Evidence is presented that people select mass communication content on the basis of interpersonal contact they anticipate having. Examinations of the results from a variety of earlier field studies showed consistently positive relationships between amount of interpersonal discussion and exposure to relevant mass media messages. In a secondary analysis of news exposure data, the number of groups with which individuals discussed news events was associated with the amount of time they spent reading newspapers and magazines. Another secondary analysis yielded strong correlations between frequency of talking about a political campaign and level of exposure to campaign coverage in the electronic and print media. An experiment investigating news information seeking in a sample of high school students showed that students who expected to participate in an informal discussion with other students about national, local, or school problems tended to select a greater amount of the appropriate type of news (either national or local items) in the course of their normal mass media use, but they did not actively seek out additional media sources. (Author/JK)
INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION AS A DETERMINANT OF MASS MEDIA EXPOSURE PATTERNS

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This paper presents evidence indicating that anticipated interpersonal communication activities lead to the selection of socially useful mass communication content. Information gained at one point in time may have utility for a variety of subsequent communicatory situations, such as everyday informal interaction with family, friends, and co-workers. Content may be specifically sought out to provide raw material for direct re-communication, or routinely acquired for a short-term storage and possible use in general conversation.

Examination of results from a variety of field studies showed consistently positive relationships between amount of interpersonal discussion and exposure to relevant mass media messages. In a secondary analysis of news exposure data, the number of groups with which individuals discussed news events was associated with the amount of time spent reading newspapers and magazines; another secondary analysis yielded strong correlations between frequency of talking about a political campaign and level of exposure to campaign coverage in the electronic and print media.

An experimental test of news information seeking in a sample of high school students supported the hypothesized model which specified anticipated interaction as a causal factor in this relationship. The independent variable was the manipulated expectation of participating in an informal discussion with several other students about either national, local, or school social-political problems. The dependent variable was the actual level of exposure to relevant information in newspapers, magazines, TV and radio in the days preceding the anticipated discussion. Subjects in the experimental conditions tended to select a greater amount of the appropriate type of news (either national or local items) in the course of their normal mass media use; however, active efforts to be exposed to additional media sources did not occur to a significant extent.
Most studies exploring the determinants of mass communication information seeking have given little attention to the possible social utility of media content for an individual's subsequent interpersonal communication activities. Research dealing with the basic reasons for media exposure has generally emphasized intrapersonal factors such as respite, reinforcement, problem-solving, curiosity, warning, interpretation, vicarious involvement, and dissonance reduction. ¹

Chaffee and McLeod (1970) observed that a person's communicatory behavior can not be isolated from the rest of his social life, and that mass media use should be considered in the larger context of one's coorientational relationships with other people. They suggested a more thorough investigation of processes of communication at the molecular level of analysis, as these factors might explain more variance than predictors at the atomic and molar levels of analysis.

Mass communication content can be conceived as yielding both immediate intrinsic rewards and instrumental utilities for decision-making, task attainment, or social relations. This paper focuses on the concept of communicatory utility, defined as the subjective estimate of anticipated usefulness of information for future informal interaction with family, friends, co-workers and acquaintances.
This report describes the conceptualization and initial evidence from a research project assessing the explanatory power of various types of communicatory utility in accounting for the amount and nature of information sought from mass media sources. The first section attempts to establish the importance of communicatory utility in mass communications research with a lengthy review of the literature, particularly those studies examining exposure patterns to news content. This is followed by a presentation of original findings from an experiment and two secondary analyses of survey data, demonstrating the relationship between news media use and interpersonal discussion of news events.

Background

Although few studies have specifically linked mass media use to expected conversational experiences, social scientists have frequently called attention to this relationship and a variety of indirect evidence lends support to the utility proposition. More than 30 years ago, researchers pointed to the role of social relations in understanding why people attend mass communications. Waples, Berelson, and Bradshaw (1940) argued that primary and secondary groups provide finer and more meaningful explanations for the selection and interpretation of books and periodicals. They distinguished between intrapersonal motives and the interpersonal motives of social prestige and security, where readers seek to win praise for the information they can display or keep up on currently discussed topics.

Wright's (1960) functional inventory also proposed that mass communicated news can bestow prestige on individuals who keep themselves informed about current events, as they enhance their standing within a group by conforming to the norm of "being informed."
Bereison's (1949) examination of the uses of a newspaper illustrates the social prestige function of mass communication exposure:

"Another group of readers seem to use the newspaper because it enables them to appear informed in social gatherings. Thus the newspaper has conversational value. Readers not only can learn what has happened and then report it to their associates, but can also find opinions and interpretations for use in discussions of public affairs. It is obvious how this use of the newspaper serves to increase the reader's prestige among his fellows."

Although "social prestige" is a more limited and specialized motivation than the desire to initiate or maintain routine informal interaction, these studies did show that subsequent communication behavior has important implications for mass media exposure.

Early contributions were also made by investigators working from a group relations perspective. Riley and Flowerman (1951) hypothesized that "kinds of media materials preferred, as well as reasons for such preference, are affected by the individual's group affiliations." They criticized mass media researchers for conceiving the audience as a series of discrete individuals characterized only by personal attributes such as age, sex, socio-economic status, religion, and personality factors. They proposed a framework featuring the "inter-communicating group" that supported an interpersonal, verbal exchange of ideas on common problems. Schramm (1954) made a similar distinction between "statistical groups" imposed by the outside observer and "functional groups" that work together for some purpose. He said that these latter groups provide a setting for discussion and evaluation of mass communication content.

Riley and Flowerman's studies indicated that pre-adolescents who were more closely integrated into friendship groups tended to select different kinds of radio programs and comic books. Those who frequently communicated with peers chose mass media content more in terms of its practical "social utility" for getting along in the everyday activities of group life.
In addition, Riley and Riley (1951) reported that the same mass media materials were used differently by school children in varying social positions. The peer group member preferred action-adventure radio shows because the stories gave them ideas for group activities, while those with lower peer integration enjoyed the thrills and excitement of the stories. Riley and Riley also discovered that "seekers" who were attempting to gain fuller integration had the strongest need for socially useful media information; girls in this situation selected more mass media materials dealing with dating, romance, and the opposite sex than the highly integrated girls.

Freidson (1953) attacked the popular concept of the anonymous, spatially separated mass audience, and argued that "much audience behavior takes place in a complex network of local social activity." He suggested that mass communication selection patterns arise out of the stimulation of organized social processes along with the usual personal interests:

"Thus, an adequate concept of the audience must include some idea of its social character, some idea that being a member of a local audience is a social activity in which interaction with others before, during, and after any single occasion of spectatorship has created definite shared expectations and predisposing definitions."

Schramm, Lyle, and Parker (1961) proposed three great classes of reasons why children use television: entertainment, (incidental) learning, and social utility. One aspect of social utility is the conversational value of program content, as "The previous evening's television programs provide an excellent common ground of shared experience for conversation at school. If you can't talk about the new programs or the new stars, you simply aren't up to date with your peer groups; thus television has direct social utility." In addition, they showed that students who discussed news events with other people were much more likely to use the media for reality seeking [high exposure to print media and low exposure to television]. These data are presented in Table 1.
Several smaller investigations demonstrate the importance of the anticipated use of informational and entertainment content from the mass media. Robinson (1941) reported that the introduction of the radio to farm families often served to increase the amount of intra-family contact with frequent discussions of program content. He also observed a high correlation between listening to serious radio shows and attendance at women's club meetings; more than half of the members said they used the radio in connection with their club activities. Bogart (1955) found that many of the superficial conversations among working class males consisted of topics originating in newspaper comic pages. Turner (1958) proposed that newspaper reading functions to provide background information for social conversation. Her typology of newspaper readers included one type who was well adjusted in his social roles and read widely to obtain material for furthering social interaction. Davison (1960) hypothesized that incoming information is stored by the individual for possible use in his expected social environment. He asked a group of veteran government foreign affairs officials to recall newspaper headlines from a poster after a brief exposure period. Although Davison expected that they would remember those headlines referring to professionally relevant matters, the officials tended to recall interpersonally useful headlines: "The headline that was remembered most often was a dramatic one of a type that would be likely to provide conversational material."

Lazarsfeld's hypothesis that ideas flow in a two-step pattern from the media to "opinion leaders" and then to the less active sectors of society has led to a number of investigations relevant to the communicatory utility question. Most studies have found that opinion leaders [who by definition actively participate in face-to-face discussions where previously obtained information is highly useful] tend to be more highly exposed to mass media content relating to their area of influence. In the original opinion leader study, (Lazarsfeld, Berelson,
and Gaudet, 1948), opinion leaders read more newspapers and magazines and listened to the radio more often than others; 90% conversed about the campaign, compared to only 58% of the general population. Of more importance is the finding that opinion leaders with lower interest in the campaign still exposed themselves to almost as much political content as opinion leaders who were greatly interested, while the rest of the respondents showed a sharp drop in exposure from high to low interest groups. These data are presented in Table 2.

Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) reported that opinion leaders in various areas read more books and magazines than non-leaders, and had greater exposure to sources of specifically relevant information: fashion leaders read fashion magazines more than twice as often as the general population, and public affairs leaders exceeded non-leaders in newsmagazine readership. Furthermore, leaders in one area were usually less exposed to messages relating to those areas outside their specialization.

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Merton (1949) found that local and cosmopolitan influentials had distinctly different patterns of media exposure, due to varying motives for selecting mass communication materials. For example, cosmopolitans were uniformly high in readership of news magazines that provided the "stuff of conversation" among the gatherings of like-minded cosmopolitans. He pointed out that influentials could strengthen their social position by dispensing information and opinions when the occasion demands. He concluded:

"The analysis of the functions of mass communications require prior analysis of the social roles which determine the uses to which these communications can and will be put. Had the social contexts of interpersonal influence not been explored, we could not have anticipated the selection of Time by one type of influential and its rejection by another."

Troldahl's (1966) factor analytic study of 23 types of teenage communication behavior produced four major two-step flow patterns. The "print-media two-step" factor accounts for 11% of the total variability in their media
behavior. Respondents exhibiting this pattern read newspapers and magazines heavily, especially content pertaining to "persons your own age." They tended to bring this media material into their conversations with friends, often discussing what they had read recently. Very similar patterns with respect to the other media accounted for smaller portions of the variance: the "book two-step flow" (8%), the "television two-step flow" (7%), and the "teen movie two-step flow" (7%). He concluded that whatever mass medium a teenager consumes heavily, he also tends to talk with friends about the content he has been exposed to in that medium.

The news diffusion literature indirectly relates to the study of communicatory utility. While Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) characterized the initial transmission of new information from opinion leaders to uninformed others as the "relay function," evidence from field studies failed to support this point for most types of news material. As a rule, relatively few persons obtained their initial information of important news events from personal contacts (Larsen and Hill, 1954; Deutschmann and Danielon, 1960; Greenberg, 1964). However, Greenberg did show that personal sources of initial knowledge played a larger role for either extremely dramatic events or minor news stories. Indeed, an individual's receptivity to obscure news may be affected by the possibility that he can pass it along to others with similar special interests.

News diffusion studies did indicate that opinion leaders may serve a "supplementation" function by contributing additional information about an event after initial awareness from media sources. Thus, they participate in "reinforcement" conversations with others who also know something about the news topic. Empirical investigations have generally discovered that more than half of the sample have interpersonal discussions, even though they do not first learn about an important event this way.
Suggestive evidence about the relative importance of social vs. intrapersonal determinants of political information seeking comes from several election studies. Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee (1954) took a distinctly molecular approach in explaining mass communication behavior in Elmira, discussing the "mutual-effect relationship" between media exposure and interpersonal discussion of the campaign. In particular, they found that the more people talk about politics, the more they are likely to read and listen to political material. Among those who could remember discussing the campaign during October, 59% were high in media exposure, while 29% of the non-discussants were highly exposed. Respondents who were members of organizations consistently exposed themselves to more media content across each level of campaign interest; this was explained in terms of the multiplicity of social contacts stimulating those with greater organizational activities. The authors concluded that "the amount of attention to political materials in the mass media must derive in good measure from the amount of stimulation exercised upon him by the social environment."

Key (1961) analysed data from the Survey Research Center's 1956 national election study, and found a strong correlation between the number of media used and "talking to people to persuade them to vote for one of the parties or candidates." Converse (1962) obtained a similar pattern with SRC's 1960 voters. More than half of the respondents who drew information from four media could be classified as political opinion givers, while the proportion of opinion givers dropped monotonically to 15% among those exposed to one medium. Becker and Preston (1969) discovered that the type of political activity correlating the strongest with media usage in the 1964 SRC study was attempted personal persuasion, as shown in Table 3.
In a study featuring an explicit information "seeking" measure, Chaffee and McLeod (1967) compared the predictive power of several cognitive orientational variables against coorientational discussion variables. During the "naturally counterbalanced" gubernatorial and congressional campaigns of 1966, Madison, Wisconsin, respondents were interviewed about their voting plans, perceptions of the campaign, and interpersonal discussion of campaign events and issues. Each person was also given a list of clearly partisan candidate pamphlet titles (along with one impartial multi-candidate title), and they were asked to indicate which pamphlet they wanted sent to their house.

Their analysis showed that more variation in overall information seeking behavior was explained by coorientational than individual predictors. The data presented in Table 4 show that respondents who discussed the campaign most frequently were most likely to request pamphlets. There was a curvilinear relationship between relative campaign interest and information seeking, with more requests among respondents who were interested about the same amount as their friends. As Table 4 indicates, this finding held primarily among those who reported some discussion of the campaign with friends. The measure most directly relevant to the question of potential communicatory utility was an item asking about the likelihood of future discussion of the campaign. Respondents who expected to talk about these political events in the weeks before Election Day tended to request more pamphlets of all types than those anticipating no discussion.
Conceptualization

As the individual continuously attempts to maximize satisfaction, his communication behavior is determined by a complex set of needs for knowledge and enjoyment produced by perceived discrepancies between his present condition and various goal states. The "need to know" exists for the individual when he wants to decrease cognitive uncertainty, while the enjoyment need occurs when he desires to increase pleasure. Depending on the magnitude and nature of the discrepancies felt by the individual, existing or elicitible messages have varying degrees of both informational or entertainment value for him. The role of the entertainment component will not be considered here, since this paper focuses on the informational uses of mass media content. Borrowing from information theory, information is defined in terms of uncertainty reduction; it represents something that the receiver does not already know.

There are four basic elements of the communication model employed here: the individual (A); a coorienting other (B) with whom A communicates directly; mediated sources of information (C); and objects and their attributes (X) in the immediate and extended environment. An object is something that exists psychologically (a concept, event, thing, or person that one thinks about and reacts to), and an attribute is any quality that the object can possess to some degree (including characteristics of the object or something it does or has happen to it).

A message is a shared-meaning symbolic abstraction (referring to X) that is transmitted into a channel; if there is an intent to influence, then it is a purposive message. In orientational communication, A is oriented toward C and toward X, and decodes messages from C about X.
Mediated source G may be any individual or institutionalized team, such as a newspaper columnist or a network news department. In coorientational communication, A and B are simultaneously oriented toward each other and toward X, and they encode and decode A-X and B-X messages.

A's act of exposure to a G-X message is treated as a dependent variable in this analysis, a function of his estimate of the rewards expected from knowledge gain and the costs associated with message acquisition and processing.

Messages can provide both consummatory gratifications and instrumental utilities for the individual. Information may be needed to help answer an implicit or explicit "question" that A poses in response to several types of cognitive uncertainty. These uncertainty states arise when he perceives an inadequate level of knowledge after reprocessing stored information from previous experience. Specific questions may be activated by a message cue encountered during mass media scanning activities, or may be due to a prior internal or external instigation to move toward the message.

The basic building blocks contributing to increased certainty are cognitions: discrete pieces of information about an X. These may be combined into more complex cognitive structures such as beliefs, values, and attitudes, and may serve to direct behavior. Two factors tend to channel the individual's possible range of uncertainties toward particular X's.

First, his personal interests determine many of the intrinsic goal states which define discrepancies in knowledge to be reduced. In a similar fashion, extrinsic uncertainties are defined by requirements for adaptation to everyday environmental and psychological problems.

The expectation of instrumental rewards from information exposure depends on the estimated utility of a message for helping to resolve
uncertainty relating to A's anticipated adaptive responses to his surroundings or his psychological adjustments to past behavioral and cognitive activities. Various types of uncertainty can be arrayed along a cognitive -- behavior continuum ranging from orientations to decisions to performances.

An orientation is any belief, attitude, value, emotion, opinion, or ability judgment comprising various cognitions. Orientations typically have as a referent an X that the individual has experienced or expects to encounter, although they also refer to ambiguous stimuli in some cases.

Pre-orientational Uncertainty occurs when the individual is faced with an object or situation (however distant) and is unsure how to relate to it. He needs clarification to help form an attitude (do I like or dislike this new object?), reduce emotional ambiguity (what do I feel as a result of this threat?), or calculate the impact of an object or event (what will happen to the bus service if a subsidy isn't appropriated?).

External information gives cognitions that can be used in defining which orientation toward X is objectively correct or appropriate to the social climate. In this uncertainty state, the orientations of other people are particularly useful; when observation of others does not provide adequate tension reduction, then messages may be acquired.

Post-Orientational Uncertainty occurs when the individual is not sufficiently sure that his current beliefs, attitudes, emotions, or values are correct or socially appropriate. He may also want to evaluate or appraise the accuracy of his ability estimations. Basically, he desires to know if he holds the right orientations. Informational messages may contain descriptions of physical evidence that contribute to his uncertainty reduction. If physical reality is not available, a social basis can be used for subjective validation of orientations.

Pre-Decisional Uncertainty arises whenever the individual's current habits, attitudes, repertoire of conflict resolution strategies, and accumulated stock of knowledge are not adequate as a basis for selecting one alternative from among the various possibilities. There is a lack of knowledge to satisfactorily discriminate between possible courses of action or inaction when the individual is asking "what is the right alternative to choose?" External information can serve both to produce alternatives and to clarify their relative desirability.

Post-Decisional Uncertainty may begin once the decision has been completed and there is an irreversible commitment to the chosen alternative. The question that the individual wants to answer is "did I make the correct (or most socially appropriate) decision?" Due to his commitment to the decision, the individual usually wants to allay his doubts with an affirmative answer to this question; he wants to be reassured that the most rewarding alternative was chosen. This is the classic case of cognitive dissonance, where the bad features of the chosen alternative and the good points of the unchosen possibilities are in an inconsistent relationship with the decision act.
Pre-Performance Uncertainty involves the individual's lack of knowledge needed to satisfactorily accomplish an action sequence. He needs to know many details that are involved in carrying out an activity that he desires or deems necessary to undertake. Two specific types of uncertainty that fit into this category are task uncertainty and communicatory uncertainty. The former relates to questions about how to enact any overt behavior pattern except informal communication (including formal communication activities such as lecturing, debating, or book writing). As the individual approaches a non-routine task, he is often without sufficient information about relevant objects and attributes for satisfactory performance. Here, A is motivated to acquire new material in order to increase his knowledge or understanding of the activity he is undertaking.

Communicatory uncertainty is discussed below.

Post-Performance Uncertainty completes the paradigm. Here, the individual inquires "did I do well?" and probably wants a flattering answer if he is in an exclusively post-performance state. The most important case of this is the asking of evaluation from coorienting sources after a public performance.

Although information may have utility for reducing these types of uncertainty, the individual always faces an expenditure of effort and/or resources in his message handling activity. The relative importance of the cost components vary according to the individual's mode of transaction: either a self-initiated search for a message, a cue-elicited receptivity to a message, or a yielding acceptance of an intrusive message.

Acquisition costs involve the expenditures of time, money, and psychological effort necessary to attain contact with a message. If the individual is in a search mode, the message accessibility is a critical factor. Accessibility of a message relates to the ease of obtaining it once the need for the message is felt. This situational obtainability can be illustrated with reference to an electronic vs. a print media advertisement; at any given time, it is usually much easier to acquire a message from the ever-accessible newspaper or magazine advertisement than the intermittently accessible radio or TV commercial.

In the receptivity mode, the overall prominence of the message is of central concern. Prominence is composed of availability (frequency of encounter and length) and pervasiveness (intensity and animation of stimuli). This latter component can be illustrated by the active quality of television commercials relative to print messages, or the attention-gaining quality of a large well-
spaced newspaper want-ad that stands out in contrast from the other classified ads.

Processing costs are constant across the various modes of transaction. This factor describes the amount of effort to decode the message once contact has been made. The total processing costs are usually calculated at the start of exposure, and thus represent a second hurdle that the message must pass.

The dependent variable of exposure encompasses three modes of transaction: information search, receptivity, and yielding. "Information seeking" subsumes the first two modes; it involves exposure to a message when the expected informational reward value is greater than the negative costs value.

Information search is defined as that acquisition behavior purposefully initiated by the individual in response to an explicit question about X. The individual actively approaches a particular mass media source with the overt intention of becoming exposed either to the general content or a particular message (i.e., he turns on the evening news broadcast or looks up a reference book). The existence of the information field must be previously known to the individual, either on the basis of external cues or previous learning. An individual's search activity typically involves movement to a given mass medium for the purpose of obtaining general information about a variety of topics, as in the case of reading news magazines. However, he may pursue a particular source in order to find information about a single topic, as in the case of watching a newscast to learn about a specific event.

Information receptivity describes an openness to question formulation as a result of X-related cues encountered during movement through the message environment. This movement includes generalized search behavior (i.e., newspaper reading for non-specific purposes) or everyday contact with message cues while pursuing other goals; thus, there may be either a systematic or random contact
with eliciting cues during the individual's normal activities. When messages are encountered, selection occurs if the message-induced question arouses some type of uncertainty. This is premeditated behavior of a lower order, since the exposure decision is generally based on routine scanning for relevant indexing cues immediately before actual exposure (i.e., the individual reads a particular news story on the basis of a headline, or listens closely to a radio newscast during the course of attending regular entertainment programming).

**Information yielding** includes exposure acts where the reward value is zero or negative (i.e., the message has no utility, or may actually increase uncertainty by introducing confusion or dissonance) while the acquisition costs are positive (i.e., it requires more effort to avoid a pervasive message than to obtain it). Yielding acceptance relates to the minimal decoding of an incoming communication encountered in the environment, such as an advertising message or a segment of television programming.

**Communicatory Utility and Information Seeking**

Communicatory uncertainty is the cognitive state of incomplete familiarity with a potential conversation topic. To the extent that information can provide the user with initial knowledge about a new event, or supplementary material about a topic that the person knows something about, the information has communicatory utility. Information that an individual obtains at one point in time may be useful in a variety of subsequent communicatory situations, including both the everyday informal interaction with friends, relatives and co-workers, and conversational communication during special occasions such as a party or organization meeting. Information from mass media or interpersonal sources can be used as raw material for direct exchange with another person, or can be combined with previous knowledge to yield new conversational material.
Greenberg (1963) proposed that communication content in informal channels may be dichotomized into information [material that is directly relayed] and valenced information [personal ideas and opinions]. An individual who expects to play an active role in interpersonal communication on a given topic must depend on external information sources for both types of output. A person who plans to be only a passive spectator to an informal conversation on a topic needs at least a minimal level of information to satisfactorily comprehend the discussion, and must also rely on some previous information source.

At the time information seeking occurs, the individual may take into account the potential usefulness of the information for these types of communication situations. When he explicitly selects material in anticipation of a particular target conversation, the information has "specific communicatory utility." When information seeking contributes mainly to the overall level of stored knowledge on a given topic or general topic area, there is "generalized communicatory utility."

The key factor in both specific and generalized communicatory utility is the likelihood that the individual will participate in any face-to-face communication on a topic. [Note: When the individual does perceive that there is a chance that the topic will be discussed in the near future, he may take into account many potential factors, which combine to produce different types of specific or generalized communicatory uncertainty and lead to different patterns of information seeking. The major variables that can play a role in determining utility of information are outlined in Appendix A, but will not be considered in this introductory examination].

The likelihood of subsequent conversational interaction is the central variable in the three empirical studies presented in this paper. These investiga-
tions deal with the relationship between informal discussion of news events and seeking of news information from the mass media. In two secondary analyses, the likelihood variable is measured by the frequency of talking about the news and level of social interaction. In a simple experimental test, the subjects' expectation of informally discussing a specific news topic is manipulated.\(^8\)

**Correlational Evidence**

Relevant findings dealing with mass media exposure patterns are drawn from data collected in a survey focusing on alienation and mass media use (McLeod, Ward, and Tancill, 1965). A probability sample of 167 Madison, Wisconsin, adults were asked which mass media they used, how much they used them, what was used within a given medium, and what gratifications were obtained.\(^9\) Respondents reported how many newspapers they read, how much time they spent attending television, radio and newspapers in an average day [for magazines, how much time per week], and whether each of nine gratifications associated with news reading applied to them generally, a little, or not at all.

In addition, respondents indicated how regularly they discussed the news with their family, friends, co-workers, and chance acquaintances. Questions dealing with the number of organizational memberships, office-holding in organizations, frequency of visits with friends, and self-designated opinion leadership indirectly measured the likelihood of news discussion. The two sets of items available for analysis are presented in Appendix B.

The secondary analysis of these data shows that the number of groups with which news is discussed "often" is significantly associated with the number of newspapers read daily \(r = +.20, p < .05\), and correlates positively with the amount of time spent reading both newspapers \(+.15\) and magazines \(+.14\). The two newspaper correlations are unaffected when socio-economic status is partialled out, and decrease only slightly when education is controlled. The
mean differences between the levels of discussion frequency and these media variables are presented in Table 5. This table also shows that exposure to the primarily entertainment media relates to discussion frequency in a different pattern: the number of groups with which news is talked about correlates negatively with time spent watching television \([-0.28, p<0.05]\) and correlates negligibly with radio listening time \([+0.06]\).

Both the number of newspapers read and the time spent with newspapers have a stronger relationship with discussion frequency than with the standard demographic variables such as education, income, occupational level, age, or sex, and the more oblique interpersonal variables. For magazine reading time, only education and income correlate more strongly than frequency of news discussion.

Among the other social variables, there is a consistently positive relationship with the print media. The number of visits with friends correlates positively with number of newspapers \([+0.11]\), and with time spent reading newspapers \([+0.15]\) and magazines \([+0.12]\). Holding an organization office shows a similar pattern \([+0.09, +0.10, +0.10]\), as does self-reported designation as an opinion leader on news affairs \([\text{mean differences are presented in Table 5}].\)

Another secondary analysis examines this relationship for the special case of news about a current election campaign. Variables relating to political discussion and exposure to mass media election coverage were measured in a statewide survey of Wisconsin voters during the 1968 Presidential campaign. Interviews with 1,293 voters were conducted by the Wisconsin Survey Research Laboratory as part of a larger investigation of parent-child communication patterns and political socialization, under the direction of Jack M. McLeod and Steven H. Chaffee. Respondents were parents of a stratified probability sample of seventh and tenth grade students in five communities ranging in population...
from 18,000 to 68,000.

The key information seeking variables dealt with the frequency of exposure to news about the political campaign in newspapers and magazines, and the amount of viewing of the Republican and Democratic conventions on television. (All items are described in Table 8). In addition, election information seeking was measured indirectly by reports of exposure levels for network TV news broadcasts, news specials, and public affairs interview shows. The main communicatory variable was the frequency of discussing the campaign with family and friends; in addition, respondents were asked if they had tried to talk someone into voting for their candidate, and how often they have family talks about general political topics. These three measures were summed to obtain a Political Discussion Index.

Table 8 shows that the frequency of discussing the current campaign strongly correlates with exposure to campaign coverage in the print media \( r = +.49 \), convention viewing \(+.29\), and watching news and public affairs programming \(+.24\). (Due to the large number of respondents, any correlation larger than +.13 is statistically significant at the .001 level). The other two discussion variables are less strongly related to information seeking, ranging from +.08 to +.25.

As expected, the respondent's level of interest in the campaign and his economic and educational background tended to be positively related to the exposure variables (Table 8). Therefore, these factors were statistically controlled to eliminate their effect on the discussion-exposure relationship. This analysis shows a decrease in the magnitude of the correlations, although they remain significantly positive. The partial correlation between print media exposure and the Political Discussion Index is +.28, compared to a +.48.
raw correlation. For the television viewing indices, the correlations drop from +.26 to +.15 and +.24 to +.15.

These findings demonstrate a consistent association between social interaction and mass media exposure on a particular topic, even with other predictors partialed out. The data indicating that the correlations remain strong when personal interest is controlled lends support to the notion that communicatory utility may make an important independent contribution to news selection patterns.

Experimental Evidence

To test the strength and causal direction underlying these suggestive survey findings, a simple experiment was designed to examine the relationship between discussion and information seeking. In this study, the independent variable is the manipulated expectation of participating in a small, informal discussion about a given topic area. The dependent variable is the actual amount of exposure to mass media news information between the manipulation and the target date for the discussion. The study design sought to avoid the weaknesses of artificial information seeking behavior (such as paper and pencil forced-choice preferences from a listing of available information items), by creating a situation where information seeking could be realistically assessed during the period after the manipulation was introduced.

Hypothesis: When there is a high expectation of discussing a topic, there will be (a) greater information search for messages dealing with the proposed topic, and (b) more information receptivity to relevant messages in the course of normal media use. The baseline for comparing these levels of information seeking is provided by a control group expecting no discussion on the topic area.
Subjects were 69 high school seniors enrolled in an introductory sociology class in Middleton, Wisconsin. This course dealt with salient societal problems and current events, providing an appropriate setting for the manipulated discussion situations. The class assembled as a large lecture group each Monday and met in three smaller quiz sections on Thursdays and Fridays. On Monday, the regular course instructor announced that the forthcoming Thursday sections would break up into 3-man discussion groups and devote part of the period to informal "rapping" about current social problems. He emphasized that the interaction would be unstructured and ungraded, in order to avoid inducing a formal communication task where students would merely perform an assigned encoding activity required of them. The experimenter was not present at the time the manipulation was introduced to avoid sensitizing the students.

The overall class was divided into 26 small "buzz groups" according to the alphabetical order in each quiz section. This grouping procedure sidestepped problems of explaining why a given student was placed in a particular group, and also tended to cut across established friendship patterns. The 26 groups were randomly assigned into one of three conditions, depending on the designated discussion topic. One-third of the students were told they would be discussing social problems in the Madison area (Local condition), and the final segment were told to discuss social problems within Middleton High School (School condition). These topic assignments were presented orally by the instructor and repeated on a ditto information sheet passed out to the students. This sheet listed both the 3-man groupings and the topic area for discussion, along with a brief description of the topic and suggestions of particular events within the topic area. [Subjects in the National condition were instructed to concentrate on social problems on the national scene that were currently in the news, such as Governor Kirk's attempt to block desegregation of Florida schools, or the identity of President Nixon's next Supreme Court nominee; the Local Ss were to deal with such problems as prosecution of University of Wisconsin strike leaders or difficulties in locating a suitable rock festival site; those in the School condition were restricted to problems within the high school, such as which pupils should be able to use the student center or what should be done with smoking students].

The manipulation effectively limited the School group to conversational material that did not appear in the mass media, and they formed the Primary control group. The Local Ss could seek information in the local mass media outlets, particularly the six o'clock and ten o'clock news telecasts, the local page of the two Madison newspapers, and the brief radio newscasts on stations catering to the teenage market [news on these broadcasts was predominantly local in nature]. The National Ss could attend the national media, such as the network news telecasts, newsmagazines, and the editorial page of the Madison newspapers. Therefore, either the National Ss or the Local Ss could be combined with the School Ss to form an Overall control condition when analyzing exposure to communications that were not applicable to their communicatory utility needs. In addition, both the National and Local groups could use certain parts of the local newspapers for relevant information; in the cases of front page reading and number of newspapers read, the School control group stood alone and the two experimental groups were combined for analysis.

The nature of this sociology course made the manipulation plausible to the students, who normally expected a variety of unusual informal assignments in their quiz sections. None of the students raised any questions about the legitimacy of the proposed discussion groups.
The dependent measures were obtained during the administration of a questionnaire purportedly dealing with attitudes toward television violence. Upon entering the classroom for the Thursday session, students were told that since the period would be partially devoted to the buzz groups, it would also be a good time to sample their opinions about the 'social problem' of violence on TV. The experimenter took control of the administration details, as the regular instructor explained that he had agreed to turn over the class for a brief survey. After a number of filler items devoted to TV violence, Ss were asked to report their media use patterns, first for an "average day" and then for each of the past two days. [This transition was smoothly accomplished; debriefing interviews indicated that students did not suspect any connection between the Monday manipulation and the subsequent questionnaire about their general media behavior. The concealment of the actual purpose of the survey was especially important because of sensitization problems, since word of the project might diffuse to members of other quiz sections meeting at a later time].
The results are presented individually for each dependent measure, grouped into broad categories of national and local social problems. The mean exposure levels for the experimental and control groups are shown in Table 6a and 6b. Since the direction of all differences are predicted, a one-tailed t test is applied in each case.

I. Exposure to news about national social problems--

(a) "Did you read any magazines in the last few days? Which ones?" The national newsmagazines or opinion magazines mentioned by the Ss were totaled. The National group did not read significantly more than the Overall control group.

(b) "How much of these sections of the newspaper did you read yesterday?" The editorial page was one of eight sections listed, and Ss indicated whether they had read most, some or none of it. The National group read more than the Overall control group (p<.10).

(c) "Which TV shows did you watch yesterday, and how much did you watch?" The national news broadcasts (Cronkite, Huntley-Brinkley, Reynolds-Smith, and 60 Minutes) were included in the checklist of all programs appearing after 5 P.M. This question was repeated for the "day before yesterday," and the total amount of viewing was summed using the most-some-none scale for each program. The National Ss did not watch significantly more newscasts than the others.

(d) "Can you remember the topics of some of the newspaper stories you read yesterday?" The relevant stories dealing with national social problems were totaled. National Ss mentioned more nationally relevant topics than the other Ss (p<.05).

II. Exposure to news about local social problems--

(a) "Most radio stations have news broadcasts once an hour. About how many of these newscasts did you listen to closely yesterday?" The number of radio news shows was reported. Local Ss listened to substantially more primarily local newscasts than combined control Ss (p<.10).

(b) "How much of these sections of the newspaper did you read yesterday?" The area news page was one of eight sections listed, and Ss indicated whether they had read most, some, or none of it. The Local Ss read significantly more of this newspaper section than the Overall control group (p<.05).
(c) "Which TV shows did you watch yesterday, and how much did you watch?" The local news broadcasts (Six O'Clock and Ten O'Clock Local News) were summed over the two days measured, according to the most-some-none scale. Local Ss watched only slightly more local news coverage than the others.

(d) "Can you remember the topic of some of the stories you read yesterday?" The relevant stories dealing with local social problems were totaled. Local Ss mentioned significantly more locally relevant topics than the others (p<.05).

III. Exposure to news about either national or local social problems--

(a) "Did you read a newspaper yesterday? (If yes) Which newspaper(s)?" The number of newspapers read was reported. There were no differences between the three conditions on the mean number of newspapers.

(b) "How much of these sections of the newspaper did you read yesterday?" The front page was one of eight sections listed, and Ss indicated whether they had read most, some, or none of it. The combined National and Local group read more than the School control group (p<.10).

IV. Participation in interpersonal conversations about social problems--

In the context of questioning the students on their interpersonal communication about television violence, they were also asked to indicate how often they talked with friends about news stories on TV or in newspapers. This was followed by an item intended to gauge the amount of information seeking from interpersonal sources:

"Can you remember any particular news stories you have talked about lately? What are they? Who did you talk to?" The relevant stories dealing with national or local social problems were totaled. The National Ss reported that they talked about national topics more often than the Overall control group (p<.10), and the Local group said they conversed about local social problems significantly more frequently than the others (p<.05).

It is unclear, however, whether this finding indicates interpersonal information seeking in preparation for the informal discussion situation, or a heightened level of interpersonal expression on those topics about which they were currently informed.
V. Overall information seeking activity—

The basic pattern of mass media use that emerges from these data is one of strong receptivity to useful content but very little active information search. Apparently the students expended the small amount of extra effort needed to choose relevant material in the course of their regular mass media use (i.e., selecting out specific news stories within the newspaper, but not trying to read additional newspapers; or listening to radio newscasts while tuned to the entertainment programming, but not bothering to turn on the TV news shows). On the other hand, active seeking of various media sources did not occur to a significant degree in this study. These two sets of findings appear distinctly for both experimental groups with regard to mass media exposure; the level of information seeking activity is difficult to determine in the case of interpersonal communication, however.

Discussion:

A wide range of evidence from correlational investigations has consistently shown a positive association between the amount of interpersonal discussion and exposure to relevant mass media materials. This relationship was illustrated in the case of news information seeking with supportive findings from a secondary analysis of survey data. An experimental test of information seeking on current events topics supported the hypothesized model that the anticipated communicatory situation directly affects selection of mass media content. Taken as a whole, the findings indicate that the expectation of conversational interaction at least partially accounts for the empirical relationship.

The main purpose of this preliminary study is to demonstrate the potential significance of the communicatory utility factor in understanding mass media information seeking. While there are typically a number of interacting
variables influencing media selection patterns, this factor is seldom accorded prime consideration. Evidence presented here indicates that communicatory utility may indeed combine with other determinants to affect exposure choice, and may also account for otherwise puzzling information selection patterns [see Festinger's discussion of utility as a confounding variable, in Festinger, 1964].

Important questions about the strength and range of this effect still need to be answered. The null findings on the active seeking measures may have been due to either weaknesses in the manipulation operationalization or a characteristic limitation in the potency of the communicatory utility process. It may be that the communicatory rewards are so slight that they offset only a minor amount of extra effort expended on information seeking activity. The range of information topics affected by this factor is not yet known, with the present findings limited to information seeking on major news stories. Data relating to this point are provided by an ongoing investigation of teenagers' viewing of TV entertainment programming. One item in a questionnaire completed by 225 sixth and ninth graders in Middleton, Wisconsin, asked if the students watch some shows that they don't really like because their friends want to talk about them the next day. A total of 22% agreed that this statement described them. On another question asking if TV programs provide interesting things to talk about with friends, 33% of the students said "often," 64% replied "sometimes," and only 3% indicated "never."

The level of manifest motivation involved in information seeking due to communicatory utility is difficult to assess; apparently conscious movement toward media material for direct re-communication purposes is a relatively infrequent behavior. For instance, Table 7 shows that reading newspapers "to give me something to talk about with others" was only a moderately important
reason for general newspaper exposure. The most pervasive effect of this factor might actually operate in a more indirect and diffuse fashion, as users routinely seek information for short-term storage without a target conversation clearly in mind. Media content exposure may serve a primarily latent function in this model, with purposeful seeking playing a minor supplementary role.

Among the pre-eminent reasons for newspaper reading in Table 7, "for information," "to help me keep up," and "for interpretation of important events" are each related to communicatory utility in an indirect manner. Information selection for these manifest reasons may be substantially determined by communicatory utility considerations.

The importance of this factor may be contingent on individual differences. Probably many people use the mass media for purely internal satisfactions, while more socially oriented individuals use information for communicatory purposes. Thus, communicatory utility may be a significant determinant of content selection patterns for certain types of media users, and have no effect on others. Future research should attempt to explore the nature of the social contingency.

Subsequent studies should also concentrate on the various coorientational variables affecting the particular pattern of information seeking, rather than sheer amount of exposure. Mass media materials may have varying kinds of communicatory utility, depending on the communication situation anticipated by the individual (See Appendix A). Particular attention must be given to the supportiveness and complexity of information sought under various circumstances.
Footnotes

1. For a brief survey of the primary approaches to studying the motivational basis for information seeking, see Parker and Paisley (1966). Waples, Berelson, and Bradshaw (1940) and Berelson (1949) also dealt with various reasons why people use the printed media.

2. This definition follows from the work of Paisley and Parker (1966), who defined information broadly in the information theory sense. Thus they considered any act of attending the mass media or interrogating other people or observing the environment as information seeking.

3. Two comments from respondents illuminate the utility factor: "You have to read in order to keep up a conversation with other people. It is embarrassing not to know if you are in company who discuss the news," and "Not that I am uneasy about what's happening but I like to know about the country so when people ask you questions you don't feel dumb and silly." From Berelson (1949).

4. After examining some of the data relating to the two-step flow hypothesis, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) concluded: "There is need to inquire not only into the media exposure patterns of opinion leaders and the extent to which their own opinions and decisions are shaped by the media, but also into the different kinds of 'uses' to which the media are put by leaders in each realm, as compared to non-leaders."

5. The Chaffee and McLeod findings were limited in several ways, as some of the relationships between information requests and social utility were studied on an ad hoc basis after the research had been planned and the data collected. The authors noted that their investigation was restricted by the small number of predictor variables and the inadequate sampling of operational definitions of individual predictors, social predictors, and information seeking. The data allowed only a superficial examination of the complexity and supportiveness of information sought by respondents. In addition, this study focused on political communication exclusively, as the study was executed as part of a pre-election survey. Nevertheless, the approach employed and the results obtained are instructive for subsequent research efforts, and provide strong evidence supporting the communicatory utility notion.

6. This definition of decisional uncertainty is similar to Carter's (1965) evaluative mode and Festinger's (1957) pre-decisional conflict, in that cognitive conflict arises when a person is unable to discriminate between alternative objects. When an individual's degree of uncertainty is discrepant from his criterion uncertainty level, he may be motivated to seek information (this is a departure from Carter and Festinger, who posit an absolute discrepancy that is basically qualitative). Seeking is unbiased in this decisional mode, since any type of information may contribute to a reduction of uncertainty about objects under consideration. The degree of conflict (a function of the relative discrepancy and the importance of the decision) is hypothesized to increase the size and scope of the information search, and affect the selection of specific content material that contributes most to uncertainty reduction.
Tasks may range along a continuum from necessary obligations (such as taking an exam) to more voluntary projects (such as taking a trip). This broad concept includes certain types of formal encoding activities such as debates or speeches (see Clarke and James, 1967). The individual seeks information to bridge the gap between his present level of certainty to a criterion level of knowledge or understanding about the task. The amount of the discrepancy and the importance of the task will combine to determine the extent of the information search, and the perceived task utility of a particular message will affect its actual selection.

Since "specific" communicatory utility of mass media content is emphasized in the experiment, this particular type of utility will be briefly examined. In the case of specific communicatory utility, the individual seeks information for the manifest purpose of informing, entertaining, or discussing with a target person. Because he has a certain receiver in mind at the moment of information seeking, the likelihood of interaction is at a high level. The actual content selected depends on such coorientational factors as relative interest, estimated information level, and value congruence, along with the individual's own orientations toward the topic (see Appendix A). Another important variable is the expected mode of interaction: most commonly, the individual anticipates either information giving (relaying new mass media content) or opinion sharing (discussing a topic both parties are familiar with).

This type of communicatory utility can apply to either a specific topic or a specific message in the mass media. The latter case provides the most direct link between information seeking and subsequent discussional usefulness. Applied to the information giving mode, an individual may listen carefully to a newscast describing a late-breaking event in order to relay it to others, or he may retell a joke he had heard on television while watching a particular show that provides humorous material. In the content sharing mode (termed opinion sharing by Troldahl and Van Dam, 1966), a specific message such as an editorial or news story previously read by both the individual and the target person becomes a topic of discussion; the individual seeks this message anticipating the discussion.

The researchers selected dwelling units from the city directory and randomly chose the respondent from within the household. They oversampled the central urban-renewal district of Madison in an attempt to obtain a more representative socio-economic composition. The interview completion rate was 83%, and the sample obtained did not differ substantially from the city census statistics.

Absences at either session led to the loss of nine subjects. There were three lost from the School Problems condition, two from the Local Problems condition, and four from the National Problems condition.
References


Troldahl, Verling (1966), "Mass Media Exposure Patterns and Interpersonal Communication Behavior of Teenagers," Paper presented to the Theory and Methodology Division of the Association for Education in Journalism convention, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.


Appendix A

**Important Variables Affecting Information Seeking Behavior of Individual A**

1. A's orientational variables toward a specific topic or topic area
   (a) his level of interest
   (b) his general knowledge level
   (c) his attitude
   (d) his level of current information regarding a potentially communicable aspect of topic

2. A's estimate of B's orientations toward the topic or topic area

3. The relationship between A's orientations and his perception of B's orientations
   (a) relative interest
   (b) relative knowledge
   (c) value congruency
   (d) current information discrepancy between A's new information level and his estimate of B's level

4. A's anticipated mode of communication with B, including role and objectives
   (a) persuasion: an attempt to influence B through the creation, reinforcement, or change of B's opinions
   (b) opinion sharing: reciprocal opinion giving and asking
   (c) information giving: relay of new material to B
   (d) passive listening: minimal comprehension of conversation on a topic with low interest or knowledge
   (e) non-participation: no expectation of active or passive communication on the topic

5. A's estimate of the amount and importance of the interaction with B
   (a) amount: length and frequency of discussion on topic
   (b) importance: significance of the discussion
Appendix B

Questionnaire Items for Secondary Analysis of McLeod, Ward and Tancill (1965)

**Media Use Questions:**

1. What newspapers do you read every day or almost every day?

2. Would you say you spend less than 1 hour, 1 to 2 hours, 2 to 3 hours, 3 to 4 hours, or over 4 hours a day reading the newspapers?

3. How much do you watch television during an average day or evening; would you say under 1 hour, 1 to 2 hours, 2 to 3 hours, 3 to 4 hours, or over 4 hours?

4. Would you say that you listen to radio less than 1 hour, 1 to 2 hours, 2 to 3 hours, 3 to 4 hours, or over 4 hours each day?

5. Would you say that you spend less than 1 hour, 1 to 2 hours, 2 to 3 hours, or more than 4 hours each week reading magazines?

**Interpersonal Discussion Questions:** (Direct and indirect)

1. Do you frequently (several times each week) discuss the news of the day with someone?

2. With whom of the following do you regularly discuss the news and how often; that is, Often, Occasionally, or Never? Family, Friends, Co-workers; Chance acquaintances, and Others.

3. Do friends, acquaintances, or co-workers ask for your opinions on matters in the news?

4. Do you belong to any lodges, fraternal organizations, church groups, business or social clubs that hold regular meetings in Madison? If so, what are they?

5. Have you held an office or been a committee chairman in any of these groups in the past five years?

6. How many friends do you get together with at least once a month?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussing the News:</th>
<th>Low TV, Low Print</th>
<th>High TV, Low Print</th>
<th>Low TV, High Print</th>
<th>High TV, High Print</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sixth Grade:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=43)</td>
<td>(N=148)</td>
<td>(N=118)</td>
<td>(N=302)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tenth Grade:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=135)</td>
<td>(N=137)</td>
<td>(N=159)</td>
<td>(N=166)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Chi square = 14.2, p<.01 for 6th grade
Chi square = 18.7, p<.001 for 10th grade
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media use:</th>
<th>Great Interest in Campaign</th>
<th>Less Interest in Campaign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opinion Leaders</td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Newspaper items</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Radio items</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Magazine items</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


(Notice that the less interested opinion leaders had greater exposure than highly interested others).

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Activity:</th>
<th>Media Usage Gamma</th>
<th>Media Usage Partial Gamma (Education, Income Controlled)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time of Voting Choice</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>-.014 (N=1089)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern for Election Outcome</td>
<td>.213</td>
<td>.169 (N=1427)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting in Previous Elections</td>
<td>.286</td>
<td>.137 (N=1443)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Political Efficacy</td>
<td>.311</td>
<td>.114 (N=1448)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting in 1964 Election</td>
<td>.418</td>
<td>.310 (N=1449)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Campaign</td>
<td>.438</td>
<td>.346 (N=1443)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters to Public Officials</td>
<td>.458</td>
<td>.301 (N=1447)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Persuasion Acts</td>
<td>.461</td>
<td>.348 (N=1447)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4

**Mean Percent Requesting Campaign Pamphlets, by Comparative Interest and Discussion Frequency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low Discussion</th>
<th></th>
<th>High Discussion</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interest more or less than friends</td>
<td>Interest same as friends</td>
<td>Interest more or less than friends</td>
<td>Interest same as friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Own candidate pamphlet</strong></td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opposition pamphlet</strong></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multi-candidate pamphlet</strong></td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>More than one pamphlet</strong></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N: gubernatorial</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N: congressional</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mean Percent Requesting Pamphlets, by Expectation of Future Discussion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low Likelihood of Discussion</th>
<th>High Likelihood of Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Own candidate pamphlet</strong></td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opposition pamphlet</strong></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multi-candidate pamphlet</strong></td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>More than one pamphlet</strong></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N: gubernatorial</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N: congressional</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Chaffee and McLeod (1967)*
Table 5

Relationship between News Discussion and News Information Seeking
(Secondary analysis of data from McLeod, Ward and Tancill, 1965)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media exposure:</th>
<th>Number groups discuss news with &quot;often&quot;:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number newspapers read daily</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total time reading newspapers</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total time reading magazines</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total time watching television</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total time listening to radio</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media exposure:</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=45</td>
<td>N=89</td>
<td>N=24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number newspapers read daily</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.54*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total time reading newspapers</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total time reading magazines</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>3.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total time watching television</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total time listening to radio</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05, F test
Table 6a

Mean Amount of News Information Seeking on National and Local Social Problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anticipated Discussion Topic</th>
<th>National Problems (N=23)</th>
<th>School Problems (N=24)</th>
<th>Local Problems (N=22)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recent Media Exposure on National Problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsmagazines Read (mean number)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Television Newscasts (none=0, some=1, most=2)</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial Page Reading (none=0, some=1, most=2)</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant News Stories Read (mean number) (exp), (control)</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent Media Exposure on Local Problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Newscasts Attended (mean number)</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Television Newscasts (none=0, some=1, most=2)</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area News Page Reading (none=0, some=1, most=2)</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant News Stories Read (mean number) (control) (exp)</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For exposure to news about national social problems, "t" tests were performed on the means of the National group and the Combined control condition containing the Local and School Ss. A Combined control group of National and School Ss was constructed for local news.
Table 6b

Mean Amount of Information Seeking from Mass Media and Interpersonal Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anticipated Discussion Topic</th>
<th>National Problems (N=23)</th>
<th>Local Problems (N=22)</th>
<th>School Problems (N=24)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recent Media Exposure on National or Local Social Problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers Read (mean number)</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.08 n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Page News Reading (none=0, some=1, most=2)</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.21 p&lt;.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Interpersonal conversations about Social Problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant Local News Stories Talked About Recently (mean number)</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.37 p&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant National News Stories Talked About Recently (mean number)</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.67 p&lt;.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note- For exposure to news about either national or local social problems, "t" tests were performed on the means of the combined experimental group and the School control group. For interpersonal conversation, the control groups on each measure contained all Ss who were not anticipating discussion on that topic area.
Table 7

Relative Importance of Nine Reasons for Newspaper Reading

(Secondary analysis of data from McLeod, Ward and Tancill, 1965)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Generally</th>
<th>A Little</th>
<th>Not at All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For information</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help me keep up with things</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For interpretation of important events</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the pleasure of reading</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To give me something to talk about with others</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To feel as though I am taking part in others' lives without actually being there</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help me get away from daily worries</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As an aid in solving problems</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To bring some excitement into my life</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=167)
### Table 8

**Correlates of Exposure to Political Campaign News in the Mass Media**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation coefficient between level of exposure and</th>
<th>Level of exposure to different media</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of Discussing the Election Campaign</td>
<td>Newspaper and Magazine Campaign Coverage</td>
<td>+.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TV Political Convention Coverage</td>
<td>+.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of Family Political Discussions</td>
<td>TV News and Public Affairs Programming</td>
<td>+.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted Political Persuasion</td>
<td></td>
<td>+.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Political Discussion (sum of three items above)</td>
<td></td>
<td>+.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Interest in Election Campaign</td>
<td></td>
<td>+.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Education of Respondent</td>
<td></td>
<td>+.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Income of Respondent Family</td>
<td></td>
<td>+.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Partial correlation coefficient between level of exposure and Index of Political Discussion (controlling interest, income, and education)  

|                                      |                                      | +.28 | +.15 | +.15 |

**Interview items:**

**Newspaper and Magazine Campaign Coverage** -- "How often have you read newspaper articles about this election—very often, pretty often, sometimes, not too often, or never? Never = 1, through Very often = 5"  
"Do you recall reading anything about the campaigns in any magazines? How many magazine articles about the election campaigns would you say you have read—a good many, several, or just one or two?" Read nothing = 1, through 'A good many = 4. These two items were summed to form an index.
Table 8 (continued)

TV Political Convention Coverage -- "Did you happen to watch any of the Republican convention on television a few weeks ago? Did you watch most of it, some of it, or only a little of it?" Did not watch = 0, through Most of it = 3. Same item repeated for Democratic convention.

TV News and Public Affairs Programming -- "About how often do you watch the following kinds of television shows? Do you watch them very often, pretty often, sometimes, not too often, or never?" National News Broadcasts. News Specials. Interview Shows like 'Meet the Press'. Never = 0, through Very often = 4

Frequency of Discussing the Election Campaign -- "About how often have you discussed the election campaign with your family or friends? Would you say very often, pretty often, sometimes, not too often, or never?" Never = 1, through Very often = 5

Frequency of Family Political Discussions -- "How I would like to read a list of things parents sometimes do with their children. For each, do you do it very often, pretty often, sometimes, rarely, or never: How often do you have family talks about topics like politics or religion where some persons take different sides from others?" Never, Rarely = 1, Sometimes = 2, and Pretty often, Very often = 3

Attempted Political Persuasion -- "During the election campaign this year have you done any of the following things to help a candidate: Try to talk someone into voting your way?" No = 0, Yes = 2

Level of Interest in Election Campaign -- "Generally speaking, how interested would you say you, yourself, are in the current election campaigns? Would you say very interested, pretty interested, not too interested, or not at all interested?" Not at all = 1, through Very interested = 4

Amount of Education of Respondent -- "What was the highest grade of school or year of college you completed?" Less than eight grade = 0, through Some graduate school = 8

Amount of Income of Respondent Family -- "What do you estimate your total family income will be this year considering all sources such as rents, profits, wages, interest, and so on? Under $2,000 = 1, through $20,000 or more = 8"