberts, *We Are Our Mothers' Daughters* (New York: Perennial, 2000) 123.
- ¹⁴ Mills, "What Difference Do Women Journalists Make?" 44.
- ¹⁵ Ibid, 42.
- ¹⁶ Ibid, 47.
- ¹⁷ Rodger Streitmatter, "Transforming the Women's Pages: Strategies that Worked," *Journalism History* 24 (1998): 77.
- ¹⁸ It should be noted that some feminist leaders also kept tabs on progressive women's pages. Catherine East said that she subscribed to the *Miami Herald*, despite living in Washington, D.C. in order to see what strong women's pages were covering. This was noted by Anne Kasper "Introduction," Marie Anderson, October 7, 1989. Oral History Project, "Women in Journalism." Washington Press Club Foundation.
- ¹⁹ Rose Ann Robertson, "From Teas and Bridal Veils to Abortion, Abuse and Feminism: How Three Women's Page Editors Changed Journalism" (Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication national convention, 1996), 4.
- ²⁰ Vivian Castleberry, Oral History Project. Washington Press Club Foundation. 2001, Session 1, 58-59. <http://npc.press.org/wpforal>.
- ²¹ Introduction to Dorothy Jurney interview. Oral History Project. "Women in Journalism." Washington Press Club Foundation. Available online: <http://npc.press.org/wpforal/preface.htm#top>
- ²² Douglas, 273.
- ²³ Julia Wood, *Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender, and Culture* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1994), 245.
- ²⁴ Douglas, 157.
- ²⁵ Patricia Bradley, "Mass Communication and the Shaping of U.S. Feminism," in *News, Gender and Power*, eds. Cynthia Carter, Gill Branston and Stuart Allan. (New York: Routledge, 1998), 160.
- ²⁶ Kay Mills, *A Place in the News*, 118.
- ²⁷ Joan Sangster, "Telling Our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History," in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (New York: Routledge, 1998), 91.
- ²⁸ Beasley & Gibbons, *Taking Their Place*, 123.
- ²⁹ Mills, *A Place in the News*, 134.
- ³⁰ Streitmatter, 77.
- ³¹ Jan Whitt, "Regression or Progression? *The Chicago Tribune* and Womanews" (Paper presented at the American Journalism Historians Association national convention, 1994) An adapted version of the paper can be found in Shirley Biagi and Marilyn Kern-Foxworth's *Facing Difference: Race, Gender and Mass Media* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Pine Forge Press, 1997), 131-138.
- ³² J.N. Cappella and K.H. Jamieson, *Spiral of Cynicism: The Press and the Public Good* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 38.
- ³³ W.A. Gamson and A. Modigliani, "Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionalist Approach," *American Journal of Sociology* 95 (1989): 1-37.
- ³⁴ Gaye Tuchman, *Making the News* (New York: Free Press, 1978) 89.
- ³⁵ Robert Manoff and Michael Schudson, *Reading the News* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), 84.

- ³⁶ Pippa Norris and Susan Carroll. "The Dynamics of the Framing Process: From Reagan's Gender Gap to Clinton's Soccer Moms." Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard University, 2. Available at <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksg/acrobat/carroll.pdf>
- ³⁷ Gitlin, 372.
- ³⁸ Tuchman, *Making News*, 133.
- ³⁹ Frank Durham, "News Frames as Social Narratives: TWA Flight 800," *Journal of Communication*, 48 (1998):100-117.
- ⁴⁰ Robert Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm," *Journal of Communication*, 43 (1993): 51-58.
- ⁴¹ Kimberly Taylor, "Promise or Peril: How Newspapers Frame Stem Cell Research" (Paper presented at the Association for Education and Journalism and Mass Communication national convention). Kansas City. 2003. Available at <http://list.msu.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A2=ind0310A&L=aejmc&P=R30300>.
- ⁴² Julie Lane, "The Framing of Title IX: A Textual Analysis of the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*." (Paper presented at the Association for Education and Journalism and Mass Communication Convention. (1998) Available at <http://list.msu.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A2=ind9812D&L=aejmc&P=R13891>.
- ⁴³ Linda Jean Kensicki, "Deaf President Now! Positive Media Framing of a Social Movement," *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 25 (April 2001):147-166.
- ⁴⁴ Patricia Bradley, "Mass Communication and the Shaping of the U.S. Feminism," in *News, Gender and Power*, ed. Cynthia Carter, Gill Branston and Stuart Allan (New York: Routledge, 1998), 162-163.
- ⁴⁵ Tuchman, 89.
- ⁴⁶ Jean Folkerts and Stephen Lacy, *The Media in Your Life* (New York: Pearson Allyn & Bacon, 2001), 104.
- ⁴⁷ Tuchman, 89.
- ⁴⁸ Douglas, 7.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid, 157.
- ⁵⁰ Linda Witt, Karen Paget, and Glenna Matthews, *Running as a Woman: Gender and Power in American Politics* (New York: Macmillan, Inc., 1994), 182.
- ⁵¹ Ibid, 181.
- ⁵² Gaye Tuchman, "The Newspaper as a Social Movement's Resource," in *Hearth and Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media*, eds. Gaye Tuchman, Arlene Kaplan Daniels and James Benet. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 192.
- ⁵³ Gitlin, 7.
- ⁵⁴ Herbert Gans, *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 89.
- ⁵⁵ Ryan, 53.
- ⁵⁶ Daniel Hallin, *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986)
- ⁵⁷ Tweney, Dogherty & Maynatt, 183.
- ⁵⁸ John McManus, *Market-Driven Journalism: Let the Citizen Beware?* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994); Thomas Patterson, *Out of Order* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 38.
- ⁵⁹ William David Sloan, *Perspectives on Mass Communication History* (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1991), 102.
- ⁶⁰ Marjorie DeVault, *Liberating Method: Feminism and Social Research* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 31.
- ⁶¹ DeVault, 2.
- ⁶² Judith Zinsser, *History and Feminism* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1993), 45.
- ⁶³ In the following three books on significant women journalists, only one women's page editor was named: Jane Cunningham Croly or 'Jennie June' who worked in newspapers in the second half of the 1880s. The reference was found in Barbara Belford's *Brilliant Bylines: A Biographical Anthology of Notable Newspaperwomen in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986). The following books contained no references to women's page editors, beyond Croly: John Jakes's *Great Women Reporters* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1969); Madelon Golden Schlipp and Sharon Murphy's *Great Women of the Press* (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1983).
- ⁶⁴ Zinsser, 30.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid, 113.

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- ⁶⁶ Joan Sangster, "Telling Our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History," in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (New York: Routledge, 1998), 87.
- ⁶⁷ As quoted in Brennen, 571.
- ⁶⁸ Kathryn Anderson and Dana Jack, "Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses," in *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, eds. Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai (New York: Routledge, 1991), 11.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 11
- ⁷⁰ Gesa Kirsch, *Ethical Dilemmas in Feminist Research* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1999), 73.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid*, 50.
- ⁷² *Ibid*, 50.
- ⁷³ Brennen, 577.
- ⁷⁴ Women in Journalism project. <http://npc.press.org/wpforal/ohhome.htm>
- ⁷⁵ Penny Bender Fuchs, "Women in Journalism Oral History Collection of the Washington Press Club Foundation," *Journalism History* 28 (2003): 192.
- ⁷⁶ Women in Journalism project. <http://npc.press.org/wpforal/ohhome.htm>
- ⁷⁷ Women in Journalism project. <http://npc.press.org/wpforal/ohhome.htm>
- ⁷⁸ The National Women and Media Collection. Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia. Collection Preface. <http://www.umsystem.edu/whmc/nwm.html>
- ⁷⁹ Susan Henry "Changing Media History through Women's History," in *Women in Mass Communications*, ed. Pamela Creedon, (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1993), 345.
- ⁸⁰ See Susan Brownmiller, *In Our Time: Memoir of a Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1999) and Laura Ashley and Laura Olson, "Constructing Reality: Print Media's Framing of the Women's Movement, 1966 to 1986," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 75 (1997): 263.

Chapter Two

Women's Pages in Review: What the Literature Reports

Numerous studies have found that when females are featured in newspaper articles, it is often in a stereotypical way – if they are featured at all.¹ This limited portrayal can have a large impact. The images found in the media, according to scholars, “help to create representations of social reality, media being the central institution capable of alerting individuals to societal-wide trends in social norms and expectations.”² Research beginning in the 1970s demonstrated sexist media coverage in newspapers and uncovered biases that were taken as routine in news production for many decades. These studies looked at the ways women were portrayed and found serious inequities in the coverage of women and men. For example, Jean Ward³ looked at discriminatory language and the invisibility of women in newspaper articles, and found evidence of both. Junetta Davis⁴ examined location and length of stories, identifying language and headline size of articles about women. She found that only 8.6% of stories in the eight newspapers she studied had women as the main characters, while 51.8% had men as the main character in articles.⁵

The following survey of research includes references to both academic and industry studies of women's pages because they provide context for the dissertation. Inclusion of the industry studies is important because it provides an overview of what some women's page editors were doing to change their sections. The goal of the literature review is to demonstrate the complexity of the sections as well as the role women's page editors played in attempting to transform them as an alternative to their elimination. It is a revision of standard journalism history, since many journalism historians wrongly credit

Ben Bradlee and the *Washington Post* as the key to the content transformation of women's sections⁶ rather than influential women's page editors, as will be explained later in greater detail.

Industry Research on Women's Pages

Associated Press Managing Editors Studies (1963, 1969 & 1975)

The most significant newspaper industry research on women's pages was done by the Associated Press Managing Editors organization (APME) over a 12-month period in 1962 and 1963. The findings are located at the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri. In the first study, done in 1962, 175 questionnaires seeking feedback on the content of women's sections were sent by the APME to both managing editors and women's page editors across the country. Responses were obtained from 78 women's page editors and 76 managing editors. The overall findings demonstrated an increasing frustration with women's sections from both groups. Two of the best known women's page editors, Maggie Savoy, of the *Arizona Republic*, and Marie Anderson, of the *Miami Herald*, presented the findings to a group of managing editors in 1963. Their talk was called "What Does Your Women's Editor Think of You?"⁷ The two women were invited to help managing editors see the sections in a more positive light. The comments made by Savoy and Anderson clearly showed the low status of women's editors and women's pages.

The two editors chided the managing editors for poor treatment of women's editors. They pointed out that women's pages got limited space and that their staffs received 23.5 percent less pay than sports reporters. They reported that women's editors were not invited to staff meetings and that they were also forgotten when it came to

getting access to news wire copy. According to Anderson, some managing editors assigned incompetent reporters to the women's pages. She said, "If it isn't true, you'd better clear the air. If it is true, you made a mistake. If she [the reporter] is no good on the city desk, she's no good in the women's department."⁸

The women drew eleven conclusions for the managing editors to use in interactions with women's page editors. They were as follows: 1) Help the editor to avoid being burdened with details - or recognize her public relations value and staff her section to answer numerous incoming calls about weddings and other social events. 2) Help the editor upgrade her staff. Anderson reported that, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, only 57 percent of journalism graduates were male. She said, "There should be plenty of good female material around. If you don't have it, hire it or train it." 3) Train the editor. Savoy suggested sending the editor to seminars and making sure she had a subscription to newspapers with strong women's sections. She said, "Criticize her; she'll love it, it shows you care. 'I'd rather be spanked than ignored,' said one." 4) Communicate with the editor so that she knows what is happening in other sections and what is coming through on the wires. 5) Back the editor up in the community. When society people and social clubs get angry, go to bat for her. In answer to the question, 'What would you sell to your managing editor?' one woman responded, "A backbone." 6) Give the editor status in the office. Too many women are looked at as second class citizens in the newsroom. 7) Do your homework. Conduct studies to find what women readers want. 8) Help the editor delegate authority. Overwhelming phone calls about engagements and club notices mean the need to hire more staff. 9) Promote the women's department. Give front page references to its strong stories. 10) Give the women's editor a budget. Let her decide how

to best use her department's money. 11) Demand more. According to the presentation, "There's a log-size chip on most of your women's editors' shoulders. Do what you can to whittle it down ... Demand her best. She'll not only respect you for it; she'll love you for it."⁹

In 1969, six years after the first APME Women's Committee study, questionnaires were again sent out to see if there had been any changes in the interaction between managing editors and women's page editors. The same survey was sent to 202 managing editors and 107 were returned. The 29-question survey also was sent to 196 women's editors and 88 were returned. The anecdotal information resulted in the paper, "How is it going in the women's departments? Or, what has happened since Anderson-Savoy?"¹⁰ This follow-up study detailed the lack of progress that had been made in the six years since the original report. The overall conclusion was that major problems still existed in spite of some improvements. According to the report, "(Sorry to tell you this, Marie and Maggie) Some discontent still exists six years after the Anderson-Savoy plea for improved relationships. As one women's editor put it, 'We're still second (or third) class citizens.'¹¹

Some women's editors reported that they had not been able to modernize their sections. This is a sample of the responses: "We exist, in [the editor's] eyes, to function as our women's department functioned in 1900. Weddings, 50th anniversaries, club news, garden news, etc.," "He thinks men know better what women want than women," and "He is frightened by our touching upon issues vital to women of today - abortion, the pill, divorce."¹² One of the women's editors wrote that she felt managing editors took advice from their wives who stayed at home and were of a higher social class than the women

who were reading their sections. Other managing editors responded that they did view the women's pages as important. One wrote, "If I were a women's editor, I would truly feel that my pages represented a tremendous challenge that, if even partially met, would enable me to make a great contribution to the readership of my paper and to the community."¹³

The next industry study which examined the transformation of women's pages to lifestyle sections, was the October 1975 APME Report: "Our Changing Women's Pages: Where Are We Now?"¹⁴ It was prepared by the Modern Living Committee (made up of 18 male editors). The study attempted to measure how much the content had changed in the move from the women's sections to "lifestyle" or "leisure" sections. A questionnaire was sent to the entire APME membership of 850, of which 267 or 31 percent returned the form. The result was that editors reported many of the sections included stories linked to the women's movement about birth control and abortion and that "alcoholic wives were everywhere."¹⁵ The new watch word for stories in the sections was "relevant." Some sections included a focus on what to do with readers' spare time. Many editors responded that they were trying to print more lifestyle stories but still were trying to keep the basic format of the traditional women's section. It was also evident that there were more male editors of these sections when the names of the sections changed from "women's sections" to "lifestyle sections."

The survey included comments and commentary from some of the participating editors as well as the lone voice of a former women's page editor. Although responders admitted a need to make some changes, many wrote that they were reinstating some

society news and club information because that was what readers wanted. Below is a sampling of responses.¹⁶

Harold Harlow of the *Knoxville News-Sentinel* wrote, “I’m still not sure that we are in tune with our readers. ... Are we listening to the voice of the reader or the whims of some malcontents within our own ranks? Maybe change for the sake of change is not the way.”

Larry Belonger of the *Green Bay Press-Gazette* wrote, “We feel papers are wrong in “cutting back” so much on the so-called routine things that were a “women’s/society” section trademark for many years. Some trimming, yes ... but not near elimination.”

Lorraine Hopkins of the *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, wrote “I’m certainly ambivalent about what we’ve all done, which is to admit there’s a stigma in having women’s coverage, at just the time when women have become interesting to write about.”

Kent Freeland of *TODAY* in Cocoa, Florida, wrote, “Since going to an exclusive lifestyle type content, we have moved back a step or two to include more traditional women’s features such as fashions, home decorating and more prominent and more timely displays of weddings and engagements.”

At the 1971 National Conference of Women’s Editors, Nicholas Von Hoffman described his women’s page experiences in his talk, which was later published, titled “Why Should Women’s Editors Ride in the Back of the Bus?” Von Hoffman wrote a column that appeared in the women’s section of the *Washington Post*. He said one of the most common questions he was asked was if he resented being published in the women’s section. He said he didn’t because more people – male and female – read the section than the editorial section where the “big names” were located. Yet, he did say that “when you write for the women’s page you are, in the eyes of your peers, in the low-rent district.”¹⁷ He put the blame for this on management who often put incompetent reporters in the section and then complained when the sections were weak. He questioned, “You notice

how they always say ‘back there?’ Does anybody know of a paper where the women’s section isn’t located ‘back there?’”¹⁸ He continued:

American newspapers do their worst job on the topics that are the most important to people: food, clothing, shelter, health – the areas that the women’s page most often has responsibility for. The fault doesn’t lie with those who put the sections together, but with the top editors, publishers, and owners who run their operations so that it is next to impossible to print something that isn’t a combination of shlock and hokum.¹⁹

Former women’s page editor Dishon also spoke at the National Conference of Women’s Editors. Her intent was to point out shortcomings of the sections and to suggest changes. She criticized the emphasis on furnishings and fashions. Dishon said, “The mythical women at which this women’s section is targeted is really very easy to describe. She fits the all-American dream which I and other women’s editors should have challenged many years ago.”²⁰ She pointed out that the messages of the women’s movement should be recognized by women’s editors and that they should be reflected in the content in the sections.²¹ She also said that in order for change to be made, male editors needed to allow women editors more flexibility. She said, “After talking to so many women in the last couple of years at papers of all sizes, I believe that the majority of caretakers of these pages find themselves boxed in – trapped by a system that may have once suited them well but is no longer flexible enough to let them do a good job of newspapering.”²² She concluded by saying that the sections should not eliminate food, fashions and furnishing stories, but that the sections should also cover current issues important to women.

In *Journalism: Stories from the Real World*, women’s page writer Don Corrigan described his experiences as the first man to work in the newly designed “Living Today” at a newspaper in Bloomington, Illinois in the late 1970s. He said that despite the name

change of the section, he got a “good taste of the second-class treatment” that women often received in the newsroom. The section was housed in a glasslike cage that allowed the managing editor to watch to see that typing was being done at a rapid rate. The women in this section were limited to a timed 30-minute lunch break, while the newsroom men got as long as they wanted. Trying to improve content was a battle. “Attempts at serious journalism were nipped at the bud. My editor would submit story ideas for review to the patriarchs next door, and they would promptly remind her that ‘Living Today’ is still the ‘women’s pages,’” he wrote.²³

Academic Studies of Women’s Pages

Several academic researchers have looked at women’s pages from various perspectives. Some have studied the content of the sections, particularly the changes that occurred over time as the sections became more feature- and/or entertainment-based. Other researchers have looked at the conditions that women’s page editors worked under, including pay inequities and battles with managing editors.

Jon Bekken examined the women’s pages in the *Milwaukee Leader*, the country’s longest running socialist daily newspaper. He did a content analysis of the women’s pages in 1912, 1917, 1922 and 1927 to find out if the newspaper challenged the traditional roles and stereotypes for women. Although this study looked at a time period earlier than the second wave of the women’s movement, it does establish that some women’s pages contained more than fluff. Included in women’s pages before and during the 1920s were stories about women in public affairs, the struggle for women’s suffrage, and stories challenging women’s roles as confined to those of wives and mothers. There was an effort by editors to “raise the political consciousness of its readers.”²⁴ Yet, the

overall focus of most articles was of a traditional nature. “While the *Leader* was prepared to support reformist demands such as women’s suffrage, it retained a basic commitment to traditional values and norms for women,” he concluded.²⁵

Mei-lang Yang studied the content of the women’s pages of the *Washington Post* under the leadership of women’s section editor Marie Sauer in 1945, 1952 and 1960. Her examination of content included both editorial matter and advertising. Yang’s coding of content found that coverage of high society had dropped from 39 percent in 1945 to 22 percent in 1960. Club coverage had likewise dropped, from 19 percent in 1945 to 9 percent in 1960. Weddings and engagement coverage stayed about the same at 22 percent. Food stories increased from 4 percent in 1945 to 10 percent in 1960. Commentaries increased from 4 percent in 1945 to 9 percent in 1960. Profiles also increased, going from 1 percent in 1945 to 5 percent in 1960. Yang also interviewed Sauer extensively to determine her role in the process of changing a “women’s section” into a lifestyle section. Although the *Post* is credited with initiating this change in 1969, Sauer had proposed a similar change in 1952.²⁶

In her interview, Sauer remembered that in the post-World War II period, she had tried to create a balance in her content for those who did not want to give up their war-time jobs and those who wanted to stay at home and “resented the belittling of their child-rearing role.”²⁷ To do this, Sauer featured stories about activities and interests for women that weren’t considered feminine such as sports, politics and aviation. She also included the results of surveys that examined gender issues. A headline in the March 4, 1950 issue was: “Women claim equal courage with men, survey discloses.”²⁸ According to Sauer, “Even though at that time, they [women] weren’t ready to be president, the most

important issues to them were peace, budget balancing, honesty and efficiency in government, equal pay for equal work ... Hard news or soft news? I felt that women wanted both.”²⁹ Yang concluded that Sauer’s decisions had “challenged the assumption embraced by many journalists that women’s pages were frivolous, dull and insubstantial.”³⁰

Sauer was known for sticking to her feminist beliefs while working in cooperation with her male superiors. “With feminist beliefs grounded in the diversity of women, she represented a wider range of images of women as alternatives to the dominant housewife-mother role model,” Yang wrote.³¹ Sauer’s belief in the importance of the women's pages “revealed a perspective countering the dominant perception of women's pages, which often served to devalue the work of women journalists and belittle the interests and activities of women readers,” Yang concluded.³² Sauer had the difficult task of fighting to keep stories in her section that were viewed as hard news. “The base line was that as long as nothing significant came out of a social event, the story could run in the women's section,” Yang found.³³

Harvey Molotch addressed the concepts of women’s and men’s news through anecdotal evidence and a content analysis in 1978. He analyzed what the definition of news was and found that news was often tied into paid work and thus women, who were often not working outside of the home, were put in an inferior position in the media.³⁴ He wrote that the “processes of life” that involve housework and child rearing were included only in women’s pages and thus were not considered real or substantial news.³⁵ He concluded that when women appeared in newspapers, “it is from a man’s perspective of what is interesting.”³⁶ This perspective meant that women were reduced to sex objects or

soap-opera figures. He wrote that despite the progress made by women the sexist treatment continued.³⁷

Zena Beth Guenin's study of lifestyle sections in 1973 found that entertainment stories had replaced much of the traditional content pertaining to advice, beauty, astrology, bridal and engagement news, charity benefits, clubs, fashion, food, home furnishing and society events.³⁸ She studied the lifestyle sections in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Los Angeles Times*, comparing the content of stories from 1965 to 1975. In that decade, these four newspapers changed the names of the sections and significantly decreased the coverage of social events and weddings. They also decreased the number of stories about child rearing and domestic consumer information.³⁹

Susan Miller studied the changes in women's or lifestyle sections at four newspapers during four months in 1975.⁴⁰ She counted the number and topics of stories used in the sections including those on relationships, parenting, health, consumer issues, wedding and society events, fashion, entertainment and environment. She found that while the newspapers had decreased the coverage of weddings and society events, there still were not significant changes in content from the earlier women's pages. The only exception was some change at the *New York Times*. She wrote, "At some papers, there has been more talk than change. And, in some instances, the changes have been for the worse."⁴¹

Sharyne Gross and Harriett Merritt studied the effects of social and organizational context on gate keeping in the lifestyle sections of newspapers in the early 1970s. They examined whether papers in different settings - rural, community and metropolitan -

provided a different kind of coverage. First, they examined the percentage of newspaper copy devoted to social news, food and fashion, leisure, careers and the women's movement. They found that 8 percent of copy in rural newspapers was devoted to the women's movement, while 12 percent of copy in suburban newspapers were devoted to the topic. At metropolitan newspapers, 14 percent of copy was devoted to the women's movement when a man edited the section. The percentage rose to 17 percent when a woman was the editor. They also found that men editors expressed less of an activist orientation than women editors did. Of the more controversial topics associated with the women's movement, the one most likely to be covered by rural and community editors was women's consciousness raising, although it was the least likely to be covered by the metropolitan newspapers.⁴²

In a related study, Lee Jolliffe and Terri Catlett found that articles in women's magazines portrayed women as passive dependents who followed gender role stereotypes in terms of social roles, personal appearance and characteristics.⁴³ Their study of seven women's magazines from 1965 to 1985 found that negative gender role stereotypes were not reduced by the presence of women editors at these magazines. Their results were not what feminists had hoped to find when females began to obtain more powerful positions in magazines. Instead the researchers found "women editors treated their women audiences in the stereotypical ways that men editors had in the 1960's."⁴⁴

To complete the review of literature of women's pages, it is important to look at the only biography devoted to a women's page editor, *A Women of the Times*, a study of Charlotte Curtis.⁴⁵ Curtis began her career at the *New York Times* in the society pages in 1961 and rose through the ranks to become an op-ed editor of the newspaper in 1975 after

being the *Times*' women's page editor. She was the first female associate editor at the *Times*. Among her accomplishments, she was cited for her work in changing society pages from soft content to issue-oriented sections. Marilyn Greenwald examined the contradiction of Curtis's career. For example, while Curtis was a strong and outspoken advocate of equal pay for women, she did not participate in the class-action sex-discrimination lawsuit brought against the *Times* by its female employees. She also disapproved of some of the activities of the women's movement and was known for mocking the use of the title "Ms." Greenwald focused on the doors that she opened for other women employees at the *New York Times*, but acknowledged that "Curtis paid a price for her ambivalence toward the women's movement in losing the friendship and respect of female colleagues."⁴⁶

Curtis did not consider herself a feminist and openly questioned some of the ideals of the women's movement. Yet, she was recognized by some feminists as a supporter of the movement, although she was criticized by others. Greenwald cited a personal letter in which Curtis wrote: "And the Women's Liberation, which is to say the very feminist (I'm still not sure that's right) younger generation, are up in arms over my women's pages. They're calling us Aunt Tabbies, which is apparently women's lip (I didn't misspell that) for Uncle Tom."⁴⁷ In her coverage of a feminist fundraiser, Curtis wrote:

Many of the women who gathered there are serious about child care centers, equal employment and abortion. Yet their voices were lost amid the tinkle of cocktail glasses, the spectacle of a woman ditching her blue jeans and diving into the swimming pool ... Perhaps what I am saying on this anniversary of women's suffrage is that if women want to be taken as seriously as they deserve, they will have to get their message across loud and clear but logically and simply. Otherwise, nobody's really going to understand how important this movement is.⁴⁸

It is interesting to note that despite her critical eye for the movement, several movement leaders considered her a supporter. Curtis was the only women's page editor mentioned in movement leader Susan Brownmiller's 330-page memoir of the movement. She wrote the following about Curtis's coverage of the Miss America demonstration:

Charlotte Curtis, the acerbic society reporter for the *New York Times* and the epitome of chic in her little black dress and double strand of pearls, had hitched a ride on the demonstrators' bus. Her coverage in the Sunday paper was colorful and sympathetic. "Charlotte was extraordinary," says Robin Morgan. "God love her, she made us look reasonable and nice."⁴⁹

Susan Douglas both praised and criticized Curtis's coverage. She wrote, "What Curtis failed to report was that one of the main political goals of the action was to force the media to hire more women to cover hard news stories."⁵⁰ A possible reason for this may have been Curtis's recognition that this change would mean less stature for women's editors who already had little stature.

Newspaper Coverage of the Women's Movement

A NOW-sponsored content analysis of nine Washington, D.C. and Virginia newspapers during the summer of 1972 and winter of 1973 found that 94 percent of front page stories and editorial columns were written by men, while 82 percent of the obituaries were about men.⁵¹ Seventy-five percent of the stories in the style sections of the newspapers, the former women's pages, were written by men. Findings for all nine of the newspapers included the following: metropolitan newspapers were more likely to substitute 'girl' for 'woman' than suburban papers, hard news about women often appeared in the style section rather than in the appropriate news section, metropolitan newspapers appointed men as editors of redesigned women's sections and added male columnists.⁵²

Rebecca Lind and Colleen Salo applied six frames to the media's coverage of feminism.⁵³ They examined numerous newspaper stories as well as radio and television transcripts from May 1993 to January 1996. They found that 'women' and 'feminists' were portrayed in different ways. They also found that journalists presented feminists as out of the ordinary and not quite normal individuals. Interestingly, they found that in some ways, however, feminists were represented more positively than women in general. For example, feminists were unlikely to be represented as victims. Overall though, feminists were about ten times as likely as women as a whole to be associated with terms like "jerks," "radical" or "bad." Lind and Salo concluded that feminists were not shown doing traditionally feminine activities. They wrote, "Feminists are much less likely to be portrayed in such situations than 'regular' women are. ... To the extent that feminists don't do the same things as 'regular' women, audiences could easily assume that feminism and its concerns are not relevant to regular people and perhaps, are actually abnormal."⁵⁴

Cynthia Epstein looked at the coverage of the women's movement in the women's pages. She focused on the trivialization of the movement by its placement in the women's section. She wrote, "According to the general canons of journalism, news of the women's movement – 'hot news' – should be included in general news."⁵⁵ She found that the inclusion of news about the movement in sections dedicated to recipes and fashion sent a message to readers that women's issues were not to be taken seriously. She did find that the *Wall Street Journal* – a newspaper without a women's section – did a strong job of covering women's issues in relation to litigation and legal issues. Her overall

analysis was that restricting women's movement news to women's sections suggested that women's issues were not important enough for society to take them seriously.⁵⁶

In 1978, Gaye Tuchman looked at the women's pages as a resource for a social movement. In particular, she examined how women's page editors benefited from male editors' dismissal of the women's movement because this allowed the women to include more actual news in their sections.⁵⁷ She found that the relationship between newspapers and a social movement was complex, especially because the impact of the message that the media sends cannot be controlled by journalistic gatekeepers. She cited as an example the *New York Times* coverage of the 1965 White House Conference on Equal Opportunity. In the story, the writer referred to a source who questioned whether this meant that the Playboy Club would now be required to hire male bunnies. She concluded that "although the sexual ideology (chauvinism) of male editors mitigated against such use, women newsmen were able to lessen the opposition to the women's movement by acting as journalist-advocates."⁵⁸

Tuchman also looked at the media's coverage of the women's movement in her 1982 book, *Making News*. She interviewed female editors and reporters for the *New York Times*, examined the newspaper's reports and also interviewed New York feminist leaders. One of the reporters described the paper's women's section as "the most feminist in the country."⁵⁹ Tuchman determined, "The women's movement was not a general story because other editors did not choose to make it one."⁶⁰ Unlike other researchers' criticism of women's sections, her research found that women's sections helped to promote the movement. She quoted a women's page reporter who said, "If the feminist stories didn't run on our page, they wouldn't run anywhere."⁶¹ Her research found that

the relatively limited coverage of the movement was based on its backing of mainstream issues. Tuchman wrote, “Ironically, yet logically, the successful institutionalization of the women’s movement limited its ability to carry forth radical issues.”⁶²

Laura Ashley and Beth Olson conducted a content analysis to determine the framing of the women’s movement in the *New York Times*, *Time* and *Newsweek*. Their study looked at articles from 1966, the year of the founding of the National Organization for Women, to 1986, a time described by the researchers as the end of feminist social protest. Content was examined for references for and against the movement. In particular, Ashley and Olson looked at the delegitimation of the term “feminist.” They found that those against the feminist movement were portrayed as well organized and attractive, while those in support of the movement received the opposite depiction. In addition, the goals of the movement were rarely mentioned. Overall, they found that coverage was minimal. According to the study, “the women’s movement was rarely covered, and when it was, it was treated with humor and puzzlement.”⁶³

Roy Funkhouser looked at the coverage of several issues in magazines in the 1960s. He looked at the entire decade, using *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Reports*. In the first nine years, he found that articles about “women’s rights” made up about 1 percent of all coverage. By 1970, the amount of coverage had increased to 8 percent. He attributed the increase to the demonstrations organized by women’s movement leaders, as defined by the media.⁶⁴

In 1998, Patricia Bradley looked at the connection between the print media and the women’s movement. She wrote that while media coverage was limited, in a matter of months, new ideas about the role of women presented by the women’s movement went

from private conversations to a media-depicted “national phenomenon.”⁶⁵ Yet, this media attention did not mean that the voices of all women were represented. Only those women who knew how to gain media attention found themselves getting attention. “Feminists who did not share the view that feminism was about the integration of women into mainstream society quickly found themselves outside of the media frame,” Bradley found.⁶⁶ She also addressed the fact that the presence of more women in news sections did not improve the coverage of women’s issues because they “found it difficult to challenge entrenched news traditions, even if they wished to.”⁶⁷ She continued that the complexity of media operation did not allow the media to champion a cause and thus it could only aid the women’s movement to a degree. “The U.S. mass communication industries, operating in contexts of craft traditions, audience desire, and profit concerns, can seldom function as agents of activist reform, let alone revolution,” Bradley concluded.⁶⁸

Bradley’s recently published book addressed the media and the women’s liberation movement from 1963 to 1975.⁶⁹ Her book touches on the complexities of the movement ranging from the variety of members’ goals to the difficulties journalists had in understanding the goals. While it offers a good overview of the time period, only three pages in the 285-page work specifically address women’s pages. The references draw heavily from Greenwald’s biography of Charlotte Curtis, which was described earlier. This example is problematic as, unlike several other women’s page editors, Curtis did not identify herself as a feminist. Only one progressive women’s page editor is discussed. She was Carol Sutton, women’s page editor at the Louisville, Kentucky’s *Courier-Journal*, who renamed her section “Today’s Living” in 1963 and began to alter the

content. Her section's topics included abortion, migrant labor, rural poverty and other social issues. Bradley's source on Sutton was her *New York Times*' obituary.⁷⁰

Monica Morris looked at the coverage of the women's movement in the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* from July 1968 to June 1969 and from March 1970 to February 1971. Articles and photos were counted to determine the amount of coverage. In addition, Morris conducted interviews with movement leaders to examine the extent of the women's movement activities in the area. She found that despite extensive movement activities, the media's coverage was minimal. She cited a June 1970 *Los Angeles Times* article: "By 1969 women's liberation had become a broad-based movement."⁷¹ She noted ironically that neither newspaper studied had covered the movement much by the year 1969.⁷² She found that the movement continued to grow despite the lack of media coverage and that the definition of a movement was not defined by those within it but rather by the media itself.⁷³

In another study, Monica Morris looked at the coverage of the women's movement in national newspapers in England and local papers in California. A content analysis was done based on these terms: women's liberation, feminists and militant (when it applied to women.) The analysis was weighted based on the length of the article being coded. Morris found that there was little coverage in local California newspapers and even less coverage in British newspapers. She asserted that this lack of coverage, or "black out," was an act of social control. She wrote that her findings fit the concept that the media supported existing social norms and as the women's movement questioned those norms, it was excluded from coverage.

Jan Whitt examined the stigma of the traditional women's sections in relation to the *Chicago Tribune's* reintroduction of a women's section in 1984.⁷⁴ While some camps supported the new section because it was devoted to serious women's issues, others claimed these stories should be on the front pages. Whitt found that this agreement involved conflict for women journalists. Some interviewed for the study criticized the new women's pages for "ghettoizing" women's news.⁷⁵ Virginia Culver, a former *Denver Post* women's page reporter, said: "I'm afraid it would slap us back into a slot and make it easy to categorize us again."⁷⁶ On the other hand, Colleen Dishon, self-identified feminist and past-*Chicago Tribune* associate editor, defended the gender-specific section:

It's about women and it's about news. Why not say so? Some implied, "How dare you call it 'women's news.'" Real news is not about women. I agree that men and women read the same things. For me, though, "Womanews" was like having a sports section, but this time everyone was committed and dedicated to women instead of sports. We ran information you'd never get if it were a part of the whole.⁷⁷

Women's Page Editors

In the early 1970s, Won Chang conducted a national survey and found that women editors earned less than men editors did for overseeing the same sections. Of his sample, 305 responders were women and 30 were men.⁷⁸ The women reported that they were bothered by the fact that some men considered the women lucky to have jobs. The male editors said they didn't consider the women to be "token," simply hired to make a newspaper look like it was making efforts to promote gender diversity. The male responders reported that they felt that they could help to ease prejudice against women in the newsroom, although they did not indicate how.

William James Willis researched how women and men editors looked at news differently in the early 1980s.⁷⁹ He surveyed 52 editors using a news value scale and also

surveyed editor perceptions of what readers wanted. Overall, he found that women editors perceived their readers' news judgment to be closer to their own than male editors did. He also looked at how editors viewed specific stories. In the case of a woman alleging rape, 55 percent of women considered this to be a highly important story, while 46 percent of men did. Interestingly, one male editor responded that newspaper content was "far too heavily weighted to male views and interests, primarily because men control most newsroom policies."⁸⁰

Rose Ann Robertson researched the stories that women's page editors Anderson, Castleberry and Journey chose to cover and what influenced those choices during the time that their women's sections were transitioning into lifestyle sections. These editors did not want to abolish the women's sections – rather they wanted to include stories in their sections that were more relevant to their readers than traditional fare. Robertson looked at their coverage of working women, civil rights, and changing society (including topics such as anorexia, child abuse, drugs, herpes, incest, mercy killings, the National Organization for Women and premenstrual syndrome). She concluded that these women editors were running progressive stories long before these subjects reached the front pages.⁸¹ These developments were in spite of, rather than because of, directives from management. The women were valued by their communities and readers more than by their editors, she concluded.

Rodger Streitmatter used the Washington Press Club Foundation's "Women in Journalism" oral history project to trace how Journey, Castleberry and Anderson transformed their sections despite having managing editors who were not supportive of change. His study also looked at the topics that were included in the editors' sections, but

not at the way the stories were written. He briefly touched on the J.C. Penney-Missouri awards, which recognized outstanding women's pages, but he did not explain their significance, although he found that some women's sections helped change the path of journalism.⁸² For example, according to Streitmatter, it wasn't unusual in the 1950s for a few path-breaking women's pages to address issues of different cultures and races while other newspaper sections ignored minorities. He cited a 1960s practice at the *Dallas Times Herald* that barred photos of African Americans. Castleberry reported that her regular efforts to include black brides in the women's pages were blocked. She took her fight to the publisher and eventually she was able to run the photos. This change led to photos of African Americans appearing in other sections.⁸³

Conclusion

Little of the research previously done on the media's coverage of the women's movement has examined the content of women's pages. In the 1950s and 1960s, some women's pages were striving for change, as was noted most prominently in the industry reports. Yet, the contributions of the women journalists of the time have been given little attention.

Another concern about the literature reviewed is that rarely did researchers look beyond major metropolitan dailies such as the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*. This was despite the fact that the J.C. Penney-Missouri Awards, which recognized top women's sections, provided a list of progressive women's pages, which were often in smaller markets.⁸⁴ Winning women's page editors said they were influenced not by top newspapers but rather by the work of other winning editors. By ignoring the work of

smaller papers that had an influence, researchers have not provided a true record of women's pages.

The studies reviewed in this chapter failed to fully explore progressive changes made by influential women's page editors. The research also did not address the difficult situation that these editors (particularly at newspapers other than the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*) were placed in as they covered a movement that they believed in personally, yet knew some of their readers were uneasy with. To understand their predicament, the next chapter will explore the women's movement and the media.

¹ This lack of representation is referred to as symbolic annihilation in Gaye Tuchman, *Hearth and Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) 5-6.

² Kathryn Cirksena, "Politics and Difference: Radical Feminist Epistemological Premises for Communication Studies," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 11 (1987): 230.

³ Jean Ward, "Attacking the King's English: Implications for Journalism in the Feminist Critiques," *Journalism Quarterly* 52 (1975): 699-705.

⁴ Junetta Davis, "Sexist Bias in Eight Newspapers," *Journalism Quarterly* 59 (1982): 456-460.

⁵ Ward, 459.

⁶ Rodger Streitmatter, "Transforming the Women's Pages: Strategies that Worked," *Journalism History* 24 (1998): 77.

⁷ Marie Anderson and Maggie Savoy, "What Does Your Women's Editor Think of You?" Associated Press Managing Editors Red Book, 1963, Marie Anderson's unindexed papers, Box 3. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri.

⁸ Anderson and Savoy, 16.

⁹ Ibid, 19.

¹⁰ Harry Sonneborn, "How Is It Going in the Women's Departments? Or What Has Happened Since Anderson-Savoy?" Associated Press Managing Editors Women's Committee. 1969, Marie Anderson's unindexed papers, Box 3, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri.

¹¹ Sonneborn, 15.

¹² Ibid, 1.

¹³ Ibid, 6.

¹⁴ Associated Press Managing Editor Modern Living Committee. "Our Changing Women's Pages: Where Are We Now?" October 1975. Marie Anderson's unindexed papers, Box 3, Western Historical Manuscript Collection.

¹⁵ APME, 1.

¹⁶ Ibid, 7-11.

¹⁷ Nicholas Von Hoffman, "Why Should Women's Editors Ride in the Back of the Bus?" *What's Wrong with Women's Pages*, University of Chicago Center for Policy Study, 1971, 4.

¹⁸ Ibid, 4.

¹⁹ Ibid, 52.

²⁰ Colleen Dishon, "The Tea Party Was Over a Long Time Ago; Please Take the Tea Cups Away," *What's Wrong with Women's Pages*, University of Chicago Center for Policy Study, 1971, 17.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid, 19.

²³ Don Corrigan, "Joining the Women's Pages," *Journalism: Stories From the Real World* (Golden, Colorado: North American Press, 1995), 32.

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- ²⁵ Ibid, 17.
- ²⁶ Mei-ling Yang, "Women's Pages or People's Pages: The Production of News for Women in the *Washington Post* in the 1950s," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 73 (1996): 364-378.
- ²⁷ Ibid, 371.
- ²⁸ Ibid, 372.
- ²⁹ Ibid, 367.
- ³⁰ Ibid, 373.
- ³¹ Ibid, 371.
- ³² Ibid, 373.
- ³³ Ibid, 374.
- ³⁴ Harvey Molotch, "The News of Women and the Work of Men," in *Hearth & Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media*, eds. Gaye Tuchman, Arlene Kaplan Daniels and James Benet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) 176-185.
- ³⁵ Ibid, 181.
- ³⁶ Ibid, 185.
- ³⁷ Ibid, 185.
- ³⁸ Zena Beth Guenin, "Women's Pages in American Newspapers: Missing Out on Contemporary Content," *Journalism Quarterly*, 52 (1975): 69.
- ³⁹ Guenin, 70.
- ⁴⁰ Susan Miller, "Changes In Women's/Lifestyle Sections," *Journalism Quarterly* 53 (1976): 641-647.
- ⁴¹ Miller, 647.
- ⁴² Sharyne Merritt and Harriet Gross, "Women's Page/Lifestyle Editors: Does Sex Make a Difference?" *Journalism Quarterly* 55 (1978): 423.
- ⁴³ Lee Jolliffe and Terri Catlett, "Women Editors at the 'Seven Sisters' Magazines, 1965-1985: Did They Make a Difference?" *Journalism Quarterly* 71 (1994): 804-806.
- ⁴⁴ Jolliffe & Catlett, 806.
- ⁴⁵ Marilyn Greenwald, *A Woman of the Times: Journalism, Feminism, and the Career of Charlotte Curtis* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1999), 119.
- ⁴⁶ Maria Henson, "A Woman at Odds With Her Times," *Columbia Journal Review* (Fall 1999) 67-68.
- ⁴⁷ Greenwald, 118.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid, 120.
- ⁴⁹ Susan Brownmiller, *In Our Time: Memoir of a Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1999), 40.
- ⁵⁰ Susan Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Random House, 1995), 158.
- ⁵¹ National Organization of Women, Northern Virginia Chapter, "Newspaper Monitoring Project," Arlington, Va: NOW, Northern Virginia Chapter, 1973.
- ⁵² This study was also described in Matilda Butler and William Paisley's *Women and the Mass Media*. (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1980), 166-117.
- ⁵³ Rebecca Ann Lind and Colleen Salo, "The Framing of Feminists and Feminism in News and Public Affairs Programs in U.S. Electronic Media," *Journal of Communication* 52 (2002), 211-228.
- ⁵⁴ Lind and Salo, 226.
- ⁵⁵ Epstein, 218.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid, 221.
- ⁵⁷ Gaye Tuchman "The Newspaper as A Social Movement's Resource," in *Hearth & Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media*, eds. Gaye Tuchman, Arlene Kaplan Daniels and James Benet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 186-215.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid, 209.
- ⁵⁹ Gaye Tuchman, *Making the News* (New York: Free Press, 1982), 146.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid, 147.
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Chapter Three

Framing the Women's Movement

This chapter looks at the frames that were used by mainstream newspaper journalists in news and women's sections in relation to women's issues as presented in the women's movement. A brief background of the time will provide a foundation for the changes in newspaper content. The women's movement questioned the role of women in a patriarchal society. As Ruth Rosen wrote, "It took a women's movement to address the many ways women felt exploited, to lend legitimacy to their growing sense of injustice, and to name and reinterpret customs and practices that had long been accepted, but for which there was no language."¹ This movement did not have support from the mainstream media² and thus many women were only shown a negative or simplified representation of the movement, which will be further detailed below. The coverage by mainstream newspapers is being examined in order to better understand how women's page editors presented news about the women's movement to their individual communities. As Maurine Beasley and Sheila Gibbons wrote,

Many people, knowing only what the mass media told them about the movement, lacked sufficient information to judge the movement's significance. What they thought of the movement was generally a reflection of what they had read or heard or were shown about. And indeed, most reporting on the 'second wave,' as modern-era feminist activism was known, trivialized the issues and mocked the movement's leaders.³

Much of this change is thought to have involved the media's attention to inequities, even if much of the media's rhetoric was negative. The mere reporting of inequity spread a message that encouraged other women to become active in the movement. Susan Douglas⁴ looked at the mixed messages that the media sent to women through popular culture. She theorized that the media offered representations that

reinforced traditional roles, but also representations that were progressive and empowering. She wrote that women were told that they could have careers, yet they were also told to focus on their appearances and their relationships.⁵

Despite the lack of mainstream-media support, through the creation of feminist organizations and demonstrations of social protests, societal change was initiated to benefit women. The 1920s to the early 1960s was a period of limited feminist activity, but even if “limited,” feminism is not non-existent. Throughout this period there were individuals, such as the three editors studied here, who were pushing a feminist agenda. Other “feminists” were, like Castleberry, Journey and Paxson, most typically professional women, such as women university faculty, or women who were important in the labor movement, or the Black women’s club movement. The issues they cared about were generally of interest to professional women: the Equal Rights Amendment and equal pay. The question of equal pay cut across class, including all working women, both professional and unionized. An organized feminist movement was not very visible or effective during this period, but it existed.

The period of the early 1960s, when Democrats are voted back into power was a period when these already active feminists, with their already identified issues, were finally able to achieve some successes—especially in pay and employment issues. Many of their issues had been on the feminist agenda since suffrage was voted. But with the support of a liberal administration and Congress, they gained greater visibility. The Commission on the Status of Women, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, issued a report in 1963 that documented discrimination against women in virtually every area of American life. States responded by establishing their own commissions for women to investigate

discriminatory conditions and to recommend changes. In that same year, Betty Friedan published the landmark book, *The Feminine Mystique*,⁶ which has been cited as an igniting force for the women's movement. (It is significant to note that *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Washington Star* did not review Friedan's book.⁷) Friedan,⁸ a former journalist, detailed the intellectual oppression that middle-class, college-educated women were experiencing because of limited opportunities. The book inspired thousands of women to examine their roles as homemakers.

Also at this time, women members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the major student organization of the civil rights movement, and Students for Democratic Society (SDS), the student organization for the New Left, began to question their roles in organizations that were not willing to champion gender issues.⁹ In his book on this period, Todd Gitlin cites a cartoon of a woman holding a screaming baby, while washing a pile of dishes, saying into the telephone, "He's not here, he's out helping the struggle of oppressed people."¹⁰

According to Jo Freeman, the women's movement of the 1960s began with the activities of two different groups. The first was what she described as an "older branch" of politically active women who had taken part in the state Commissions on the Status of Women, and the second a "younger branch" of women who had had taken part in the civil rights and New Left movements. The older branch created the National Organization for Women (NOW). The younger branch developed conscious raising groups and took on more radical activities.¹¹

These groups brought employment issues to the nation's attention. When Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act was passed, it prohibited employment discrimination on the

basis of sex as well as race, religion, and national origin. The legislation led to the establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to investigate discrimination complaints in the workplace. In the commission's first five years, it received 50,000 sex discrimination complaints but little was done. Friedan and the chairs of the various state commissions looked to the possibility of forming a civil rights organization for women similar to the NAACP, and by 1966 NOW was organized. Other organizations were created to address the needs of specific groups of women, including members of various ethnic groups, lesbians, welfare recipients, business owners and potential politicians.

On college campuses, as well as in other communities, some women began forming "women's liberation" organizations to address their role and status within a changing society. This led to grass-root efforts to establish a greater voice and place for women in communities. Women's newspapers and bookstores were created. Battered women's shelters and rape crisis hotlines were established, and issues of sexual abuse and domestic violence started to be better recognized by the criminal justice system.¹² Clinics were opened to provide birth control and family planning information to low-income women. Legislation to address gender discrimination was created through Title IX in the Education Codes of 1972. It established equal access to higher education and to professional schools for women and outlawed quotas that limited women's enrollment in graduate schools. It also established equal access for girls and women to athletics in educational programs. Below is a more detailed description of this time period based on media coverage of the women's movement.

The Media and the Women's Movement

Research has documented the lack of media coverage for the women's movement.¹³ The lack of coverage of women meant that the few articles that did run became the representation of the movement. This tended to simplify the extensive battle that women were undertaking to establish equal opportunities. It fit the concept of symbolic annihilation which is based on two ideas: "Media content is a symbolic rather than a literal representation of society and that to be represented in the media is in itself a form of power."¹⁴ In 1978, Gaye Tuchman applied this theory to the coverage of women and argued that through "absence, condemnation and trivialization, the media reflect a social world in which women are consistently devalued."¹⁵

After the publication of Freidan's book, new ideas about the role of women went from private conversations to being a "national phenomenon."¹⁶ Yet this media attention did not mean that the views of all feminists were represented. Only those women who knew how to gain media attention found themselves being symbolized. Patricia Bradley said, "Feminists who did not share the view that feminism was about the integration of women into mainstream society quickly found themselves outside of the media frame."¹⁷ The media's focus most often was on Gloria Steinem and Friedan. This focus on celebrity spokesperson was the opposite of what the movement was promoting – opportunities for each woman to speak for herself. Not only did this limit the message being sent, it caused political problems within the movement. According to movement participant Susan Brownmiller, "Nothing threatened a particular kind of movement woman more than seeing another movement woman's name in print."¹⁸

The women's movement posed considerable difficulties in coverage from several standpoints. According to Carol Mueller, prior to 1970, much of the women's movement had been a "movement of friends" created in the "submerged networks of civil rights."¹⁹ The lack of organization would have made it difficult for journalists to cover the movement even if they had wanted to. Marginal coverage also can be explained by the media's typical model of reacting to events rather than issues. Difficulty in publicizing their story and often condescending, if not hostile, coverage meant that many movement leaders were leery of journalists. The leaders wouldn't speak to reporters and on some occasions, reporters had their notes stolen and their microphones taken away.²⁰ "Feminist sympathizers among the press complained that some militants were making it impossible for them to cover movement news,"²¹ according to Davis.

In spite of much anecdotal evidence of biased and/or nonexistent coverage, by the early 1970s, the movement eventually became too big for journalists to ignore. According to Flora Davis:

On one hand, they educated the American public about a multitude of issues, from wife-beating to the gender gap. On the other hand, they failed to cover much of what happened in the movement and often distorted what they did cover. A feminist conference wasn't considered news, for example, unless the women were at one another's throats, fighting for power.²²

Social movements become movements due to media coverage – the press is needed to spread the message. "Though the mass media were, for the most part, hostile to feminism, they made its boom years possible. . . . As a result, thousands of women joined feminist groups, tried consciousness-raising and turned out for rallies and demonstrations,"²³ Davis wrote.

The Conflict Frame

In defining what is newsworthy, journalists are drawn to conflict. A city council meeting with topics that everyone can agree upon is not as interesting as a meeting where heated debate occurs. The first meeting in this scenario may not even warrant an article; the second meeting could garner headlines. The women's movement, like other social movements, earned media attraction when it did something that incited debate. The coverage may have been biased, but it did get the issues women were fighting for in the news pages. As Davis put it, "There are circumstances in which any publicity is good publicity, and going strictly by the numbers, that seemed to be true for the women's movement."²⁴ Protests – as moments of conflict – fit the news frame with which journalists were familiar. Reporters could cover these conflicts as they would have the heated debate at the meeting. "It took violence – or an approach that seemed both fresh and funny – to get into the newspapers,"²⁵ according to Davis.

Three women's movement protests received the most media attention. One of the first public demonstrations that established the movement in the eyes of the media was the 1968 Miss America Pageant protest. More than 200 women protested ludicrous beauty standards forced on women. The women crowned live sheep to demonstrate that the contestants were being treated like animals at a county fair. Robin Morgan described the event as "a watershed – the beginning of a grass-roots feminist explosion in North America."²⁶ The media heavily covered this event – to the degree that a media myth was invented. A press release prior to the protest announced that women would be burning their bras. That action never actually occurred, although it became an image that was commonly associated with the movement.²⁷ Also significant to this event was the

participants' decision to only speak to women journalists. According to Morgan, "We estimated correctly that it would raise consciousness about the position of women in the media – and help more women get jobs there as well as helping those who were already there escape from the ghetto of women's pages."²⁸

In her analysis of the protest, Carol Hanisch wrote that the media focused more on the positives than the negatives of the event. She cited Shana Alexander who wrote in a *Life* magazine editorial that she wished the protesters had gone further. In the *Daily News*, a reporter pointed out that women were not protesting femininity: "Gals say they're not anti-beauty, just anti-beauty contest."²⁹

Two years after the Miss America protest, some feminist leaders took on women's magazines. In March 1970, actions by women in the women's movement and women journalists themselves attracted attention to concepts of equality. Led by Susan Brownmiller, one hundred feminists held a "sit in" at the *Ladies Home Journal* to protest the magazine's promotion of the traditional role for women in articles and in advertising. The sit-in lasted through the day and into the evening before the editor-in-chief John Mack Carter agreed to include an eight-page feminist supplement in an upcoming issue. The supplement was created by a group of thirty women. The unsigned articles included: "Should This Marriage Be Saved," "Women and Work," "Housewives' Bill of Rights" and "How to Start Your Own Consciousness-Raising Group."³⁰ The magazine also added a regular column for working women that was written by a feminist. The media heavily covered the incident.³¹ According to Davis, the sit-in was a victory. She wrote that "for the first time, articles by feminists explaining what the new feminism was all about reached non-movement women across the country."³²

The third event that came to represent the movement was the Women's Strike for Equality on March 26, 1970. The strike, initiated by Friedan, was in many ways symbolic as many women could not simply walk away from their jobs. Instead, there were sit-ins, lunch-hour rallies and a march down Fifth Avenue in New York. It was the largest women's protest in U.S. history.³³ Those within the movement considered the event a success, although media coverage was largely condescending.³⁴ According to Rosen, the media used the march to "sensationalize and discredit the women's movement."³⁵ For example, Howard K. Smith on ABC began his coverage this way: "Three things have been difficult to tame. The ocean, fools and women. We may soon be able to tame the ocean, but fools and women will take a little longer."³⁶ On CBS, Eric Sevareid said, "The plain truth is, most American men are startled by the idea that American women generally are oppressed, and they read with relief the Gallup poll that two-thirds of women don't think they're oppressed either."³⁷ Newspaper coverage was not much more positive. According to a *New York Times* editorial that ran the day after the strike,

It is an unfortunate truth that a protest group such as the Women's Liberation Movement can only make itself heard if it speaks at the top of its voice and resorts to publicity-seeking exhibitionism. The suffragettes of a half-century ago, whose great triumph – the Nineteenth Amendment – was commemorated yesterday, were often noisy and obstreperous.³⁸

In her memoir of the women's movement, Brownmiller doesn't mention the negative press but rather how the media responded to issues for the first time. She wrote of the Women's Strike for Equality Day: "For the first time since the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, newspapers and magazines seemed to expect women to stand up for their rights."³⁹ Mueller also theorized that the media's coverage of the strike was a unifying force in the development of the movement.⁴⁰ Journalist David Broder agreed

that the impact of the strike was significant. He wrote, “The tactic worked. The agenda of causes was spelled out in full, and for the first time, debated.”⁴¹

Craft-Related Habits Frame

The structure of a reporter’s job made coverage of the women’s movement difficult in terms of sources and timing, in view of what Philips described as “craft-related habits of mind.”⁴² The typical journalistic conventions, such as timeliness, prominence and a focus on events rather than issues mean that some activities are not recognized as news. According to Tuchman, newspaper reporters’ heavy reliance on established business and governmental institutions and people with institutionalized power “may account in part for their denigration of women and the women’s movement.”⁴³ Frequently movement organizers did not consider reporters’ schedules so that important deadlines were missed. For example, often meetings and speeches were held on weekends and at night when reporters weren’t on duty. According to a New York reporter who covered women’s issues, “I find that a lot of feminists are ignorant of the realities of a working newsroom.”⁴⁴ Many of the media-defined leaders of the movement, such as Steinem and Friedan, had backgrounds in the media and knew how to get the attention of reporters. Yet, Friedan failed to hold press conferences at times that would allow reporters to make deadlines⁴⁵ and Steinem would occasionally refuse to speak with women’s page editors.⁴⁶

In addition, the journalistic principle of balance in news stories led to anti-movement messages in newspapers. The perceived interests of the readership may have been another driving force in a negative tone of women’s movement coverage. Former women’s page editor Marie Saulsbury wrote in an Associated Press Managing Editors

report that not all of the women in her community of San Bernardino, California were supporters of the movement:

We hated to admit that club women did have their place in the world and that society stories were not always bad. And that many women not only couldn't care less about the women's lib movement, they were openly hostile to it. ... It's time to consider our entire readership; something we've never really done.⁴⁷

Yet, by the early 1970s, with an increase in legislation and court decisions addressing women's rights, the women's movement received a higher level of coverage as. Some newspapers established a women's movement beat.⁴⁸ *New York Times* economic reporter Eileen Shanahan recalled her creation of a national women's rights beat after she started covering the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) campaign. She was among other women reporters who initiated women's beats.⁴⁹ According to Brownmiller, "By 1971 the national media were no longer simply engaged in reporting a story. Newsrooms were being impacted directly by women's movement, and the demands for a new order were reaching into the journalists' personal, as well as their professional, lives."⁵⁰ This increased coverage also meant a different tone emerged – especially in women's pages, although it was also at this time that many sections were disappearing. Many of the stereotypical images of the shrill, angry woman were replaced by more favorable images of women looking for equality who expected to be taken seriously. As Rachel Blau DuPlessis and Ann Snitow wrote:

Beginning about 1970, for a few years, media attention spotlighted feminism. This created an atmosphere of glamour around a white, free, young, pretty, gutsy few. The mirror was held up to these vivid young for a year or so; then it was smashed. The press found out that women really meant it. ... Once the message started to repeat and gain in intensity, the media decamped. Women had burst beyond the surface packaging in which the media wrapped them.⁵¹

Objectivity Frame

The media, like other professions, spent decades overlooking sexual discrimination in its own workplace. In March 1970, *Newsweek* researchers (all but one was female) filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission charging that “women were systematically discriminated against both in hiring and promotion.”⁵² Their complaint followed a press conference in which the women announced the limited opportunities they had at the magazine where they were trapped as researchers. They were incited to action after the magazine decided to assign a cover story on the women’s movement to a freelancer, a rare occurrence at the publication. The press conference occurred on the day the women’s movement issue hit the newsstands. *Newsweek* worked out a settlement with the women.⁵³

In Washington, women journalists picketed a Gridiron dinner protesting the club’s ban on women members in 1970.⁵⁴ This action led women from the *Washington Post* and the *Washington Star* to form caucuses to discuss the treatment of women in the newsroom and in the pages of their newspapers. They asked for equal pay and the elimination of stereotypes for identification, such as referring to Golda Meir, premier of Israel at the time, as a grandmother rather than a government leader. By 1972, *Washington Post* Executive Editor Ben Bradlee agreed to eliminate terms like “divorcee” and “housewife.”⁵⁵ He also issued the following statement:

It is the policy of the *Washington Post* to make the equality and dignity of women completely and instinctively meaningful. This policy begins in the newsroom with hiring practices, and follows naturally through assignment and promotion practices. We will use all our resources to combat discrimination against women.⁵⁶

The women researchers at *Newsweek* and the Washington newspapers were not alone. In one workplace study, more than 50 percent of women journalists “affirmed the presence of unjustified discrimination.”⁵⁷ Traditionally, women’s page editors and reporters were paid less than male editors and reporters. Pay inequities occurred even when men took on what were considered “women’s beats.” A 1974 survey of 335 women’s page editors found that the 30 male editors were paid substantially more than the 305 women.⁵⁸ The inequities meant that women journalists were in the awkward position of being a part of the story that they were covering, testing the typical frame of objectivity that most journalists follow. Tuchman found that some feminist reporters would ask hostile questions of feminist leaders in order to “prove their reportorial neutrality.”⁵⁹

Before the second-wave women’s movement, the cultural constraints of being a woman in a male-dominated field impacted the way female reporters were expected to do their jobs and limited their abilities to climb career ladders. Many women journalists were denied important news beats, had significant stories taken away from them and were denied promotions that they were qualified for. Despite the blatant sexism, little changed until the women’s movement. Initially, according to Beasley and Gibbons, “Because women in the media were accustomed to being discriminated against and feared being replaced, it was not surprising that they did not immediately seek redress under civil rights legislation.”⁶⁰ But eventually, the women’s movement did cause female journalists to take action in seeking equality in the workplace. “With their consciousness raised, women did not like what they saw. Widespread dissatisfaction caused groups of women

within news organizations to band together to fight sex discrimination,”⁶¹ Beasley and Gibbons wrote.

Pay and promotion inequity lawsuits continued throughout the 1970s. In 1977, when women writers sued *Reader's Digest*; their settlement was \$1.3 million or about \$244 each for the 5,635 women involved. In 1978, NBC also settled a sex discrimination complaint with its 2,700 female employees for \$540,000 or \$200 per woman.⁶² The lawsuits shed light on many discriminatory practices, such as the story told in Nan Robertson's *Girls in the Balcony*. The name of her book, which is a history of women at the *New York Times*, came from a discriminatory practice that occurred at the National Press Club in Washington in the 1950s and 1960s. The club began accepting women only in 1971; prior to that, Robertson wrote, the balcony was a metaphor for the exclusion that many women journalists endured. After World War II numerous leaders gave important speeches at the National Press Club, making news that was carried the next day in media outlets across the country. Until 1955, women were not allowed in the club at all to cover the speeches. Finally that year, the male members came up with a plan that allowed women journalists to cover speakers from the balcony of the ballroom, but they had to stand because the balcony was too narrow for chairs. According to Bonnie Angelo, chief of the *Newsday* bureau in Washington:

Here were the people in the balcony, distinguished journalists treated like second-class citizens. I *had* to cover the stories there. Some people equated the balcony with the back of the bus, but at least the bus got everybody to the same destination just as well. We could not ask questions of the speakers. ... All this standing - it was like a cattle car. And all the time you were really boiling inside. You entered and left through a back door, and you'd be glowered at as you went through the club quarters. It was discrimination at its rawest.⁶³

The result of this awakening was a number of pay inequity lawsuits, like that fought at the *New York Times*. By 1977, statisticians hired by the Women's Caucus lawyers there found that men were paid on average \$98.67 a week more than women for the same position, or \$5,160 a year. Experts noted that while \$1,425 of the difference could be attributed to education levels and years of experience, this still left an unexplained \$3,725.⁶⁴ The case was ultimately settled in 1978 for a nominal amount and the *Times* acknowledged no wrongdoing,⁶⁵ but the evidence of sexism made an impact. Several internal memos of sexist content were uncovered during the discovery process of the lawsuit. The following memo was written by Sunday editor Dan Schwarz in response to one from Heather Bradley in the London bureau, who had recommended a young woman for a job: "We'll take your word on Pamela Kent, of course. What does she look like? Twiggy? Lynn Redgrave? Perhaps you ought to send over her vital statistics, or picture in a bikini?" . . . In the performance review of one young female employee in the circulation and promotion departments, a male supervisor wrote that she was "very pleasant. Good at shorthand and typing. Her chief ambition is probably to get married. Has a good figure and is not restrained about dressing it to advantage."⁶⁶

Women's Page Frames

Former women's page editor Colleen Dishon wrote that there were two kinds of women's pages in the late 1960s. The first, she said, "embraced the so-called American dream, 'a la Ozzie and Harriet,'" while the other "perceived its readers as part of the real world, curious about whatever made it go 'round."⁶⁷ She wrote that women editors in the second group who were "widely separated by distance but loosely bound through a common cause – flight from fluff – embraced this and also adopted what I called the

beyond-the-housewife syndrome.”⁶⁸ It was their women’s sections that took the lead covering the women’s movement and doing so in a positive way. Former *Miami Herald* women’s page editor Marie Anderson was one of those editors who often covered the women’s movement. In one instance, a repressed task force report about women produced by the Nixon administration was leaked to Anderson and she made it available as a 25-cent brochure. Historian Anne Kasper said of Anderson, “When the women’s movement erupted Marie saw increased possibilities for reporting news about women and she took significant risks in printing stories which management found disturbing and too controversial.”⁶⁹

As has been pointed out, little research on the media’s coverage of the women’s movement has concerned the women’s pages. An exception was that of Gaye Tuchman who interviewed reporters and editors who worked for the women’s page in the *New York Times* at the beginning of the women’s movement.⁷⁰ Her study looked at coverage in the women’s section versus the general news section. Joan Whitman, who was the assistant women’s editor under Charlotte Curtis and handled the day-to-day operations of the section, took the initiative in covering the women’s movement in the 1970s. She said that she thought the women’s page could provide better coverage than the news section because stories there could be longer and would not be bumped due to breaking, hard news events.⁷¹ According to Whitman, despite her willingness to provide strong coverage of the women’s movement, she was treated poorly by feminist leaders. She said, “I always get flack from women in the movement [who think stories about their activities should be run on the general news pages]. I just think they’re wrong. It’s better to have

lots of space and good display than to be a four-paragraph story and compete with Watergate.”⁷²

Feminists did not agree with Whitman’s sentiments about the women’s pages providing the best placement for their news. Even when articles supported the women’s movement, they were bothered because the coverage appeared in what they considered the “ghetto” of the newspaper.⁷³ *New York Times* women’s page editor Charlotte Curtis, who preceded Whitman, said that she felt she was in a no-win situation in the late 1960s. She said,

If we ran feminist stories on that page, people would say, “But you’re segregating them by putting them on that page. They belong in the news.” If we didn’t run them, and said they should go in the news section, they’d say, “You’re against us because there should be a page devoted exclusively to feminist problems.”⁷⁴

Women’s movement leaders believed that stories in the women’s section meant that the messages of the movement were taken less seriously than if they had been in the regular news section. Journey recalled the lack of support she received as she transformed her section in the early 1970s:

The women's movement did not help any at this point. Gloria Steinem and Bella Abzug , probably, although I remember Steinem's efforts more, maintained that women's news should be treated like any other news and should appear throughout the newspaper, on page one, or the local pages, and so forth. In theory, that was fine, but it didn't work out in practice. It simply disappeared from newspapers.⁷⁵

The issues central to the women’s movement were complex. There was sometimes controversy among movement leaders and those who believed in gender equality but did not always agree about communication strategies. According to feminist bell hooks, “Feminism has its party line and women who feel a need for a different strategy, a different foundation, often find themselves ostracized and silenced.”⁷⁶ Many

women's page editors found themselves in that position. They considered themselves feminists, yet at times, they were ostracized by feminist leaders. Editors of these sections came under attack for "segregating" news that related to women. In the minds of feminist leaders, the elimination of "women's pages" would mean these stories would make it to the front page. Although many women's sections contained elements of activism and challenged stereotypes, some feminists criticized the women's pages for "ghettoizing" women's news.⁷⁷ The result was the loss of women's sections – at the expense of some editors' jobs. Paxson faced the anger of feminist leaders many times:

The activists wanted the movement news off our pages, and in their eyes we women editors were traitors. When editors responded by changing women's sections to general interest feature sections, women's editors paid the price. We were not considered capable of directing this new kind of feature section. That was men's work.⁷⁸

Women's Page Editors' Subjectivity Frame

Numerous studies, several of which were described in the first chapter, have documented the typical news frame used by journalists. Women's page editors had a different news perspective from the editors of other sections. Content was looked at through a different frame. Some women's page editors were making efforts to change their newspapers in the early 1960s. The activism of the women's page editors meant that they were already a part of the women's movement; they did not pretend to use the objectivity frame defined earlier. Instead, these editors said they approached stories differently because they were women. As Castleberry said in 1989 about women journalists during her career, "I think women add special dimensions if they're allowed to speak their own voices. I think so often women have been trained not to be 'emotional' and to be [so] terribly objective that very often their real voices do not come through."⁷⁹

Castleberry, Journey and Paxson believed in feminist ideals and thus viewed their sections differently than those who did not consider themselves part of the women's movement. Castleberry recalled her own role in the movement. She was active in her community, often taking part in projects that were initiated by the women's movement.

Specifically, and personally, I was involved in all of the opening wedges of the women's movement and the children's rights movement and the custody movement, this sort of thing. The reason being because that's a part of the whole human being and it's imperative to the whole of us that we take care of these little pieces. So I was one of the founding members of the Dallas Women's Center and of the Women for Change prior to that, one of the founders of the Women's Issues Network, and one of the founders of the Executive Women of Dallas, and the different things that came along, because I happened to be there and had collected information and people knew me and knew what I did, then I would be drawn in as one of the founders.⁸⁰

Castleberry often wrote about abortion and other controversial topics.

Management recognized her activism and how her opinions shaped the coverage in her section. She, like Journey, Paxson and several other women's page editors, saw the news through a different framework than male journalists. Grace Lichtenstein, first female head of a national *New York Times* bureau, mentioned the difference in a 1975 interview with Tuchman. She said: "There have been times when I found editors unaware of things happening, like the rape laws. Only women think in terms of rape laws; the men [who are editors] know about capital punishment."⁸¹ Castleberry reported that the different framework was recognized and not encouraged by management. She said,

My management felt, as it sometimes did, that I was being too much of a feminist. They very often thought that. I had one boss tell me one time, I said, 'I can't help being a woman!' And he said, 'Well, you could try.' ... He was trying to be funny and it didn't come off as funny to me at all. But you cannot think outside the framework of who you are.⁸²

Women's Page Editors' Issue-Based Frame

In an article on the need for a “women’s movement beat,” Reg Murphy, *Baltimore Sun* president and publisher, said: “Gunfire is not the only source of news. And conflict may not be the big story. This story [the women’s movement] was important because it was the awakening of the world to the problems of women.”⁸³ The women’s page editors examined in this dissertation often used an issue-based frame, rather than a conflict frame. These editors did not need a protest or sit-in to occur in order to take on serious, and sometimes controversial, topics. For example, some women’s page editors did not find it acceptable that the African-American community wasn’t being covered. In the 1950s, there was no coverage of black brides at the *Dallas Times-Herald*. Castleberry said she made the request almost weekly to change the policy. Permission for change came only after Castleberry asked for raises for her writers. She wrote a five-page letter to the top boss seeking more support for the women's section, from content to salary:

We feel like stepchildren, and it's very difficult for me to come in every day and get my staff all enthusiastic about what they are going to do when I do not feel enthusiasm from the top. We need to know we are a part of this family and that we are cared about. And we need to get paid for what we are doing, which we are not. And we know that our salary levels are lesser than they are in almost every other department.⁸⁴

No raises were given, but Castleberry did “get a little note from him saying that it's okay to publish black brides.”⁸⁵

The condescending tone of the general news was absent from many women’s page stories on issues that the movement considered important. Topics that Castleberry, Journey and Paxson included in their sections concerned pay equity, women’s legal rights, abortion and child care. Journey recalled covering the Equal Employment Opportunity

Commission and various lawsuits filed by individual woman in Detroit: “And the newsroom simply had more than they could handle. They just left that to us.”⁸⁶

Castleberry recalled that she made changes because she believed that issues central to the women’s movement were important:

I had opened the door—when I went to the *Times Herald*, we could not publish on the Living page, the front page of the women's section, the words ‘planned parenthood.’ And I didn't know that until I did it and I found out I could do that. And so it had already been done and then I could do it. Also, the fact that when the feminist movement first came along, I started using the word “Ms.” immediately. And I didn't know I couldn't do that for five years until one day when *Editor & Publisher* picked up a speech that I was making and said that we had been using “Ms.” at the *Times Herald* for five years and the next day I got a written edict from my management that *we* would no longer do this, that it was either Mrs. or Miss and that the word Ms. had no significance and we could not use it. And that was news to me because I had been doing it for five years and nobody had noticed.⁸⁷

This doesn’t mean that even progressive women’s page editors eliminated the traditional fare of their sections. Articles about food, fashion, family and women’s clubs co-existed with the more substantive stories. Some editors reported that the mix of topics was due to reader and advertising expectations. In the 1950s, Marie Sauer worked to create an empowered image of women in her section while continuing to run the more traditional content that she had been told readers wanted. She added a new kind of frame to the traditional fame used by women’s page editors. According to Mei-ling Yang, Sauer said:

Women took very hesitating steps to what in the 1960s would be called ‘using your full potential.’ Some women resented giving up their war jobs for homemaking but most women told us they were content to have their husbands back and to be rearing children (the rate was 3.1 per family), which they found a ‘very rewarding job.’ They resented the belittling of their child-rearing role.⁸⁸

The mix of traditional and progressive topics was typical of the media's often contradictory messages that represented women as both traditional and progressive. Again, this was a more complex frame than typical news content is usually viewed through. While many advertisements and articles encouraged women to be attractive and attentive to men, some content also showed women that they could be assertive and succeed. According to Douglas, these kinds of media messages were "porous, allowing us to accept and rebel against what we saw and how it was presented."⁸⁹

This is not to say that many women's sections were entirely supportive of the women's movement. Many stories that addressed issues central to the women's movement did show both sides – which may have been a matter of representing both sides in the community. Editors may have striven to show both sides of the movement because readers were unsure of how they felt. According to Winifred Wandersee, "one of the major tasks of feminists was to convince women themselves that they had a right to their freedom, and [that] women's issues were justifiable political objectives."⁹⁰

Journalists' craft-related habits of mind frames, such as timeliness, were less of an issue for women's pages than general news sections, since the women's sections often had an early deadline. Without the pressure of timeliness, issue-based stories were more likely to be found in the women's pages than other parts of the newspaper. And because the women's editors had been covering some of the issues central to the women's movement for years, it was natural for them to take these issues seriously. There was also more space for stories in the women's sections because, as Tuchman wrote, news about the women's movement did not have to compete with Watergate in general news columns.⁹¹ For that reason, many stories about the women's movement that ran in the

women's sections were longer and had better placement than other news stories about it, often including photos. As an example, Tuchman cited the coverage of the International Women's Year conference. The United Nations correspondent filed a story that was basically just a list of speakers. It ran inside a news section. The story on the event that ran in the women's section filled several columns and included the content of the speeches and an analysis of political interaction between feminists.⁹²

Elimination of Women's Pages

Ben Bradlee and the *Washington Post* are typically given credit in works on journalism for changing women's pages into style sections.⁹³ In 1968, Bradlee said that he found the *Post's* section, "For and About Women," to be dated in relation to women's developing roles in society. He wanted a new section with a new focus. He said that the mission of the new "'Style'" section was "first, to treat women as people and not as appendages to men, and second, to make the paper better organized."⁹⁴ The intent of the new section was to broaden the definition of women's news beyond that of interest only to wife and mother. In her memoir, Katherine Graham described her concern and then pride over the changed section:

What was right was that we had broken an old mold and were inventing an important and entirely new one – one for the new times that were dawning, in which women's and men's interests were coming together, in which neither one nor the other wanted to hear about women holding teacups around a table, or as Ben [Bradlee] put it: "We had become convinced that traditional women's news bored the ass off of all of us."⁹⁵

Bradlee said the section "made me feel uncomfortable. Women were treated exclusively as shoppers, party-goers, cooks, hostesses, and mothers and men were ignored."⁹⁶ Bradlee also said that a change was needed because despite having a women's section, there was no place in the paper "for a look at social trends beyond the seasonal

change of values.”⁹⁷ Yet, according to veteran journalist Peggy Simpson, a Nieman Fellow and Associated Press congressional correspondent, the loss of the section meant that the newspaper “literally abandoned any systematic coverage of the women’s movement.”⁹⁸ This was true at other newspapers, according to journalist Cokie Roberts. She said that the elimination of the sections meant that “serious news affecting women effectively disappeared.”⁹⁹

The result of feminist leaders’ argument against women’s pages was the loss of these sections – at the expense of editors. Paxson recalled a friend telling her that she was a casualty of the women’s movement because she lost her job as a women’s editor. Paxson responded: “Well, of course, that’s true and lots of other women were casualties, too, but I’m sure they had just as rough a time as I did.”¹⁰⁰ She said:

When you've got Gloria Steinem and people like her writing in her magazine and making speeches about (eliminating the sections) — and the National Organization for Women and other women's groups hammering at this in everything they say, every time they speak to an editors' group ... They began to hammer and pound and hammer and pound.¹⁰¹

Many of the best-known women’s movement leaders, such as Brownmiller, Freidan and Steinem, had been journalists and were well aware that men controlled the media. They hoped by criticizing women’s pages and arguing for more women in the media, the movement’s message would be portrayed with a positive tone. At the time, the few women who held jobs in journalism outside of the women’s pages were not in a position to make a difference. According to Wandersee, “That women played almost no role in this process was certainly a factor contributing to the trivialization of their issues and the general negative treatment of the politics of the movement.”¹⁰² Although the

movement did lead to more women in newsrooms, it also led to the elimination of many women's page editors' jobs.¹⁰³

The negative impact of the sections' elimination was noted by some women journalists who covered general news. Simpson wrote that in the late 1960s, news about the women's movement "crowded out the more traditional coverage of society balls and debutantes."¹⁰⁴ She did not think this was totally a good move in terms of keeping women readers. In fact, after the elimination of the sections, some women's section editors questioned the decision. Editor Saulsbury, who went on to become a city editor, said:

The trend away from women's sections toward modern living was a lot like the French revolution. It was destined by history to take place, it eliminated much that was bad, it cleared the way for a new day, BUT ... too many heads were lopped off as the movement went too far. No one denies that the blood bath was worth it. (Of course, it was our blood that was shed.) So long overdue that who can blame us when, in retrospect, we see that perhaps we became a little carried away with the swish, swish of the guillotine.¹⁰⁵

It should be remembered that some women's page editors had worked hard to include women's issues in their sections. According to Agnes Gottlieb, there was "a conscious realization by women editors of the section that if these women were not covered on the women's page, they would not be covered at all."¹⁰⁶ A true analysis of the newspapers coverage of the women's movement must include articles included in the women's sections. The results of a thematic analysis of award-winning women's page articles that concerned issues central to the women's movement are explained in Chapter 4.

¹ Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2000), xii.

² Although there were many strong feminist publications, they are not addressed here because mainstream metropolitan newspapers are being examined. Many of these publications are described in chapter 18 of Maurine Beasley and Sheila Gibbon's *Taking Their Place: A Documentary History of Women and Journalism*. (State College, Penn: Strata Publishing, 2003), 151-166.

³ *Ibid*, 150.

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- ⁴ Susan Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Random House, 1995), 1-24.
- ⁵ *Ibid*, 231.
- ⁶ Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Bantam Doubleday, 1963).
- ⁷ David Broder, *Behind the Front Page* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 126.
- ⁸ It is interesting to note that Friedan's mother was a women's page editor in Peoria, Illinois, prior to her marriage. "First Measured Century: Betty Friedan Interview." www.pbs.org/fmc/interviews/friedan.htm.
- ⁹ Monica Morris, "The Public Definition of a Social Movement: Women's Liberation," *Sociology and Social Research* 58 (1974): 526-543.
- ¹⁰ Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1980), 371.
- ¹¹ Jo Freeman, *The Politics of Women's Liberation* (New York: Longman, 1975), 105.
- ¹² It should be noted that the news sections of newspapers did not regularly cover domestic violence as an issue until the O.J. Simpson trial in 1994 and even after that, the issue was not treated as a broad social issue, according to a University of Pennsylvania study, described in Michelle Johnson "Covering Domestic Violence," *Quill Magazine*, October/November 2000, 40.
- ¹³ Roy Funkhouser, "Trends in Media Coverage of the Issues of the '60s," *Journalism Quarterly*, 50 (1979), 533-38.
- ¹⁴ Rebecca Lind, "Laying a Foundation for Studying Race, Gender and the Media," *Race, Gender, Media*, (New York: Pearson Education, Inc., 2004), 5.
- ¹⁵ Quoted in Lind, 5.
- ¹⁶ Patricia Bradley, "Mass Communication and the Shaping of the U.S. Feminism," *News, Gender and Power*, ed. Cynthia Carter, Gill Branston and Stuart Allan. (New York: Routledge, 1998), 166.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*, 171.
- ¹⁸ Susan Brownmiller, *In Our Time: Memoir of a Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1999), 98.
- ¹⁹ Mueller, 249.
- ²⁰ Davis, 109.
- ²¹ *Ibid*, 109.
- ²² Flora Davis, *Moving the Mountain: The Women's Movement in America since 1960* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 120.
- ²³ *Ibid*, 106.
- ²⁴ *Ibid*, 108.
- ²⁵ *Ibid*, 108.
- ²⁶ Robin Morgan, *The Word of A Woman* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), 15.
- ²⁷ *Ibid*, 26.
- ²⁸ *Ibid*, 24.
- ²⁹ Carol Hanisch, "What Can Be Learned: A Critique of the Miss America Protest," *Voices from Women's Liberation*, Ed. Leslie Tanner, (New York: Signet, 1970), 136.
- ³⁰ Davis, 113.
- ³¹ Brownmiller, 105.
- ³² Davis, 113.
- ³³ Carol Mueller, "Conflict Networks and the Origins of Women's Liberation," *New Social Movements*, eds. Enrique Larana, Hank Johnston and Joseph Gusfield (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 253.
- ³⁴ Douglas, 177.
- ³⁵ Rosen, 296.
- ³⁶ *Ibid*, 296.
- ³⁷ Rosen, 297; also quoted in Douglas, 163-164.
- ³⁸ Broder, 127.
- ³⁹ Brownmiller, 147.
- ⁴⁰ Mueller, 255.
- ⁴¹ Broder, 127.
- ⁴² Gaye Tuchman, "The Newspaper as a Social Movement's Resource," in *Hearth and Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media*, eds. Gaye Tuchman, Arlene Kaplan Daniels and James Benet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 135.

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- ⁴³ Ibid, 28
- ⁴⁴ Gaye Tuchman, *Making the News* (New York: Free Press, 1982), 144.
- ⁴⁵ Tuchman, *Making the News*, 118.
- ⁴⁶ Mills, 118.
- ⁴⁷ Saulsbury, 23.
- ⁴⁸ Tuchman., in *Home and Hearth*, 147.
- ⁴⁹ Tuchman, *Making the News*, 42.
- ⁵⁰ Brownmiller, 156.
- ⁵¹ Rachel Blau DuPlessis and Ann Snitow, *The Feminist Memoir Project* (New York: Random House. 1998), 15.
- ⁵² Brownmiller, 144.
- ⁵³ Davis, 111.
- ⁵⁴ Ellen Hoffman, "Women in the Newsroom," *Columbia Journalism Review*, Winter 1970-71. www.cjr.org. p. 3.
- ⁵⁵ In his memoir, *A Good Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), Ben Bradlee mentions only briefly his role in changing the section.
- ⁵⁶ Hoffman, 3.
- ⁵⁷ Maurine Beasley and Kathryn Theus, *The New Majority* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1988), 27.
- ⁵⁸ Maurine Beasley and Shelia Gibbons, *Taking Their Place: A Documentary History of Women in Journalism* (State College, Pennsylvania.: Strata Publishing, 2003), 188.
- ⁵⁹ Tuchman, 143.
- ⁶⁰ Beasley & Gibbons, 25.
- ⁶¹ Ibid, 3.
- ⁶² Ibid, 209.
- ⁶³ Robertson, 101.
- ⁶⁴ Nan Robertson, *The Girls in the Balcony: Women, Men, and the New York Times* (New York: Random House. 1992), 181.
- ⁶⁵ Maria Henson, "A Woman at Odds with Her Times," *Columbia Journalism Review* (Fall 1999): 67-68. A good explanation of the lawsuit can be found in Kay Mills's *From Pocahontas to Power Suits: Everything You Need to Know about Women's History in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), 266-267.
- ⁶⁶ Robertson, 196.
- ⁶⁷ Colleen 'Koky' Dishon, "We've Come a Long Way – Maybe," *Media Studies Journal* 11 (Spring 1997): 97.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid, 97.
- ⁶⁹ Anne Kasper, Introduction to Marie Anderson interview, October 7, 1989, Oral History Project. "Women in Journalism." Washington Press Club Foundation, 1.
- ⁷⁰ Tuchman, *Making the News*, 146.
- ⁷¹ Ibid, 146.
- ⁷² Quoted in Tuchman, *Making the News*, 149.
- ⁷³ Flora Davis, *Moving the Mountain: The Women's Movement in America since 1960* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 109.
- ⁷⁴ Marilyn Greenwald, *A Woman of the Times* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1999), 118.
- ⁷⁵ Rodger Streitmatter, "Transforming the Women's Pages: Strategies that Worked," *Journalism History* 24(1998): 73.
- ⁷⁶ bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (Boston: South End Press, 1984), 9.
- ⁷⁷ Jan Whitt, "Regression or Progression? *The Chicago Tribune* and Womanews." Paper presented at the American Journalism Historians Association national convention, 1994. An adapted version of the paper can be found in Shirley Biagi and Marilyn Kern-Foxworth's *Facing Difference: Race, Gender and Mass Media* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Pine Forge Press, 1997), 135.
- ⁷⁸ Mills, 124.
- ⁷⁹ Vivian Castleberry interview, "Women in Journalism," Washington Press Club Foundation. 1989, Session 2B, 101. Available online: <http://npc.press.org>.
- ⁸⁰ Castleberry, Session 4, 166.
- ⁸¹ Tuchman, *Making the News*, 143.

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- ⁸² Castleberry, session 2B, 93.
- ⁸³ Quoted in “New Directions for News, Women Studies Program, George Washington University, 1983, 4
- ⁸⁴ Castleberry, Session 2A, 61.
- ⁸⁵ Castleberry, Session 4, 166.
- ⁸⁶ Dorothy Jurney interview, “Women in Journalism,” Washington Press Club Foundation, Session 2, 78.
Available online: <http://npc.press.org>
- ⁸⁷ Castleberry, Session 3, 110.
- ⁸⁸ Mei-ling Yang, “Women’s Pages or People’s Pages: The Production of News for Women in the *Washington Post* in the 1950s,” *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 73 (1996): 371.
- ⁸⁹ Susan Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Random House, 1995), 9.
- ⁹⁰ Winifred Wandersee, *On the Move: American Women in the 1970s* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1988), xv.
- ⁹¹ Tuchman, in *Home and Hearth*, 148.
- ⁹² Ibid, 149.
- ⁹³ Mills, 118.
- ⁹⁴ Ibid, 119.
- ⁹⁵ Katharine Graham, *Personal History* (New York: Random House, 1997), 414.
- ⁹⁶ Ben Bradlee, *A Good Life: Newspapering and Other Adventures* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 298.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid, 297.
- ⁹⁸ Peggy Simpson, “Covering the Women’s Movement,” *Nieman Reports* 53/54 (Winter 1999/Spring 2000): 2.
- ⁹⁹ Cokie Roberts, *We Are Our Mothers Daughters* (New York: Perennial, 2000), 115.
- ¹⁰⁰ Marjorie Paxson, Women in Journalism Oral History Project, recorded by Diane K. Gentry, the Washington Press Club Foundation, 1991, <http://npc.press.org/wpforal/pax.htm>, session 3, p. 87.
- ¹⁰¹ Paxson, Session 3, 73.
- ¹⁰² Wandersee, 169.
- ¹⁰³ Mills, 124.
- ¹⁰⁴ Simpson, 2.
- ¹⁰⁵ Marie Saulsbury, Associated Press Managing Editors, 1975, 26. Marie Anderson’s unindexed papers, file WUNP551. Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia.
- ¹⁰⁶ Tuchman, in *Home and Hearth*, 24.

Chapter Four

Honoring the Best: Penney-Missouri Awards

“The new women’s page awards should be as important as the Pulitzer Prizes in the general news field.”

-- Dorothy Roe, former Penney-Missouri awards judge

Few people agreed with the above words if standard journalism history is any measure. Rarely are the Penney-Missouri awards, which were sponsored by the J.C. Penney Company starting in 1960 and given by the University of Missouri, included in journalism history materials. These awards were created to recognize and help improve women’s pages. A study of the award-winning entries is one of the most obvious ways to examine the work of those considered the best of the women’s page editors. The topics of the award-winning entries from women’s pages dispel the previously described myth that the sections were limited to fashion, family, food and furnishings. An examination of the Penney-Missouri award-winning sections show that at least some women’s pages were more than society notices and photos of brides in the late twentieth century. While the Penney-Missouri awards were the only nationwide recognition for women’s page editors (women’s pages had previously been recognized mainly by state press associations), little research has been done on the awards or the winning sections and their editors. To learn more about the awards, I interviewed judges from the 1960s. I obtained additional information about the awards from the unindexed archives at the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri, thanks to the files of award-winner Marie Anderson. I also examined all of the winning sections which are kept on microfiche at the University of Missouri’s School of Journalism.¹ These records provide proof of the progressive content of some women’s sections although the record is

incomplete. As is shown in the appendix, some of the sections were not archived. There is no official archive for the awards nor a documented history of the competition.

This chapter will look at the history and winners of the Penney-Missouri Awards from 1960, the year the awards began, to 1971, by which time many women's sections had changed their focus. The focus, and often the names, of the women's sections began to shift in the late 1960s to feature or lifestyle sections, following the model of the *Washington Post*.² During this period the awards program was growing. In 1960, there were 301 entries; by 1978, there were 1,869 entries.³ These awards were granted to the top women's sections of newspapers in various circulation categories. Immediately after their establishment, the awards were highly esteemed. "These awards are now the most coveted portfolio of honors in women's page journalism," said Earl English, dean of the University of Missouri's School of Journalism.⁴ Over the years, as the number of entries steadily increased, *Editor & Publisher* covered the workshops that were held each year in connection with the awards. Marion Marzolf, in her 1977 book *Up From the Footnote*, a history of women journalists, specifically addressed the importance of the Penney-Missouri awards. She wrote that the awards "may be a bellwether of changes ahead for women's pages."⁵ This indicated that she thought the sections could become more viable repositories for news of women's issues.

The typical news frame is based on conflict and features official, usually governmental, sources as described earlier. Many of the winning editors' definitions of news, however, were not conflict-based and instead focused on trends and issues. These awards, which recognized the importance of coverage of women's issues, helped to promote a new identity for women's news. According to Penney-Missouri judge George

Kennedy, the goal of the awards was to improve women's sections. He said, "The contest did that by recognizing and rewarding work that broke from previous molds, that entered new areas of content or presentation, that took chances."⁶ Recognition of the Penney-Missouri award winners legitimized the work done by forward-looking women's page editors. The awards provide a record of the innovative work that was being done at the time the women's pages changed into lifestyle sections.

Evolution of the Penney-Missouri Awards

Today the Penney-Missouri awards range far beyond what is traditionally described as women's news. According to the University of Missouri's School of Journalism website, the 43-year-old competition is "the oldest and best known feature writing and editing competition in American newspapering."⁷ Nancy Beth Jackson, who was director of the awards program in the 1990s, said the Penney-Missouri award "was one of the major forces in creating lifestyle journalism. The awards were often described as the Pulitzer Prizes of feature writing."⁸

The awards program started in the summer of 1960 through a grant of an undisclosed amount from the J.C. Penney Company, a large department store chain. The annual grant, renewed annually, was used to recognize women's page editors for excellence and to establish workshops for women editors so that the women's sections could be further improved. English, who was instrumental in establishing the awards, said the goal was "to break down the traditional editorial barriers which have narrowed women's pages in the past to monotonously routine recording of lilac-scented society and club news. Another is to recognize, finally, the outstanding talents of the newspaper women and men who edit and write the nation's women's pages."⁹

The Penney-Missouri winners were divided into classes based on newspaper circulation size: Class I (circulations of 25,000 or below), Class II (circulations of 25,000 to 100,000) and Class III (100,000 and up); Class IV was later added for the largest newspapers. These categories allowed smaller newspapers to be recognized as well as large metropolitan dailies. First, second and third-place awards were given in each class, as well as one overall winner selected for fashion coverage. In 1964, an overall reporting-writing award was added. Winners were chosen based on the content and the appearance of the sections entered. Editors had to submit three sections from either one of two designated weeks annually; in one of the competitions, editors had to enter sections from the week beginning April 29 or the week beginning July 15. The entries had to be from different days of the same calendar week.

The program continued to grow as many women's sections changed into feature sections. Additional individual categories were added in the 1970s – such as consumer affairs reporting and multicultural affairs. In 1974, the rules of the contest were changed so that the journalists did not have to work full-time in a women's section in order to enter the competition.

George Pica, a Penney-Missouri winner who was later hired to run the program at the University of Missouri, witnessed the growth and impact of the program. He said that James Cash Penney, the founder of the J.C. Penney Company, chose the University of Missouri School of Journalism to conduct the program because he was born in Missouri. Penney, Pica said, believed the school had the prestige necessary to reshape women's sections into effective vehicles for his company's advertising. According to Pica:

I suspect that in many ways the program he helped create succeeded beyond his expectations and helped that area of journalism evolve in a direction he

never envisioned. I don't think J.C. Penney wanted the women's sections so much to change as to become better at what they did – telling women what they ought to be spending the family's income on. Instead, the program spawned a generation of aggressive, innovative lifestyle journalists whose work was as likely to win a Pulitzer as it was to win a Penney-Missouri award.¹⁰

In 1994, the J. C. Penney-Missouri Awards became the Missouri Lifestyle Journalism Awards after the Penney company stopped funding the awards for undisclosed reasons. The School of Journalism itself now sponsors the competition and continues to give the awards. In 2002, more than 1,400 entries were sent in and 15 winners were judged best in six general excellence categories.¹¹ Winners received monetary awards ranging from \$250 to \$1,000.¹²

Penney-Missouri Judges

Unlike many competitions, which were run by male editors, the Penney-Missouri competition was judged by women and a few men who were familiar with women's sections. According to English, "Competition of this high level calls for fair and judicious judges. The early admonition to judges by the journalism faculty: 'Put them to work without strings attached, then support their decisions' has served well."¹³ Kennedy said there was only general guidance – judges were simply told to "pick the best stuff."¹⁴

The faculty at the University of Missouri was the initial screeners of the awards.¹⁵ From the beginning of the competition, distinguished journalists and award-winning women's page editors were rotated into the judging pool. These winners, who themselves had created a new definition of women's news, helped to reinforce the message that strong sections included significant stories and a variety of women's voices. By 1976, of the rotating seven judges (University of Missouri Professor Margaret Mangel was a permanent judge), three were former Penney-Missouri Award winners. In addition,

Miami Herald women's page editor Marie Anderson, who won so many Penney-Missouri Awards that she was retired from the competition, served as a consultant to the awards.¹⁶ The input of former winners signaled an effort to continue strengthening the content of women's sections.

The judges helped define what was to be considered excellence for women's journalism because they recognized that women were more than simply wives and mothers and were concerned about the world outside their family life. They gave awards to editors who took on serious issues in their sections. By doing so they encouraged other editors to try new things and stretch their definition of what was "women's news." This was demonstrated through the new topics that were being covered. For example in 1966, the *Honolulu Advertiser* ran a series in a winning section uncovered horrendous reports of child abuse, which will be explained later. This was a sign of things to come as women moved from women's pages to general news staffs. As Mills wrote of the 1970s, "it cannot be an accident that newspapers started paying more attention to the problem of child abuse at a time when there were more women on the staffs to pay attention to it."¹⁷

Penney-Missouri Story Topics

Castleberry said the Penney-Missouri awards she won in 1965 and 1967 were validation for the work she was doing. In her oral history interview, she described the changes that she had instituted in her section – changes that she had to fight with management to make. Many of these stories she had to write herself, including a story investigating the licensing requirements for daycare centers. She said, "I was covering those things that I considered to be the cutting edge of change, stories that I didn't have anybody yet to assign to, such as wife battering, child abuse."¹⁸

While award-winning sections in the 1960s did contain photos of brides, recipes and fashion coverage, there was also significant content that blurred the line between hard and soft news. The content in progressive sections broke barriers by covering trends and issues that were missing from the news sections. Recognition of the importance of these stories was demonstrated by the Penney-Missouri judging process. The winning sections defied the “fluff” definition and instead created their own definition of women’s news. The editors addressed issues that leaders of the women’s movement encouraged the media to address such as birth control, abortion and child care.¹⁹

For this dissertation, portions of the sixty available winning sections from 1960 through 1971 that have been preserved were viewed on microfilm.²⁰ Stories that defied the “fluff” definition were examined as a way of finding a framework of themes. The analysis looked at how women’s page editors addressed issues important to women rather than confirmed old values that limited women’s roles or discounted issues important to them. Stories in the sections overseen by Castleberry, Journey and Paxson are highlighted, as well as the sections overseen by Marie Anderson, who was trained by Journey at the *Miami Herald*. Anderson was later Paxson’s editor at the newspaper.²¹

The following is an examination of the relevant themes found in the winning Penney-Missouri sections. All stories in these sections would have been considered “soft” rather than “hard” news although some of the topics would not have fallen under the fluff category. Of the approximately 250 stories looked at, a majority contained traditional content including family, fashion, food and furnishing. There were, however, several stories that broke that stereotype. It was these stories that were included in the following analysis. The analysis of themes follows the model of Catherine Covert, who described

the need to view journalism history from a female perspective other than that of male “winners.”²² It was applied to the media’s coverage of feminism by Carolyn Kitch,²³ who examined *Time* magazine from 1969 to 1998, looking for themes that both “simultaneously acknowledged and dismissed the gains and messages of feminism.”²⁴ The backlash themes she found included these: “Men will never be able to understand women,” “Women’s freedom is about sex,” “Good feminists are attractive,” “Bad feminists are violent,” and “The movement is falling apart.”

My examination found that:

1. Top women’s pages included stories about women politicians and political issues that were important to women. Several women’s sections addressed current events that directly impacted women, including no-fault divorce, the beginnings of the women’s movement and political conventions. The sections also included issue-based stories that came out of women’s meetings – a source not taken seriously by other sections of newspapers. A 1964 story in the *Indianapolis Times* outlined problems with current divorce laws and proposed that changes be made.²⁵ A 1965 *Washington Post* story reported the stand of Rep. William Hill who questioned research showing that cigarette smoking was a harmful health risk at a women’s Democratic group lunch.²⁶ Another story in that same issue reported what happened at a dinner at the Syrian Embassy, focusing on current issues discussed in conversation there.²⁷ Other stories looked at women involved in the political process. A 1964 *Miami Herald* story, edited by Anderson and Paxson, profiled five women who would play major roles at the upcoming Republican Convention. Although this story from the Associated Press addressed the hard work of the women, the writer also described the women as “good-looking,”²⁸

illustrating the mixed messages that the sections conveyed. Another story in that same issue, a United Press International wire story, profiled Katie Loucheim, the top ranking woman in the State Department.²⁹

A few stories in the top sections mentioned the women's movement specifically. A 1969 story in the Birmingham *Eccentric* led with the growth of the feminist movement and addressed workplace issues such as pay equity, training and child care.³⁰ According to the reporter, the feminist movement was spreading through big cities and small towns. She pointed out that it was "not loud and pushy, not the sign-carrying-type movement which helped give women the vote back in 1920." Instead, she mentioned that this was a movement that was important for all women. She wrote, "The responsibilities, problems and legal rights of women who work and even those who don't have become a source of concern to women from all walks of life. It is no longer considered feminine to plead ignorance or boredom at the forces which vitally affect and shape our world today." A 1971 *Montana Standard* story referred to the New York March for Equality and profiled four women who were running for state office.³¹ The lead connected the New York City March for Equality with Montana women who were politically active, showing that feminism was both a local and a nationwide issue. The theme of the article was to encourage women to get politically involved in their communities. According to one of the women candidates, "Mothers and wives who make up such a large number of our voters should be represented."³² The article concluded with the following: "Women can wield weight and wonder at the polls by exercising their feminine right to vote won for them by fiery liberationists of their day. It was 51 years ago today, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified allowing women's suffrage."³³

2. Top women's pages included stories about inequalities in the workplace and issues significant to women in the workforce. As legislation on equal pay was passed, several women's page editors addressed the issue of how the regulations would impact women in their communities. A 1964 *Miami Herald* story, edited by Anderson and Paxson, addressed the new federal equal-pay-for-women law and the limited effect it would have for Miami women.³⁴ A 1971 *Louisville Courier-Journal* story outlined a complaint filed by the Women's Equity Action League charging discrimination in employment at the University of Kentucky.³⁵ The League, a women's rights organization with primary focus on achieving economic, political and educational equality, based the charge on a thirty-one page report on the status of women at the university in 1970 and 1971. The report showed women faculty and staff members were clustered around the lowest rankings and lowest paying jobs in every facet of the university. These women were framed as underdogs requesting answers in their fight for equality. The story cited federal regulations and the opinions of the U.S. senators who validated the position of the women, thus framing the complaint as a legitimate issue.

Some workplace stories centered on women who were entering male-dominated occupations. These stories were important because they showed that women were succeeding if they were given a chance. A 1967 *Raleigh Times* profiled a female mail carrier.³⁶ A 1971 *Palm Beach Times* story profiled Eleanor Thorton, M.D., an emergency room physician. With little chance of being accepted to medical school in the United States, she had gone to Germany to study because in that country one-third of the medical students were female.³⁷ A sidebar to that story, written by a male doctor, described the difficulties that women medical students faced in the United States due to the prejudice of

male administrators. In comparison with other countries that had a significant percentage of women in their medical schools, in the United States only 7 percent of the student body was female, the story said. Only South Vietnam, Madagascar and Spain had a smaller proportion of women doctors. The writer cited a survey done of medical school deans and their attitudes toward female students. One dean quoted in the story said, “I just don’t like women – as people or doctors – they belong at home cooking and cleaning, certainly not as medical colleagues.”³⁸

Other workplace stories looked at how women balanced a profession with parenting. A 1969 *Sacramento Union* story detailed the issues that single parents faced, citing the statistic that in one workforce study, twenty-five percent of working women were single heads of households.³⁹ A sidebar to this story outlined the difficulties working women confronted in finding good child care, ending with “Mrs. Young observes that the number of working mothers in the community is increasing faster than the child care facilities for their children.”⁴⁰ A 1971 *Grand Rapids Press* article described eleven corporate day care centers and anticipated an increase in them due to the fact there were 4.6 million working U.S. mothers with children under the age of six.⁴¹

A few stories focused on employment for women in lower socio-economic groups. A 1965 *Washington Post* four-part series explained the Women’s Job Corps training center, described as “a social experiment that is calculated to change the profile of poverty into one of hope.” The program took women from across the country, ages sixteen to twenty, and taught them workplace skills in order to “find their places as more productive members of an affluent society which has been excluding them from its mainstream.”⁴²

3. Top women's pages covered stories about health and safety issues that were important to women. The most common health stories in the winning sections were about women's mental health issues and alcoholism. In 1964, the *Seattle Times* ran a four-part series about homemakers as "hidden alcoholics." The series addressed women's battles with alcohol and how women had recovered from this illness.⁴³ In 1965, the *Davenport Times-Democrat* ran a similar two-part series. It detailed the difficulties that alcoholics faced each day. The writer, Maddy Ocheltree, the society editor, used case histories and interviews with women.⁴⁴ A 1967 *Raleigh Times* article addressed one woman's battle with mental illness and her search for self worth beyond being a mother.⁴⁵

4. Top women's pages covered the activism of women in a positive way. A story in the *Dallas Times Herald* overseen by Castleberry profiled a group of women who fought for improvements in poor housing conditions and changes in discriminatory practices against black people. This lengthy story about women described them as "crusaders" in their communities on issues relating to women's rights, racial equality and crime. The reporter wrote: "It may be a fight against prejudice. A campaign for women's rights. Or, a basic project whose aim is to attract attention, get women interested in community affairs, to challenge them, to get them to do something."⁴⁶ The writer framed this story as a reasonable fight for the underdog on behalf of justice. The women involved didn't fit the "angry woman" frame often used by reporters in other sections. The women sources in the story were allowed to address the term used by the reporter – crusaders. The reporter quoted an activist: "Thank you for calling us crusaders rather than troublemakers." The overall theme was one of advocates taking on worthy battles.⁴⁷

Another story in that same section overseen by Castleberry profiled a woman who had been a Catholic nun and left the order. It described her book about her life and the need for reforms in the Catholic Church.⁴⁸ A story in the *Kettering-Oakwood Times* described a campaign by the Dayton Area Housing Opportunities Coalition to raise awareness about housing issues including a door-to-door fair housing drive. According to one of the women quoted, the purpose of the campaign was “for people to express good will toward racial problems with an emphasis on open housing.”⁴⁹

5. Top women’s pages covered reproductive and abortion issues. A 1969 *Miami Herald* article, edited by Anderson, detailed how the introduction of the pill has changed the way young people looked at birth control. Although the expert quoted described the University of Florida as being progressive because it no longer expelled pregnant students, the article also included information that upheld traditional values. The expert was quoted further as saying that if students who were not engaged wanted birth control pills through the student health center, they had to get permission from their parents.⁵⁰ A 1971 *Palm Beach Times* article explained the need for family planning and birth control information to be distributed by nurses to women in lower socioeconomic communities.⁵¹ Some women’s sections also addressed the abortion debate. A 1967 *Suffolk Sun* story featured a poll of local women who approved of the American Medical Association stand that supported liberal abortion policies.⁵² A sidebar to the story, written by Clare Boothe Luce and distributed by the Associated Press, explored the possibility of the Catholic Church liberalizing birth control rules.⁵³ A 1970 series in the *Dayton Daily News* investigated the problem of illegal abortions in the city. According to the editor’s note,

the intent of the series was to not to “evoke moral judgment but to illustrate a very real dilemma.”⁵⁴

6. Top women’s pages covered children’s issues from an issue-based perspective.

A 1966 *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* story, which included photos of bruised children, chronicled the abuse of many children and addressed the need for more social workers and a centralized agency to handle child abuse cases.⁵⁵ A 1963 *Miami News* story about a national PTA convention focused on a resolution to reach out to students from lower socioeconomic communities and those with disabilities.⁵⁶ Another 1963 story, also based on a report from the national PTA convention in the *Fort Lauderdale News* centered on the low expectation that some educators have for girls. The report encouraged educators to raise their standards for girls.⁵⁷

7. Top women’s pages covered international issues relating to women. A 1965 *Washington Post* article listed examples of gender equality that women in Hungary enjoyed such as property rights, and access to abortions and birth control pills as well as political office. In addition, it reported that children there could take either the mother’s or the father’s last name. When the reporter asked a Hungarian woman how abortion could be legalized when her country was predominantly Catholic, she replied that the younger generation was less religious and more realistic than the older one. She said, “They know that to bring up two children properly is far superior to bringing up 10 without food, clothing or shelter.”⁵⁸ In 1969, the *Detroit Free Press*, under the supervision of Journey, ran a series about Israeli women. One issue detailed Israel’s Program for International Cooperation and profiled Golda Meir, prime minister of Israel. Yet, while the writer highlighted Meir’s career, she also described her physical

appearance several times and mentioned her role as a grandmother.⁵⁹ Another article in the series profiled Israeli women soldiers – the only women in the world who were drafted into the military. It reported that Israeli women had to serve twenty months and be members of the reserves for ten years, noting that while many women served as secretaries and clerks, others held more traditional male positions, such as paratroopers. The writer, however, also described the women’s uniforms and their feelings about how they looked in them.⁶⁰ A final story in the series treated the work of female officers seriously, describing the dangerous environments they faced.⁶¹

This overview of the winning sections shows that the frames through which the winning women’s page editors saw news were different from those traditionally ascribed to news on women’s pages.⁶² Instead, the frames were based on issues of empowerment and equality. They included topics that were addressed by the women’s movement: abortion, pay equity and child care. It is important to note that the awards celebrated the work of progressive editors and rewarded them for their views on women’s page content. Judges said they were impressed by the news and issue-based features that were found in the top sections. They further encouraged a more issue-based approach through the programming done at the workshops that accompanied the awards. Often, past winners were invited to the workshops to help encourage the production of stronger women’s section.

Penney-Missouri Workshops

The intent of the workshops at the University of Missouri was to publicize the groundbreaking ideas and new practices that were found in the winning entries. Archival material at the university includes photographs, programs and some sections of the

speeches made at the workshops. It shows that workshop sessions were based on ways to improve the look and content of the sections, with a focus on better writing and less of a focus on simply writing about weddings. The workshops also included several networking opportunities. Study of these workshops gives insight into the changes confronting the editors.

The first workshop, held in 1962, was keynoted by Journey, who at that time was women's editor of the *Detroit Free Press*. Other speakers included Anderson, the women's page editor of the *Miami Herald*; Richard Young, Jr., managing editor of the *Charlotte News*; Rosemary Madison, women's editor of the *Dundee Sun*; Professor William Bickley of the University of Missouri School of Journalism and G. Thomas Duffy, visiting professor of journalism there. Anderson recommended that editors cut down on society news and reduce the size of wedding photos. Young's message was for management. He recommended that women's page editors be given more authority and more resources. He said, "A managing editor should give the same attention to women's pages as to sports and other departments."⁶³ Other workshop topics included improving interviewing, taking better photos and strengthening story ideas.

Maggie Savoy, women's editor of the *Arizona Republic* and a Women in Communications colleague of Paxson, spoke at the 1963 workshop about "Ideas and How to Get Them." She addressed issues of respect in the newsroom, stronger content and the changing role of women. She recognized that women's page editors were looked down upon at many newspapers and she told the group that while that was a common experience, there were opportunities for change. She said:

Some of you may think you're isolated from the mainstream of the paper. Most of you are – you've been put aside in a pink-and-pretty office, or in a refurbished

garrett, and there are those bosses who are happy if you simply keep out of their hair. You've been given earlier and killer deadlines that make it difficult for you to get spot news into your sections. You are seldom invited, let alone admitted, to news conferences. You may not "feel" a part of your newspaper – but you are. And you can be a vital one, both circulation-wise and advertising-wise.⁶⁴

Her advice to editors was to ignore the slights delivered by management and to keep strengthening their sections on their own. The idea was to raise the esteem of the women's or society sections – so that they would not be places where weak stories were "dumped." Before long, Savoy said, the women's editor would hear from the news desk that "Society swiped our story."⁶⁵ Savoy also encouraged editors to address the changing role of women in society. She said:

If you fail to reflect and report and build on this, you're a flat failure not only to your paper, but you are failing your readers and your community. Women are looking for ideas, inspiration and guidance. And if you don't give it to them they'll find it in magazines, television, radio – and you'll lose them.⁶⁶

An article in *Editor & Publisher* described the content of the 1964 workshops. The keynote speaker was Margot Sherman, vice-president of the advertising agency McCann-Erickson. She challenged the editors to raise the bar for women's sections by improving both subject matter and writing style. She asked that the editors produce sections that stimulated women's minds. Sherman went on to say that there were four reasons that contributed to the devaluation of women's pages: 1) women's pages were published for advertisers not readers; 2) women thought and reacted differently from men and this had not been taken into consideration; 3) editors had not realized the economic power of women; 4) women's pages did not challenge the intelligence of women. She said: "Many women's sections of newspapers are written and edited in a style for men. The economic status and individuality of women is neglected."⁶⁷

Fashion writer Yvonne Petrie spoke about the difficulty of being objective when being influenced by celebrities. She said, “What a newspaper fashion reporter does is report the news. Her own interpretations of trends must be impartial and painfully honest.”⁶⁸ Columnist Dorothy Roe spoke about developing local features and improving the leads of stories. She criticized some women’s section leads for being too long and using too many adjectives. She said, “It is indeed an unusual story where leaving out the adjectives won’t help it. Remember that stories can be technically correct but still overwritten.”⁶⁹

At the 1965 workshop, Journey, women’s page editor of the *Detroit Free Press* at the time, addressed cutting costs. She recommended that editors screen applicants carefully so that they hired quality staff, used progress reports to track staff development and watched production schedules. She also said that editors who were overseeing six or more reporters should not try to write. At the same session, William Wundram, women’s pages editor of the *Davenport Times-Democrat*, urged management to spend more money on women’s sections due to their importance in attracting women readers.

Thirty women’s page editors attended the 1967 workshop. Sessions were based on the theme: “How to produce better women’s pages through better reporting and editing, better fashion writing and better women’s page photography.”⁷⁰ Session topics included cut-line writing, headlining, leads, story and page critiques and photo editing. An examination of the program shows that women’s page editors again were being encouraged to reduce stories about brides and society parties. Instead, editors were encouraged to tackle more newsworthy topics and to raise their writing standards.

At the 1968 workshop, Marilyn Gardner, women's page editor of the *Milwaukee Journal*, encouraged editors to reach out to readers. She said, "There are lots of smart women in the world. Don't insult them in your pages. When you are discussing today's issues, make them realize all the social problems are important to them because they are affected in their own communities [by these issues]." ⁷¹ She also discouraged the use of wedding and engagement news. As a result, she said, the stigma of the sections as non-news vehicles would be reduced. At the same workshop, Bobbi McCallum, women's page reporter for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, spoke about the best ways to approach feature stories. McCallum had won the top reporting-writing award for her five-part series about "unwed mothers." (There was one individual reporting-writing award granted each year.) She advised reporters to let the personality of the source come through in their writing. Duffy spoke to the editors about using stronger language, reducing attribution and strengthening cut-lines. ⁷²

The 1969 workshop included thirty-three women's page editors and reporters, and fifteen of the twenty-four Penney-Missouri winners. Sessions were conducted on news and feature writing, cut-line editing, photography and the display of photos, critiques of women's sections and story ideas. One session featured in the program was on consumer protection. ⁷³ Missouri Attorney General John Danforth and Virginia Knauer, President Nixon's advisor on consumer interest, spoke to the editors. Knauer cited consumer issues as top women's page material. Professor Duffy, another speaker, encouraged the editors to include more feature stories in their sections and to raise their writing standards. He said, "Do I detect a national trend in women's sections away from feature writing? By far

the majority of features I read in your sections were nothing but expanded news stories. Most lacked focus, and without focus you do not have a feature story.”⁷⁴

Several of those who attended said that the workshops were a unique networking opportunity. They provided the first time for many women’s page editors to connect with each other – something many said they needed to do to promote change. This also was something that other section editors had been doing for years. In her oral history interview, Penney-Missouri winner Paxson said that workshop attendance was her central networking opportunity:

It was a big help. If nothing else, it lets you know that you're not alone, you're not the only one out there who has these ideas about getting more hard news and substantive news into your pages. You're bored with writing the trivial club notices and lengthy descriptions of weddings and engagements — and if you're bored the readers are probably bored, too. But you're not alone. Other people are fighting the same fight and you get all sorts of ideas from them. And I think this was happening all over the country in other state press groups the same way.⁷⁵

Jurney echoed her sentiments in her oral history interview. She said the awards’ workshops, as well as American Society of Newspaper Editors workshops that she later attended, allowed her to get professional training and join in the collegial atmosphere that male journalists long had enjoyed in the conventions of their associations. According to Jurney:

We [women] had very little communication newspaper-to-newspaper. And it was not until ... I became a member of the American Society of Newspaper Editors and I learned that all of these men that I had been working for and thought were so smart got many of their ideas by going to conventions of the ASNE. And women did not have this opportunity.⁷⁶

Penney-Missouri Frames

The frames that the winners of the Penney-Missouri awards used, reinforced by the judges of the competition, were issue-based. One frame was the importance of

women becoming active in the political process. As has been mentioned, examples of political and legislative stories included profiles of women who were playing major roles at an upcoming Republican Convention, a feature on a top-ranking woman in the State Department and a story about proposed changes in divorce laws. Stories that were on the women's movement were not condescending in tone and instead encouraged women to become involved with the issues of the movement.

Another frame involved the inequities that women faced in the workplace. Some editors of the winning sections included stories on gender discrimination complaints, on the lack of women in male-dominated occupations and on the need for child care for working mothers. These stories outlined the difficulties that women faced in a way that confirmed the problems and issues that needed to be addressed. The approach was one that added validity to the issues, as the reporter cited statistics and anecdotal evidence.

When it came to women's activism, the winning women's page editors in the Penney-Missouri competition framed the activists in a positive way. Instead of employing the negative frames used by journalists in the main news sections that were described in the third chapter, these women gave credibility to those engaged in social protest and reform. In one example cited previously, a source thanked the reporter for referring to the activist as a 'crusader' rather than a 'troublemaker.' It was clear that the source was aware of the negative frame that so many journalists were using at the time.

By using the previously mentioned frames, the women's page editors in the competition were lauded for their choices. It is clear from the winning entries and the words of the judges that improving women's sections meant treating women's news seriously in terms of the broad community. Rather than focusing on only family, fashion,

food and furnishing, the winning women's page editors expanded their frames to include political and economic issues. This allowed the women's page editors to include topics that women's movement was addressing including abortion, pay inequities and activism for equality.

In terms of frames, it is worth mentioning the work of Marie Anderson. She was trained by Journey when they were at the *Miami Herald*. When Journey left the newspaper, Anderson became editor of the *Herald's* women's section. Her section won four Penney-Missouri awards in the first five years of the program and she was invited to speak at several workshops. The frame she used echoed the platform of the women's movement. In 1970, she presented the following story ideas to Penney-Missouri attendees:

Women ... have gone back to work. It takes two to get along now financially. Most working women are heads of families. Does she, as a family head, have the same legal protection as a man? Equal pay for equal work? Many states don't have the equal law. Why not?

One in ten families is headed by a woman; it's probably a poverty family. The child care situation is desperate. One newspaper has a working women's column in a community which established a child care program. We had them during the war, why not now?

Most young girls are being encouraged only to get a husband or teach these days. Why can't she be a mathematician and have a husband, too?

If we are producing unwanted babies, what about abortion? Legally women can dye their hair, bulge their busts or slice off their bosoms, but you can't tamper with the reproductive apparatus.⁷⁷

Conclusion

It cannot be forgotten that many women's editors were pioneers. In order to make significant changes in the content of their sections, they had to take on management – men not open to change. The awards enhanced the working environment of these editors. Castleberry, who won Penney-Missouri awards in 1965 and 1967, recalled the awards

giving her power at her newspaper that helped her defy management. At one time, she had a boss who didn't want her to enter competitions because he did not want to encourage her to write about what he considered controversial issues. Editors were not always pleased when Castleberry brought home awards although they pretended to be. She said, "I got nice notes from them. I think, for the most part, it made it more difficult to handle me. I really do. ... because if I were getting that much applause from the public, what could they do with this woman they couldn't really control?"⁷⁸

The mixed reception given to the awards at some newspapers was a reflection of the lack of recognition the women's pages received in spite of the steps forward taken by their determined editors. It was relatively easy to produce sections restricted to family, fashion, food and furnishings, but, as this examination proves, some women's editors tackled more substantive issues. Some editors worked to educate and empower women by giving them information that could not be found in the news sections. The women's sections also helped enlighten women about the women's movement, taking a perspective that was different from the condescending approach used on the front pages of many newspapers. The themes presented here show that there was more to the sections than fluff.

To understand the importance of the role of forward-looking women's editors we need to examine the careers of three women who led the way for others. Their careers illustrate the challenges faced by women's editors who tried to change the nature of women's news.

¹ Debbie Landi, reference archivist, "University Archives," December 13, 2001, personal email.

² Kay Mills, *A Place in the News* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 118.

³ Beth Morgan, "Awards Are 20 Years Old," *Penney Press*, 8 (September 1979): 2.

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- ⁴ Earl English, *Journalism Education at the University of Missouri-Columbia* (Marceline, Mo.:Walsworth, 1988), 208-209.
- ⁵ Marion Marzolf, *Up From the Footnote* (New York: Hasting House, 1977), 216.
- ⁶ George Kennedy, email interview, March 6, 2002.
- ⁷ Missouri Lifestyle Journalism Awards, Missouri School of Journalism, <http://www.missouri.edu/~jschool/lifestylejournalism.html>.
- ⁸ Pat Guy, "J.C. Penney Drops Journalism Awards Program," *USA Today*, Aug. 12, 1993.
- ⁹ English, 209.
- ¹⁰ George Pica, Former Awards Director, email interview, March 20, 2003.
- ¹¹ Missouri Lifestyle Journalism Awards, Missouri School of Journalism, <http://www.missouri.edu/~jschool/lifestylejournalism.html>
- ¹² Paul Myhre "Penney-Missouri Award Winners Split \$11,500" news release, Dec. 27, 1970.
- ¹³ Earl English, "A Grant ... and a Purpose." 1960 J.C. Penney-University of Missouri Journalism Awards program. University of Missouri School of Journalism, Dean's Office, Penney-Missouri Awards, Series 4 – C:11/1/6 (A96-40)
- ¹⁴ Kennedy interview.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Marie Anderson was women's editor of the *Miami Herald* – the first and only newspaper to be indefinitely retired from the competition. Anderson's section won first place in 1960 and 1961. As a two-time winner, the section was ineligible in 1962. In 1963, the section came in second.
- ¹⁷ Mills, 239.
- ¹⁸ Vivian Castleberry interview. "Women in Journalism." Washington Press Club Foundation, 1989, session 2, 121. Available online: <http://npc.press.org>.
- ²⁰ Mills, 240.
- ²⁰ Several winning entries are missing in the years from 1960-1970, as is shown in the appendix. The remaining entries are available on microfiche at the University of Missouri School of Journalism.
- ²¹ It should be noted that Marie Anderson was also a progressive, influential women's page editor. She was not included in this dissertation because there is so little information available about her. She was interviewed for the Washington Press Club's Women in Journalism project although due to her Alzheimer's Disease, the interview reveals little about her life.
- ²² Catherine Covert, "Journalism History and Women's Experience: A Problem in Conceptual Change," *Journalism History* 8 (Spring 1981): 6.
- ²³ Carolyn Kitch, "Reporting the Birth and Death of Feminism: Three Decades of Mixed Messages in Time Magazine" (Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication national convention, 1999).
- ²⁴ Ibid, 5.
- ²⁵ Ann Pearson, United Press International, "Study of California Marriage Problems May Bring Uniform Law Recommendation," *Indianapolis Times*, July 12, 1964.
- ²⁶ No byline, "He'd Rather Fight Tobacco Report Than Switch His Stand on Weed," *Washington Post*, March 9, 1965.
- ²⁷ Dorothy McCardle, "Arab Envoys Take United States," *Washington Post*, March 9, 1965.
- ²⁸ Associated Press, "GOP? It Means Gals' Own Party," *Miami Herald*, June 18, 1964.
- ²⁹ No byline, "What Katie Did – Use Imagination," *Miami Herald*, June 18, 1964.
- ³⁰ Cindy Skalsky, "Michigan Moves to Meet Women's Needs," *The Eccentric*, July 17, 1969.
- ³¹ Betty Ann Raymond, "Women's Equality Best Gained at Polls," *Montana Standard*, Sept. 21, 1971.
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ Ibid.
- ³⁴ Beth Resler, "Not Much Equal Pay for Miami," *Miami Herald*, June 18, 1964.
- ³⁵ Beverly Fortune, "UK Women Ask for Comment on Bias," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 21, 1971.
- ³⁶ No byline, "Here Comes the Mailman – Only It Isn't a Male," *Raleigh Times*, Feb. 26, 1967.
- ³⁷ No byline, "At Age 35, She Decided to Go to Medical School," *Palm Beach Times*, Sept. 21, 1971.
- ³⁸ No byline, "Whether Men Like It or Not, More Women to Become M.D.s," *Palm Beach Times*, Sept. 21, 1971.
- ³⁹ Jackie Peterson, "Singular People, Plural Problems: Dad Sews, Mom Plays Ball," *Sacramento Union*, July 13, 1969.

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- ⁴⁰ Jackie Peterson, "Who'll Mind the Baby?" *Sacramento Union*, July 13, 1969.
- ⁴¹ Richard Leom, Newsweek News Service, "Corporate Day Care Coming Up?" *Grand Rapids (Michigan) Press*, Aug. 13, 1971.
- ⁴² Elizabeth Shelton, "A Florida Hotel Becomes a House of Hope," *Washington Post*, April 15, 1965.
- ⁴³ Dorothy Brant Brazier, "Kitchen of Normal Housewife May Harbor Secret Drinking," "Just across Line from Social Drinking Lies Illness," "Attractive Grandmother Has Learned to Live with Herself," "Many Hands Reach Out to Aid Those Who Need Assistance," *Seattle Times*, July 26-29, 1964.
- ⁴⁴ Maddy Ocheltree, "The Woman Alcoholic," *Davenport Times-Democrat*, May 16, 1965.
- ⁴⁵ Margaret Bartlett, "Breakdown: 'I Couldn't Cope With Life,'" *Raleigh Times*, Feb. 26, 1967.
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Chapter Five

Dorothy Journey: Pacemaker

Dorothy Journey was a groundbreaker during decades of change for women. Feminist Catherine East, who held senior staff posts with every presidential advisory commission on women from 1962 to 1977,¹ declared that Journey was born too soon.² Jean Gaddy Wilson said Journey “single-handedly changed American newspapers” by transforming women’s pages from society sections with fashion photos and recipes, to sections with hard news and investigative stories during her four decades as a women’s page editor at six newspapers.³ Journalist Colleen Dishon said that Journey was one of the women’s section editors who “spurred the flight from fluff.”⁴ Former Gannett head Allen Neuharth said Journey was the kind of women’s page editor who helped “the guys in their part of the newsroom understand what the hell folks wanted to read.”⁵ Based on Journey’s numerous awards and citations, which will be described later in this chapter, other journalists agreed. She also had influence as a speaker at conferences and as a member of professional organizations.

Journey said one of the advantages of heading women’s sections during her tenure in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s was that there were no expectations about what was newsworthy for women. She said, “We were free to explore areas where we thought the reader was very much involved – where we could interpret a trend, explain an event, show new dimensions that would give greater understanding to the life around us.”⁶ She said that whenever possible she put strong news content in her women’s section.⁷ This exploration led to a new way of defining “women’s news” and made Journey a leader in the field.

During her career beginning in 1930 until her retirement in 1975, Journey was a journalist at the *Gary Post-Tribune*, the *Miami News*, the *Washington Daily News*, the *Miami Herald*, the *Detroit Free-Press* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Most of her career was spent as a women's page editor. She assigned her reporters to cover news stories such as pay inequities for women, homosexuality, issues in the black community, women workers in the automobile industry and women in politics. Journey said: "What I was striving for is a way to arouse editors, maybe even excite them, to consider the problems they face in reporting women's issues."⁸ During her career, she was also a city editor, during the war, and a managing editor, at the end of her career. She was known as a hard worker who fought for change without making enemies. Journey's former supervisor at the *Washington Daily News*, Charles Stevenson, wrote of her in 1949:

In these times when so many people are trying to get more for doing less, demanding promotion and recognition for seniority rather than merit, I feel it is essential to fully state the case of those few remaining persons who are willing to knock their brains out and who still believe in the fairy tale that recognition comes to those willing to work for it. Mrs. Journey belongs among that small group of hopefuls.⁹

As Journey neared retirement, she said she had enjoyed her work but that she felt limitations had been imposed on her based on her gender. Reflecting on her career, at age sixty-one, she said she valued:

the opportunity to be creative; the opportunity to be almost completely my own boss; the opportunity to be influential in the lives of thousands of women, not once in a lifetime but every day, seven days a week, fifty-two weeks out of the year and now forty years in one lifetime. ... I am very satisfied with my career because it has always been a creative one. However, if I were beginning my career in the '70s I feel I would have the opportunity to have greater executive responsibility which was denied me at one time because I was a woman.¹⁰

Journey died relatively unheralded on June 19, 2002 in St. Petersburg, Florida. A search using both online search engines and Lexus-Nexus found only one reference to her

death. The reference was a 2004 reprint of a Northwestern University 2003 Hall of Achievement ceremony. In it, Journey was lauded for being a leading women's editor in terms of providing important social content. She was also recognized for "assigning her best reporters, including columnist Ellen Goodman, to cover issues ranging from problems in poor black schools to the rising crisis of teenage pregnancy among black unwed mothers."¹¹ While the description of her sections' content is true, the reference to Goodman is not. Goldman told me that while she had worked for *Detroit Free Press* in the early 1970s, she did not work for Journey. She did say that Journey was "terrific, very early and very smart in the business."¹²

Part of Journey's legacy was the founding of a journalism research institute, New Direction for News, which was located at the University of Missouri before moving to the University of Minnesota. New Directions for News has helped to redefine the concept of what makes a story newsworthy. Its initial research will be detailed later in this chapter. Journey also was the "first" in several news organizations, including becoming the first female board member of the Associated Press Managing Editors organization in 1973. She was cognizant of the changes she made in journalism, although she doubted that she would be remembered for much of her work. She said, "I played a role in the transition from society pages to women's pages with significant news. And while nobody's going to remember me for what I did there, I have a great sense of ... satisfaction, in thinking that I brought stories to the attention of women."¹³

Information about Journey comes from the 130-page transcript of her interview for the Washington Press Club oral history project and her personal papers archived in the National Women and Media Collection at the University of Missouri. Her papers

contain articles she wrote, several speeches, a chapter about her from a book that is no longer in print, personal letters and an autobiographical sketch. It also includes her presentations at several conferences, including the Penney-Missouri awards workshops and American Press Institute sessions. Her life story shows that she was a strong individual with a tremendous commitment to women in journalism.

Childhood

Dorothy Journey said she was raised “to believe that a woman with a brain should have a career.”¹⁴ She was born Dorothy Misener in Michigan City, Indiana, in 1909. Her father ran the local newspaper, the *Michigan City News*, and Journey learned every aspect of journalism at the newspaper, from selling subscriptions to editing to layout to recognizing press type. Her mother, Mary Hershey Misener, was a graduate of the Kings School of Oratory in Pittsburgh. She was active in the suffrage movement and was one of the first women elected to the Indiana legislature.¹⁵ While in office, she sponsored and fought for Indiana’s first voter registration law.¹⁶ Many of Journey’s beliefs about women’s roles in society were based on her mother’s activism. She said, “I guess I was always a feminist. My mother was a feminist, certainly. I was not as outspoken about it, but it was part of my values.”¹⁷ Journey said that her coverage of issues pertaining to women’s rights preceded the second wave of the women’s movement.¹⁸ She initiated several stories about gender-based discrimination and the lack of opportunities for women in the 1950s. She said she was influenced by her mother’s friends. Many didn’t have careers, but they were involved in community activities.

From her father, Journey said she learned “not to form conclusions until you know facts.”¹⁹ She said that he stressed objectivity and tolerance.²⁰ Overall, she said she was

quiet, more like her father in demeanor than her mother, especially when it came to job conflicts. Journey said:

Perhaps I'm not that much of a fighter and since it appeared that I would lose any concerted battle to get further ahead, I simply withdrew. This was my nature. And I guess I have to take my lumps if I'm made that way, you see. And I guess this is what I inherited from my dad. Now my mother would have fought. So – c'est la vie.²¹

While she was growing up, her family meals included discussions of local and national news, focusing on ways to improve local government. After dinner, her parents would leave for community meetings, demonstrating their activism. Her parents also encouraged her to do well academically. She said, "There was never a hint, that I, a girl, would find any limitations."²²

After high school, Journey attended Western College for Women in Oxford, Ohio, now part of Miami University, for two years. She considered studying drama or economics. She toyed with the idea of being a city manager, but said she realized the slim chances of a woman attaining that position at that time. After leaving Western College, she completed her junior and senior years at Northwestern University with a major in journalism and an emphasis in economics. While in school, she was good friends with Mary Welsh, who wrote for the *Chicago Daily News* and later married Ernest Hemingway.²³ Journey had every intention of pursuing a professional career, like many of her female classmates, when she graduated in 1930. She said:

My friends were career minded, there was that impetus that we should all be working – we should be working women and have careers. But nobody ever pointed out, or we were not smart enough to realize that the horizons were not very high. The girls that I went to college with were all going to become something in the business or professional world ... not women who were aiming to become only wives and mothers.²⁴

Jurney said she was frustrated later by women who were not using their educations outside of the home. She said, “I was very disappointed when I found that the women who were in college around the time of World War II were not career-minded. They were marriage and family and children minded. And that struck me as regression for women.”²⁵

Newspaper Career

After graduation from Northwestern University in 1930, Jurney wanted to work at the *Chicago Daily News*, but it didn’t have any women in the newsroom. Her only job offer was to work with publications at the Michigan Tuberculosis Association. Instead, Jurney began working as a reporter at her father’s newspaper, the *Michigan City News*, for \$25 a week. This dropped to \$15 a week about two years later due to the Depression. She also took photos and was a columnist for the *lovelorn*. She spent nine years at the newspaper, getting experience in covering different kinds of stories. She wrote that her small town newspaper experience “gave me an advantage later in life over those men and women who only knew big city work.”²⁶ That advantage involved working with all departments – layout, circulation, advertising and editorial. She said, “Most kids want to go to a big newspaper, and many of them do, but they don’t know how it all meshes together.”²⁷ The *Michigan City News* had a circulation of 6,000; the competing newspaper had a circulation of 3,500.²⁸

Jurney left the *Michigan City News* after her father sold the newspaper. In 1939, Jurney became the women’s editor of the *Gary (Indiana) Post-Tribune*, the same newspaper where her brother was a photographer. She had a staff of five reporters who worked in a corner of the newsroom that was divided by a partition from the desks of

male staff members. There was no restriction on the content of her section.²⁹ Journey said this experience increased her interest in the issues of immigrant workers, such as those who worked in Gary's steel mills. During her years in Indiana, she was a local president and state officer of the League of Women Voters.³⁰

Journey married engineer Frank Journey in 1939. Right before they married, Frank informed his future wife that he did not want her to work. She said she responded: “Well, I don't want any children and work was really more important to me than getting married.”³¹ In 1941, the couple moved to the Panama Canal Zone, where Frank Journey was a civilian employee with the Army Corp of Engineers. For the next two years, Journey was the assistant to the U.S. government press representative of the Panama Canal. Many stories she wrote were printed in Panama's two daily newspapers. The couple left Panama in 1943 when Frank Journey was transferred to Arlington, Virginia.

Journey was hired as a “city-side deskman” at the *Washington Daily News*, a Scripps-Howard newspaper, by Managing Editor Charles Stevenson, who needed staff members because male journalists were serving in World War II. A former Northwestern female classmate wrote to her: “That [position] must be a dream, too bold to be expressed even yet, of every dame who ever got mixed up in newspapering.”³² Stevenson later said he hired Journey reluctantly: “I had an antipathy toward women in news shops.”³³ Journey soon was promoted to being an assistant city editor when male editors were too drunk to come to work. Later, she became acting city editor. According to Stevenson, Journey at that point had become “one of the greatest finds ever to enter our doors. She was an excellent copy reader, a good writer, an editor of rare judgment, an exceptional executive – and one of the hardest workers it ever has been my privilege to know.”³⁴

Then, the war ended and Journey, like most female journalists of the time, lost her position. As men were returning, Journey received a phone call from a top editor. He said:

Well, you know, the men are coming back from war and we have this young man who was a cub reporter in the sports department and I want to make him the city editor. And Dorothy, I would like you to teach him his job. You know, I just don't think it would work to make you the city editor, and you know the reason why.' And I said, 'Yes, I'm a woman.' He agreed.³⁵

Years later, Stevenson wrote he knew that Journey's treatment was unfair but that it was the practice at the time to discriminate against women. He wrote that Journey "became city editor in fact if not in title. We were unfair to her in this."³⁶ He said despite his initial concerns over her gender, she became accepted in the newsroom. He wrote she "won the respect of the men who were her subordinates through the quality of her leadership, her quiet efficiency, her friendliness which permitted no favoritism."³⁷

After losing her job, Journey moved to Miami, Florida, in 1945 when her husband took a job with a private company. She was the assistant women's editor of the *Miami News* from 1946 to 1949, but left because she felt the position "in no way utilized my journalism expertise."³⁸ She described the women's page editor at the *Miami News* as not a supporter of the kind of news-based stories that Journey wanted to cover. She asked to be transferred to another section of the newspaper so that she could address serious issues. When that didn't happen, Journey quit and was hired by the *Miami Herald*, where she spent the next decade. Journey started as a copy editor and then became the women's page editor at the progressive *Miami Herald*, giving her the opportunity to stretch the definition of women's news in a section under her direction.³⁹

Lee Hills was the managing editor of the *Miami Herald* where he oversaw Journey's changes to the women's section in the early 1950s.⁴⁰ He was an executive of

Knight Newspapers, which bought the *Miami Herald* in 1937 and the *Detroit Free Press* in 1940. (Years later, at age 61, Journey said that Hills was the most influential figure in her life.⁴¹) The *Herald* had a history of strong women's sections. In 1939, when the newspaper was run by Jack Knight, he hired a woman, Arletta Weimer, to revamp the women's section. While there was still a lot of society news, she also included stories on politics, health and education.⁴² Weimer later left the *Herald* for the *Washington Post*.

With the strong basis for a women's section already in place, Journey was able to further strengthen the women's section and with Hills' support. According to a history of the *Miami Herald*, within four years, Journey had "built one of the nation's outstanding women's sections."⁴³ It was during this time that Journey also worked with Allen Neuharth, who was assistant managing editor.⁴⁴ Neuharth later became the head of the Gannett company, the nation's largest owner of newspapers, where he encouraged the promotion of women into publisher positions.

In Miami, Journey fought for deadline changes that allowed more breaking news to be in her section, a policy that she described as "unusual" at the time.⁴⁵ Her section included stories about people and activities in the black community at a time during a period when the main news section of the newspaper largely ignored issues affecting the African American community. For example, a story about the upgrading of housing in an African American community ran in the women's section, rather than the city section.⁴⁶ She said that she attempted to cover the civil rights movement, but that her hands were tied by management, who did not want such news in her section, and she did not feel as though she could rebel. She recalled: "I had grown up in a time when you called the boss

Mister. Respect for the boss and his way of doing things. I worked for some men that I thought were not very smart and I resented that very much.”⁴⁷

Throughout her career, Journey promoted opportunities for women to network, including holding workshops for women’s club members to teach them how to gain media attention. She found the workshops “upgraded the quality of work of many of these organizations.”⁴⁸ For example, after attending workshops, the club members tended to focus more on issues in the community rather than simply hold social events. In Indiana, she had organized gatherings called the Michigan City News Conference for Women to discuss local issues. The sessions drew between 200 and 400 people. At the *Miami Herald*, she brought together women’s club members to learn about their activities and also to advise the groups on the best ways to promote themselves – as a result, the clubs operated more effectively. She said that the goal was to serve both the newspaper and the public.⁴⁹

With the approval of Hills, Journey expanded the content of the *Miami Herald*’s women’s section. As women’s editor, she managed 14 women, a group she described as a “large staff.”⁵⁰ Hills agreed coverage of clubs and brides “was too narrow a focus”⁵¹ for the section. Journey continued to run this material as well as articles about food and fashion, but she added stories about political and social issues, features about professional women and Eleanor Roosevelt’s daily ‘My Day’ column. She was able to “have a good deal of impact by covering such issues as housing needs in the black community.”⁵² Journey explained her approach in an article in the January 1956 *American Society of Newspaper Editors*’ publication. She suggested that editors cover home and health stories from more of a hard news than a soft news perspective. She wrote that the home beat

should be “no different fundamentally than the police beat.”⁵³ She echoed her approach from that time in a 1988 speech at the Penney-Missouri Winners’ Banquet: “What is generally regarded as ‘soft’ news should be elevated in the editor’s mind. What the community is talking about, thinking about is vital to readers. The story might not be an event that happened yesterday. It may be a lot more nebulous.”⁵⁴

Jurney also encouraged women’s page editors to cover sex in their sections. At the *Miami Herald*, she ran stories on the Kinsey Report, the largest study ever conducted on human sexual behavior, in her section and received no complaints. While she encouraged reporters to use good taste in writing about the topic, she said her female readers appeared to be less “squeamish” than male readers. She also encouraged management to develop the talent of women working on women’s pages. She said, “There are some good men in the field, but women will do it better.”⁵⁵

While at the *Miami Herald*, Jurney was considered for a promotion, but she said she already had had her ambitions squashed because of her *Daily News* experience. She unknowingly turned down her opportunity when asked by Cle Althouse, the head of human resources at the *Miami Herald*, if she was interested in becoming city editor or managing editor. She replied: “Cle, why should I try? I would be butting my head up against a wall and I’m not going to do that for my own peace of mind.”⁵⁶ She found out later she was being considered for city editor. (Years later at the *Detroit Free Press* she learned that Lee Hills said to another editor of Jurney: “There’s the person who would make a better managing editor than the one we have.”⁵⁷)

Despite not moving up the career ladder, Jurney did make an impact. During her tenure at the *Herald*, several women’s editors from other newspapers visited to observe

her progressive techniques. At one point, she oversaw the revamping of the *Charlotte Observer's* women's section. She spoke at the American Press Institute in 1956, causing Director J. Montgomery Curtis to remark that Journey "did the best work on women's interests and women's pages ever done" at the Institute.⁵⁸ Yet, Curtis wasn't completely complimentary with his comments. In a letter following the presentation, he chided her for using "uhs" when she spoke and recommended that she work with the American Press Institute to become a "first-class orator."⁵⁹

In 1959, Journey separated from her husband and, looking for a new challenge, left the *Herald* for the *Detroit Free Press* at the suggestion of Hill. She wrote to a friend about her career move: "It will be cold and dismal but the horizon should be brighter – anyway broader."⁶⁰ That same year Journey started divorce proceedings. Her husband, Frank, appealed the case to the Florida Supreme Court and won in 1959. The court decided that incompatibility was not a cause for divorce. Their divorce was never granted and Frank Journey died a few years later. The couple had no children.

By this time, Hills had moved on to the *Detroit Free Press*. As part of his effort to improve the Detroit newspaper, he brought along Journey who had gained a national reputation for creating a strong women's section at this time.⁶¹ Under Hills, the Detroit newspaper became known for being "aggressive," especially for focusing on "questionable government practices."⁶² Its women's section "ran stories on lifestyles, recognizing their importance at a time when few newspapers ran such stories."⁶³ Journey said the Hills was a good editor who supported what she wanted to do. In fact, she said, due to Hills' understanding of her work in the women's section, she was invited to Knight

[which became Knight-Ridder after a company merger] executive meetings around the country. This was a very rare opportunity for women at the time.⁶⁴

In Detroit, Journey became editor of what was then called the family section and oversaw what she described as a “larger staff”⁶⁵ than the one under her in Miami. Journey changed the name of the section to “For and About Women” because she felt it was more personal.⁶⁶ It was at the *Free Press* that Journey “changed the look, philosophy, and level of professionalism of the women’s pages,”⁶⁷ according to Mills. Journey said of her new city: “Largely known as a man’s town, Detroit had very strong women leaders and it was a pleasure to know them well. I was a strong believer in knowing community movers and shakers on all levels.”⁶⁸

Journey’s work had an impact on the definition of what was women’s news, and ultimately an impact on which issues were included in the newspaper. She persuaded the managing editor to hire one of the first African American journalists at the *Detroit Free Press*, a woman whom Journey wanted to cover the African American community for the women’s section. Journey helped to name a Detroit home for teenage mothers for Lulubelle Stuart, an influential doctor in the African American community. She wanted to include news of the black community that was not being covered in the news sections. She said, “They were ignored. Just like women’s things were ignored. We were just not – we weren’t a part of the living, breathing community.”⁶⁹ Journey boldly assigned stories about incest in local families after speaking to a social worker. Her section also included stories about changes in Communist China that were based on information from a female professor at Wayne State University. Journey also was instrumental in establishing the Michigan Press Women organization in 1964.⁷⁰

As women's editor, Journey oversaw stories on women in politics, race relation issues, human sensitivity training and women in labor unions that were ignored by the news section.⁷¹ Journey was so progressive about covering issues in her section that a city reporter went through the *Free Press's* library and found that all the stories he was interested in writing had already run in the women's section.⁷² Journey said her motivation was simply to help her community. She recalled: "It was information for readers. ... I have attached the meaning that this is important to our democracy. I feel very strongly the importance of newspapers and the importance of in-depth reporting, not in length, necessarily, but so that the voters know what is happening."⁷³

Journey fought to cover serious issues, including some subjects that some of her male bosses didn't understand. One of her reporters, Jean Sharley Taylor, said that Journey often brought a female point-of-view to issues. Taylor said, "Journey didn't apologize for being a woman. She had self esteem as a woman. I was inclined to think you'd better keep your interest in these things under wraps. I never rebelled about writing women's page stories."⁷⁴

Journey's goal was to treat the topics in her section as "news." She recalled writing about the inequities of tenure for women professors at the University of Michigan. Her boss took her aside and chastised her for the story, questioning why "we were writing about the advancement of women in universities."⁷⁵ It was the kind of story that wasn't being covered by other reporters. Journey said:

The city desk had not been doing it. And, as a matter of fact, I think we entered a lot of areas that the city desk probably didn't have the staff or time to report on these things or maybe were not as much aware of what was happening among women in the UAW, for instance, or in the level of professors in the University of Michigan. You really had to get in there and be a part – an observer, sure – but [be] accepted, win the confidence of the people and understand where they were,

what they were doing, and then you could have the basis for the factual story on these things. I don't think the newsroom had the time or interest in these.⁷⁶

In 1965, after she assigned a reporter to cover homosexuality in the Detroit schools, her managing editor bristled at running the six stories that had been written. His solution was to run a kicker above the headline: "How to Raise More Manly Sons." Journey said that she found the idea "ridiculous."⁷⁷ To broaden the coverage of her section, she offered to cover issues or events that the news desk didn't have time or staff for. Journey said: "We always did stories on women in politics because it didn't seem to me that a woman who was campaigning for state representative or for the city commission got a fair shake from the news side. So we just said, we will also do a story on her."⁷⁸

Journey said she dealt with her male editors by anticipating what they wanted and being able to respond to their demands. She said of one of her more difficult editors: "I never went to his office to discuss a problem unless I had the answer – or at least my idea of the answer to the problem. Having an answer ready made it possible for him to build on that."⁷⁹ As an example, she cited a time when her managing editor recommended that she hire a society writer whom Journey didn't feel was qualified. She said she did not respond negatively to the managing editor's choice but rather set out to find a better candidate. She said when she presented her choice to the editor, the person was "so superior to his candidate that he saw it immediately."⁸⁰

Her dealings with management helped Journey expand the definition of news in her section by extending her deadline, allowing more timely material to run in the women's page. The sports and news sections had deadlines that could be stretched until 10 p.m. or midnight. The women's pages usually had a noon deadline – 2 p.m. at the latest. Journey was the one of the first women's editors to request a later deadline, called a makeover,

which allowed for updating a story. This was done when a reporter was covering an evening speaker, such as Michigan Congresswoman Martha Griffiths. The change was significant because the later deadline meant that the newspaper “treated women’s page news more as news,” according to Journey.⁸¹

Journey was always concerned about a balance of voices in her sections. After running several stories about divorce, alimony and child support, she was visited by a man who said she was only including the wives’ points of view. Journey said, “They [the men] had a point, too. So we wrote those stories then – we quoted these men and whatever figures they had.”⁸² In a letter after her retirement, *Wisconsin State Journal* Editor Frank Denton recalled being inspired by Journey’s work at the *Free Press* when he was a “struggling lifestyle editor.” He wrote her: “The vision you gave the *Free Press* in the ‘60s lives on today at that newspaper. And at many others where *Free Press* people and ideas have migrated. ... You are one of a few people about whom it can be said that they changed the course of our profession.”⁸³

Journey said she was most proud of a collection of stories about women and working conditions that she initiated at the *Detroit Free Press* in 1972.⁸⁴ The series was filled with charts that documented pay inequities and the lack of women in management position. One of the stories addressed a program at General Motors that encouraged women to enter male-dominated fields like engineering.⁸⁵ Several other stories pointed out that not all businesses welcomed policies that forced the hiring of women. One executive was quoted as saying: “We’re being forced to play the number game with women.”⁸⁶ Yet, the tone of the series was that the changes would occur so society needed to prepare for them. Reporter Helen Fogel wrote in 1972, “It is a fact that the women’s

movement and women's demands for equality, both of which seemed laughable to many a few short years ago, are laughable no longer."⁸⁷ A concluding story in the series addressed how businesses would react to more women in the workforce. Fogel wrote:

It may take all of America's celebrated business and industrial know-how to implement a regulation that looks far into the future where traditional sex roles are erased, at least in the work world, and to implement it with today's women who grew up in a society that taught her success beyond her home in unfeminine.⁸⁸

While at the *Detroit Free Press*, Journey was the U.S. delegate to the 1967 Conference of Asian and American Women Writers, a program sponsored by the U.S. State Department, Women in Communications and American Women in Radio and Television. During this conference she became very interested in the issues of Asian women.⁸⁹ She eventually made five trips to Asia and wrote freelance stories about her experiences there.

In 1973 Journey became assistant managing editor of the *Free Press*. She oversaw the women's section and special sections. Journey's title allowed the newspaper to nominate her for membership in the American Society of Newspaper Editors. In the mid-1970s, at the first ASNE convention she attended, there were nine women and 700 men. An invitation to become the first female board member of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association came before she was even a member of the organization, "which says something about their sudden awareness that there were women in newspaper directing editorships that they should take recognition of," Journey commented.⁹⁰ She said the experience was helpful in learning how other editors were doing things, especially in terms of exercising news judgment.

The networking experience was significant for Journey because there were so few opportunities for women's page editors to connect with each other. She later said that one of the reasons why there was not more improvements in women's sections may have been a lack of networking. As the first woman board member of APME, Journey attended meetings where she learned from the experience of male editors. She became aware of how women's page editors had missed out on these opportunities for professional development.

Journey left Detroit to become assistant managing editor/features of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, on the recommendation of John Knight, founder of Knight Newspapers.⁹¹ The paper, purchased by Knight Ridder in 1969, was undergoing many changes at the time and there were few experienced reporters. Journey said she was not able to do as much at the *Inquirer* as she had at other newspapers because she was not able to introduce the kind of progressive content in the "Living" section that she had in her previous women's/feature sections.⁹² Part of the reason, she said, was that she wasn't allowed the time to get to know the community as she did at other newspapers.⁹³ She concluded, "It was not really my finest hour."⁹⁴

But, she did make some progress at the newspaper. In a series of *Inquirer* articles in 1975, she wrote about International Women's Year, seeking to explain the issues and victories of the women's movement. She also attempted to correct the biased coverage of the women's movement in other media stories. She highlighted the demonstration at the 1967 Miss American contest by writing, "Although no bras were burned, as alleged, members of the women's liberation groups were thereafter called 'bra burners' and the term 'women's lib' was applied by the news media to the entire women's movement."⁹⁵

Jurney retired from the *Inquirer* in October of 1975, saying she was ready to try some new projects. Of her newspaper career, Jurney commented:

If I've had any influence at all, I would hope it would be to develop quality. It seems to me that the future of the world is so dependent upon better education, better understanding, better feeling among peoples, and if I could have had contributed any small part to that - it's my deep belief that our mission is to improve things.⁹⁶

Retirement

During her retirement, Jurney continued to speak out on the media's coverage of women and the opportunities for women in journalism. She was optimistic about the future for female journalists, explaining that women editors have a broad vision. She said, however, that to really make a difference women needed to have control over the categories of news and how news is presented.⁹⁷ With some women in decision-making positions, Jurney saw some improvements in newspapers. She was pleased to see that human interest stories, confined to women's pages in the past, had found their way to the front page of the *New York Times*. In 1990 Jurney said:

Because of women's acculturation and experiences in life, they know that there is more to living than what happens in the police court and the fire stations and the government buildings and state legislatures. And I think they are more receptive and as they are strengthened now to do their own thing in being an editor, that we will be getting more of that news.⁹⁸

In the first few years of her retirement, Jurney worked for the National Commission on International Women's Year in Washington, D.C. She was the writer and editor of the commission's 1976 report to President Gerald R. Ford, "To Form a More Perfect Union." It was a difficult assignment as she dealt with fifteen committees in order to produce a report that was well received and influential.⁹⁹ According to East, "Throughout a very difficult period Dorothy was unflappable. She was tactful, helpful,

considerate and constructive in her direction of the preparation of the report.”¹⁰⁰ She also continued to speak about the role of women and journalism. Journey said in a 1978 speech that the roles of wife and mother in the lives of women added to their journalistic abilities – allowing them to place more of an emphasis on human concerns. She said, “These experiences do not rob an able woman journalist of traditional news concepts. Rather they add dimension. She sees news value in many areas that seldom occur to a man to be important.”¹⁰¹

Journey also took part in the National Women’s Conference in Houston in 1977. Later that year, she organized an editorial talent search firm, the Woman’s Network. She placed several women in newspaper management positions before ending the service because of funding problems. Also during the late 1970s, Journey began preparing an annual report on women in news management positions that was published in the *Bulletin* of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, pointing out that there were few women in decision-making positions. She continued the reports for a decade and wrote many articles for journalism industry publications about the topic.

In 1984, she was named Michigan Woman of Achievement. According to award organizers, “Her name is mentioned most often by successful women journalists as the person who provided the greatest inspiration in their careers.”¹⁰² Sharon Nelton, senior editor of *Nation’s Business*, wrote upon the occasion of the award, of her years working with Journey at the *Miami Herald*: “Dorothy has one of the most open minds I have ever encountered, and this openness has enabled her to spot stories where others have failed. ... Dorothy has been an unfailing source of inspiration to me and to many, many other women in journalism.”¹⁰³ Paxson, former *Miami Herald* copy editor under Journey’s

editorship, wrote of her upon the award nomination, “She has been an inspiration and a source of encouragement and support throughout my career.”¹⁰⁴

Jurney didn’t only aid female journalists. After she won the Missouri Honor Medal, a high journalism honor, in 1988, Bill Baker, group vice-president of news for Knight Ridder, wrote to Jurney:

You have always been a visionary. . . . Your style helped set a tone for how professional women could and should cope with breaking into a closed society. But of course that style was a universal style, so a man could learn how to lead and to change things and still to motivate and be a friend. So I believe I have, and here too I count my blessings of having been around you at a crucial stage in my formation.¹⁰⁵

New Directions for News

One of Jurney’s most important projects during her retirement was a study of how newspapers covered particular issues that related to women. The project, New Directions for News, began as an effort to detail the role newspapers played in the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment. The study found that the ten newspapers examined, except for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, had failed to cover the Equal Rights Amendment in a way that allowed readers to truly understand the issues. The study was later expanded to include coverage of Title IX, education, housing, family law issues, and equal pay for comparable work. Along with feminists East and Virginia Allan, Jurney organized research that included examining articles on these topics that appeared in ten different newspapers in 1974. Graduate students at George Washington University coded the stories.

The study grew into a journalism institute, New Directions for News, with initial funding from the McCormick Tribune Foundation. The front page of the initial New

Directions for News publication, a tabloid-type newspaper, symbolized the approach that many managing editors took to the women's sections. It included a drawing that featured men in shirts and ties sitting in front of computers in various news departments – city news, government news, sports news and entertainment news. The last department was the women's section and behind it sat a Neanderthal character in front of a manual typewriter. (Journey convinced the *Miami Herald* to run the drawing in its newspaper.¹⁰⁶) Journey said it was an example of a picture being worth a million words.¹⁰⁷

The introduction to the study, written by Journey, began with a quote from the American Society of Newspaper Editors' statement of principles: "The primary purpose of gathering and distributing news and opinion is to serve the general welfare by informing the people and enabling them to make judgments in the issues of the time."¹⁰⁸ Journey then wrote, "If the way newspapers have covered recent issues and events of importance to women can be taken as a measure of general performance, then it would seem papers have often failed to carry out their primary purpose."¹⁰⁹

The finding of the study showed that the newspaper articles examined focused on conflict, even when that was not the main issue that a reporter had originally written about in her or his article. For example, it pointed out that reporters who had covered the International Women's Year Conference in Copenhagen complained about the editing of their stories. They had sent back stories that were based on issues that had been discussed. At their home newspapers the editors instead focused on a minor part of the conference, such as Israeli or Muslim women walking out.¹¹⁰ Journey stressed that the "hook of a newspaper story" didn't need to be confrontational. Instead, the hook could be economical, financial or family oriented. She wrote:

Reporting only the confrontations – and a number of papers in this study did no more than that – often obscured the deeper thrust of social change. And when there was no controversy involved, the story was often neglected completely. Assuming that these 10 papers are typical, newspapers are missing some of the big, far-reaching stories of our times. In many cases they are also neglecting to report, in a meaningful way, the small stories that affect people in their daily lives.¹¹¹

The study pointed out the areas where newspapers were neglecting their responsibilities as gatekeepers. One of the main conclusions was that newspapers needed to expand their definition of what was newsworthy, particularly putting a stronger emphasis on human interest, or soft news. According to the research findings:

Human news, emerging social issues which impact on the lives of many, must be defined as newsworthy. ... Reporting soft news is more difficult than covering hard news because there is little action and guidelines are few. But when it is done with expertise, the rewards for the public and for the newspaper are large.¹¹²

As Journey reviewed the stories, she pointed out the power of some of the women's pages to address significant issues, especially the section edited by Castleberry at the *Dallas Times Herald*. Journey wrote:

All of the stories that dealt in depth with social issues affecting women and the family in the times that we were studying them, which would have been in the early 1970s – the best stories were done either in sections or by women who had been women's editors. They knew what they were talking about. They saw the importance of family – changes in family law and what that meant.¹¹³

Conclusion

Journey did much to change the definition of news within the limitations of her time. She both predated and advanced the women's movement. She is known as one of the first women's page editors to include more news in her women's section and less society and weddings coverage. Several editors, including Castleberry and Paxson, followed what Journey was doing and modeled their sections after hers.

Several times during her career Journey was told that she was being denied opportunities because of her gender. For example, while Journey was at the *Detroit Free Press*, her former editor Lee Hills introduced her as “our women’s editor, and if she were a man, she’d be executive editor.”¹¹⁴ Journey continued to strive despite the limitations placed upon her. She was not afraid to be labeled a feminist and to push for topics that would empower women. The stacks of letters cited in this chapter laud Journey for her ability to question traditional thinking about women and news. The stories about women that she edited showed her commitment to the goal of the women’s movement.

The women’s movement likely helped her advance in the managerial role of newspapers although in her final editorial position she said she did not feel she was effective. It is also logical to suppose that the top male leadership of Knight Ridder was influenced by the need for social change highlighted by the movement and hence was willing to promote her.

Journey rejected the idea that female journalists had to fit the patterns established by male journalists; instead she valued the different views that they could present. She wrote in 1981, “I am arguing for recognition of women’s insights into the news. It is very important that women reporters and women executives keep open their sensitivity to broadly based news.”¹¹⁵ She combined that differing view to her hard news background and, as a women’s page editor, introduced progressive topics that were not covered in other parts of the newspaper such as pay equity, abortion and homosexuality.

For that reason, Journey was critical of movement leaders’ treatment of the women’s pages and the women’s page editors. As was described in an earlier chapter, she said that the approach of moving women’s news to the front pages was a good idea but

unrealistic in practice. She said that while she respected feminist publications, which reached a relatively specific audience, the movement also needed newspapers to spread the message of equality to a larger audience. She wrote in a 1978 memo that “mainstream rather than feminist representation is very important in order to accomplish progress.”¹¹⁶ Rather than eliminating the women’s pages, she would have preferred to strengthen the women’s sections, making them a place for issue-based news about women.

Jurney was a leading critic of newspapers when it came to treatment and inclusion of women. She played the major role in several studies that looked at the annual gender make-up of reporters at newspapers as well as organizing the initial “New Directions for News” study that looked at how newspapers covered issues important to women. She gave speeches and presentations throughout her career on how to improve women’s sections and the coverage of news pertaining to women. She said, in 1978, that the media did not cover the pay inequities for women. She also said, “Newspapers ignore these and other facts concerning U.S. women in the labor force. They also ignore the injustices in social security, inheritance and other legal facts which work to the detriment of all women, especially those who are homemakers.”¹¹⁷ Her importance lay in her ability to speak up on these issues and to be listened to by a variety of colleagues, both male and female, who respected her journalistic ability and expertise. The women’s movement provided the impetus to make her voice heard in the newspaper industry, although she disagreed with its leaders’ position on women’s sections to which she had devoted most of her outstanding career.

¹ Sonia Pressman Fuentes, “Catherine East” in *Three Legendary Feminists*, 1998, <http://www.moondance.org/1998/winter98/nonfiction/catherine.html>

² Introduction to Dorothy Jurney interview, Oral History Project, “Women in Journalism,” Washington Press Club Foundation, available online: <http://npc.press.org/wpforal/preface.htm#top>

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- ³ Introduction to Dorothy Journey interview, Oral History Project.
- ⁴ Colleen 'Koky' Dishon. "We've Come a Long Way – Maybe," *Media Studies Journal* 11 (Spring 1997): 99.
- ⁵ Kay Mills, *A Place in the News: From the Women's Pages to the Front Pages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 304.
- ⁶ Dorothy Journey, Autobiography, September 28, 1988, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia. Journey file, C3904, folder 106, 3.
- ⁷ Dorothy Journey, Penney-Missouri Winners' Banquet speech, March 30, 1988, Journey file, C3904, folder 106, 3.
- ⁸ Dorothy Journey, quoted in the introduction of Western Historical Manuscript Collection, <http://www.umsystem.edu/whmc/nwm.html>.
- ⁹ Charles Stevenson, recommendation letter, February 28, 1949, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Journey file, C3904, folder 104-105.
- ¹⁰ Barbaralee Diamondstein, *Open Secrets: 94 Women in Touch With Our Time* (New York: Viking Press, 1972), 227.
- ¹¹ Medill School, Northwestern University, 2003 Hall of Achievement program, <http://www.medill.northwestern.edu/alumni/honors/profiles/journey.html>
- ¹² Ellen Goodman, email interview, June 9, 2004.
- ¹³ Dorothy Journey interview, "Women in Journalism," Washington Press Club Foundation. Available online: <http://npc.press.org>. Session 2, 57.
- ¹⁴ Diamondstein, 228.
- ¹⁵ Journey, Autobiography, 1.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Journey, Session 1, 16.
- ¹⁸ Journey, Session 1, 33 and Autobiography, 3.
- ¹⁹ Journey, Session 1, 4.
- ²⁰ Journey, Autobiography, 1.
- ²¹ Journey, Session 2, 54.
- ²² Journey, Autobiography, 1.
- ²³ Journey included a note in her archived papers that described Mary Welsh Hemingway as a "great friend." Years later, in 1959, Journey wrote to her asking if Ernest Hemingway would speak at a Miami conference, Mary responded: "I have to tell you there isn't a chance. The only speech I've ever heard him make since I've known him was at the captain's dinner on an Atlantic crossing before they passed the hat for the seaman's retirement fund. It lasted two minutes." Mary Hemingway letter, Jan. 27, 1959, Journey file, C3904, folder 106, 3.
- ²⁴ Journey, Session 1, 13.
- ²⁵ Journey, Session 2, 55.
- ²⁶ Journey, Autobiography, 2.
- ²⁷ Journey, Session 1, 37.
- ²⁸ Ibid, 15.
- ²⁹ Ibid, 17.
- ³⁰ Journey, Autobiography, 3.
- ³¹ Journey, Session 1, 23.
- ³² Mary Hemingway letter to Journey, September 11, 1958, Journey file, C3904, folder 106, 3.
- ³³ Stevenson letter.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Journey, Session 4, 126.
- ³⁶ Stevenson letter.
- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ Journey, Autobiography, 1.
- ³⁹ Dorothy Journey, "Women In Journalism," *The Bulletin*, American Society of Newspaper Editors, January 1, 1956, 5.
- ⁴⁰ Frank Angelo, *On Guard: A History of the Detroit Free Press* (Detroit, Michigan: Detroit Free Press, 1981), 208.
- ⁴¹ Diamondstein, 227.

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- ⁴² Nixon Smiley, *Knights of the Fourth Estate: The Story of the Miami Herald* (Miami, Florida: A.E. Seeman Publishing, 1974), 169.
- ⁴³ Smiley, 267.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 271.
- ⁴⁵ Journey, Autobiography, 1.
- ⁴⁶ Journey, Session 4, 127.
- ⁴⁷ Journey, Section 1, 49.
- ⁴⁸ Journey, Autobiography, 2.
- ⁴⁹ Journey, Session 2, 53.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 64.
- ⁵¹ Marion Marzolf, *Up From the Footnote: A History of Women Journalists* (New York: Hasting House, 1977), 209.
- ⁵² Cokie Roberts, *We Are Our Mothers' Daughters* (New York: Perennial, 2000), 114.
- ⁵³ Journey, "Women In Journalism," 5.
- ⁵⁴ Dorothy Journey, Penney-Missouri Winners' Banquet speech, March 30, 1988, Journey file, C3904, folder 106, 3.
- ⁵⁵ Journey "Women's Pages," 5.
- ⁵⁶ Journey, Session 1, 49.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 50.
- ⁵⁸ Montgomery Curtis letter. March 26, 1959, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia. Journey file, C3904, folder 104-105.
- ⁵⁹ Curtis letter.
- ⁶⁰ Journey letter to Mary Hemingway, May 8, 1959, Journey file, C3904, folder 106, 3.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid*, 267.
- ⁶² Angelo, 207.
- ⁶³ *Ibid*, 207.
- ⁶⁴ Journey, Session 2, 59.
- ⁶⁵ Journey, Session 2, 64.
- ⁶⁶ Journey, Session 4, 127.
- ⁶⁷ Kay Mills, *A Place in the News: From the Women's Pages to the Front Pages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 115.
- ⁶⁸ Journey, Autobiography, 3.
- ⁶⁹ Journey, Session 4, 123.
- ⁷⁰ Naida Ayadi Farmer, Michigan Women's Press Association, December 6, 1983. Available through Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia. Journey file, C3904, folder 104-105.
- ⁷¹ Journey letter to Laura Fraser, June 1, 1981, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia. Journey file, C3904, folder 104-105.
- ⁷² Journey, Session 1, 20.
- ⁷³ *Ibid*, 19.
- ⁷⁴ Mills, 74.
- ⁷⁵ Journey, Session 4, 121.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 121.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 122.
- ⁷⁸ Journey, Session 2, 77.
- ⁷⁹ Dorothy Journey, "Problems of Women in Journalism" speech, 1976, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia. Journey file, C3904, folder 106, 3.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid*.
- ⁸¹ Journey, Session 4, 124.
- ⁸² Journey, Session 2, 80.
- ⁸³ Frank Denton letter, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Journey file, C3904, folder 104-105.
- ⁸⁴ Journey note, October 9, 1988, about Order 4 stories, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia. Journey file, C3904, folder 106, 3.
- ⁸⁵ Helen Fogel, "GM and Women Today," *Detroit Free Press*, April 1972.
- ⁸⁶ Helen Fogel, "GM Executive Looks at the Impact of Women Workers," *Detroit Free Press*, April 1972.

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- ⁸⁷ Helen Fogel, "Putting New Rules into Effect," *Detroit Free Press*, April 1972.
- ⁸⁸ Helen Fogel, "U.S. Industry, Women Head For New Era," *Detroit Free Press*, April 1972.
- ⁸⁹ Journey, *Autobiography*, 4.
- ⁹⁰ Journey, Session 3, 105.
- ⁹¹ The University of Akron, John S. Knight, <http://www3.uakron.edu/library/jsknight/bio.html>.
- ⁹² Journey said she did not like the section's title of Living. She said in that part of the newsroom, the phone was answered "Living." One day, she recalled, that she answered a ringing phone with the customary greeting and there was silence on the other end. She said, "Finally, a somewhat sad male voice came through. 'Oh,' he said, 'I wanted the obituary writer.'" Dorothy Journey, Penney-Missouri Winners' Banquet speech, March 30, 1988, Journey file, C3904, folder 106, 3.
- ⁹³ Journey, *Autobiography*, 3.
- ⁹⁴ Journey, *Autobiography*, 3.
- ⁹⁵ Dorothy Journey, "Women's Liberation" *Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 10, 1967.
- ⁹⁶ Journey, Session 3, 117.
- ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 118.
- ⁹⁸ Journey, Session 4, 130.
- ⁹⁹ Catherine East letter, January 29, 1984, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Journey file, C3904, folder 104-105.
- ¹⁰⁰ East letter.
- ¹⁰¹ Journey, talk at Carolina Symposium, 4.
- ¹⁰² Farmer letter, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Journey file, C3904, folder 104-105.
- ¹⁰³ Nelson letter, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Journey file, C3904, folder 104-105.
- ¹⁰⁴ Paxson letter, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Journey file, C3904, folder 104-105.
- ¹⁰⁵ Baker letter, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Journey file, C3904, folder 104-105.
- ¹⁰⁶ Journey, Session 2, 99.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁸ Virginia Allan, Catherine East and Dorothy Journey, "New Directions for News," sponsored by the Women Studies Program and Policy Center of George Washington University, 2.
- ¹⁰⁹ Journey, "New Directions for News," 2.
- ¹¹⁰ Journey, Session 4, 129.
- ¹¹¹ Journey, "New Directions for News," 2.
- ¹¹² *Ibid.*,^{3, 10}.
- ¹¹³ Journey, Session 1, 33.
- ¹¹⁴ Mills, 115.
- ¹¹⁵ Journey, letter to Fraser.
- ¹¹⁶ Journey, letter to Margaret Gallagher, Institute of Educational Technology, September 25, 1978, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia, Journey file, C3904, folder 104-105.
- ¹¹⁷ Journey, letter to Gallagher, 2.

Chapter Six

Marjorie Paxson: From Women's Editor to Publisher

Marjorie Paxson spent more than four decades in journalism, moving from being a wire service reporter to a women's editor to a publisher. Her career, heavily influenced by her mentor, Journey, illustrated the impact of the women's movement on another outstanding woman in journalism who worked to redefine women's news. Paxson worked as a reporter or editor for the United Press, the Associated Press, the *Houston Post*, the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Miami Herald*, the *St. Petersburg Times*, the *Philadelphia Bulletin*, and the *Idaho Statesman*. She then became a publisher of two Gannett newspapers, the *Public Opinion*, in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and the *Muskogee Phoenix* in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Paxson said she always was a "closet boss" until the Gannett company gave her the opportunity to "come out of the closet."¹

Like Journey, Paxson won several awards throughout her career. She was national president of Women in Communications from 1963 to 1967, its key years of change from a sorority to a professional organization. She received its Headliner award in 1976. She received the organization's lifetime achievement award in 2001. Paxson won a Penney-Missouri award for an outstanding women's section in 1970 while she was the women's page editor of the *St. Petersburg Times*. Journey, said that Paxson's "news sense was the finest."² She had a "great skill in evaluating an idea and choosing the right person to follow up the story," Journey continued.³ Journey also said she was impressed with Paxson's people skills:

Marj has so much managerial ability. She's a take-charge woman, but never offensive. Brilliant people working in the newsroom have to mesh. Marj was excellent at blending creative minds. She could evaluate an idea, then choose the

best reporters for the story. She always knew how to handle people and problems, and was great to work with.⁴

Information about Paxson comes from the 169-page transcript of her 1991 interview for the Washington Press Club oral history project, a telephone interview conducted in the summer of 2003, an autobiographical chapter in the out-of-print book, *New Guardians of the Press*, speeches and presentations that she gave, articles that she wrote for industry publications, newspaper stories about her and other unindexed personal papers that are archived in the National Women and Media Collection at the University of Missouri. Her biographical material shows a strong woman shaped by a strong mother.

Childhood

Paxson was born in Houston, Texas, in 1923 and spent her childhood in that area. Her parents were both from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. They left Pennsylvania for Texas due to her father's job as a petroleum geologist. Her mother went to secretarial school after high school and worked for the board of health in Lancaster until she got married and stopped working outside of the home. Paxson's mother was a strong influence; she took care of the family, which consisted of Paxson and her brother, and acted as disciplinarian when Paxson's father was away on business – a situation that occurred regularly. According to Paxson, her mother “was pretty resourceful and she took care of everything. She was much handier around the house than my father. ... From the personality standpoint my mother was tougher.”⁵

Paxson grew up reading history books and the newspapers that always were in the house – her family subscribed to both the *Houston Post* and the *Houston Chronicle*. As an adolescent, she wasn't sure what she wanted to be. She only knew what she didn't

want to be: a nurse or a teacher. When Paxson began attending Lamar High School, she started writing for her school newspaper. It was then that she realized that journalism was going to be her career and she never regretted the decision,⁶ she recalled.

Paxson's mother encouraged both of her children to prepare to go to college. Paxson earned good grades in high school except in a shorthand class. This so upset her mother that she visited the school to discuss the poor grade which kept Paxson out of the honor society, but not out of Rice College (later Rice University) in Houston. According to Paxson:

There were no ifs, ands or buts about it. "You're going to go [to college]." As far as the career or getting married, I think she would like to have seen me married but that didn't happen. And it was mainly that you get an education and do what you want to do.⁷

Based on a teacher's recommendation, Paxson wanted to attend the University of Missouri for its journalism program, but her parents encouraged her to attend Rice College for her first two years because it was close to home. She worried about being accepted there – at the time, Rice's freshmen class was limited to ten percent women. While at Rice, she worked on the student newspaper and took her general education requirements.

In 1942, Paxson began her junior year at the University of Missouri in Columbia – which had a reciprocal agreement with Texas, so that out-of-state students could pay in-state tuition. Although the University of Missouri School of Journalism was full of students when she began, six weeks later there were many vacant seats because most male students had been drafted for World War II. The School of Journalism, then as now, put out a daily community newspaper, the *Columbia Missourian*, which competed with a

local newspaper, the *Columbia Tribune*. Paxson said the practical experience at the *Missourian* as well as her liberal arts classes at the University of Missouri helped her to get her first job with the United Press. She said, “I think the liberal arts are a great help and I think a lot of journalism students now don’t have enough of it. But I think you need the practical training, too.”⁸

Becoming a Journalist

Paxson graduated from college in 1944, in the middle of World War II. She said she considered joining the military when her college roommate joined the Marines but that ultimately journalism was a bigger draw for her.⁹ With so many men in the armed forces, women had a relatively easy time finding journalism jobs. Paxson’s first job was with the United Press in Nebraska. She and the bureau manager, Marguerite Davis, covered state news except for football games – women were not allowed in the press box at Nebraska Stadium – and executions at the state penitentiary because the Omaha bureau manager didn’t think women belonged there.¹⁰ That first job was a learning experience for Paxson. She said, Davis “taught me that some of that even though I was a graduate of the famous Missouri J-School, I don’t know everything there was to know about journalism.”¹¹

Paxson mentioned an experience with sexual harassment occurred while covering the state Supreme Court. The 70-year-old clerk used to “pat” the women. At one point he put his arm around Paxson. Most of the time she tried to avoid him. Paxson said, “You just had to put up with it, spend as little time as possible in his office, make a point of always keeping the desk in between you. If he started to come around the desk, you picked up those opinions and left.”¹²

While the war allowed women to break into the news sections of newspapers (up until then most women could only write for women and society sections), it only provided a short-term opportunity. Paxson, like other women journalists, signed an agreement with United Press that allowed a man to take her position when he returned from duty. She said: “Thousands of women all over the country signed those waivers. That would not happen today. But when you understand the mores and attitudes of this country in 1944, signing the waiver was the accepted thing to do. Journalists need that historical perspective. It is important to the story.”¹³

After working for the wire service for two years, Paxson was replaced, when the war ended, by a man who had no previous journalism experience. (Forty-six women were let go in her division of the United Press at that time.) Ironically, the new male hire was paid \$20 less than Paxson had earned per week because he had less experience – a switch in the usual gender-based pay inequity. Paxson said, “This may be one of the few times in history that a woman was replaced by a man at a lower salary.”¹⁴ At the time, men and women of the same experience level were supposed to earn equal pay under contracts negotiated by the American Newspaper Guild. For much of her career, however, Paxson did not enjoy pay equity. It was not until she became an executive with the Gannett company that she again earned equal pay. As she said, “There was no discrimination then while I worked for the [wire] services and they had the contracts with the guild. Everybody got paid the same thing. And years later when I became a publisher, I got equal pay. In between, I didn’t.”¹⁵

The week she was told she was losing her job at the United Press, she took a job with the Associated Press in Omaha. Her job was to edit the radio wire copy, a task

which she said helped her to write more concisely and directly. She stayed there for two years before tiring of the routine and the long hours, and heading back to Texas in 1948. She applied to several newspapers and was offered the position of society editor at the *Houston Post*, the more liberal paper in the city in comparison to its main competition, the *Houston Chronicle*.¹⁶ There were three papers in the city at that time. The *Houston Post* was the morning paper. The *Chronicle* was the afternoon paper and it had a slightly larger circulation than the *Post*. The smallest circulation paper was the *Houston Press*, a Scripps-Howard paper, that later folded.¹⁷ She moved back home at age twenty-four because her parents believed that a single woman should not be living in an apartment and ended up living with her parents from 1948 through 1956.

Being the society editor in a town when the oil economy was booming kept Paxson busy. She had a staff of five women. To keep up with society events, Paxson had fourteen evening dresses – most were made by her mother. She had a hectic schedule. On Friday, she would put together the Sunday section during the day and then cover a party at night before going back to the office, writing a story about the social event she had attended and getting home at 3 a.m. Paxson recalled, “And of course, there was no overtime. There were laws in Texas that women weren’t supposed to work more than ... ten hours a day but nobody paid any attention to that.”¹⁸ On some days, Paxson would be in the composing room looking at the page proof upside down while in her evening dress. At that time linotype machines set the type and the pages were made up by hand. The tricky process sometimes resulted in mistakes. In one story about a cocktail party, the second half of a word was left off. Paxson was lectured about proofreading.

Paxson said one of her greatest accomplishments was to get pictures of brides off the front page of the Sunday women's section so she could put more issue-oriented features there. In a 2003 interview Paxson recalled, "It was really something at the time. I was educating, arguing, fighting – and I wasn't brought up to argue. But change had to happen."¹⁹

While her editors were all males and not very supportive, the female publisher of the *Houston Post* did back Paxson up on her policy change on wedding pictures. When the daughter of a friend of the newspaper's owner, former Governor William Hobby, was married. Hobby called asking for an exception, but Paxson stuck to her policy. The next call came from his wife, Oveta Culp Hobby, who had been the director of the Women's Army Corps during World War II and was in Eisenhower's cabinet at the time. (Although officially the former governor was the publisher of the paper, it was his wife who actually ran it.) She asked Paxson about the policy and after hearing the answer, backed Paxson up.²⁰

The men for whom Paxson worked at the time were not as enlightened as Mrs. Hobby had been. After Paxson was promoted from society editor to women's editor, she had a difficult time getting hard news in her section. When she came across a wire story about a state Parent Teacher Association convention in a nearby city, she asked the news editor if her staff could cover the story. Paxson recalled, "He looked me straight in the eye and he said, "I'll never give a news story to the women's section."²¹ The news editor devoted three paragraphs to the story, while the women's section would have given it ten to twelve inches. "I never cracked that [male barrier]. I never could get anything out of him. This was the old-fashioned idea and some of them [male editors] were not about to

change,”²² she recalled. Yet, she found some advantages to heading the women’s section – freedom from some restraints. For example, Paxson was able to run a syndicated advice column that focused on sexual issues. The managing editor told her, “You can run that kind of thing in your section where we couldn’t run it in the rest of the paper.”²³

In 1952 the women’s editor of the *Houston Chronicle* retired. The managing editor of the newspaper called Paxson, offering her the job and a raise. Paxson, who was in her early thirties at the time, accepted and inherited a staff of seven people. When she started, there was still a focus on soft feature stories, but a new era was on its way. In the early 1950s, Paxson started receiving photos of black brides – prior to that time none had been sent in. The *Chronicle’s* women’s section was the first in the city to publish photos of black brides. Paxson’s section was also one of the first sections in the country to carry Ann Landers’ columns of advice. Paxson said that many of the changes that occurred in her section were a result of change in the community. “It was more a matter of let’s keep up with the times and stay current. It was clear that our coverage would need to change.”²⁴

It was in the mid-1950s that Paxson began covering more serious issues in her section, focusing on working women and how they could best balance their work and home lives. Paxson remembered:

We began to look at the *Miami Herald* and the just revolutionary things they were doing that period on the trends, on the things that affected women. It’s not that we didn’t have the freedom on the *Post*, it’s just simply that we didn’t know enough to know we ought to try. You feel your way and get better as you do it. All my life I have preached the theory that you should plagiarize and localize, steal an idea wherever you can and make it work for yourself. And we stole a lot from the *Miami Herald*.²⁵

Paxson's position at the *Chronicle* introduced her to management issues. She recalled that she had some difficult people on her staff – although she didn't have the power to hire or fire. She said, "This was where you begin to learn to handle people. I like to be a boss."²⁶

Paxson stayed at the *Chronicle* until 1956 when she felt she was getting too comfortable and needed a fresh challenge. She believed she had accomplished everything she had planned to do to update the women's section at the *Chronicle*. She wrote to several newspapers to inquire about jobs and was happy to get a favorable response from Dorothy Jurney at the *Miami Herald*, a woman whose career Paxson had followed. There was an opening for a copy editor in the *Herald's* 14-person women's section. At the *Herald*, which had a circulation of about 300,000 at the time, Paxson worked directly under assistant women's editor Marie Anderson, the woman who won so many J.C. Penney-Missouri awards²⁷ that the *Herald* section was retired from competition. Paxson said she learned management skills from both editors: "Where Dorothy could be very strong and forceful, Marie was very low-key. But she got things done just the same."²⁸ When Jurney left for the *Detroit Free Press*, Anderson was promoted to women's page editor and Paxson became assistant editor. The section continued to be an advocate for women. The editors ran the entire report of the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, and excerpts from Friedan's *Feminine Mystique*. Paxson said, "[Management] let us try things. They didn't fight us."²⁹

The section included stories about birth control pills, the sexual revolution, unmarried couples living together and women's medical concerns. It was large – running as many as 24 pages on Sundays during heavy advertising seasons. Stories in the sections

moved far beyond food and fashion and explored serious social issues including those important to black and Jewish communities. (The Hispanic community was not very large in Miami during the time Paxson was at the newspaper.) “We wanted it to be balanced. We wanted variety. We mainly wanted to get into that section the things that women were interested in. And we felt that that went a lot further than society, although they were interested in society, and there was plenty of activity in Miami.”³⁰

Paxson said the key to transforming the women’s section was the activism of the women’s editor and the support of the male managing editors and publisher – especially because women editors did not have the authority to make the final decisions. One of those supportive managing editors at the *Miami Herald* was Allen Neuharth, who years later hired her as a Gannett publisher. He later became known for being open to the women’s movement. (In 1970, when Neuharth was president of the New York State Publishers Association, he invited Steinem to be the keynote speaker and urged her to lay out the movement’s agenda. It was clear that not all editors supported the movement in the way that Neuharth did. During Steinem’s address, she was challenged by a publisher: “Why should white male publishers like myself support your feminist movement?”³¹)

Paxson encountered resistance from some male editors in Florida. She said, “We had a good idea of what our readers wanted but we needed them [the editors] to back us up. Some managing editors got it, some didn’t.”³² As a way of strengthening that connection, Paxson and Edie Greene, women’s editor of the *Ft. Lauderdale News*, gave a presentation to a Florida state meeting of managing editors called “What’s Wrong with Women’s Pages” (This was not their title – Paxson said they didn’t think there was

anything wrong – only that more consideration of their content was needed.). The first issue they focused on was the emphasis on women’s roles as wives and mothers:

We thought they made a mistake when they allowed reporters to write something to the effect that “although Edie Greene is a champion stock car driver, president of the Florida women’s press club and women’s editor of the *Ft. Lauderdale News*, she still finds time to be a wife and mother.”³³

They turned the story around, asking whether male journalists would write a story explaining that Milt Kelly (Greene’s boss) was a professional marksman, a flycaster, and a managing editor and yet still found time to be a husband and father. More than twenty years later, Paxson remarked that style of writing is “still being done and I still cringe. We may have come a long way but we have a long way to go.”³⁴

The presentation also encouraged managing editors to include fewer stories about brides and “club trivia” and more stories about medical, educational, economic, sociological and community issues. The women recommended that the managing editors stand behind the women’s page editors when they received irate phone calls from brides’ fathers asking why there wasn’t space to write about the train on their daughters’ dresses. They also requested a new job description for women’s page editors. They thought a women’s page editor should be a crusader, a newswoman who was alert to what was going on in her community and a woman with an imagination who could localize the news content of the general wire stories in her section. There was also the question of administrative skills. Paxson told the group:

This is something that got overlooked a lot of times. Some woman simply was promoted but she needed to learn how to manage the staff, how to keep the staff on its toes. At some point she needed to learn to back up her staff. That’s the thing learned from Mrs. Hobby. She was willing to back me up and I’ve never forgotten that.³⁵

The training session did not have much of an impact, according to Paxson. She said, “Oh, they all told us they loved it. And then went right back to doing things the way they had always done it.”³⁶

While at the *Miami Herald*, Paxson was offered a job in Atlanta, which she ultimately declined. She was torn between it and her Miami job because she had recently been promoted by the *Herald* and sent to a training seminar. As Paxson pondered her decision, Anderson sent her to talk to Neuharth, the city editor. He told her to rely less on loyalty and instead look at the big picture and examine each opportunity. He said, “Remember, nobody is going to look out for Marj Paxson except Marj Paxson.”³⁷ She had learned that lesson when it came to her salary – she and the women’s page reporters were all underpaid in relation to male staff members. She said, “We always kept saying that the women’s editors should get equal pay with the sports editor. And that fell on deaf ears.”³⁸

As the women’s movement got underway, Paxson recognized a growing awareness of women in the newsroom. She wrote an article for the *Iowa Publisher* newsletter in October 1967 about the progress that women were making in journalism, although she also recognized that sexism still existed. She wrote, “The walls of resistance to women in the newsroom are yielding, a complete turnaround from 1945. It’s no longer a question of whether they’re in, or whether they’ll stay, or even of whether they are properly recognized.”³⁹ But she mentioned that due to gender-based stereotypes, women were coming into the newsroom at a disadvantage. She wrote, “Most city editors are men, and there is an inborn prejudice against sending a woman on certain kinds of stories.”⁴⁰ She concluded the article by telling young women that they did not have to

make a choice between a personal life and a professional life. She wrote, “A woman needn’t worry either about having to make the old choice between marriage or a career. More than half the women who work in this country are married. A smart girl has her cake and eats it, too.”⁴¹

Professional Networking

During her years at the *Miami Herald*, Paxson was elected the national president of the 4,500-member professional journalism organization that is now known as Association for Women in Communications (then called Theta Sigma Phi and later Women in Communications). She held that office from 1963 to 1967. When she took office, the organization – which was founded as a sorority for journalism students, in 1908 – was more of a social group than a professional one. According to Paxson, “I turned the organization from a narrow, journalistic social sorority concept to a professional approach. I motivated volunteers who paid dues for the privilege of working in the organization ... to change direction.”⁴² Paxson’s campaign for a more professional approach to issues concerning women in journalism was not always well received. The race for the presidency was “bitter.” Many members resisted Paxson’s emphasis on professional training. She was at a local Theta Sigma Phi meeting when she learned she had won. She got a telegram from Marie Anderson: “Congratulations, I guess.”⁴³

According to Chicago journalist Mary Jane Snyder:

Those were decisive years when a philosophy of change was at stake. We needed a woman with strong leadership qualities, a real professional. Marj was the right person at the right time. She hits the ground running. She’s a woman with high expectations who has the talent to mesh divergent people together, yet do it in a non-threatening manner so everybody feels comfortable.⁴⁴

Paxson’s goals included establishing a national headquarters. At that time the

national organization's files were housed in a member's garage. She also wanted to put more professional information in the organization's magazine, the *Matrix*. She spent much of her free time traveling and speaking to local chapters. During the time she was president, she visited 40 chapters and traveled more than 75,000 miles. She also corresponded with different groups within the organization – writing more than 4,000 letters for an average of 25 a week. In her farewell address as president, Paxson called for the organization to change its name from the Greek letters denoting a sorority to a more professional title, Women in Communications, although it took several more years for this to occur. She said, “I always had a high regard for the organization. It did spread across the country and there were a lot of prominent women in it. I felt like it could be a force to help women as things changed in the sixties.”⁴⁵

In the years following Paxson's presidency, the women whom she had recruited stayed involved and pushed for continued professionalism. Decades later, the Association for Women in Communications, as the organization is called today, continues to be a professional association that provides a female voice for communications professionals. Christy Bulkeley, who was a leader in the years following Paxson's presidency, said that Paxson served to inspire members. According to Bulkeley:

[There was] talent she had spotted and brought in and gotten involved and set on tracks where they then could handle their own involvement and progress. With that many who survived and made it through the presidency, with all of the kinds of things that would divert women when there was no support for working women, little child care, and the rest of it with those who left the field for a while or didn't have the support to do national involvement, you know there were lots more of highly talented women who fell by the wayside or were limited to doing their work in their local community, that she also had spotted and brought along.⁴⁶

A New Challenge

In 1968, after 12 years at the *Miami Herald*, Paxson got a phone call offering her the position of women's editor at the *St. Petersburg Times*⁴⁷ in St. Petersburg, Florida. St. Petersburg is primarily a retirement community and its newspaper was known for having progressive content. Paxson decided to take the job. She had a staff of seven women, but like most women's page editors, she had limited powers; in St. Petersburg, she could not hire, fire or control her own budget. She did oversee her reporters and developed her own management style.

I have never been one who could be really tough. Every now and again I can get mad and [the reporters] will know it. Mostly I tried to persuade people and cajole them into doing it my way. And then finally if that doesn't work then you get pretty tough."⁴⁸

She wasn't there very long when the newspaper became among the first in the country to change the women's pages into a features section, known as the DAY section – as in MonDAY, TuesDAY, etc. In the reorganization, Paxson was demoted to the number three person in her section. She said, "It was a very uncomfortable position to be in and a very difficult time for me."⁴⁹ The new editor of the section was a man, a situation that was occurring across the nation. Paxson said, "Some of the [women's movement] leaders were very vocal about changing the sections. You could see the changes coming."⁵⁰

For Paxson, her demotion was ironic. In the weeks after the elimination of the section, she learned that she had won a 1969 Penney-Missouri award for editing the best women's section. She said, "That award was a tremendous achievement. It was proof that your section was relevant."⁵¹ After accepting the award, Paxson returned to her

newspaper that no longer had a women's section and knew she had to leave. She said, "I had been given the literal two-step, there was no sense in staying."⁵² When editors at the *St. Petersburg Times* learned she was looking for a new job, she was fired.

Paxson soon went to work as the women's page editor at the *Philadelphia Bulletin*. It was a strong, respected newspaper at that time,⁵³ according to Paxson, although it folded in 1982. Paxson had a staff of 15 women. She discovered her job was a difficult one. Her boss didn't trust her opinion and regularly criticized what she did. She said, "I don't think he trusted any woman's judgment."⁵⁴ The job gave her even less freedom than she had experienced in Florida. By 1973, the *Bulletin* decided to eliminate its women's section and create a features section called Focus. Paxson said, "It was the same song, second verse."⁵⁵ She was demoted to associate editor of the Sunday magazine.

In a chapter on her career written for a book on women journalists, Paxson described this period as the bleakest of her life. All she was responsible for was reading page proofs and handling petty details. She said her lowest point came when she was meeting with a group of professional women to whom she described her firing and demotions. Paxson recalled, "One of the participants heard me out and then told me: Marj, you have to accept the fact that you're a casualty of the women's movement."⁵⁶ Paxson said she agreed.

While at the magazine, she was told that she should continue to look for stories that would be of interest to women that would run in the features section. Yet, all she could do was make recommendations; she had no power to make sure that stories directed at women would actually run. When Paxson made suggestions, she said the

response from the city editor was: “We’ve got more important things to do than that.”⁵⁷

During her time in that position, which she described as “the worst fourteen months” of her life, she did try to make changes. She regularly wrote critical memos to Managing Editor George Packard. One of those memos, which was sent on March 8, 1974, is detailed below:

Today’s paper upsets me as a women’s news editor. It is completely male oriented. In fact, looking through the pages of the B section, I wonder if women do anything but sing for the president and produce babies. The male dominance of the paper is happening so regularly that I am concerned. It’s a mistake, a big mistake. ... Why not a story on the policewoman’s battle for equal treatment, pointing out how backward the Philadelphia police are compared with other police departments. ... Why not a story on the suits for equal pay and equal opportunity women are filing and winning around the country pegged on those two Camden women? ... I keep suggesting stories such as these to various editors but they are not interested. I think we need to be interested because I think a lot of our readers are interested. After all, we do have more women readers than men. And women are doing interesting things these days. I am trying to function as women’s news editor but if today’s paper is any indication, I am striking out. I need your advice on how we can get some of these women’s stories into print.⁵⁸

According to Bulkeley, Paxson was not valued by editors at the *Philadelphia Bulletin* even though her work was excellent, because it threatened male domination. During floods in the community in 1972, her women’s section continually scooped the city side with stories on about how to survive the natural disaster. “Her section became so much more valuable that the hierarchical reaction was to kill the section and put Marj in limbo. ... The initial reaction to the woman producing more valuable news was to decide it must have been a fluke and get her out of the way,”⁵⁹ Buckley said.

With good journalism jobs hard to find, Paxson tried to stick it out at the *Bulletin*. She liked the Philadelphia area and the fact that her former boss, Journey, had purchased the house next door to her when she began working at the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. In

1974, Paxson's job title was changed and she became a low-level assistant metropolitan editor overseeing 18 beat reporters. She recalled, "I finally was rescued from purgatory."⁶⁰ But her transition back to a management role wasn't easy. Paxson was afraid to assume the same leadership role she had shown in Florida and became overly cautious. She began double-checking every decision with editor Jim Tunnell. One Sunday, he laid his pencil down and shook his head at her. He said: "You're wasting time. You're acting like somebody who's been badly burned. Don't ask me. Just go ahead and do it. I trust your judgment."⁶¹

After that conversation, Paxson said her confidence returned, although she still didn't have much power. When she was asked whether the fashion editor should travel to Paris despite budget constraints, she responded that she could make a better call if she knew the department's budget. Editor Dale Davis's response was: "Aren't you glad you don't have to worry your pretty head about things like that?"⁶²

In 1975, while at the *Bulletin*, Paxson received a phone call asking if she would be interested in editing the eight-page bilingual daily tabloid to be published in Mexico City for the United Nations World Conference for International Women's Year. With the approval of the managing editor, she was given five weeks of unpaid leave to edit the newspaper for the conference that included 1,300 delegates from various countries. The name of the paper was *Xilonen*, in honor of the Aztec goddess of tender corn. Although Paxson's title was editor, she was more of a publisher.

Paxson worked in a difficult environment with few resources. One of her biggest problems was the heavy pressure from special interest groups. In an article about her experience published in the *Matrix*, the publication of Women in Communications,

Paxson wrote that one woman shoved her against a wall and shook her fist in Paxson's face because she refused to run the writer's "three-page, hand-written opus."⁶³ On the other hand, many influential writers eagerly contributed to the publication. One day, Germaine Greer walked into the pressroom asking if she could write an article. Paxson said it took her a half a second to agree. Thirty minutes after walking through the door, Greer returned with the article and handed it to Paxson to read. "When I finished, I beckoned to her and I said 'I like this,' Paxson remembered. And she said 'I thought so. I was watching you and you smiled at the right places.' I think she was worried that I wouldn't catch the humor and the satire."⁶⁴

Although Paxson had received a leave to work on the Mexico City paper, her own newspaper did not bother to run the four-part series she put together to explain the main issues addressed at the conference. Paxson started to see the handwriting on the wall and began a job search, although at age fifty-three, she was worried about her prospects. She said, "You know, when you get to be that age, they don't really want to hire you. That's true throughout all industry."⁶⁵

In negotiating her move, Paxson thought back to her former Florida supervisor, Neuharth, who by this time was the head of the Gannett company.⁶⁶ She wrote him a letter asking whether there was any way she could get a job at her age. The response was a handwritten scribble for her to call him collect at the Gannett headquarters in Rochester, New York. She made the call, and when he came on the phone, she recalled, he said "that was the silliest question he'd ever heard. Of course there was. 'And we must make arrangements for you to come talk to us at Gannett.'"⁶⁷

After a positive initial interview, Paxson heard back from Gannett: "We're

interested and we liked what we saw. So now we want to know from you what you want to do, what you think you can do.”⁶⁸ Paxson said she thought she could be a managing editor or a publisher – positions that were rare for women at that time. A few weeks later, she heard again: “We’re very interested and we’ll just keep an eye out. When the opening comes along, we’ll contact you.”⁶⁹ While she waited, things did not improve at the *Bulletin*. After some frustrating weeks, she quit in the spring of 1976.

At the time, Gannett was known as a newspaper chain that was active in promoting women and minorities. According to Mills, Gannett’s philosophies were based on Neuharth’s views. When he grew up, Neuharth said years later that his single mother worked twice as hard as a man to earn income for the family, so he was aware of gender inequities.⁷⁰ He became active in affirmative action issues after a push from his former wife, Lori Wilson, a Florida state senator, who actively backed the Equal Rights Amendment. According to Mills, “those who knew the couple say she reinforced Neuharth’s basic concern for fairness toward women that his mother had established.”⁷¹ In his 1989 autobiography he wrote:

In the South, the vow of many whites was to keep the ‘colored’ down on the plantation. In South Dakota [his home state], it was to keep the Indians down on the reservation. And a woman’s place was in the home. Those lives and times instilled in me a commitment to try to wipe out sexism and racism, some day, some way. . . . My preaching began in earnest soon after I joined Gannett and declared war on the good old boys in our business. Inside and outside Gannett, my pitch was that ‘our leadership must reflect our readership.’⁷²

Neuharth used several techniques to do that. In 1973, when Neuharth became the Gannett chief executive officer, he named the first woman publisher at Gannett. She was Gloria Biggs, a 1969 and 1970 Penney-Missouri winner, who Neuharth described as “a highly regarded feature and women’s editor.”⁷³ As a “first,” Biggs was often invited to

many conferences. She was a speaker at a New York editors meeting when she was asked by a man: “Do you think a woman is as good as, better, or worse than a man?” She responded with “At what?” David Bernstein, editor of the *Binghamton Sun-Bulletin*, said of the man’s question: “The catty remark revealed a male insecurity among the editors ... behaving like clever maiden aunts whose powder room had just been invaded by Burt Lancaster.”⁷⁴ Neuharth also instituted a program at Gannett that tied a sizable portion of his executives’ annual salaries to equal employment programs in their departments. Neuharth said, “Even the most chauvinistic of our male managers got the message when it hit their pocketbooks.”⁷⁵

While Paxson waited for a Gannett offer, Journey was writing the official report for the third Status of Women Commission headed by Jill Ruckelshaus. Journey arranged for Paxson to join the commission staff. She worked for the commission for three months, handling production for the report to be presented to President Ford. In June of 1976 Paxson heard from the senior vice president for news at the Gannett company. He said there was an opening for an assistant managing editor in Boise, Idaho. She flew there and decided to take the position at the 60,000 circulation newspaper, earning the same salary as a man would for the same job.

At Boise, Paxson reported to editor Gary Watson. She remembered, “I regarded this as a kind of a training ground. And this was the first time that I learned about working with budgets because I worked with Gary on preparing the budget for the newsroom, for the whole editorial department. He was a great teacher.”⁷⁶ She was happy to find that in Idaho, unlike Philadelphia, people communicated face-to-face, rather than by memo, and in stores, it was “Thank you, Marjorie” rather than “Miss Paxson.” While

at the *Idaho Statesman*, Paxson received Women in Communication's 1976 Headliner award for her work on the Mexico City newspaper, the *Xilonen*.

Becoming a Publisher

After 18 months in Boise, Paxson was offered the position of publisher of the *Public Opinion*, a Gannett newspaper in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. She accepted and she was flown down and installed as publisher the next day. She became the fourth female publisher of a Gannett daily paper; the company had approximately 60 newspapers at the time.

Chambersburg was near Harrisburg. Paxson described it as a quiet, reserved community – friendly, although there was little social interaction. She met with local leaders and made speeches to local organizations. Paxson said, “You just need to let people know that you’re the one who can get things done when you come in as a boss.”⁷⁷ Part of being the boss involved dealing with numbers, which she had little opportunity to do in the past. At the *Public Opinion*, she was in charge of the budgets for five different departments. She said, “I simply had to ask questions and get these people to tell me what all was going on and what their problem was – then get to the point that I might be able to anticipate [it].”⁷⁸ The big story while she was there was the Three Mile Island accident⁷⁹ in March 1979. Chambersburg was fifty miles south of the nuclear power plant, and the *Public Opinion* was the closest Gannett newspaper to the accident. Paxson recalls that she entered her paper's coverage in a Gannett contest and took second place. The judge liked the Bellingham, Washington newspaper's headline better: “Nuke Plant Spits Hot Steam.” Paxson found that headline unethical for her community. She said:

I just went through the roof because if we had written that kind of headline in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, with people in that town – the people who lived in Chambersburg, a lot of them were very afraid. Plus the people who had fled from the Harrisburg area. I think if we had run that kind of a headline, it would have been one of the most irresponsible things we could have done.⁸⁰

It was at Chambersburg that Paxson's management skills were tested. She had to fire a circulation manager and the lack of authority given to her in her past women's section positions left her unprepared to take this action. She said, "It was a totally new experience for me because I had never had the authority to fire anybody up to this point." The regional president of Gannett recognized that she lacked experience and joined in on a conference call with the employee.⁸¹ Paxson said that through this and similar experiences, she developed her own management style:

I try to speak up and simply be myself. Above all, I do not want to be like a man. My management style involves a lot of persuasion and teaching, a little preaching and occasionally behaving like a double S-O-B (that's "boss" spelled backward"). I want to get everyone involved in a team effort, taking a positive approach to whatever problem we're dealing with. I keep pushing and prodding, asking questions and more questions.⁸²

Also while at the *Public Opinion*, Paxson became the associate editor of the daily newspaper for the 1980 United Nations Mid-Decade Conference for Women in Copenhagen. Paxson believed the executive editor, John Rowley of Great Britain, didn't want her on the publication. As the conference opened, the executive editor went around the room to introduce the staff. She said, "He got to me and he said, "And this is Marj Paxson," and he went on. That's when I interrupted to remind him that I had edited the paper in Mexico City. He wasn't going to get away with that."⁸³ The conference newspaper focused on confrontational issues and Paxson said it was a newspaper that she wasn't very proud of.

In an article about the experience that ran in the Hagerstown, Maryland, *Morning Herald* newspaper, Paxson said the U.N. newspaper was demeaning to women. She put much of the blame on the executive editor, Rowley, who she said “displayed little understanding of women’s issues and it partially filtered down through the product.”⁸⁴ She cited examples of captions written by Rowley describing the meetings as full of “buzzing” activity in a “beehive atmosphere.” When Paxson objected, she felt Rowley’s response was “flip indifference.” She saw her work with the newspaper as that of an activist and a journalist. She said, “I went because I was a journalist first but I’ve been part of the women’s movement for a long time.”⁸⁵

After two years and eight months at the *Public Opinion*, Gannett moved her to the *Muskogee Phoenix*, in Muskogee – a town of about 40,000 in Oklahoma. She remembered, “I think they move you when they think you’ve learned how to do the job and can move on.”⁸⁶ Paxson was met at the airport by Tams Bixby III, the publisher who had sold his family’s newspaper to Gannett three years previously. Although he was friendly, she wasn’t well received by all of the staff. She learned that one of the young, male reporters had seriously considered quitting when he found his new publisher would be a woman. She said, “His reasoning was that he thought this was a halfway decent paper and he couldn’t understand what it had done to deserve one of Gannett’s token women.”⁸⁷ He later told Paxson that he had changed his mind after he met her.

On the first day of work, Paxson learned about one of Bixby’s policies. She recalled: “He turned around and looked at me and he said, “You might as well know that I have a policy that women can’t wear pants.” And I said “What?!”⁸⁸ Although Paxson

said she had planned to look “every inch the lady publisher” and had purchased a number of skirts, she decided to wear her lone pantsuit to the office on day two. She said:

So the next morning at eight o’clock, wearing that pants suit, I walked into the *Muskogee Phoenix* through the pressroom, through the composing room, through the news room. . . . By noon, the publisher’s secretary came upstairs and she said, “Everybody is asking if there’s been a change – if they can wear pants.” So we had a meeting of the department heads that afternoon and I announced a change in the dress code. And my instructions were that they could wear pants, that I really was not going to dictate what either men or women wore, as long as they were neat, as long as they were clean, and as long as they were dressed appropriately for the job they were supposed to do for the *Phoenix*.⁸⁹

She later learned that many of the females went shopping that evening. The next day, of the 45 women working at the paper, 29 were in pantsuits. She recalled, “That story got around town very quickly.”⁹⁰ In fact, Paxson remembered shopping at Sears when the clerk looked down at the name on Paxson’s credit card. The clerk looked up at Paxson: “Are you the new lady at the paper?” Paxson replied that she was, and the clerk responded: “I’m so glad you let them wear pants.”⁹¹ In an article introducing her to the community, Paxson said she expected to be taken as seriously as she had been in her last position as publisher, but that she also wanted the community to know, “I am not an ogre, that I do know football.”⁹² Paxson was quoted in an article as saying that there should be more women publishers: “Women haven’t been considered for that job until the past few years. It involves persuading women it isn’t the end of the world when you give up writing. The rest of the job is interesting.”⁹³

Paxson said she adjusted rather easily to the new newspaper, although she had battles left to fight. At the time the paper had taken three consistent editorial stands. First, the newspaper was in support of alcohol by the drink, an issue because the town had liquor stores but no liquor by the drink. That was fine with Paxson, who said she had

been “known to take a drink.” The second stand was in support of horse racing and betting. Paxson didn’t bet on horses, but the paper’s position was fine with her. The third stand was against the Equal Rights Amendment. Paxson told the staff: “That’s going to change.”⁹⁴

Paxson embraced her leadership role although she recalled that it took her mother a little time to understand her daughter’s position. Paxson became known in the community for bringing her miniature dachshund, Tiger, to work. She said, “He was a small dog and so I thought he needed a name that would boost his ego.”⁹⁵ Her mother was shocked when she learned that Tiger accompanied her daughter to the office. Her mother said, “I don’t know about your taking that dog to the office, Marjorie. What will they think?” And I said, “Mom, I am ‘they.’ That’s when it got through to her that her daughter was really the boss.”⁹⁶

Paxson said being the publisher in Muskogee was a great way to end her career. She said she didn’t miss writing or editing. She said her focus changed, “When you become a publisher, you really need to become a generalist instead of a specialist because you’re dealing with so many different areas.”⁹⁷

Retirement

Paxson was publisher of the *Phoenix* from 1980 to 1986. At age 63, after 42 years in newspapers, she retired. Gannett had a mandatory retirement age for top executives and after 10 years with the company, Paxson qualified for a valuable early retirement package. She had “generous” stock options and an annual income of six figures. As she arranged her retirement, she realized she already had put aside money for her brother, sister-in-law and their child, and made plans for donations for Rice University and the

University of Missouri. Her accountant recommended that she consider a special donation that would help ease a big tax hit. The result was that Paxson established the National Women and Media Collection housed at the Western Manuscripts Collection at the University of Missouri. Another motivation was a Gannett Foundation policy that would match money given to universities in a trust.

The women and media collection contains personal and professional papers, documentation about media sex discrimination and legal challenges to gender discrimination, and other research on women in journalism. She said, “I think you have to give things back, I just feel like I was lucky. So let’s give something back and help someone else. I guess it’s my philosophy.”⁹⁸

Her donation was lauded by many in the journalism community and at a reception, Paxson was recognized for her generosity and her career accomplishments. Neuharth described Paxson as a role model, an inspiration and a pioneer.⁹⁹ Linda Grist Cunningham, executive editor of the *Trenton Times*, wrote of Paxson:

It’s been a long time coming and we still have many years of tough fisticuffs ahead, but this recognition that will come to you and to other women in this profession through the National Women in Media Collection is a mighty first step. Women, like you, have opened the doors for those of us who have followed. You’ve made it easier for us to knock on the doors of executive hall and actually be welcomed. None of us can take for granted the progress we’ve made, but we can celebrate with you the recognition that is finally coming due.¹⁰⁰

Looking back at her career, Paxson said it was a mixture of luck and taking advantage of opportunities. She said she felt the most important work she had done was in Mexico City and the best job she had had was as a publisher. She said that being a publisher was like being the conductor of an orchestra; “When everyone is in tune, playing at the same tempo with the same feeling, you can make beautiful music. Yes,

being a publisher carries more risk, more responsibilities and more headaches. But it also is more fun.”¹⁰¹

In her retirement, Paxson wrote a weekly column for her former paper called “Nobody Asked Me But ...” She wrote about local issues and everyday experiences – everything from planting her garden to complaints about potholes not being fixed. She also wrote about her travels. As a retirement gift, Gannett gave her an airline and hotel voucher. She ended up traveling across the Pacific, visiting Tahiti, New Zealand and Australia. She later went on a major trip each year, including two visits to Russia. The travel columns turned into a book that was published in 1990. In 2001, Paxson received the Sadie Award for lifetime achievement from the Association for Women in Communications.

She continues to live in Muskogee and as of summer 2004, she still was contributing columns to her former newspaper. In one column, she criticized the media for not tackling serious issues. She wrote, “In this busy world, there are plenty of topics to talk about and examine in depth. But TV only seems interested in what's easy -- publicizing a writer peddling a book or a Hollywood star hyping a new movie.”¹⁰² Another column addressed the 2004 presidential election. She wrote, “It may be asking a lot, but here's hoping candidates who win will put the general welfare ahead of partisan politics.”¹⁰³

Conclusion

Paxson said women have been central to her professional life. Her role models included her former editors Anderson, Davis and Journey. In a book chapter on her life, Paxson wrote, “Happily, I can report that some of the best bosses I’ve had have been

women. Some of the men were helpful and some were not.”¹⁰⁴ She also praised Oveta Culp Hobby, who had supported Paxson’s decision to no longer run photos of brides despite political pressure. Paxson said the value of her role models has inspired her to support others: “Because these women helped me, I believe in taking every opportunity to help young people. If I’ve got it made, I should help the rest of them as they come along.”¹⁰⁵

Her establishment of the National Women in Media Collection has ensured that there will be a place for people to learn of women’s role in journalism history. Former Women in Communications president Kay Lockridge wrote to Paxson about the collection, “Once again, Marj, you remind us that it is women helping women – through personal and professional support and encouragement in such endeavors as the Women in Media Collection – that will make the difference for us all.”¹⁰⁶ Associated Press Correspondent Edith M. Lederer wrote to Paxson, “As a pioneer, and a model for those of us who have followed in your footsteps, you will provide the roots for a collection which I know will grow in the decades to come.”¹⁰⁷ Paxson said she recognizes her pioneering role, especially on women’s pages. She said of her fellow women’s page editors, “We tried our best and we did a good job. I’m proud of the work I did, bringing news to those pages.”¹⁰⁸

But, Paxson has been vocal about career setbacks that she attributed to the women’s movement. She said that not only were women’s leaders reluctant to speak with women’s page journalists but that they fought to eliminate the sections without any concern for what would happen to the women’s page editors and staff members after the change. She said she felt victimized twice – first, by the women’s movement leaders’

actions and second, by the newspapers that fired or demoted her. It was especially disturbing because she considered herself a feminist who had made her own contributions to the movement.¹⁰⁹

It is important to study Paxson in order to understand how journalism's coverage of women in newspapers and treatment in the newsroom evolved. Some of the battles Paxson fought during her career still have not been won. Newspaper editors still are failing to reach female readers with stories that address women. News organizations still lack women in publisher positions. As Paxson said in a 1991 interview, women today have more opportunities in journalism than during her career but more needs to be done to push women beyond middle management positions. "You can't slacken up in the fight or you go backwards,"¹¹⁰ she said. According to Paxson, while people talk about equal opportunities for women, the more subtle prejudices are still there. She said:

I keep hoping that as the younger generation of male editors comes along, they may have different attitudes. I'm not sure that they will. This goes back for a long time and is a very deep-seated feeling. And I just think we're going to have to work and work and work at it. ... I don't think the deep-seated attitudes are changing that much. I don't want to sound unduly pessimistic because basically I'm a great optimist. But I just think it's going to take a long, long time.¹¹¹

¹ Marjorie Paxson, "Marjorie Paxson," *New Guardians of the Press*, ed. Judith Clabes (Indianapolis: R.J. Berg, 1983), 129.

² Marjorie Paxson, Women in Journalism Oral History Project, recorded by Diane K. Gentry, The Washington Press Club Foundation, 1991, <http://npc.press.org/wpforal/pax.htm>, Session 3, 55.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Paxson, Introduction, 1.

⁵ Paxson, Session 1, 8-9.

⁶ Paxson, *New Guardians of the Press*, 121.

⁷ Paxson, Session 1, 4.

⁸ Ibid, 21.

⁹ Marjorie Paxson, "Remember, but keep looking ahead, too," *Muskogee Phoenix*, June 18, 2004, <http://www.muskogee phoenix.com/news/stories/20040618/opinion/670724.html>

¹⁰ Paxson, Session 1, 20

¹¹ Paxson, *New Guardians of the Press*, 128.

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- ¹² Paxson, Session 2, 2.
- ¹³ Marjorie Paxson quoted in the introduction of Western Historical Manuscript Collection, <http://www.umsystem.edu/whmc/nwm.html>.
- ¹⁴ Paxson, Session 1, 21.
- ¹⁵ Ibid, 26.
- ¹⁶ Paxson, Session 2, 37.
- ¹⁷ Ibid, 43.
- ¹⁸ Ibid, 14.
- ¹⁹ Paxson, telephone interview, June 2003.
- ²⁰ Paxson, Session 2, 15.
- ²¹ Ibid, 41.
- ²² Ibid, 41.
- ²³ Ibid, 41.
- ²⁴ Paxson, interview.
- ²⁵ Paxson, Session 2, 47.
- ²⁶ Ibid, 46.
- ²⁷ J.C. Penney Missouri awards recognize the top women's pages in the country. They were the top awards for the sections.
- ²⁸ Paxson, Session 2, 50.
- ²⁹ Paxson, interview.
- ³⁰ Paxson, Session 3, 56.
- ³¹ Al Neuharth, *Confessions of an S.O.B.* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 241.
- ³² Paxson, interview.
- ³³ Paxson, Session 3, 61.
- ³⁴ Ibid, 61.
- ³⁵ Ibid, 62.
- ³⁶ Ibid, 63.
- ³⁷ Paxson, *New Guardians of the Press*, 123.
- ³⁸ Paxson, Session 3, 53.
- ³⁹ Marjorie Paxson, "Where the Girls Are Going," *The Iowa Publisher*, October 1967, 13. Western Historical Manuscript Collection. Paxson file, WUNP4811, unindexed papers.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid, 13.
- ⁴¹ Ibid, 14.
- ⁴² Paxson, *New Guardians of the Press*, 124.
- ⁴³ Paxson, Session 3, 66.
- ⁴⁴ Diane K. Gentry, Women in Journalism Oral History Project, The Washington Press Club Foundation. 1991, <http://npc.press.org/wpforal/pax.htm>, Introduction, 1.
- ⁴⁵ Paxson, Session 3, 71.
- ⁴⁶ Bulkeley, Session 4, 103.
- ⁴⁷ A history of the newspaper is detailed in Robert Pierce's *A Sacred Trust: Nelson Poynter and the St. Petersburg Times* (Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 1993). There is no information about Paxson nor the newspaper's women's section in the book.
- ⁴⁸ Paxson, Session 3, 76.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid, 78.
- ⁵⁰ Paxson, interview.
- ⁵¹ Ibid.
- ⁵² Paxson, Session 3, 79.
- ⁵³ Ibid, 81.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid, 81.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid, 84.
- ⁵⁶ Paxson, *New Guardians of the Press*, 126.
- ⁵⁷ Paxson, Session 3, 84.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid, 86.
- ⁵⁹ Christy Bulkeley, Women in Journalism Oral History Project, The Washington Press Club Foundation, 1991, <http://npc.press.org/wpforal/pax.htm>, Session 4, 100.

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- ⁶⁰ Paxson, Session 3, 87.
- ⁶¹ Ibid, 88.
- ⁶² Paxson, Session 4, 90.
- ⁶³ Paxson, "Mexico," *The Matrix*, Women in Communications Inc., 1975, Located in Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Paxson file, WUNP4811, unindexed papers.
- ⁶⁴ Paxson, Session 4, 96.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid, 98.
- ⁶⁶ It should be noted that Neuharth, as president and chairman of the Gannett Company, named the first woman publisher in the chain in 1973, according to "Gains at Gannett," *Savvy*, September 1980, 26.
- ⁶⁷ Paxson, Session 4, 98.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid, 99.
- ⁶⁹ Ibid, 100.
- ⁷⁰ Kay Mills, *A Place in the News: From the Women's Pages to the Front Pages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 302.
- ⁷¹ Ibid.
- ⁷² Neuharth, 240.
- ⁷³ Ibid, 242.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid, 242.
- ⁷⁵ Ibid, 243.
- ⁷⁶ Paxson, Session 4, 105.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid, 110.
- ⁷⁸ Ibid.
- ⁷⁹ The accident at the Three Mile Island Unit 2 nuclear power plant near Middletown, Pennsylvania, on March 28, 1979, was the most serious in U.S. commercial nuclear power plant history; there were no deaths or injuries to plant workers or nearby residents.
- ⁸⁰ Paxson, Session 4, 111.
- ⁸¹ Ibid, 112.
- ⁸² Paxson, *New Guardians of the Press*, 128.
- ⁸³ Paxson, Session 4, 114.
- ⁸⁴ Robert Vucic. "Forum 80: An Experience for Publisher," *The Morning Herald*, August 6, 1980, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Paxson file, WUNP4811, unindexed papers.
- ⁸⁵ Vucic.
- ⁸⁶ Paxson, Session 4, 115.
- ⁸⁷ Ibid, 117.
- ⁸⁸ Ibid, 117.
- ⁸⁹ Ibid, 117.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid, 118.
- ⁹¹ Paxson, Session 5, 120.
- ⁹² Victoria Nininger, "Publisher Didn't Expect Transfer to Muskogee." *Muskogee Phoenix*. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Paxson file, WUNP4811, unindexed papers.
- ⁹³ Nininger, 1.
- ⁹⁴ Paxson, Session 5, 122.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid, 125.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid, 126.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid, 125.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid, 133.
- ⁹⁹ Allen Neuharth, Letter to Marjorie Paxson, October 7, 1987, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Paxson file, WUNP4811, unindexed papers.
- ¹⁰⁰ Linda Grist Cunningham, *Trenon Times* Executive Editor, letter to Marjorie Paxson, October 16, 1987, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Paxson file, WUNP4811, unindexed papers.
- ¹⁰¹ Paxson, *New Guardians of the Press*, 129.
- ¹⁰² Marjorie Paxson, "TV should really question Clinton," *Muskogee Phoenix*, June 22, 2004, <http://www.muskogee phoenix.com/news/stories/20040622/opinion/695509.html>
- ¹⁰³ Marjorie Paxson, "Remember, but keep looking ahead, too" *Muskogee Phoenix*, June 18, 2004. <http://www.muskogee phoenix.com/news/stories/20040618/opinion/670724.html>

¹⁰⁴ Paxson, *New Guardians of the Press*, 128.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 129.

¹⁰⁶ Kay Lockridge, Letter to Marjorie Paxson, October 14, 1987, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Paxson file, WUNP4811, unindexed papers.

¹⁰⁷ Edith M. Lederer, Letter to Marjorie Paxson, October 7, 1987, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Paxson file, WUNP4811, unindexed papers.

¹⁰⁸ Paxson, interview.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Paxson, Session 5, 138.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 140.

Chapter Seven

Vivian Castleberry: An Editor Ahead of Her Time

Vivian Anderson Castleberry was an influential journalist and a strong voice for women in Dallas and internationally. Unlike Journey and Paxson, she did not move from newspaper to newspaper throughout her career. She was the editor of the women's section, and later the lifestyle section, of the *Dallas Times Herald* for 28 years, from 1956 to 1984. During those years, she transformed the definition of "women's news" in Dallas and advocated ways to empower women. According to journalist Molly Ivins, Castleberry, "got away with murder because the dumb male editors never bothered to read [her section]. They were writing about birth control, abortion. But it wasn't considered real news. Even today it isn't. You have to be a moron to miss the crying need for adequate child care, but papers do."¹ Castleberry was an active participant in the women's movement and thus she did not suffer some of the negative treatment that other women's page editors suffered from movement leaders.² She did not want to see her women's section eliminated; however, her paper followed the lead of others and created a lifestyle section instead. Nevertheless, she remained editor of the section and her approach to the section did not change.

Castleberry broke a barrier as the first woman appointed to her newspaper's editorial board, although she resigned after a few months. She was recognized with three awards from the Press Club of Dallas, two state UPI awards and three Penney-Missouri awards, in 1965, 1967 and 1970. She was elected to the Texas Women's Hall of Fame in 1984. She was a founder of the Women's Center of Dallas, the Women's Issues Network

and the Dallas Women's Foundation. In 1988, she was chair of Global Peace, an international women's conference.

During her tenure at the *Dallas Times Herald*, Castleberry helped to transform the women's section into a lifestyle section without losing some traditional content that was important to women. Under Castleberry's editorial leadership, her section included serious, timely topics about women. She worked to empower women in the community by teaching them how to attract media attention and how to seek out resources to improve their status. As an editor, she saw herself as an advocate in telling stories of communities that had not been covered in the past and to do so, she reached out to poor and minority neighborhoods. In telling these stories, she wrote about topics that had been excluded from most newspapers such as gender-based work inequities, domestic violence and child abuse.

Castleberry said her role models were women who made a difference - her mother, Amelia Earhart and Eleanor Roosevelt. She said she also admired and respected Anderson, Journey and other progressive women's editors. Like Anderson and Journey, Castleberry saw her job as a journalist as one of an advocate for women. Castleberry admitted that she was not objective about many of the stories she covered. She did not believe in being indifferent to the community she was covered. She said she cried in many meetings.³ As an active member of the community, she helped establish programs for women who had been battered or sexually assaulted. She was a member of the first Dallas Commission on the Status of Women. Castleberry's story is worthy of study due to her contribution to her newspaper's framing of news about women and her own leadership of women in Dallas.

Information about Castleberry has been gathered from the 172-page transcript of her interview in 1989 for the Washington Press Club oral history project, articles written by her and found at the Dallas Public Library (the *Dallas Times Herald* is no longer in business and thus no newspaper archives exist), material written about her and her various awards and citations.

Castleberry's Childhood

Vivian Anderson Castleberry was born in 1922 in Lindale, Texas. She credits part of her professional success to being from a large family which adored her. Her family exposed her to diverse ideas that later would influence her coverage of both strong women and the African American community. Her mother was an equal partner in the family household and demonstrated to Castleberry that she could become whatever she wanted to be. Castleberry said, "I was a first child, a very wanted child, and a very adored child. And my mother was ... an extremely important influence in my life."⁴

One of Castleberry's most significant childhood memories occurred in 1930 during the funeral of her grandfather, who had been the superintendent of several Texas schools for African Americans at the beginning of the century. Many African Americans surrounded the Presbyterian church in Bethesda, Texas, where the service was held on a snowy morning. When her grandmother learned of this, she went outside to invite the mourners in. It was the first time black people had been welcomed into the church. Castleberry said, "So the history of our progression in inclusiveness is rather interesting for East Texas. Grandmother did that, then, you know, we began to make kind of quantum leaps for inclusiveness in the entire family that I have always treasured."⁵ This early exposure to diverse groups led to Castleberry's willingness to go beyond the

coverage of only the middle-class, white community. When she became an editor, Castleberry said she “became a kind of a token white in some meetings”⁶ that she covered. She recalled being the only white person at an all-black conference at Bishop College in Dallas early in her career.

Castleberry said she knew from the age of seven that she was going to be a journalist.⁷ Although there was little money in her house, her family always subscribed to a newspaper. In high school, she was valedictorian and editor of her newspaper. After her high school English teacher, Mrs. Hood, introduced her to journalism, Castleberry began creating story assignments and interviewing community leaders. At graduation, she won a scholarship to college. “My mother always, has always, said, ‘Go for it, honey.’ My mother always said, ‘When you go to college,’ ‘when you do this,’ ‘when you leave home.’ And she always held out the carrot – what the possibilities were in the wider world.”⁸ During this time Castleberry was influenced by a Methodist minister, William G. Fletcher, who brought in speakers to church groups from the Jewish and Hispanic communities. She said, “He made a world that didn’t exist for me.”⁹ In high school, she was also involved with the debate team and got to know a Jewish student. “I began to really experience other cultures. Up until that time I don’t think it had ever dawned on me why people go to different churches or different synagogues.”¹⁰

Although Castleberry was accepted by several colleges, she ended up at Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas. She was the only one from her high school to go there which was the way she wanted it to be. Castleberry said, “I wanted the pioneering spirit of doing it on my own.”¹¹ She entered college as a journalism major. As a freshman, Castleberry started writing for the school’s weekly newspaper, the *Campus*. By

the time she was a junior, she was working as many hours at the newspaper as she could. She had worked her way up from features editor to assistant editor when she decided to run for editor, an elective office. Her opponent, who lost to Castleberry, was another female student. It was a significant election as there never before had been a female newspaper editor in the university's history.

After graduation Castleberry turned down a fellowship for a master's degree in religion at Boston College. Instead she became an editorial assistant for the Petroleum Engineer Publishing Company in Dallas. While in college, she had been corresponding with Curtis Castleberry, a former high school classmate. He served for nearly four years in the South Pacific as part of the Marine Corps during World War II and worked his way up to staff sergeant. She married him in 1946 after he returned from the service. He became a student at Texas A&M University in College Station, and she became the woman editor of the *Texas A&M Battalion* (the newspaper had a male editor and a female editor), a daily newspaper that served the campus as well as the community. In spite of the male editor, she took over most of the leadership at the paper. She said, "I was there all the time. The other kids were students and they kind of handed it over to me."¹²

Although it is co-ed now, Texas A&M University was an all-male school at that time. While Castleberry was there, the chancellor told her, "Women will never be admitted to this university. Never." Castleberry responded: "I will give it five years."¹³

After her husband's graduation from a master's degree program, the couple was unsure what would come next because the Korean War was still going on. Curtis Castleberry was sent to El Paso, Texas, for more military training, while Vivian Castleberry stayed at Texas A&M and worked at the *Battalion*. It was there that she had

her first child, Carol. Castleberry was 27 at the time. When the Korean War ended, the couple moved to Burkeville, a small town deep in East Texas where Curtis Castleberry took a teaching position. Vivian Castleberry had her second child, Chandra, in Burkeville.

Moving to Dallas

The small-town environment didn't suit the couple, and in June 1952, they moved to Dallas without job prospects. She returned to Petroleum Engineer Publishing, where she worked on one of the firm's publications, *Cosmetics Magazine*. She took the job to help support the family, planning to stay only a few weeks but ended up staying two years. In the fall of 1955, she took a leave of absence for the birth of her third child, Keeta. This was significant because, at that time, most companies simply terminated a woman's employment when she got pregnant. Castleberry said she had a progressive boss, Ernestine Adams, who guaranteed that she would have a job when she wanted to return.¹⁴ It was during this leave that Castleberry got a job offer from the *Dallas Times Herald* to work in the women's section, thanks to a former SMU classmate. She was ready for a change and even Adams encouraged Castleberry to take the new position. Adams said, "It's your kind of job. You need to get your hand back into newspapering."¹⁵ Castleberry started at the newspaper in March 1956 as home furnishings editor. In this position she began her training for eventually becoming the women's page editor by volunteering to help in all departments of the women's section. Castleberry said, "I could never stand idleness."¹⁶

Although the couple now had three children, both Castleberry and her husband continued to work outside the home. She said, "Well, the interesting thing was that when

Curt and I married in 1946 we started out with the idea that we would have two careers each—one in the workplace and one at the home place. And I think at that time I didn't know how different I was because I had been a career woman.”¹⁷ She said that they had already decided to combine work and family before reading the propaganda that was distributed after World War II to encourage women to stay at home and have children.¹⁸

Castleberry said:

My mother had always been involved in the workplace and his mother had been involved in the workplace, and that was our basic role modeling and I feel like that even though society was telling us differently both in ways and in words and modeling a difference, I feel like that, again, we were evaluating by the most basic role model that we had.¹⁹

But there was one point when Castleberry did question her decision. She resigned from the newspaper in early 1957 after becoming pregnant with her fourth child, Kim, and facing resulting “societal” pressure to stay at home with her children. A few days after she gave birth, *Times Herald* Editor Bert Holmes called her three times to ask her to take the women’s pages editor position. Castleberry turned him down the first two times, but she went in to speak to him after the third call. The discussion went well and she returned to the *Times Herald* in January 1958 with the support of her family. She recalled:

I said, “Curt, that is a glorious job. I want that job so badly. I know I would be real good at it. I don’t see how on earth I can do it. What do you think?”

And my husband said, “If you think you have talents that somebody will pay you for, I wish you would go out and do it.”

It was extremely revolutionary and he also said, “You take the job and we will do whatever is necessary to make it work.”²⁰

Balancing Work and Family

Castleberry is the only one of the three women editors profiled in this dissertation who had children. With help from her husband, Castleberry raised her children and worked as an editor and an advocate. She also had the help of a live-in housekeeper. To help balance her work and family lives, Castleberry said that she “trained” management to understand what she needed to be a good mother and a good editor. She told her bosses:

I cannot afford to foul up at home and you cannot afford to have a women’s editor who does. So I have to do both jobs. . . . I will do the job for you. I promise you unlimited time. But I will have to do it on my own hours. There are going to be times when I’m going to be required to do things for my family and my children. And, as a result of that, you’re going to get more out of me than you would otherwise get out of the average employee because I’m going to do the job for you. And I’m going to do a better job for you than anybody else would do. And the way I’m going to do it is sometimes I’m going to work nights when my husband’s home with the children and after I get them to bed and there’s something to do, I’ll be down here doing it. I will work on weekends if I have to. I will not watch a time clock. I will do a job.²¹

Sometimes the plan involved unusual arrangements. On one Saturday, she was scheduled to meet an important source at the airport. One of the children was sick and the babysitter cancelled at the last minute. Castleberry packed up some food, and the children had a picnic in the car while she conducted her interview. There were weekly family council meetings and each child given her own responsibilities. The children were aware of where their mother was and what she was doing, sometimes going to the office with her and doing their homework. Castleberry would often go into the office on Sunday to plan for the week ahead.

When Castleberry became pregnant with her fifth child, she was given an unpaid leave from the *Dallas Times Herald* and allowed to work part-time from home. The

arrangement didn't last very long. Management soon said working from home was not acceptable and she had to return to the newsroom.²² Although she went back, she demanded a flexible schedule; it was a battle for which she fought throughout her career. She had to regularly "retrain" management to understand her schedule when new editors came on board. Castleberry said:

I had to recondition bosses along the way. Every time I would get a new head of department. I would have to restructure this kind of thinking. And what it amounted to was a retraining of male employees endlessly because I kept getting new bosses who didn't understand my concept.²³

Although management's support could not always be counted on, Castleberry said her husband's help allowed her to succeed as a journalist and a parent. She said, "I could do it because Curt could tie sashes and comb hair and make curls as well as I could."²⁴ Castleberry did say, however, that the pressure of her job led to later health problems such as her 1978 bout with uterine cancer. She said, "I very honestly think that one of the reasons that I succumbed to cancer was that I had ingested too much stress and pressure."²⁵

Women's Page Content

When Castleberry went to the *Times Herald* in the mid-1950s, the content of the women's section was like that of most women's pages of the time – primarily recipes, society news and wedding announcements. Although many described the women's section as a "ghetto,"²⁶ Castleberry said she was happy where she was:

I had to bite my tongue in two different areas because the women's pages had a stigma attached to them and a women's editor had a stigma attached to her. That was [the thinking] that if you're any good at all, you don't stay in women's news. ... To prove your mettle as a journalist you cannot stay on the "soft side" of the news, you've got to get into hard news to be a reporter. And I kept refuting that and I kept saying I'm where I want to be. I don't want to be doing anything else. This is where the heart and soul of humanity is. These are the kind of stories that

must be reported and that must be held up as pictures to the community so that something can be done about them.²⁷

When Castleberry was hired, she wanted to change coverage from what she described as food, fashion and frivolity. Society events were covered heavily, but Castleberry made plans to decrease attention to them. She said, “I looked at society with a small “s” instead of a capital “S” which didn’t always please my bosses.”²⁸ She changed the definition of “society” to include “all humanity – the social structure of the community.”²⁹ She established new rules, often without knowing she was doing anything groundbreaking. Early in her tenure, she wrote a story about the organization called Planned Parenthood. Until that time, the name “Planned Parenthood” had never been used in the section. After that breakthrough was made, coverage of Planned Parenthood continued. The first story about child abuse in the state appeared in her section in 1967. Castleberry had read that child abuse was a problem nationwide. She learned from a source at the Southwestern Medical School that it was also a problem in Dallas. Male editors were leery of publishing a story about such a controversial topic but Castleberry prevailed. The lead for the 1967 child abuse story was:

Think of the worst torture possible to inflict on a human being – and it’s likely to have happened to children in Dallas County.

Recorded in the Dallas Child Welfare Department are statistics on physically abused children that run the gamut: Scalding, starvation, burning, bone fractures, sex assaults, beatings with tubes, ropes, belts, fists.

The offenders: Parents.³⁰

The following year Castleberry herself wrote about the problem of neglected children and a program that sought to help them. Her 1968 story began:

Last Christmas 9-year-old Jeff’s antisocial behavior had him pegged for a spot on the human scrapheap.

A ward of the Dallas County Welfare Department, he had been shuttled from foster home to foster home since he was a year old. Just about everybody had given up on him. ...

SANCI – The Society for Abandoned and Neglected Children, Inc. – is a group of 79 women who care enough to make it their personal business to rescue the Jeffs.³¹

Abortion, rape, sexual harassment and violence against women were also topics that she covered. Castleberry said she experienced sexual harassment on the job in the 1960s. She recalled that there was one man specifically who ogled her, made suggestive remarks and regularly put his hands on her. She described it as “a hard row to hoe.”³² The man was later removed for unknown reasons. In terms of controversial issues, Castleberry said it was important to be “far enough ahead to make breakthroughs but not so far ahead that you lose your audience.”³³ She explained:

I did a great lot of that kind of breakthroughs because I didn’t know what not to do, I did it, and I learned that – I did it. I always felt like that it was better to do and then to be told it was wrong, than it was not to be sufficiently challenged to ... try to do it.³⁴

Some of the other topics Castleberry covered included adoption, child care, child custody, the Commission on the Status of Women, male batterers, feminism, disabled people, incest, Jewish women, the League of Women Voters, and a local black women’s organization. She said she tried to give women value by writing about their work in a serious way in her section. In the lead to a 1966 story about management strategies, Castleberry addressed both “home managers and business leaders.”³⁵

She continued to assign reporters to the traditional women’s club meetings, although the news that came from them was not about elite social events. In a 1967 story, the club editor, Barbara Richardson, wrote an article about birth control. Her lead was: “Dr. Edward Rydman branded as ‘yellow journalism’ a leading women’s magazine

article calling birth control pills unsafe.”³⁶ A 1968 story by Richardson, who was still club editor, addressed the educational issues of disadvantaged students.³⁷

In 1983 Journey’s “New Directions for News” study singled out Castleberry’s work. It found that she took women’s issues seriously in her sections, unlike the other journalists whose work was analyzed. According to the study’s results:

Another notable exception to the general shallowness of the stories on domestic relations was an in-depth balanced analysis of joint custody, which Vivian Castleberry wrote for the *Dallas Times Herald*. She interviewed judges, psychologists, lawyers and parents for whom joint custody was working well. The story also quoted from an American Bar Association journal article, which outlines the limited circumstances in which joint custody is feasible.³⁸

Instead of finding a women’s section limiting, Castleberry saw her role as editor as one of educating her readers. She wanted her audience to understand that topics that editors considered “women’s” or “family” were important to everyone:

I am convinced that if enough of us saw this vision, if enough women in this country could understand how critical these issues are to the survival of civilization, then we would turn it around. And this is what we have trouble getting across because it has been such a man’s world and has been so weighted toward giving value to the things that men think are important that we have totally left out the human element.³⁹

During her career, Castleberry found that gender made a difference in how journalists researched and wrote about news. Castleberry said she discovered that women and men cover news differently. As an example, she recalled her experience covering President Kennedy’s visit to Dallas when he was assassinated. While most of her reporting was omitted from the newspaper as the news unfolded, she recalled phoning in information along with a male reporter and that she noticed things he didn’t. She was the one who noticed the cowboy hat and toys for Kennedy’s children that had been left for the President at a reception site – items he would never receive. She said, “I gave

dimensions to stories that wouldn't have been there if I hadn't been, the personal and sensitive."⁴⁰ She said she asked questions that hadn't been asked by male reporters before her. When she interviewed politicians and their wives, she asked each the same questions, to the shock of their husbands.⁴¹

Castleberry was bothered by the limitations imposed by the definitions of soft news versus hard news. She said she did not see her coverage of women's groups as soft news. Instead she viewed the work of women's groups as significant and newsworthy. Her section included stories about groups that raised money, lobbied for change and raised awareness of injustices. She wanted her section to be the place for these groups to be recognized. She said:

As social issues have reared their ugly heads, there have been women's groups who have been there to [help]. A great many of the women's clubs are working in teenage pregnancy. And every issue that comes along, women are there first to answer needs. And those things were not being reported.⁴²

Castleberry did not shy away from confrontation in her section's content and her dealings with management. She recalled that when she edited a story about contraception, she included the controversial information before the story jumped to an inside page.⁴³ From the day Castleberry started working at the *Dallas Times Herald*, she said that she intended to publish pictures of black brides, although it was against policy. In an interview with a journalism historian, she said, "I considered myself a public servant. My responsibilities to my readers were far more important than anything the editors tried to do to stop me."⁴⁴ When she asked for permission to publish photos of black brides on a regular basis, management told her "no" each time. "I don't know why they didn't fire me, because I probably asked at least once a month – at least."⁴⁵ In the midst of her requests, she was approached by an African-American woman who asked Castleberry

why her daughter's wedding photo was not published when numerous photos of white debutantes ran regularly. Castleberry responded that she could not justify the exclusion in any way and tried again to persuade editors to change the policy – a fight that she eventually won.

Rather than approaching “first woman” stories by focusing on the novelty of a woman entering a man's profession,⁴⁶ Castleberry pointed out the challenge of overcoming discrimination. In one particular profile of Dr. Elizabeth Lee Gealy, who had accepted a position as a staff geologist for the Deep Sea Drilling Project in California, Castleberry focused on Gealy's professional credentials as well as the difficulties that she faced as a woman in a male-dominated field. It was clear from the information and quotes used that Castleberry was trying to portray Gealy's accomplishments as important and in some ways, more significant than male accomplishments because of what she had had to overcome based on societal views of gender. She quoted Gealy:

I am a woman in what has always been a man's field. Nobody has suffered the bitter consequences of this more than I. All I asked was acceptance for what I know – for what I could do. All I got were clichés because few people are willing to gamble that brilliance and creativity do not always come exclusively garbed in male attire.

Castleberry also wrote about issues of race and the media's framing of them, challenging traditional practices. In 1968, she wrote an article called “Mass Media Asked to ‘Understand.’”⁴⁷ It was based on a Southern Methodist University symposium on the Education of Women for Social and Political Leadership. The panel addressed how the media could help improve relations between people, particularly those in different racial communities. Speakers pointed out that media coverage tended to promote racial stereotypes and that the media needed to be more responsible. Castleberry quoted speaker

Dorothy Height, who was president of the National Council of Negro Women for more than 40 years, from 1957 to 1998, “We need press leadership with a depth of understanding about the real problems of real people. We need more substance in what is quoted.”

In the 1970s, Castleberry wrote a series of stories on what makes strong marriages, with the emphasis on advice from couples in the community whom she surveyed, rather than from doctors or researchers. This fits one of the principles of feminist journalism, as presented in the *Media Report to Women* in 1976: that the media should allow people should speak for themselves rather than depend on experts.⁴⁸ As Castleberry wrote, the real experts on marriage were those couples who had been together for more than 20 years.⁴⁹

One of the stories in the series addressed the changing gender roles in families as more women were entering the workforce. Castleberry began by pointing out that based on her survey, there was no proof that a marriage was weaker or stronger if a woman worked outside of the home. She then addressed the changing societal views of working wives. She quoted a woman, married for thirty-six years, who returned a questionnaire: “I gave up a career I loved to marry and it has been an exceedingly good marriage. But were I young today when it is socially acceptable for a wife to work, I would continue with my career.”⁵⁰

Some of Castleberry’s gender-examining views came through in the lead of her October 1980 story, “Equality – How Far Do Men Want to Go.” She began:

Many men say they desire relationships of equality with women, but the past often dies hard for both men and women.

For many men equality stops with the dirty dishes and the dirty diapers. For many women, it stops when the car stalls on the freeway and when the kitchen sink stops up.

“Men want to date modern women,” wrote Nickey Scott in a newspaper column *Working Woman*, “but they want old-fashioned wives.”

“But times are changing,” says Pat Pearson, a Dallas counselor whose private practice deals largely with singles. “Men have been sacrificed on the altar of machismo as much as women have been sacrificed on the altar of dependence. Strong men and women see in each other the ultimate liberation for both sexes. Nobody wants to be liberated and alone.”⁵¹

Dealing with Management

Despite her battles with her male editors, Castleberry was at the best newspaper in Dallas for her mission. The 1952 circulation of what was then known as the *Dallas Daily Times-Herald* was 140,489 for the daily edition and 139,892 for the Sunday edition.⁵²

Two years later the paper was redesigned and “Daily” was dropped from its name along with the hyphen. In 1977 the Sunday edition of the *Times Herald* outsold its competition, the *Dallas Morning News* by 322,093 newspapers to 321,167.⁵³ The *Times Herald* was known as the more liberal of the two publications and it claimed to have more blue-collar and minority readers.⁵⁴ While a majority of her editors, who were all male, did not support her idea of what was women’s news, she did have one champion – Bert Holmes, who she had known briefly during their studies at Southern Methodist University. She said of him, “He always valued women. I don’t know that I would call Bert a feminist; I would call him someone who is a very kind and tuned in human being who treats everybody with respect and dignity.”⁵⁵

Holmes was the managing editor when Castleberry became women’s page editor in 1957; she was the only woman in any position of authority at the newspaper at the time. She said it was difficult because she had no training in managing a staff. The

previous women's editor had been very tough and assertive and she wasn't the kind of model Castleberry wanted to follow. She said, "I don't want to be the kind of boss she is, so I almost ingested that to the point that I was too soft. It took me years to find a balance because all of it was a do-it-yourself project. I had no training at all."⁵⁶ She developed her management style as the years went by. One of her biggest tests occurred when she returned from her final pregnancy. With five children at home, it had been rumored that she would not return and there was staff unrest when she came back to her job. As the first woman on the newspaper to be given a leave of absence to have a baby, she was in a pioneering role. Although she hadn't been paid during her leave, just to be allowed to return to her position, a rare event for the time, raised eyebrows and created some concern in the office. "I think I opened the doors for some women by pushing hard [for] maternity rights,"⁵⁷ she said.

Castleberry said she called her boss, Felix McKnight, and told him that she intended to exercise complete authority over her staff and she was going to take charge once again. She recalled:

I said to him, "Mr. McKnight, I'm going to do something today and want you to know what it is. I'm going to call my staff together and I'm going to lower the boom." I said, "I understand that people have been running in here one after the other reporting to you about just the different things that are going on and it's been one person doing one thing and somebody – and then," I said, "you're having to listen to all of these sad sob stories of what people are coming in telling you is going on. And I just want you to know that I'm taking over today and you don't have to do that for me anymore."⁵⁸

Castleberry also faced challenges when she dealt with her male editors over the section's content. For example, Castleberry said management did not understand why she was covering progressive, human interest topics. She said, "They really didn't enjoy my going to the – in those days, going to a campground and covering what the black people

were doing at a picnic, you know, that wasn't our cup of tea."⁵⁹ She was told by editors that readers wouldn't be interested in stories like those on sex education in the public schools or bad conditions in the Dallas County Juvenile Home. She said, "I knew I was going to make waves, what I would do would be to prepare these stories and wait until my management went out of town and then we would publish. Then I would get my hand slapped on Monday morning."⁶⁰

The editors found her coverage of women's issues threatening. She recalled that an editor approached her in a hallway and asked what happened to the "little girl" they had hired who had "really believed in God, country, motherhood and apple pie."⁶¹ She responded: "You hired me and you sent me out to see what the real world was like. And I found out that the stories do not happen at the Petroleum Club and the Dallas Country Club."⁶² In her coverage of parts of the community and topics that had been ignored in the past, Castleberry said, "I always felt more comfortable in the hovels of South Dallas and in West Dallas where there was only Spanish spoken. I don't understand Spanish, but I often felt more comfortable in that setting than I did in the glitzy Four Hundred kind of country club, Petroleum Club milieu."⁶³ When she did occasionally attend society events, her discomfort showed. At one party, her society editor approached her and told her to "Please wipe that expression off your face."⁶⁴

Castleberry used the period when her editors were on vacation to run the most controversial stories in her section. She recalled when the "big boss" went out of town, she decided to write a story about the first integrated neighborhood in the community. "I just sort of started biding my time to see how long it was going to take before I could do a story on this."⁶⁵ She ended up writing the story "Neighborhood Power." It ran below a

graphic of a white hand and a black hand clasped together. She later won an award for the story. “When my management came back to town, they weren’t real sure about that. They didn’t know what had hit ‘em. And so it was always kind of fun to have someone present an award for something they hadn’t approved of when it was done.”⁶⁶

Another story concerned overcrowded conditions at the Dallas County juvenile home. The story began:

The house at 3002 Knight St. is haunted. Haunted by the sounds of children who have no one to love them. Haunted by the sobs of children who wake up in terror from nightmares. Haunted by a community that has only begun to hear the cries. Such children – and there are hundreds of them in Dallas County – occupy the ramshackle, rundown, pitifully inadequate structure that serves as the Dallas County Emergency shelter for abandoned, deserted and abused children.”⁶⁷

The impact in the community was immediate. Although Dallas County Commissioners hadn’t been to the home in the past, they went there the morning after the story appeared in the newspaper.

Castleberry said it was often difficult to get editors to understand the issues that she thought the women in her community wanted to read about. In her oral history interview, she recalled her experiences in 1957. She said:

At that point in time, and still really a lot of times, most men, and remember that my entire management was comprised of men, I was *the* only woman in any kind of position of responsibility or authority. And so the whole framework was male. And at that time, every man judged – or evaluated – that was going on for women by what happened in his own home. And all of them had traditional wives. So the kinds of problems that I encountered were simply that the men did not think women thought of these things. My entire management was—they were puzzled for the most part. And a great many of the things that we did as breakthrough stories for human interest stories, we were doing against the grain of not only public opinion, and I always said to my staff, you must be far enough ahead that you make breakthroughs in journalism, but you must not be so far ahead that you lose your public.⁶⁸

Castleberry didn't win all battles, though. At one point, she wanted to run a story on teenage sexuality. She was ready to go to press when the male bosses insisted she drop the story.⁶⁹ During her years as editor, she had several run-ins with management.

I got lots of new bosses that I had to train. And I remember one time they hired this man and he came in and I had to report to him. And finally, in utter frustration with me, he said to me one time, "But Vivian Castleberry, I was hired to handle you." And I said to him, "Good luck. Better people than you have tried." What I think happened was that I always felt this inner need that I was working for the public and I was a public servant and this was more important than any of the impediments that were put in the way.⁷⁰

Castleberry was the first woman named to the editorial board of the *Dallas Times Herald* in the 1960s. She took herself off the board after realizing that she couldn't make much of a difference in the newspaper's content and that she needed to devote more time to her section. She said that she did feel she made some changes, such as writing about abortion and adding a mother's voice to the debate over the Vietnam War, but that in the long run, she was appointed as a token and that she had remained a token rather than a change maker. "I was lonely there. I was the only women, there were several men, and although the men were not of a single mind, the male attitude prevailed."⁷¹

In some instances her work led her to personally campaign to improve conditions for women. She was a member of the first Dallas Commission on the Status of Women. Castleberry, along with members from these organization, trained women on how to ask questions of people who were running for office so that women's issues would be highlighted. She said "Under our own women's auspices we would hold meetings of candidates that were running for all public offices and publicly ask them questions about how they stood on women and the issues that were critical to our needs."⁷²

Throughout her journalism career, Castleberry looked for ways to promote the work of overlooked women in the community. She said:

It had become increasingly clear to me that the women news shapers in the community were – their pictures never got in the paper. There was no way to – except when we put them in, there was no way to really cite these people as outstanding community people. So we instigated a number of years ago to start the new year by choosing the outstanding women in the community and holding them up to applause.⁷³

Castleberry initiated Women's Panels, which began as the *Times*

Herald Homemaking Panels. These panels were intended as a networking and empowering opportunity between the newspaper and women in the community.

Castleberry said that as “her feminism grew” she changed the name of the program to reach beyond homemakers.⁷⁴ She started the panels as a way to reach out to the community and to find out what kind of stories women wanted in the newspaper. The following message was printed on the 1976 program from one of the panels:

Women must, if they are to remain happy and productive, anticipate the turning point of their lives and be prepared to make reasonably accurate veers in the right direction before they arrive at those critical points. Very young women don't know this and some older women have still not learned it.⁷⁵

The panels were intended to be a “framework of sisterhood” that included about five hundred women of all ages, ethnicities, backgrounds and interests. The meetings resulted in connections that likely would not have take place otherwise. Castleberry said she remembered watching immediate change take place:

Marvelous things happened, such as the year that I seated the president of the Junior League next to the woman from South Dallas who lived in a housing project and whose eight children were sleeping on the floor because they had no beds. And by the end of the day, the president of the Junior League not only provided beds for the children, she had provided medical care for one of the children in need. So what it really did – what I found out very early on was that women speak the same language.⁷⁶

Retirement

Castleberry retired from the *Dallas Times Herald* in 1984, seven years before the newspaper folded. Castleberry said she retired due to health reasons and a desire to take on new projects. On December 8, 1991, Belo Corporation, publisher of the *Dallas Morning News*, bought the *Times Herald* for \$55 million. The *Dallas Times Herald* printed its final edition the next day and the era of competing newspapers in Dallas ended. In fact, after the *Dallas Morning News* bought the *Dallas Times Herald* and shut it down, it also bought the building, disassembled the presses and tore down the building to prevent another newspaper from starting.⁷⁷

In her retirement, Castleberry became what she described as a “grassroots citizen diplomat.” She made several trips abroad, including three trips to the Soviet Union to interview women who were members of the Soviet Women’s Committee. She had conferences with Soviet women whom she described as activists and feminists. She said a favorite moment occurred during an interview with a professor at the University of Moscow. The professor said to Castleberry:

Go home and bring us your women. Men have been trying to bring peace to our world for hundreds of years and they haven’t done such a good job and we women are still sending out sons to war, and we don’t want war anymore. We don’t want to fight anymore. And men have tried but they haven’t done such a good job. So go home and bring us your women.⁷⁸

Her experience led her to create Peacemakers Incorporated along with friend Roseann Naim in 1986. She recalled that they came up with the name and called the state to find out how to get tax-exempt status. They went to the Internal Revenue Service and met with an employee, who was a retired military man. He gave the women advice and

then asked a question before they left the office. He inquired, “Now, I've got to know what you little ladies are up to.” Castleberry responded with “We're going to try to bring peace to our world.” She said he looked baffled and said, “Well don't you think that's going to take a long time?” Castleberry said, “Yes, sir. And don't you think it's time somebody got started.”⁷⁹ The group got tax-exempt status in less than six weeks – record time. Then, the women needed to raise money, something that Castleberry said she had never done before. She said they raised the money on their own by “quarters and dimes and twenty-five dollars.”⁸⁰ According to Castleberry:

I mean the wealth in this community was incredible. I still had the backing of the mayor of Dallas and of a lot of the women's groups and I know that a lot of the organized women's groups were still looking on us askance and saying, ‘I know they can't do that, but if Vivian Castleberry wants us to try, I guess we'll try.’ And so it just kept happening. It just kept going. We just kept moving in the direction of the vision.⁸¹

Castleberry and Naim ultimately raised \$300,000 in a year. Much of the money went toward a conference that was held in August of 1988 at SMU. It was attended by 2,000 people from 56 countries and 37 states. She said the highlight was on the final day of the conference when women from various countries were divided into groups to represent a microcosm of the world. According to Castleberry, she didn't want any specific country to dominate the discussion. The goal of the groups was to come up with ideas and actions to create a more peaceful world. After a meeting, the group members shared their ideas. Castleberry was overcome by the diverse voices. She said, “When they walked in to the stage on Friday morning to make their reports, Roseann and I were in tears. It was a personification of what we had dreamed.”⁸² After the conference, Castleberry handed over leadership of the group, which continues today.

Castleberry next took on book writing projects. In 1994, her book, *Daughters of Dallas: A History of Greater Dallas through the Voices and Deeds of Its Women*, was published. The book chronicled the achievements of more than five hundred Dallas women beginning in 1842 and continuing through 1988. The women varied in race and social class; their commonality was that they made a difference in their communities.

According to Castleberry's preface:

This is a partial story of those ignored, overlooked, forgotten people – the blend of ethnicities that would, long ago, have made Dallas truly an international city had it taken better advantage of its priceless cultural diversity. It is especially a story of the unheralded half of the population of all colors – the women of Dallas.⁸³

In 1998, at the age of 77, Castleberry spoke at a United Nations Association Conference in Dallas about anti-feminism and the media. The conference program described her as “a fierce crusader for women’s rights.”⁸⁴ In 2000, the Association for Women Journalists in Dallas/Fort Worth established the Vivian Castleberry Awards. The awards recognize quality work that fairly and accurately portrays women and their concerns in all walks of life. Recent winning stories were about the rape of a woman inmate by a Texas prison guard, the anniversary of Title IX, and an analysis about how California's safe haven law has not helped save the lives of unwanted babies because the state had not paid for advertising that would explain the law to expectant mothers. Castleberry has presented the awards herself over the past few years.⁸⁵

In 2003, Castleberry co-authored with Louise Raggio, the book, *Texas Tornado: The Autobiography of a Crusader for Women's Rights and Family Justice*. It is the story of Raggio, who is best known for her work reforming married women's legal status in Texas. Raggio pushed for the Texas Marital Property Act in 1967 which gave equality to

wives and spearheaded the Family Code project in 1979, making Texas the first state with a unified family code.

Castleberry's influence on journalism continues to be recognized today. In spring 2004, Castleberry received the Planned Parenthood Federation of North Texas's 2004 Gertrude Shelburne Humanitarian Award. It was given for Castleberry's "powerful and intelligent influence on important issues affecting women for three decades."⁸⁶

Conclusion

Castleberry's advocacy in the community and in her newspaper denies the stereotypes that women's page editors had no power and that their sections were full of fluff. During her professional career and in retirement, Castleberry worked to open doors and create opportunities for women in both her newspaper and her community. She said, "I gave nurturance and appreciation to many younger women."⁸⁷ She said that her calling to help young women was influenced by her mother.

When Castleberry was in high school, she would often iron her brother's shirts. Over the years she began to rebel and he ended up ironing his own shirts. Castleberry said her mother was so busy that she didn't have time to worry about how labor was divided. Castleberry described her mother as a "manipulator" in order to get things done. She said, "I say that in the kindest terminology there is because I became one too in my work life. I had to survive. And that's the world that I am looking forward to for my granddaughters where women do not have to manipulate in order to have the good life."⁸⁸

Castleberry said that during her career, she did not strive for the male ideal of objectivity, finding instead that her women reporters brought a more subjective, human-interest approach to their writing – something that readers were looking for. She said:

And what has always appalled me about that is that the first of the "W's" is the who, and that's where I stop. If I can find out who you are, I can pretty well tell what you are, and why you are, and how you are, and almost all the other things follow who you are. And I think that's what we have forgotten in American journalism is that the who is the almighty important question. And I think women instinctively know that, whether or not it's instinct – my sociologist friends quibble with me over whether or not it's an ingrained condition, but at least it's there and I don't know whether it came with the womb or it came with the territory, but it's still more in women than it is in men and unless you legislate it out, it will come through in the story. And it's a softer touch, it's a more inclusive touch, it's a more human kind of reporting.⁸⁹

Castleberry, unlike the other two women's page editors studied in this dissertation, raised children and stayed at one newspaper throughout her career. She had to fight different battles with her editors due to childcare issues, and in doing so she created a model at her newspaper for women journalists who came after her. Because she did not move from Dallas, her roots were deeper than Journey's and Paxson's in their communities since they relocated every few years. This allowed Castleberry to nurture a wealth of sources and she recalled that many of these sources became her fellow advocates. Outside of the office, she took an active role in the community. Many of her activities were clearly linked to the women's liberation movement such as her role in establishing a rape-crisis hotline and a battered women's shelter. Possibly for these reasons, Castleberry did not encounter anger from women's movement leaders that Journey and Paxson shared. Instead, her battles most often were with her editors over content issues from writing about abortion to using the term 'Ms.' At one point, she was

accused of being too much of a feminist by her male editors. Castleberry did not apologize.

Castleberry's contributions to journalism and to the women's movement deserve recognition especially when so little about significant women's page editors has been documented. She was a pioneer who tried to balance her work and home life without a model to follow. It was not enough for her to simply edit her section, she also wrote stories – many of which were investigative pieces that inspired change. It was also not acceptable for Castleberry to allow her section to follow traditional patterns. She ignored society news and focused on the disadvantaged, minority communities and international issues. While much of women's liberation's history related to the media has focused on New York City and Washington, D.C., Castleberry's work proves that in Dallas a committed women journalist could take a leadership role in tackling issues that were important to women.

¹ Kay Mills *A Place in the News* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 116.

² Examples of this treatment was detailed in chapter eight of Mill's *A Place in the News*, 110-125.

³ Castleberry, Vivian. "Women in Journalism." Oral History Project. Washington Press Club Foundation. 1989. <http://npc.press.org/wpforal/> Session 2A, 58.

⁴ Castleberry, Session 1, 1.

⁵ *Ibid*, 2.

⁶ Castleberry, Session 2A, 71.

⁷ Castleberry, Session 1, 13.

⁸ *Ibid*, 16.

⁹ *Ibid*, 16.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 18.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 21.

¹² *Ibid*, 40.

¹³ *Ibid*, 42.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 45.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 46.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 49.

¹⁷ Castleberry, Session 2A, 12.

¹⁸ Information about the campaign that encouraged women to give up their jobs and stay at home is available in Elaine Tyler May's *Pushing the Limits: American Women 1940-1961* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

¹⁹ Castleberry, Session 2A, 13.

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- ²⁰ Ibid, 12.
- ²¹ Ibid, 14.
- ²² Ibid, 62.
- ²³ Ibid, 14.
- ²⁴ Castleberry, Session 4, 165.
- ²⁵ Rodger Streitmatter, "Transforming the Women's Pages," *Journalism History* 24 (Summer 1998):72-81.
- ²⁶ Jan Whitt, "Regression or Progression? *The Chicago Tribune* and 'Womanews,'" in *Facing Difference* (Thousand Oaks, Calif: Pine Forge Press, 1997), 136.
- ²⁷ Castleberry, Session 2A, 59.
- ²⁸ Ibid, 60.
- ²⁹ Castleberry, Session 4, 160.
- ³⁰ Val Imm, "Parents Torture Own, Deny They Are Guilty," *Dallas Times Herald*, 31 July 1967, C-1.
- ³¹ Vivian Castleberry, "If I Be Lifted Up," *Dallas Times Herald*, Dec 15, 1968, 1D.
- ³² Castleberry, Session 2A, 67-68.
- ³³ "Women of Courage: Trailblazing Texas Journalists," Association for Women Journalists, <http://www.awjdfw.org/>
- ³⁴ Castleberry, Session 4, 161.
- ³⁵ Castleberry, "Every Member is the Organization" *Dallas Times Herald*, April 15, 1966.
- ³⁶ Barbara Richardson, "Birth Control Article Bunk" *Dallas Times Herald*, June 30, 1967.
- ³⁷ Barbara Richardson, "School Systems Can Help" *Dallas Times Herald*, March 12, 1968.
- ³⁸ New Direction for News, Women Studies Program and Policy Center, 1983, 9.
- ³⁹ Castleberry, Session 2B, 87.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid, 103.
- ⁴¹ Ibid, 96.
- ⁴² Castleberry, Section 2A, 58.
- ⁴³ Email interview with Kristin Sullivan, past president of the Association for Women Journalists in the Dallas area, March 9, 2004.
- ⁴⁴ Streitmatter, 75
- ⁴⁵ Castleberry, Session 2A, 61.
- ⁴⁶ Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2000), 303.
- ⁴⁷ Castleberry, "Mass Media Asked to 'Understand,'" *Dallas Times Herald*, Feb. 2, 1968.
- ⁴⁸ Donna Allen, "Female Journalism is Something Different," *Media Report to Women*, January, 1976, 2-3.
- ⁴⁹ Castleberry, "The Good Marriage," *Dallas Times Herald*, Feb. 22, 1970, Sec. E, 9.
- ⁵⁰ Castleberry, "Marriage: Shifting Sex Roles Challenge," *Dallas Times Herald*, Feb. 25, 1970.
- ⁵¹ Castleberry, "Equality – How Far Do Men Want to Go," *Dallas Times Herald*, October 1980.
- ⁵² Matthew Hayes Nall, *Dallas Times Herald*, Online Handbook of Texas, University of Texas at Austin, <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/DD/eed13.html>
- ⁵³ Nall.
- ⁵⁴ Nall.
- ⁵⁵ Castleberry, Session 2A, 47.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid, 67.
- ⁵⁷ Castleberry, Session 2B, 103.
- ⁵⁸ Castleberry, Session 2A, 68.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid, 60.
- ⁶⁰ Castleberry, Session 4, 162.
- ⁶¹ Castleberry, Session 2A, 56-57.
- ⁶² Ibid, 56-57.
- ⁶³ Castleberry, Session 4, 162.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid, 162-163.
- ⁶⁵ Castleberry, Session 2A 40.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid, 41.
- ⁶⁷ Val Imm, "The Haunted House," *Dallas Times Herald*, 30 July 1967.
- ⁶⁸ Castleberry, Session 4, 162.
- ⁶⁹ Castleberry, Session 2A, 59.

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- ⁷⁰ Castleberry, Session 4, 163.
- ⁷¹ Castleberry, Session 2B, 101.
- ⁷² Castleberry, Session 3, 125.
- ⁷³ Castleberry, Session 2A, 48.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid, 79.
- ⁷⁵ Castleberry, Session 2B, 7.
- ⁷⁶ Castleberry, Session 3, 130.
- ⁷⁷ Phillip Lamb, Dallas locations, 2004. <http://www.philiplamb.com/DalTimes.html>
- ⁷⁸ Castleberry, Session 3, 137.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid, 147.
- ⁸⁰ Ibid, 147.
- ⁸¹ Ibid, 148.
- ⁸² Ibid, 153.
- ⁸³ Castleberry, *Daughters of Dallas* (Dallas, Texas: Odenwald Press, 1994), Preface.
- ⁸⁴ United Nations Conference Program, "Anti-feminism and the Media," October 1998. Available at <http://www.utdallas.edu/dept/socsci/prog%20pg11.htm>
- ⁸⁵ Sullivan.
- ⁸⁶ Barbara Buzzell, 2004 Planned Parenthood Awards Luncheon, Dallas, Texas, Dec., 2, 2003.
- ⁸⁷ Castleberry, Session 2B, 103.
- ⁸⁸ Castleberry, Session 1, 16.
- ⁸⁹ Castleberry, Session 2B, 100.

Chapter Eight Conclusions

As this dissertation shows, newspapers have long been a male domain. For many women newspaper reporters and editors, the ability to write about the women's liberation movement, and other topics, was limited. For decades, the little power that women journalists held was found in the women's pages. While these sections were criticized for focusing on "fluff" stories, some sections also carried stories that challenged stereotypes and encouraged women to find their own voice.

Consequently, the role of women's pages editors was one that was both powerful and subordinate. While these editors did not have a voice in the content of the front pages, they did have the ability to define what made headlines in their sections. They decided which topics and which groups made news – and which got ignored. Yet, their position on newspapers was one of the lowest on the editorial ladder. The desks of the women's page staff were located in a separate part of the newsroom, away from the male journalists.¹ The decisions of women's page editors could be easily overturned by male editors; they did not have the power to hire nor fire. In addition, stories could be taken from their section if other sections wanted them. The editors and writers also had lower salaries than their male counterparts. Male editors had the real power and relegated women to the sidelines. As Beasley and Gibbons wrote:

Women's pages reinforced the idea of separate spheres for men and women. Men ran the world: The news of their conflict, power, and influence dominated the front pages. Women took care of home and children: the news of non-confrontational domestic and social pursuits appeared on the women's pages.²

Decades before the second wave of the women's movement, journalist Isabel Ross saw the potential women editors had. She wrote, "Where a woman of wide

newspaper experience takes hold, wonders can be done with the stepchild of the profession.”³ To find out what outstanding women’s editors did with the “stepchild of the profession,” during the era of the second wave, I used framing and feminist theories to examine how a group of women editors chose stories, represented women’s issues, and made an impact in coverage of the women’s movement.

The findings of this study support a revision in the history of women’s pages and their role in the women’s movement. While traditional women’s pages, often filled with society, home and wedding news, appeared in many newspapers, this was not the full story. Some sections were progressive in content and writing style. Not recognizing the differences among sections at various newspapers leads to the invisibility of women in journalism history⁴ and overlooks the important role played by women in pressing for change.

This research adds to the literature of journalism history and the history of the women’s movement. In many of the popular memoirs of the women’s movement, including *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* by Ruth Rosen⁵ and *In Our Time* by Susan Brownmiller,⁶ women’s editors are almost entirely overlooked. The few references to them by feminist leaders picture them differently than the way some women’s editors saw themselves. One example of differing views can be seen in the case of *New York Times* women’s page editor Charlotte Curtis, who unlike Anderson, Castleberry, Journey and Paxson, did not consider herself a feminist. Curtis openly questioned some of the ideals of the women’s movement. Yet, she was recognized by some feminists as a supporter of the movement.

The three women journalists profiled in this dissertation all were impacted by the women's movement. In various ways the movement both empowered and limited their achievements. It brought about changes to the women's sections on which they worked and, as a result, changed their own careers. All three women overcame discrimination in journalism to work on behalf of other women. Their work on women's pages serves to show the importance of these sections in the era of the women's movement.

Dorothy Journey

Journey grew up in an environment that encouraged her to take a unique path for her time. Her mother was an advocate for women and her father, a newspaper publisher, included her in the family business. There was a family expectation that she would go to college, which she did. Her graduation during the Depression gave her limited job choices so she began her journalism career writing for her father's paper. Later, she covered hard news when male journalists left newspapers to serve in World War II. A short marriage that produced no children did not prevent her from working. She was relegated to the women's pages after the war ended where she made use of her experience with hard news. She transformed the women's sections that she headed in Miami and Detroit, adding issue-based content and reducing society and bridal coverage. Her work caught the eye of others and her section became a model for women journalists, such as Castleberry and Paxson. As the women's sections were transformed, Journey became an assistant managing editor, ending her journalism career at the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. She was one of the first female members of two newspaper management associations. In her retirement, she worked as an advocate for women – creating studies that examined how women were covered by the media. Up until her death in 2002, she

continued to call for more equality for women in journalism in various speeches and articles.

Marjorie Paxson

Paxson's childhood also created a positive foundation for her later career. Her mother was a strong figure in the household and raised her daughter to go to college. Her graduation during World War II meant that she had many job opportunities. She began her career covering hard news for a wire service. Like Journey, she went to the women's pages after the men returned from war, taking her news sense with her. She worked to include more hard news in her women's sections in Houston and Miami. She was heavily influenced by Journey's work. In fact, she moved from Texas to Florida in order to work for Journey. With training by Journey, Paxson went on to transform other women's sections in St. Petersburg and Philadelphia only to lose her job twice when the sections were changed into feature sections. It was during this time that she oversaw a publication for a feminist conference and was president of the national Women in Communication. She viewed herself as a feminist, yet she has not been recognized by historians of the women's movement as an important figure. When she was in her fifties, she became one of the first women newspaper publishers employed by the Gannett Company. She was the publisher of two papers and imprinted her views on editorial stands, including supporting the Equal Rights Amendment. In her retirement she established a national archive for the papers of women journalists and continued to write a column for her local newspaper.

Vivian Castleberry

Castleberry's upbringing helped to prepare her for a career in which she would appreciate diversity and recognize issues that were significant for women. Her family

was open to different kinds of people as was demonstrated by her grandfather's acceptance of African Americans in an area and time when this was rare. She was influenced by her mother who Castleberry saw as a strong figure; Castleberry's mother did not see her daughter's future limited by her gender. It was in college that she broke her first gender barrier – becoming the first woman editor in her school newspaper's history. When she married, she said that she and her husband, Curtis, agreed to have their own careers and not be influenced by the thinking of the times that she should stay at home and raise their children. Her personal feelings about the non-traditional roles of women were reflected in the stories that ran in her section.

Yet, that decision to combine her family and her career meant constant struggles with editors who were not used to employing a working mother. She regularly educated her managing editors at the *Dallas Times Herald* about her need to balance her roles as editor and mother. In addition to that battle, she fought with management over the content of her section. She often wrote stories herself, and in the process of her reporting, her eyes were opened to various injustices, including domestic violence, rape, and child abuse. She felt the need to address these problems in her section and in her activism. In addition to combining family life with her journalism career, Castleberry was an advocate for women in Dallas and for peace. She helped establish organizations and programs that helped the disadvantaged and empowered women. In her retirement she continued to be an advocate – traveling abroad to reach other women and writing two books that recognized strong Texas women.

Answering the Research Questions

The purpose of this dissertation has been to show how progressive women's page editors defined the content of their sections to give the women's pages more substance than previously recognized before and during the era of the women's movement. To illustrate this, the three women's page editors have been profiled and a thematic analysis carried out of the winning Penney-Missouri entries, which have not been documented elsewhere.

The first question I looked at was ways in which Castleberry, Journey and Paxson were impacted by the women's movement. Using an analysis of oral history transcripts of Castleberry, Journey and Paxson, as well as a review of their personal papers which have been archived in the Western Historical Manuscript collection, I found that the women were caught in a difficult place as they edited women's sections and were criticized by movement leaders. They defined themselves as feminists and worked in their journalistic and professional lives to give voice to feminist issues, yet the feminist movement did not give much respect to women's page editors.

Castleberry's fights were most often with the male management at her newspaper rather than with feminist leaders. In confrontations, these editors either scolded her for or hampered her efforts to run content that was feminist in nature. As described in length in her chapter, examples of changes she brought to her section included less coverage of social events and increased coverage of the African-American community. Paxson and Journey both had more direct confrontation with leaders from the women's movement. Paxson, in particular, was impacted negatively by the movement when she was demoted and fired due to the insistence of what she said was women's movement leaders to

eliminate the women's sections. Yet, at the same time, she may have benefited in the long run because the women's movement was behind the affirmative action programs that probably led to her being named publisher of two Gannett newspapers. She spoke out on many feminist issues, including changing a newspaper's stance to support the Equal Right Amendment, after she became a publisher. She said the most important thing she did in her career was the editing of the eight-page bilingual daily tabloid published in Mexico City for the United Nations World Conference for International Women's Year.

All three women, Castleberry, Paxson and Journey, said they considered themselves a part of the women's movement. The story of these women editors can be seen through Gloria Steinem's analogy about ten people in a room, used in the forward in "To Be Real," an anthology on the changing "face of feminism." In it, she described ten people sitting around a table – each very different from the other. One person was dressed in a revealing fashion, another was a conservative-looking woman and a third was a tall, black man. The point of her story was that each of the diverse individuals in the room, despite the images of feminists presented in the media, actually were feminists. She wrote that society needed to embrace the "feminist paradigm of and instead of the patriarchal either/or."⁷ Applying this concept to women's page editors allows the contributions of these three women to be recognized as part of the feminist movement.

To date, these editors have not been recognized in any history or memoir of the women's liberation movement, despite the work they did. They were important to women in their communities and groundbreakers in journalism – Castleberry was the first woman named to the *Dallas Times Herald* editorial board, Journey was the first female board member of the Associated Press Managing Editors organization, and Paxson was one of

the first women newspaper publishers in the country. According to Bulkeley, “The experience of pioneers – those women who were ‘the first,’ ‘the only’ help define the perspectives and values many women bring with them to their jobs.”⁸

It is difficult to determine exactly how the careers of the three women editors were influenced by the women’s movement. The issues of women’s equality – from wages to reproduction – were covered in their sections from the early 1960s onward. Clearly, the movement’s messages reinforced the kind of content that these women sought to provide. The movement likely led to Castleberry’s appointment on her newspaper’s editorial board, but she saw herself as a token woman who did not have a real role and she resigned after a few months. The final promotions of Journey and Paxson may have been in part due to the women’s movement as leaders encouraged businesses to examine the gender make-up in management. Yet, they received support of male editors at many of their newspapers. As was described earlier, Gannett head Neuharth was concerned about women’s equality due to his childhood, as well as to the influence of his first wife who promoted affirmative action. Journey also was sought out for promotion from one women’s page to a bigger, better one, by a male editor, Lee Hills.

The second question I looked at was the impact that Castleberry, Journey and Paxton, as well as other top women’s page editors, had on the definition of women’s news in the 1960s. Using a thematic approach based on framing theory, I examined the topics in the 1960s women’s sections that earned the J.C. Penney-Missouri Awards. I also looked at the content issues addressed in the transcripts of the oral history interviews with Castleberry, Journey and Paxson. I found that the winning women’s sections featured issue-based stories that covered such topics as child care, pay equity, and abortion. These

were topics that were not being covered by the news sections at the time. This fits the model of changes in news that Bulkeley discussed in 2002: “Anecdotally, women journalists have unlimited stories of the ways they have made a difference in news content – topics covered, sources consulted and quoted, storytelling approach, how stories are covered and illustrated – and how newspapers are managed.”⁹

If it were not for women’s page editors, it is likely that there would have been less coverage of the women’s movement. In a 1970 *Washington Post* column about the societal debate over birth control pills and abortion, former women’s page writer Nicholas von Hoffman addressed the lack of understanding of these issues by men. He wrote, “In strictly masculine company, it’s still almost impossible to bring up the topic of the treatment of women without being regarded as a kook. Men, especially in executive positions, will not even admit it’s an issue.”¹⁰ His words explain why women’s page editors often did not have much support in changing the definition of news. If men were not interested in the issues of the women’s movement, then those issues would not be given serious consideration in the media except in the women’s sections. Molotch’s words reinforced this message. He wrote, “Men have no need of information that may cause women to wish to abandon their traditional sex roles altogether. Serious treatment of women’s liberation has been difficult to come by in the media because of this lack of interest to men.”¹¹

I found the winning Penney-Missouri women’s page editors framed women’s news differently from male journalists framing of news that pertained to women. Women’s page editors attempted to balance the conflicting messages of staying at home versus fighting for change that were being given to women. They did not focus on

friction when they covered the women's movement. They created their own issue-based frame that took the women's movement seriously without excluding women who wanted to remain homemakers.

Nevertheless, women's page editors often were in a tough position. They were pressured by women's leaders as well as other segments of their communities. Women's page editor Charlotte Curtis said that she felt she was in a no-win situation in her section in the late 1960s by overseeing the section that was seen as a "ghetto," yet contained news about the movement.¹²

The third question I looked at was how these three leading women journalists participated in the women's movement and acted as activists for women, despite their lack of support from movement leaders who criticized women's pages. By analyzing the oral history transcripts of Castleberry, Journey and Paxson, as well as their personal papers, I found that these three women strove to help women in ways that went beyond their journalism careers. They believed in issues central to the movement, including a need to prevent domestic violence and a fight for economic equity and political power. Their continued activism into their retirement further demonstrated their commitment to helping women.

While the women's editors studied here may not have been supported by women's movement leaders in their efforts to continue women's pages, they were advocates for many of the same issues central to the movement. Castleberry was a founder of the Women's Center of Dallas, Women's Issues Network, and the Dallas Women's Foundation. Among her many advocacy activities, Journey worked for the National Commission on International Women and conducted annual reports on the lack

of women in news management positions. Paxson was a national president of Women in Communications and helped change it into a professional rather than a social organization. She also edited the newspaper for the United Nations World Conference for International Women's Year and established the National Women and Media Collection at the University of Missouri.

While Castleberry, Journey and Paxson often had to fight their male editors to include significant content about women, they did receive some positive feedback from some women in their own communities. They were encouraged to go beyond society and wedding news by those women who were fighting for change and knew that they needed the media to get their stories out. The women also found support from each other and other women editors. Castleberry kept an eye on what Journey was doing and said that the Penney-Missouri workshops helped connect her with other women's page editors. Journey stayed close to Marie Anderson and Paxson after their years of working together at the *Miami Herald*.

Frames of Castleberry, Journey and Paxson

The frames used by the women's page editors described in this dissertation were clearly different from the frames used by journalists in other sections when describing women's issues. These different interpretations are important to look at in order to truly understand the complexities of the women's movement as well as both newspaper coverage of and readership by women. While some women's sections contained issue-based content, this is not to say that the mainstream media did not dismiss nor belittle the women's movement – evidence of the latter is clear.

It could be argued that women's page editors saw an intersection between the personal and the political and responded to it in their sections. Some women's page editors were working mothers who lived complex lives each day. Castleberry, for example, told interviewers about aspects of her personal life that led to story ideas as well as the struggles she had with management in order to balance her roles as editor and mother. She understood the difficulties of being a working mother because she was one.

A journalist's background and identity often shape how she or he sees the world.¹³ The personal and professional struggles that Castleberry, Journey and Paxson faced most likely shaped the frames through which they saw women's news. On a personal level, they each faced different sacrifices and battles. As has been noted, Castleberry's role as a mother regularly impacted her working world, especially in terms of scheduling her time. Journey's marriage impacted her early career choices. Later she faced her husband's court fight to prevent her divorce. Paxson's brother and sister-in-law created family support for her, somewhat similar to that found in a marriage. These experiences may have meant that these three women accepted messages from the women's movement in a different way than some male journalists did. For example, Creedon wrote that the mass media consistently "framed" feminists as man haters who were out to destroy family values. In fact, she wrote that "in the media, the opposite of 'family' often is 'feminist.'"¹⁴ Many women's page editors did not use this frame. They recognized women's important roles at home and at work. They saw these roles as overlapping rather than oppositional. They included stories about parenting in addition to stories about daycare for mothers working outside of the home.

When it came to professional experiences, it is also likely that the three women's editors in my study could relate quite easily to women's movement messages.

Castleberry and Paxson each mentioned instances of sexual harassment. All three experienced pay and promotion inequities. During her career, Journey was told specifically that her gender prevented her from reaching higher ranks at the newspapers where she worked. Her suspicions about gender-based coverage inequities were reinforced in the studies that she initiated and conducted. In an autobiographical sketch, Journey wrote:

[I] reported extensively on the women's movement and on political, social, economic and governmental gains made by women. I was not active in any of the organized feminist groups. My job, however, included reporting on the advancement of women and I was a firm believer in women's equality, believing the family and the country would advance because women had opportunity to pursue their potential.¹⁵

These women did not need to be convinced of the realities of the messages presented by the women's movement – they had lived them. With this in mind, it makes sense that their frames for the movement would be different from those of journalists who dismissed it. To back up this point, Merritt and Gross found that women editors of women's sections/lifestyle sections were more likely than male editors to use stories about the women's movement in their sections.¹⁶ They wrote that when editors named the main goals of their sections, men chose a leisure focus and women chose a social change emphasis.¹⁷

Frames help to define the gate-keeping function of what is and is not news. In White's 1950 study of gate keeping, he found that the acceptance and rejection of stories is a complex process. This process was, in part, highly subjective and was based on the gate keeper's own "set of experiences, attitudes and expectations of what the communication of 'news' really is."¹⁸ While several studies have found that newsroom

culture and organizational restraints can dilute different experiences related to gender, other studies have found that gender can make a difference when it comes to deciding what defines news.¹⁹ One of the few studies that compared the decision-making process between female women's page editors and male city editors found a difference in the way the two groups perceived news.²⁰ Whitlow found that women's page editors did not necessarily conform to the standards of the traditional newsroom.²¹ She wrote that women's page editors were "not necessarily affected by the norms and behaviors of the dominant newsroom since the simulated gate keeping of the women's section editor is relatively dissimilar from that of the city editor."²² In other words, they created their own frames.

The stories of these three women are important because they prove that innovation can exist outside of the "great" newspapers, that are the most studied, like the *New York Times*. These women represented a portion of the feminist movement. Unlike the *New York Times*' Charlotte Curtis, who is most often cited when the women's page coverage of the women's movement is mentioned, these three editors were not conflicted about their role as feminists. That positioning meant a different kind of coverage for women's news and the women's movement in their sections.

If we only look at the women's pages as "fluff sections" and a "ghetto" for women, we devalue the work of these women who fought in their own ways for change. There was traditional content in these sections from food to fashion, but as Pamela Creedon wrote, to remain in any field "women must conform in some ways to the norms."²³ What is interesting and important is what these three women's editors did in addition to adhering to the norms. They were pioneers, which in itself makes their life

stories valuable. Yet, their stories are also important because their personal experiences helped to create the frames through which they saw news. As Creedon wrote, “gender neutrality can never be objective.”²⁴ Rather she wrote that journalists need to acknowledge that they frame their own stories through their own experiences.

Limitations

Qualitative research emphasizes meaning over measuring.²⁵ “Ultimately one sees the importance of qualitative methods by considering such a seemingly straight forward question as ‘what is news?’”²⁶ In this case, the question is what is women’s news? This calls for looking at news from a feminist perspective. Authorities have pointed out that “masculine and patriarchal forms of understanding are enacted through the mass media. The ‘masculine’ bias of culture may have been reinforced, in part, because it was naturalized and therefore inconspicuous.”²⁷

This research has clarified how Castleberry, Paxson and Jurney, as well as other Penney-Missouri winners, defined women’s news and were not limited by the existing definitions of hard and soft news. Tuchman wrote that during the 1960s, women’s news included those stories that had no “daily urgency.”²⁸ Mills wrote that women’s news is associated with soft news: “Hard news is news about foreign policy, the federal deficit, bank robberies. Historically, men’s stuff. Soft news is news about family, food, fashion, and furnishings.”²⁹ Witt, Paget and Matthews stated that the practice of separating soft and hard news is longstanding: “What constitutes ‘news’ is partly whatever editors or news directors decide and partly a hundred years of a tradition that has defined women and their issues as ‘soft’ news, while politics is ‘hard news’ and a man’s domain.”³⁰

Castleberry, Journey and Paxson attempted to redefine women's news by blending the two categories.

A wider examination of what other women's page editors were doing during the women's movement would help to further define the frame of women's news. Simply studying female journalists, however, does not necessarily lead to an understanding of how women see news differently since to succeed many women journalists had to learn how to emulate a white, male, upper-class model.³¹

Limitations of this research involve a lack of multiple sources of information on women editors and the loss of several of the early Penney-Missouri winning sections. Part of the reason for the lack of material is that newspapers and professional associations of journalists often dismissed the work of women.³² In addition, books that detail individual newspapers' histories rarely mentioned the role of women's sections.³³ For these reasons, research about women often lacks historical documentation. Sometimes material about journalists, outside of the "greats," does not exist outside of individual memories.³⁴ Without the existence of the oral history transcripts, the stories of these women could not be presented.

Contribution to the History of the Women's Movement

While sources may present information in a certain way, hoping that their message will be presented in a positive light, it is up to the journalist to accept or reject that frame.³⁵ Journalists usually use frames based on traditional news values, such as conflict or prominence.³⁶ Reporters and editors follow traditions as active members of the news-making process because as Tuchman wrote: "they both make and consume their society's culture."³⁷ Traditional news values help to create the framework in which an

issue will be defined. For example, many mainstream publications and networks put members and events of the women's movement into negative frames. Many women within the movement criticized the mainstream media for stereotyping feminists – or creating these negative frames.

No doubt, the framing of the news process limited the representation of women during the women's movement and continues to do so today. As journalists look for what is newsworthy, they tend to fit events and people into frames. The changing role of women in the 1960s and 1970s conflicted with most of the frames traditionally used by the media, by which women were limited to passive roles in the home. It was through this paradigm that the women's page editors worked – they were attempting to introduce into their communities a new place for women without rejecting women who wanted to uphold the former, traditional role.

Contribution to Journalism History

More explanation of women in journalism history needs to be done. Too often, history focuses on “great” individuals, as defined by historians, and excludes most women. This exclusion causes half of the story of history to be told. As Sloan wrote, “Because most of us acquire most of our knowledge of the past from historians’ accounts, how they tell history is of utmost importance. What we know of the real past comes mainly from historians’ explanations.”³⁸ Henry has written about the need to explore media history and “the effects women journalists’ ‘marginal’ professional status has had on their journalism.”³⁹ As noted in earlier chapters, some books on women journalism “greats” exclude all but two women's page editors. The lack of women's page editors in the story of journalism means that women's voices have been excluded since women's

page journalism was the main outlet for women journalists for decades. This research opens up new doors to recognizing women journalists who were making changes on newspapers other than the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, which are frequently written about.

An investigation of what women's page editors and reporters went on to do when they were incorporated into regular newsrooms would be important to see whether these women journalists took their women's page training with them. For example, *Detroit Free Press* women's page reporter Helen Fogel trained under Journey and wrote many of the stories that helped the section win a Penney-Missouri award. She went on to become a labor reporter at the newspaper, and a review of her stories finds that many of her stories included a female perspective. In 1987 she wrote about sexual harassment in the workplace.⁴⁰ That was four years prior to the Clarence Thomas hearings which made sexual harassment front-page news. Fogel also wrote about pay inequities and the lack of women in union leadership positions.

Future Research

More research needs to be done on the contributions of women's page editors to newspaper history. It is too simplistic to say that the women's sections were merely fluff. Further study could clarify what leading women editors apart from the three studied here saw as 'women's news.' This is needed today when women's newspaper readership is declining. According to experts, "The bottom line for publishers is that women have been abandoning newspapers just when their demographics and buying power are the most commanding."⁴¹ According to columnist and former women's page reporter Ellen Goodman, "It turns out that women across the board are more likely than men to feel that

the paper doesn't speak to them. Or about them."⁴² Former Gannett executive Nancy Woodhall made the comparison of women to a suburb that wasn't covered by the newspaper. She said, "If your newspaper didn't cover a suburb, it wouldn't surprise you that readership is not there. So why are we surprised when women are buying us less and less?"⁴³ It could be helpful to discover how women's page editors were reaching their readership.

Additional research also needs to be done on the fight women journalists endured as "firsts." The women's page editors described here helped to change journalism before and during a period when the women's movement was forcing an examination of women's roles. These women faced uphill battles but still found ways to succeed. Lessons could be learned as women continue to face barriers today. As Jodi Enda wrote in 2002, "The state of women in journalism today is one of those half-full, half-empty things. We no longer sit in the balcony, but neither do we have the best seats in the house."⁴⁴ Studying women who led the way for others may provide greater understanding of women's positions today.

¹ Kay Mills, *A Place in the News: From the Women's Pages to the Front Pages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 112-113.

² Maurine Beasley and Sheila Gibbons. *Taking Their Place: A Documentary History of Women and Journalism* (Washington, D.C.: The American University Press, 1993), 3.

³ Mills, 114.

⁴ Joan Wallach Scott, "The Problem of Invisibility," *Retrieving Women's History*, ed. S. Jay Kleinberg (New York: Berg Publishers Limited, 1988), 5.

⁵ Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2000).

⁶ Susan Brownmiller, *In Our Time: Memoir of a Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1999).

- ⁷ Gloria Steinem in Rebecca Walker's *To Be Real: Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), xv.
- ⁸ Christy Bulkeley, "A Pioneering Generation Marked the Path for Women Journalists," *Nieman Reports*, Cambridge: Harvard University, 66:1, Spring 2002, 62.
- ⁹ Bulkeley, 61.
- ¹⁰ Nicholas von Hoffman, "A Recklessly Marketed Drug," *The Washington Post*, Jan. 21, 1970, Sec. B, 5.
- ¹¹ Harvey Molotch, "The News of Women and the Work of Men," in *Hearth and Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media*, ed. Gaye Tuchman, Arlene Kaplan Daniels and James Benet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 182.
- ¹² Marilyn Greenwald, *A Woman of the Times: Journalism, Feminism, and the Career of Charlotte Curtis* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1999), 118.
- ¹³ Pamela Shoemaker and Stephen Reese, *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content* (White Plains, New York: Longman Publishers, 1991), 78.
- ¹⁴ Pamela Creedon, "Framing Feminism: A Feminist Primer for the Mass Media," *Media Studies Journal* 7 (1993): 75.
- ¹⁵ Journey, *Autobiography*, 3.
- ¹⁶ Sharyne Merritt and Harriet Gross. "Women's Page/Lifestyle Editors: Does Sex Make a Difference?" *Journalism Quarterly* 55 (1978): 423.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*, 513.
- ¹⁸ David Manning White, "The Gate Keeper: A Case Study in the Selection of News," *Journalism Quarterly* 27 (1950): 390.
- ¹⁹ For more information, see Pamela Shoemaker and Stephen Reese, *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content* (White Plains, New York: Longman Publishers, 1991), 78-81.
- ²⁰ S. Scott Whitlow "Women in the Newsroom: A Role Theory View," *Journalism Quarterly* 56 (1979): 378-382.
- ²¹ *Ibid*, 380.
- ²² *Ibid*, 382.
- ²³ Creedon, 71.
- ²⁴ *Ibid*, 77.
- ²⁵ Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln. *Landscape of Qualitative Inquiry*. (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1998), 8.
- ²⁶ K.B. Jensen and Nicholas Jankowski. *A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies For Mass Communication Research* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 79.
- ²⁷ *Ibid*, 30.
- ²⁸ Gaye Tuchman, *Making the News* (New York: Free Press, 1978), 147.
- ²⁹ Mills, 110.
- ³⁰ Linda Witt, Karen Paget and Glenna Matthews. *Running as a Woman: Gender and Power in American Politics* (New York: Macmillan, Inc., 1994), 183.
- ³¹ Jodi Edna, "Women Journalists See Progress, But Not Nearly Enough," *Nieman Reports*, 56:1, 2002, 68.
- ³² For specific details on the sexist treatment of women in *Editor & Publisher*, see Joey Senat, "From Pretty Blondes and Perky Girls to Competent Journalists: *Editor & Publisher's* Evolving Depiction of Women from 1967 to 1974," Paper presented at the 1997 Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication National Conference; or Cindy Elmore, "Two Steps Forward and One Step Back: Coverage of Women Journalists In *Editor & Publisher*, 1978 through 1988," paper presented at the 2002 Association for Journalism and Mass Communication National Conference, Washington, D.C.
- ³³ Two examples central to this dissertation are books that detail the histories of newspapers. The history of the *St. Petersburg Times* can be found in Robert Pierce's *A Sacred Trust: Nelson Poynter and the St. Petersburg Times* (Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 1993) The book does not include any mention of a women's section. A history of the *Detroit Free Press* devoted two paragraphs in a 267-page book to Journey. Frank Angelo, *On Guard: A History of the Detroit Free Press*. (Detroit, Michigan: Detroit Free Press, 1981)
- ³⁴ Maurine Beasley and Richard Harlow "Oral History: Additional Research Tool for Journalism Historians" *Journalism History* (Spring 1980): 38.
- ³⁵ Tuchman, 89.
- ³⁶ Folkerts & Lacy, 104.

³⁷ Tuchman, 89.

³⁸ William David Sloan, *Perspectives on Mass Communication History* (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1991), 1.

³⁹ Pamela Creedon, ed., *Women in Mass Communication* (New York: Sage Publications, 1993), 342.

⁴⁰ Helen Fogel, "No Joke: Sexual Harassment Costs," *Detroit Free Press*, Nov. 22, 1987.

⁴¹ James Cox, "Newspapers Court Women: Society Page Redux It's Not," *USA Today*, Nov. 24, 1992, 2.

⁴² Ellen Goodman, "Newspapers find woman are a fading readership," *Austin American Statesman*. April 8, 1992.

⁴³ Nancy Woodhall, "Is It a Man's Newspaper?" *Editor & Publisher*, January 15, 1994, 19.

⁴⁴ Edna, 67.

APPENDIX A

Penney-Missouri Award Winners 1960-1971

(* All entries of this year are missing)

(** Most entries of this year are missing)

1960*

Class I	1 st	Carol Black & Ann DeLeo	<i>Middletown (NY) Record</i>
	2 nd	Bette Elliott & Meredith Council	<i>Raleigh (NC) Times</i>
	3 rd	Beverley Morales	<i>Pompano Beach (FL) Sun-Sentinel</i>
Class II	1 st	Margaret Claiborne	<i>Charlotte (NC) News</i>
	2 nd	Edee Greene	<i>Fort Lauderdale News</i>
	3 rd	Beryl Ann Brownell	<i>Gary (IN) Post-Tribune</i>
Class III	1 st	Marie Anderson	<i>Miami Herald</i>
	2 nd	Dorothy Jurney	<i>Detroit Free Press</i>
	3 rd	Maggie Savoy	<i>Arizona Republic</i>

1961*

Class I	1 st	Dorothy Clifford	<i>Tallahassee (FL) Democrat</i>
	2 nd	Evelyn Van Wagner	<i>Aberdeen (SD) American</i>
	3 rd	Caryl A. Rivers	<i>Middletown (NY) Times</i>
Class II	1 st	Margaret Claiborne	<i>Charlotte (NC) News</i>
	2 nd	Drue Lytle	<i>Honolulu Advertising</i>
	3 rd	Basil W. Hall	<i>Charleston (SC) Evening</i>
Class III	1 st	Marie Anderson	<i>Miami Herald</i>
	2 nd	Barbara Frost	<i>Detroit News</i>
	3 rd	Aileen Ryan	<i>Milwaukee Journal</i>
Class IV	1 st	Rosemary Madison	<i>Dundee Sun (Neb.)</i>
	2 nd	Ethel Taylor	<i>Van Nuys (CA) News</i>
	3 rd	Erma M. Winner	<i>Grit (Williamsport, PA)</i>

1962*

Class I	1 st	Dorothy-Anne Flor	<i>Pompano Beach (FL) Sun</i>
	2 nd	Bette Elliott	<i>Raleigh (NC) Times</i>
	3 rd	Betty Preston	<i>Glendale (CA) News-Press</i>

Class II	1 st	Edee Greene	<i>Fort Lauderdale News</i> <i>Charleston (SC) Evening</i> <i>Savannah (GA) News</i>
	2 nd	Basil W. Hall	
	3 rd	Joy Gallagher	
Class III	1 st	Nancy Taylor	<i>Miami News</i> <i>Akron (OH) Beacon-News</i> <i>St. Petersburg Times</i>
	2 nd	Betty Joycox	
	3 rd	Gloria Biggs	
Class IV	1 st	Ethel Taylor	<i>Van Nuys (CA) News</i> <i>Arlington Heights (IL)</i> <i>Herald</i> <i>Burlingame (CA) Advance-</i> <i>Star</i>
	2 nd	Marianne Scott	
	3 rd	Grace Barbor	

1963 (second and third place winners for this year are not available)**

Class I	1 st	Ann Rowe	<i>St. Petersburg Independent</i>
Class II	1 st	Marj Heyduck	<i>Dayton Journal Herald</i>
Class III	1 st	Billie O'Day	<i>Miami News</i>
Class IV	1 st	Marianne Scott	<i>Arlington Heights (IL)</i> <i>Herald</i>

1964

Class I	1 st	Florence Burge	<i>Evening Gazette (NV)</i> <i>St. Petersburg Independent</i> <i>Glendale (CA) News-Press</i>
	2 nd	Ann Rowe	
	3 rd	Betty Preston	
Class II	1 st	Marie Saulsbury	<i>San Bernardino (CA) Sun</i> <i>Indianapolis Times</i> <i>Canton (OH) Repository</i>
	2 nd	Virginia Hill Hunt	
	3 rd	Helen Carringer	
Class III	1 st	Marie Anderson	<i>Miami Herald</i> <i>Detroit Free Press</i> <i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>
	2 nd	Dorothy Journey	
	3 rd	James Estes	
Class IV	1 st	Thelma Barrios	<i>San Fernando (CA) Valley</i> <i>Sun</i> <i>Evanston (IL) Review</i> <i>Van Nuys (CA) News</i>
	2 nd	Lorraine Bannon	
	3 rd	Ethel Taylor	

1965

Class I	1 st	Helen Cheney	<i>Salisbury (NC) Post</i>
	2 nd	Velma Baylor	<i>Yakima (WA) Herald</i>
	3 rd	Maggie Wilson	<i>Scottsdale (AZ) Progress</i>
Class II	1 st	William Wundram	<i>Davenport (Iowa) Times-Democrat</i>
	2 nd	Marie Saulsbury	<i>San Bernardino (CA) Sun</i>
	3 rd	Basil W. Hall	<i>Charleston (SC) Evening</i>
Class III	1 st	Aileen Ryan	<i>Milwaukee Journal</i>
	2 nd	Marie Sauer	<i>Washington Post</i>
	3 rd	Vivian Castleberry	<i>Dallas Times Herald</i>
Class IV	1 st	Ethel Taylor	<i>Van Nuys (CA) News</i>
	2 nd	Erma Winner	<i>Grit</i>
	3 rd	Myrtle Walters	<i>Encinitas (CA) Coast Dispatch</i>

1966

Class I	1 st	Marilyn Reynolds	<i>Yakima (WA) Republic</i>
	2 nd	Kit King	<i>Denton (TX) Record Chronicle</i>
	3 rd	Doris Flora	<i>Tuscaloosa (AL) News</i>
Class II	1 st	Gloria Biggs	<i>TODAY (Cocoa, FL)</i>
	2 nd	Kathryn Robinette	<i>Palm Beach Post</i>
	3 rd	William Wundram	<i>Davenport Times-Democrat</i>
Class III	1 st	Louis Schwartz	<i>Newsday (NY)</i>
	2 nd	Aileen Ryan	<i>Milwaukee Journal</i>
	3 rd	Barbara Somerville	<i>Philadelphia Bulletin</i>
Class IV	1 st	Marianne Scott	<i>Arlington Heights (IL) Herald</i>
	2 nd	Lorriane Bannon	<i>Evanston (IL) Review</i>
	3 rd	Thelma Barrios	<i>San Fernando Valley Sun</i>

Reporting/Writing 1st Pat Hunter *Honolulu Advertiser*

1967

Class I	1 st	Dorothy-Anne Flor	<i>Lakeland (FL) Ledger</i>
	2 nd	Lucy Coulbourn	<i>Raleigh Times</i>
	3 rd	Betty Preston	<i>News-Press (Glendale, CA)</i>

Class II	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	Arlene Alligood Betty Preston Edee Greene	<i>Suffolk Sun</i> (Deer Park NY) <i>News-Press</i> (Glendale, CA) <i>Fort Lauderdale News</i>
Class III	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	Madeleine McDermott Irene R Sharkey Vivian Castleberry	<i>Houston Chronicle</i> <i>Los Angeles Times</i> <i>Dallas Times Herald</i>
Class IV	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	Judy Flander Sandra Wesley Lorraine Bannon	<i>Coalinga (CA) Record</i> <i>Boca Raton (FL) News</i> <i>Evanston (IL) Review</i>
Reporting/Writing	1 st	Pat Hunter	<i>Honolulu Advertiser</i>

1968

Class I	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	Betty Danfield Marilyn Helfers Sallie Batson	<i>The Paper</i> (Oshkosh, WI) <i>Arlington Heights</i> (IL) <i>The Ledger</i> (Lakeland, FL)
Class II	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	Kathryn Robinette William Wundram Grace Smith	<i>Post-Times</i> (Palm Beach, FL) <i>Davenport Times-Democrat</i> <i>Morning Call</i> (Paterson, NJ)
Class III	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	Marilyn Gardner Madeleine McDermott Stuart Troup	<i>Milwaukee Journal</i> <i>Houston Chronicle</i> <i>Newsday</i> (NY)
Class IV	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	Marianne Scott Ann Clevenger Mary Jane Peironnet	<i>Arlington Heights (IL) Herald</i> <i>Coast Dispatch</i> (Encinitas, CA) <i>Press-Dispatch</i> (Kansas City)
Reporting/Writing	1 st	Bobbi McCallum	<i>Post-Intelligencer</i> (WA)

1969

Class I	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	Betty Danfield Virginia Hardin Betty Preston	<i>The Paper</i> (Oshkosh, WI) <i>Press-Chronicle</i> (Johnson, TN) <i>News-Press</i> (Glendale, CA)
Class II	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	Beryl Ann Brownell Gloria Biggs Mae Belle Pendergast	<i>Post-Tribune</i> (Gary, IN) <i>TODAY</i> (Cocoa, FL) <i>Sacramento (CA) Union</i>
Class III	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	Marie Anderson Marjorie Paxson Al Cohn	<i>Miami Herald</i> <i>St. Petersburg (FL) Times</i> <i>Newsday</i> (NY)

Class IV	1 st	Sandra Wesley	<i>Boca Raton (FL) News</i>
	2 nd	Tish Myers	<i>Birmingham (MI) Eccentric</i>
	3 rd	Anne Doll	<i>Kettering-Oakwood (OH) Times</i>

1970

Class I	1 st	Mary Bach	<i>Scottsdale (AZ) Progress</i>
	2 nd	Martha Koon	<i>Tuscaloosa (AL) News</i>
	3 rd	Sandra Wesley	<i>Boca Raton (FL) News</i>
Class II	1 st	Gloria Biggs	<i>TODAY (Cocoa, FL)</i>
	2 nd	Marie Saulsbury	<i>San Bernardino (CA) Sun-Telegram</i>
	3 rd	Mae Belle Pendergast	<i>Sacramento Union</i>
Class III	1 st	Marie Anderson	<i>Miami Herald</i>
	2 nd	Ruth D'Arcy	<i>Detroit News</i>
	3 rd	Vivian Castleberry	<i>Dallas Times Herald</i>
Class IV	1 st	Anita Clevenger	<i>Encinitas Coast Dispatch (CA)</i>
	2 nd	Ethel Taylor	<i>Van Nuys (CA) News</i>
	3 rd	Gladys Mayberry	<i>Butler County News-Record</i>
Reporting/Writing	1 st	Elaine Morrissey	<i>Dayton (OH) Daily News</i>

1971

Class I	1 st	Betty Ann Raymond	<i>(Butte) Montana Standard</i>
	2 nd	Kathryn Robinette	<i>Palm Beach Times</i>
	3 rd	Lucille Kahn	<i>Melborne (FL) Times</i>
Honorable Mention		Jeanne Montage	<i>Anchorage Daily News</i>
Class II	1 st	Betty Danfield	<i>Press-Enterprise (CA)</i>
	2 nd	William Wundram	<i>Davenport Times-Democrat</i>
	3 rd	Lois Town	<i>Bay City (MI) Times</i>
Class III	1 st	Carol Sutton	<i>Courier-Journal (KY)</i>
	2 nd	J. Bruce Baumann	<i>Grand Rapids (MI)</i>
	3 rd	Marilyn Traum	<i>Chicago Tribune</i>
Honorable mention		Bill Manago	
		Ruth D'Arcy	<i>Detroit News</i>
Class IV	1 st	Anita Richwine	<i>Kettering-Oakwood Times (OH)</i>
	2 nd	June Blum	<i>Palisadian-Post (CA)</i>
	3 rd	Linda Christiansen	<i>Encinitas Coast Dispatch (CA)</i>
Honorable mention		Patricia Smith	<i>Birmingham Eccentric (MI)</i>
Honorable mention		Alice Schmidt	<i>East Lansing Towne Courier (MI)</i>

APPENDIX B

Penney-Missouri judges.

1960

- Inez Robb, United Features columnist, New York City
- Dorothy Roe, news columnist, New York City
- Margot Sherman, vice president, McCann-Erickson Inc., New York City
- J.B. Mullaney, associate editor, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*
- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri

1961

- Dorothy Roe, news columnist, New York City;
- Lee Ettelson, editor of the *San Francisco Examiner*;
- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri (permanent judge);
- Arthur Strang, president of Newspaper Association Managers, Inc.;
- G. Thomas Duffy, former editor of the *East St. Louis Journal* and a visiting professor of journalism at Missouri University.

1962

- Dorothy Roe, news columnist, *New York News*;
- Philip H. Willon, vice president, N.W. Ayer & Sons, Inc;
- Glenn McNeil, manager, Tennessee Press Association;
- Basil Walters, former executive editor, Knight Newspapers;
- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri (permanent judge).

1963

- James Bellows, unknown affiliation;
- Richard Young, unknown affiliation;
- G. Richard Dew, unknown affiliation;
- Charles Claggett, unknown affiliation;
- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri (permanent judge).

1964

- Frank Starzel, unknown affiliation;
- Marvin McQueen, unknown affiliation;
- Lloyd Burns, unknown affiliation;
- Earl Hall, unknown affiliation;
- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri (permanent judge).

1965

- Milburn Akers, unknown affiliation;
- Carl Coburn, unknown affiliation;
- Jo Foxworth, unknown affiliation;
- Melvin Street, unknown affiliation;
- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri (permanent judge).

1966

- Ben Martin, unknown affiliation;
- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri (permanent judge);
- Roy Moskop, unknown affiliation;
- Dr. Ruth Hall, unknown affiliation;
- Margaret Claiborne, unknown affiliation;

1967

- Alfred Kirchhofer, former editor, *Buffalo Evening News*;
- Jean Mooney, director of women's services, Newspaper Enterprise Assoc.;
- John Colt, former executive editor, *Kansas City Star*;
- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri (permanent judge).

1968

- Ted Weeger, managing editor, *Los Angeles Times*;
- Carol Junge Loomis, editorial board member, *Fortune*;
- Chads Skinner, senior speech writer, U.S. Steel Corp.;
- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri (permanent judge);
- Bill Bray, executive director, Missouri Press Assoc.

1969

- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri (permanent judge);
- Margot Sherman, unknown affiliation;
- Inez Robb, unknown affiliation;
- Dorothy Roe Lewis, news columnist, New York City;
- J.B. Mullaney, unknown affiliation.

1970

- Arthur McQuiddy, formerly of the *Kansas City Star-Times* and current public relations director for International Harvester Co., Chicago;
- Don Anderson, retired publisher, *Wisconsin State Journal*;
- William Boykin, assistant manager, Texas Press Association;
- Basil Hall, former executive women's editor and current columnist for the *Charleston (SC) Post* and past Penney-Missouri winner;

- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri (permanent judge)

1976

- John Emmerich Jr., editor and publisher of the *Greenwood (Miss.) Commonwealth*;
- Dorothy-Anne Flor, special projects writer for the *Miami Herald's* magazine and past Penney-Missouri winner;
- William Hosokawa, associate editor of the *Denver Post*;
- Dorothy Journey, former assistant managing editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and past Penney-Missouri winner;
- Dr. Margaret Mangel, director, School of Home Economics, University of Missouri (permanent judge);
- Paul Poorman, editor of the *Beacon Journal*;
- Marie Saulbury, city editor of the *San Bernardino The Sun-Telegram* and past Penney-Missouri winner;
- Paul Swenson, retired associate editor of the American Press Institute.

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