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Jean E. Macksam

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A STUDY OF HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM SURVEYED IN  
WORKS OF AUTHORS IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES  
AND A PLAN FOR OPERATING A NEWSPAPER AND  
JOURNALISM COURSE IN THE PUBLIC HIGH  
SCHOOL AT FLANDREAU, SOUTH DAKOTA

BY

JEAN E. MACKSAM

A research report submitted  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree Master of Education with a major in  
Communication, South Dakota State  
College of Agriculture and  
Mechanic Arts

June, 1963

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## INTRODUCTION

The first known class in high school journalism was started in Salina, Kansas, in 1912.(4:384) Edwin Emery, Phillip H. Ault, and Warren K. Agee gave some estimates indicating that in 1960 about 40,000 senior and junior high school publications, newspapers, magazines, and year-books were being issued regularly with nearly a million students working on them. Collectively, they might reach a cost of around 35 million dollars a year.(4:384)

This study was undertaken to examine some suggestions covering journalism courses on the secondary level. Through a literature search, it was intended to investigate various depths to which the study of journalism could be conducted in high school as an extra-class activity carrying one-fourth credit per year.

Fay Day stated in Chapter 5, entitled "Content Analysis in Mass Communication"(13):

In determining the effect of communications in any medium upon the group which it reaches, one of the primary steps is an evaluation of those communications, or of the contents of the medium...  
(13:86)

Hill followed Day's theory of evaluation in his research by conducting a number of surveys with the Trentland Arrow staff. These surveys were completed at the beginning of his study.(7:5,10 and Tables I,II,III,IV)

There appeared to be some kindred associations in Hill's(7) study with problems that might be encountered in the departmentalized high school newspaper. The similarity that might have a tendency to change the policies of a high school newspaper printed in the local weekly is circulation coverage. Hill's paper and a departmentalized product would be circulated to a large number of readers when compared to the number of papers circulated among the members of a high school student body.

The letter received by Hill from Joseph M. Murphy, Director of Columbia Scholastic Press Association, Columbia University, New York, dated September 23, 1959, contained a paragraph which seemed apropos to this situation. Murphy stated:

The major function of any school newspaper is the educational value to the participating students. When they write for the school paper, they are judged as students by students who are their readers. It would seem to me that if the community's interest comes first, these boys and girls will have to meet a higher standard in their writing and in their conversations.

According to these lines of Murphy's, the larger the circulation of a publication, the greater is its chance to influence. This is what the press strives for; this type of publication may come closer to forcing more mature attitudes upon high school staff members.

## OBJECTIVES

Objectives for a secondary school newspaper are stated by Hill in A Study to Determine the Feasibility of Combining Scholastic Journalism and Community Journalism Through a School-produced News Weekly.(7) The results of his surveys offer a number of clues to the direction objectives might take. Replies which he received regarding what a community expected of a newspaper revealed what potential readers wanted to know; and the area, Trent, might be considered typical of farm communities in eastern South Dakota.

He received 100 per cent of the replies stating that local items, personals, school activities, weddings, funerals, recreation, entertainment, and a calendar of events were of prime interest to the people surveyed. This seems to indicate the immediacy of the information most desired, both in area covered, and people with whom each is concerned. Local organizations included IOOF, Rebecahs, and Theta Rho, and 84 per cent indicated interest.

The next item on the list was county news and a sharp drop in answers brought the percentage to 44. State news was of interest to 38.8 per cent, while national and international news received replies amounting to a 34.4 percentage.

This survey gave Hill the framework he needed, and it might assist in keeping a school newspaper within the bounds of community interest. These same families surveyed, regarding what they would like to read in a community newspaper, also replied to a similar survey concerning the type of school news they preferred.

News explaining school program, sports, special events, meetings, and programs, received replies amounting to 100 per cent interest. The entire "Type of School News" survey resulted in consistently high interest, the last item being Student Council, and 186 (74.4 per cent of 250 replies) answered that this would interest them.

Two items in the "Editorials" survey indicated reader interest percentage of 88.4 and 81.6. One concerned interpretation of recent news, and the other was to offer background information to help them understand a news event. Seven other editorial suggestions met with less interest, ranging from 49.6 to 0.0 percentage. Features on community, and informative feature articles backgrounding area activities were acceptable, with 93.6, 90.4 and 73.6 percentages respectively. Fiction, humor, poetry, book reviews, and art work received scant replies. The last question concerned elimination of features in favor of more news coverage. No one checked this item.

Hill reminded his staff of their responsibilities to the community, which are, in the case of that particular type of publication, closely tied to what the adult readers want. He admonished his members that their paper would be subject to additional criticism commensurate with the coverage of community news as well as news of the high school.

In addition to all of the above information gathering, Hill conducted a study of weekly newspapers in South Dakota and Minnesota. Editorial content, page makeup, advertising and general effect of these gave the staff some understanding of the role of the newspaper in a community as a public service instrument. His findings appear to follow closely the results of his own surveys.

Community news took precedence over news from other immediate areas. Local items and items of personal interest were given the most space in comparison to other types of news. Most of the newspapers studied carried 60 per cent editorial matter and 40 per cent advertising. Capital and lower case headlines took precedence in ten out of twelve papers. Sports coverage was placed throughout the

papers with the exception of two having separate sports pages. Local news took precedence over state and national news in front page display. Each paper carried public service announcements and a calendar of events.

The foregoing findings by Hill are of value to this study because the similarity of the area which he studied and the area served by Flandreau High School is apparent, both being in the same county. In Hill's project, he indicated that money and time were spent which would not be available to the author for a basic course in secondary school journalism.

Staff members were required to submit editorial policies for the Trentland Arrow. Some that might be useful in a school situation are:

To present community and school news accurately, impartially, and objectively.

To provide practical experience-type newspaper situations for the high school journalist.

To interpret the school program to the community public.

McKown(10:344-345) stated that the best school newspapers are those produced by classes in journalism. In this setting he does not think the newspaper can be classified as an extracurricular activity. He believes of the four types of school publications, newspaper, magazine, handbook and yearbook, the school newspaper is probably the most important.

The main function of the high school newspaper is to carry news, and since this means records of recent and coming events, the paper must be issued every week or every two weeks. (10:345)

Some of the objectives which seem to be of paramount importance in authors' works read are given below:

1. To publish the news. (10:337)
2. To interpret and comment on the news. (4:385)
3. To give publicity (recognition) to worthy school enterprises and activities. (10:337)
4. To interpret the school program to the community public. (7:19)
5. To promote stability in the ideals and traditions of the school society in the face of its ever-changing population, both student and faculty. (10:337)
6. To point up the importance and desirability of self-advertising or school publicity through continued support of the community which the school serves. (10:338)
7. To allow the staff the advantages of self-expression and opportunities to use creative ability. (10:340)
8. To develop the best qualities for social inter-action as the staff members cooperate with one another, use tact, realize the value of accuracy, gain tolerance for another's ways, and increase a sense of responsibility, initiative and leadership. (10:340)
9. To promote good will among schools. A clearly written unbiased report of a sports story can increase reader respect for an entire student body. (10:341)

The high school newspaper is generally planned to best serve the conditions prevailing in the school and in the community. (10:338) There is the limit of plant, school population, or financial aid; possibly all three items are inadequate, but the need for a journalistic effort is evident. Many administrators and advisers work under similar handicaps, but the effort is productive in the fields of writing, learning to take responsibility, and demonstrating reliability. When active journalism students leave their high schools for adult pursuits, in the field of higher education, or in job training programs, they are experienced in these important traits, and may be acknowledged as potential leaders early in their experience.

The above considerations were gleaned from the objectives outlined for the Baltimore, Maryland, secondary school course in journalism, which exemplify those in other areas of the country. (4:385) They are:

1. To teach the functions of a school newspaper.
2. To foster an understanding of the role of the newspaper in a democracy.
3. To encourage the development of qualities essential to a competent school journalist.
4. To develop a working knowledge of newspaper ethics.

5. To promote the critical selection and reading of newspapers and periodicals.
6. To develop skill in accurate, clear, and forceful journalistic writing.
7. To provide experiences in the technical processes in producing a school newspaper.
8. To give practice in the use of the correct mechanics of English.

The adviser might conceivably avoid some of the dangerous outgrowths of a departmental high school paper if he were to stress that the staff would write, not only for their fellow classmates, but for every subscriber to the local weekly. (7:16) This may have a tendency to strengthen the stories submitted, or result in greater depth reporting.

## FUNDAMENTALS

Decisions must be made regarding the type of publication, physical plant available for conducting the class, and getting the material written. Financing, periodicity, and how much of the preparation will be the responsibility of the staff might be included. A core staff may be desirable; sometimes the question of whether the members advance on the basis of seniority, or by merit alone, must be settled.

Several methods of selecting staff have been employed. (10:378-379) Popular election has the disadvantage of placing possibly the most popular students in the positions; but they are not necessarily the ones with the ability to do newspaper work.

Selected staff positions have been designated as "belonging" to certain classes, the most important positions assigned to the seniors. This might preclude an unusually gifted freshman or sophomore from serving in one of the high offices for which he may be well-suited.

Some schools have a Board of Publications, which is usually composed of business managers, advisers of student publications, teachers of journalism, and other interested and competent persons. Any student in the

school may announce his desire to be a candidate by making proper application to this board. The Board of Publications selects the ones they believe to be best fitted for the positions.

There is also a system where applicants "try out" for the various positions. A complete staff will band together and publish one issue of the paper. There are serious problems connected with this system. No one staff would include all of the best newspaper workers in the school, and while these "trial" papers are being published, it gives the impression that the newspaper lacks a definite policy.

McKown recommends a permanent Board of Publications to lend stability to the publications program, and its experience may help to prevent serious errors. (10:379)

Types of high school newspapers vary greatly. More than financial consideration will help decide the matter. A mimeographed work requires a corps of typists who can afford to give up study periods or after-school time to put out a readable sheet or magazine. They would probably not be members of the journalism staff, since the staff members write much of the time, and help with headline work, as well as write their news stories in addition to their assignments. Freshmen and sophomores may not type

in some schools, and juniors may be learning for the first semester. Some small schools have difficulty staffing a paper.

The monthly newspaper which is sometimes composed of one double sheet, which makes a four-page newspaper, requires that staff members spend time obtaining ads to help finance the project. There must be a strong business manager and helpers to keep records in detail for this type of operation. The Orange and Black of Sioux Falls Washington High is an example of this type of independent paper.

The departmental paper is another type of high school paper. It is published in the local weekly. Staff members are sometimes required to obtain advertising from local businessmen to help pay expenses. These ads may appear on the same page with the paper. Parkston, South Dakota, P.H.S. Highlights uses this method.

The departmental paper may be published without solicitation of advertising. The school board authorizes payment of the amount agreed upon between the local publisher and the board.

Since publication of the school newspaper may increase subscriptions, the cost of having the paper printed in the local weekly or semi-weekly is not usually prohibitive.

Where the publishing plant is small, it is not always feasible for members of the staff to go to the printing office to make up the paper. Community circumstances surrounding each high school weigh heavily in planning every detail of a scholastic journal. Community thinking and attitudes will be reflected in the high school paper, particularly in the case of the departmentalized issue, since it will be available to the entire subscription list of the paper.

The use of cleverness in naming high school publications, or coined names, has long ago passed out of style. The reader may lose interest before the first headline catches his eye. (18:9)

Some of Smith's suggestions in name searching are given here: (18:9)

1. The name should be appropriate to the paper, school, and community.
2. Current terminology will become obsolete in a short time. Omit "jive" for example.
3. It should be easy to pronounce and remember.
4. It should not be easily twisted into comic expression or become the subject of puns.
5. It should look well in type.
6. The name should not be a registered trademark.

Essentials agreed upon by most authors read in composing the name plate for page one, or what might be the only page of the newspaper are: name, volume number, issue number, city and state where published, and date.

Hill(7:20-21) suggested that a slogan could be used for a name plate, but this was not mentioned by another author. Where the paper is small, five columns by fifteen inches, for example, it might be best to conserve all available space for news, omitting a slogan.

The laboratory location will be decided by whatever space and equipment are allotted the journalism staff by administrators. Essentials might include tables sufficiently large for spreading out the work, examining exchange papers, drawing and note-taking, as well as writing. One bulletin board, a file cabinet, one cupboard for reference works, some typewriters on stands, (or the laboratory situated next door to the typewriting room) are other essential equipment. In some floor plans it has been noted that no blackboard was included in the room.(7:29) Staff members at Flandreau High School have found a blackboard to be a useful tool. They work out headlines on the board.

Page makeup and the distribution of stories, editorials and features should be worked out by key staff members. (7:31) Hill suggested advisers assist with page makeup, and believes that once these sections of the paper are placed, they should be consistently followed. English and Hach (5:228) describe balanced, brace or focus, broken-column, contrast and balance, circus, and streamlined makeup, showing examples of each. Several texts for high school journalism courses include these terms for makeup. (14:166) (1:302) (16:320)

Variations are recommended in page makeup, particularly where the paper is one small (five columns by fifteen inches) page in the local weekly. (1:302) (14:166) (19:340)

objectively as is humanly possible (that word "objectively" means).

Interpretation of news may vary according to the point of view, bringing up the difference between objective reporting and opinion. (4:152(2))

Another policy which is toward the student of a high school for a professional paper, but which is more of an interest among students, is that of the "open" policy. Hill (7) made no mention of this last idea, and since the role the Irishland (7) is played in the

## POLICIES AND FORMAT

Policies

Policies of a newspaper may be considered in the light of promises that a business makes to its customers. They form a sort of guarantee to readers that the goal of the newspaper will be, first, to inform readers objectively about what is happening in whatever kind of area is being covered. It may be a city, an agricultural community (often covering an entire county), or--it may be a school plant.

School newspaper staffs choose policies which are realistic enough to be attainable, and because the pattern has been set by "The Press" in the world, they believe sincerely that they will strive to write accurately and as objectively as is humanly possible (when they learn what that word "objective" means).

Interpretation of news may assist a student in pointing up the difference between objective writing and his opinion.(4:162(2))

Another policy which is toward the bottom of a list for a professional paper, but which is bound to stir more interest among students, is that of entertaining the reader. Hill(7) made no mention of this last idea, and since the role the Trentland Arrow(7) is playing is almost

professional, this would not further his purpose. Entertainment does have a place in a school newspaper on occasion. Among five functions of newspapers, English and Hach(5:309(III)) placed entertainment third. Policies are derived from the functions that newspapers perform in specific geographic areas.

Hill's policy(7:19(6)): "To interpret the school program to the community public," would appear to be a too-ambitious promise from the staff of a small high school paper. To replace this worthy desire, it might be possible to include a policy to strive to keep the community public, as well as the school plant members, informed on interesting scholastic endeavors, the staff to be the judge. Here might be an opportunity for a staff to invite one or more administrators to send in editorials once each school year. Interpreting the school program is their business, since their work each day is composed of acts of interpretation.

#### Format

The first requirement for any newspaper seems to be that it must "look" like one. How does a newspaper "look"? Perhaps it looks back at the reader as pleasingly to the eye as it possibly can, after high school staff members have put forth their best efforts to make it appear attractive.

To do this, a name plate should be planned--one that will not jar the visual sense, but simply attend to the first law of the press--inform.(8:3) Hill (7:20(1)) and his staff composed a flexible name plate that would easily lend itself to being moved about on the first page, from side to side, and from top to some measured distance from the top, allowing for a skyline or overhanging story.

In the case of a mimeographed newspaper, the staff should select the kind of paper to be used, the number of columns, and the number of spaces wide the columns will be. A departmentalized paper might be measured out by what the staff and adviser believe they could handle; but since space is the commodity sold by the publisher, he will perhaps decide how much he can spare for the school paper.

Staff members may decide to strive for absolute uniformity of page, using the balanced plan entirely. Or they may wish to permit leeway in order to lend variety to the appearance, intending to change from balanced to brace to streamlined every three weeks, for instance.

The masthead is considered important enough to be included in the smallest paper. It generally carries the name of the paper, the seal of a high school journalism organization to which the school belongs, and the names

of the editors and adviser. In the past it was placed at the top of the page, but has recently been relegated to the bottom to make way for the material for which the paper is being circulated--news.

A newspaper invites the reader's attention through persuasion of design and symmetry first, and second by lively headlines. From that area on, its success is with the reporter whose use of the language (whatever one it may be) is clear, concise, and meaningful.

## CENSORSHIP

The subject of censorship received little attention in the material used for this report. This could be a matter that is the sole concern of the individual school administration, and therefore suggestions would not serve any definite purpose.

Post and Snodgrass(14:206) recommend a school publication board be appointed by the adviser to act in an advisory capacity with regard to whether certain stories or articles might not serve the best interests of school and community if published. This board could have three staff members and one faculty member, with the adviser as the only permanent member.

Adams and Stratton in Press Time(1:13-15) seem to be trying to steer a middle-of-the-road course concerning censorship. The best way to indicate their thinking without taking too much out of context and possibly distorting their meaning is to quote as much as will explain their views. The following paragraphs are directly quoted from pages 14 and 15 of the above reference:

...The people of the community consider that school papers represent the school administration's policies as well as students' interests.

School newspaper staffs recognize, therefore, that they must support certain ideals: the goals of American education, the professional standing

of teachers, the responsibility of the student toward his school, the dignity of education. Just how directly the paper must promote community recognition of these principles will be determined by the relationship that develops between school administration and newspaper staff.

One authority proposes the following list of items which should not be printed in high school newspapers. Study the list. Which does your school paper withhold from publication as a matter of good editorial policy? Which are published? Are other items not listed here restricted from publication in your paper? What are they?

Student accidents on the school grounds.

Causes of teacher dismissals.

Student expulsions or disciplinary actions against serious offenders.

Details of school vandalism.

Critical sports stories.

Critical reviews of plays, operettas, or concerts.

Discussion of the performance or policies of administration, faculty, or school board.

Discussion of the office clerk's work, or that of the custodian, or the operation of school facilities such as the cafeteria.

Actual voting figures in student elections.

Details of proceedings and arguments in student council and other school organizations.

Names of students tried before student courts and judgments of the courts.

Detailed accounting of student funds.

Adams and Stratton recommend that the students discuss these items listed above in class. (1:13-15)

McKown, in his book Extracurricular Activities (10:336-343) offers some strong opinions regarding the values and functions of school publications. McKown is the editor of the magazine School Activities, and through continuous association with school publications should have for his "proof" knowledge gained from the material that has crossed his desk daily for many years.

He states that a school newspaper may serve as a medium for the expression of student opinion. This is debatable in many schools, as McKown states, and as journalism advisers may acknowledge. Once in a while a school may accept a suggestion for physical betterment. Last year, one student wrote an article concerning the need for some concrete steps leading down to a roadway at Flandreau High; it was made a project in the shop course and completed during the spring. This year a large trash receptacle was constructed, painted and placed on the students' parking lot at the published suggestion of one journalism student.

"They advertise the school," ("they" meaning school newspapers), is one of the value headings, and McKown(10:341) permits no glossing over, but explains that what this amounts to is the student body and proud

parents doing their own advertising with the newspaper acting as the catalyst.

McKown(10:340-341) disagrees with those who believe that the school newspaper's most important reason for existing is that of offering opportunity to develop self-expression and creative ability of the student. One of the main reasons for his disagreement lies in the fact that too few of the total enrollment are in a position to profit in this manner; and another reason is that practice in this medium is insufficient to justify expectation of development to any measurable degree.

The high school newspaper can be considered an opportunity for vocational exploration of the students' interests, abilities and capacities. But McKown(10:340) follows this with the reminder that the publication cannot be justified on values for the few journalism students, but must be justified on the basis of its values to the school. "Its purpose is not to encourage, develop, or honor the student participant but to educate the reader. All other values are incidental."(10:340)

When development of the qualities of cooperation, tact, accuracy, tolerance, responsibility, initiative and leadership are mentioned, again these may be developed in the participants only, but these fine qualities do not represent a justifiable basis for existence of the school paper.

Most of the literature examined states that the first function of the high school newspaper is "to publish news." When this has been established, and if there is room in the paper, other information may be included. Papers published weekly are in a better position to include advance stories, as well as the results of contests, whether athletic, music, or scholastic. Those papers on a bi-weekly or monthly basis may find it necessary to gear their material to feature writing, and columns which might be popular. Since the greater the interim between publication, the more pages seem to appear in print, there could be room for many phases of journalism that cannot be enjoyed by the schools which print one small sheet, on one side only. News interpretation, interviews, humor to a degree, are a few of the types of material that can be included in the larger paper.

McKown(10:342) recommends that a school purchase the services of one of the national organizations which are set up for the purpose of criticizing, making suggestions, and keeping a journalism staff informed through a periodical.

## A SMALL HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

A suggested method for setting up a small high school newspaper is described.

The physical plant, method of staffing, framework within which actual process of assignments might be performed, writing, editing, typing, and dummyming, is included. Subheadings will be used to separate parts and phases of the publication.

### Physical Plant

Adequate light and an uncrowded condition would be first requirements for a suitable journalism room. Windows should be operable, so that the room may be kept fresh and cool.

Minimum furnishings might include a desk or table for each student and member of the staff. One table should be large enough to hold the dummy for page makeup.

If the business education teacher is the newspaper adviser, typewriters would not need to be in the journalism room. They would be available when needed. Typewriters are a necessity for journalism, no matter how they are arranged. A blackboard is useful, not only for instruction purposes, but also for headline writers.

A filing cabinet with a lock is desirable. There are occasions when confidential information is supplied to a writer in advance, and it must be kept secret until the administrators instruct otherwise.

A cabinet or bookcase is used to keep the accumulated texts and informational material within easy reach. Reference books, a tickler file box containing indexed cards filed by date to call attention to special events and days, a style sheet, dictionaries, and the latest exchange papers, are items which are used often while gathering news and writing.

#### Name

Some authors recommend that the name of a high school newspaper incorporate some identifying label concerned either with the name of the school or its colors for example. Another example might be the name High Flier which would not be considered a suitable name when compared to Flandreau Flier, indicating the name of both town and school. The particular instance mentioned has the drawback of possibly becoming confused with the Indian school paper, Flandreau Spirit; no doubt, for this reason High Flier will remain the name of the Flandreau Public High School newspaper.

### Objectives

1. To publish school news, while accepting limitations of respect and decency placed upon the staff by administrators and school board.
2. To interpret and comment on the news.
3. To publicize (recognize) worthy school enterprises and activities.
4. To interpret the school program to all readers.
5. To promote stability in ideals and traditions of the school society in the face of its ever-changing population, both student and faculty.
6. To seek continued community support for the school program through school publicity.
7. The staff shall take advantage of the opportunity for self-expression and use of their creative abilities.
8. To encourage and promote good will among schools.
9. To earn and keep a reputation for being dependable in preparing a newspaper every week during the school year, including holidays, so that the publisher need never cope with an unexpected blank space.
10. To cooperate with the publisher at all times, particularly with regard to news items.
11. To vary the publicizing of school departments so that all are eventually given consideration.

### Type and Size

The paper will be a departmentalized publication printed on the page before the last of the local

weekly newspaper. It is agreed that five columns by fifteen inches in length will be the approximate size. The professional publisher has explained that at times it is necessary to cut this size to include certain legal notices which are printed periodically.

### Format

The high school paper may be placed a varying, but short, distance above the fold, and the name plate will be included. High Flier is to be printed in all capital letters. "Ears" are the two blank areas that appear to the immediate left and right of a newspaper name; in the left area will be the name of the high school, and in the right area the name of the city and state, both "ears" to be unboxed. Within a narrow area enclosed between two thin black lines, and just below the name, will appear the volume number, the date centered and balancing the volume number on the opposite side the issue number.

The masthead, which contains the South Dakota High School Press Association insignia and a list of staff and positions, plus the name of the adviser, will be placed in the lower left corner. It may be changed if the staff should decide to do so.

In view of the size of this publication, and to preclude its appearance being out of proportion, variations will be the rule, rather than trying to work with

only a balanced page, or brace type. Double column stories will be used when feasible, as well as two-column and one-column pictures. The page will have balance in weight, one side against the other, but using one side of a small area on a full-size newspaper does not lend itself to attempting perfect balance.

### Headlines

The largest type used for headlines will be 36-point tower; 24-point bold Century, or 24-point Stymie bold will be used in the majority of papers as the main headline type. The journalism department will be given a complete headline schedule with measurements opposite each size. The schedule is that of the local newspaper, and High Flier headlines are to be set up with the same schedule.

### Style Rules

The high school journalism staff probably should make most of the decisions regarding typographical style for the paper. If the paper is financed through advertising and printed separately from any local professional papers, detailed rules may be laid down with the aid of a textbook to start the work. (1:132)

An exception to working out style rules with no outside assistance might be that of the departmental paper. If the local publisher uses a certain style book, he may request that the high school staff also adhere to this book in preference to having the two systems appear in one paper. A copy of the South Dakota Newspaper Style Book will be given the High Flier staff by the publisher of its paper.

#### Staff Policy

Choosing the editor-in-chief, simply called editor, and other departmental editors, as well as a business manager, is one of the important tasks of the adviser. Only the adviser can appraise the student and balance him or her against the responsibilities to be undertaken. (18:13) Smith has listed questions for each of twelve positions, plus devoting a chapter to choice of the newspaper editor. (18:15) He assures the adviser that he does not intend his questionnaire to act as a decision-making criterion for any one position, but as an aid in choosing students best qualified to operate in the capacity for which they are selected.

Staff needed for the publication will depend upon the size of the paper, and the number of items that will recur as news often enough to justify the attention

of one person. A basic staff might include: editor, assistant editor, business manager, photography editor, sports editor, plus positions as copy reader, reporter, proof reader if galley proofs are submitted, and typists. Typists are sometimes obtained on a voluntary basis.

### Choosing a Textbook

Choosing a textbook is an important phase of the entire program. Upon the plan of the book will rest the plan of the course, its depth, freedom of order (flexibility) and coverage of the field.

A text, The High School Journalist, by H. S. Hepner(6), copyrighted in 1936, covers what appears to be the entire high school journalism program. Style changes seem to have a tendency to urge an adviser toward newer trends which he believes should be included. This is not to state that a student might become a better journalist, using the latest textbook, but he would have the benefit of the most recent ideas in page makeup, and writing trends.

Reddick(16:v) in his text, Journalism and the School Paper, which holds a copyright date of 1949, describes what he believes to be three stages of journalism as offered in high schools over the years. The

first stage was concerned with encouraging and training students in writing; it was an additional offering in the English department during the 1920's and 1930's.

Administrators were instrumental in bringing about the second stage when they realized the publicity value that could be used to promote growth for the school and build school spirit. During this period, the entire high school journalism program seems to have been placed in a strait jacket, with rigid inverted pyramid form of the professional papers being copied. Serious, long explanatory editorials were the order.

A few years after World War II the third stage began to appear, noticeable through the realization that to expect high school students to adhere to professional rules and regulations was to stifle the creativity that an education was supposed to be fostering. The rigid regulations for school newspapers were relaxed, and journalism staffs began to take critical looks at the adult world through newspapers. They began to understand, through the practice of newspaper reading, the important messenger that stood ready to interpret world and national affairs, as well as events near by.

These seem to be sufficient reasons to search for newer books with up-to-date trends in journalism.

Both Hepner's(6) and Reddick's(16) books were published using eye-tiring small print, and there seemed to be little relief through change or variation. This might have had a tendency to cause a student to lose interest. Spears and Lawshe(19) and Mulligan(12) had their books printed on larger pages, but each page is solid with print, and again may give the feeling that a reader must work laboriously through them.

Miller's(11) text has fresh and inviting pages with enough white space to rest the eyes. The book is compact in size, and the detailed index should make reference work fast and clear.

Miller's(11) text might have been a first choice if it had not been for recent new arrivals. They are: News in Print by Homer A. Post and Harold R. Snodgrass(14), and Press Time by Julian Adams and Kenneth Stratton(1).

The following quotation from News in Print(14:v) regarding goals is similar to one in Press Time(1):

...the production of the finest scholastic publication possible within the framework of the individual school; the stimulation of student awareness of what constitutes good reporting and of those responsibilities entailed in honest, accurate, and effective communication; the creation of still another vital practice area in basic English skills at the high-school level; the introduction to journalism as a potential career opportunity.

Both texts are completely directed toward school publications and their goals rather than professional journalism ideals.

News in Print(14) has many fine photographs which students might favor. But the Press Time(1) authors included something more--a complete handbook within the text, conveniently labeled with a color tab and the letter "H" imprinted in the upper right corner of each of those pages for easy reference. This book also has an index, plus a list of all colleges offering journalism programs accredited by the American Council on Education for Journalism. This may lend considerable weight to a student's thoughts about his presence on the high school journalism staff. It is important, and in some way that list may prove it.

When students are required to find their way with little or no assistance in the high school journalism activity, the text, Press Time(1), with no superfluous words on its pages, will be popular. Attention-getting boxed information, plus some colored lines and borders, sufficient white space, and elite type on off-white dull-gloss paper are all part of new concepts in textbook printing that should help to make the learning process pleasant.

Both of these books appear to have been arranged for flexibility and efficiency in getting the student started in writing immediately. Press Time(1) was chosen as the textbook for journalism class on the strength of the possible extra value of the handbook which is included. Until a book has been tested in use, it is impossible to say what its value may be.

#### Plan of the Course

The first forty pages of Press Time(1) are devoted to getting the feel of news, what it is, and explaining how to distinguish between fact and opinion. On page 40 instruction begins on news, and the interview is the first assignment. The background material is not overloaded with history, and it appears to contain foundation for writing.

Page 3(1) starts with dialogue regarding the John Peter Zenger case. His trial in 1734 resulted in his being thrown into prison, but one year later the jury set him free. This trial established the right of American newspapers to publish the truth. An adviser might take advantage of such a beginning and include other "cases" famous in the annals of the press while it fought for its freedom. Other types of information with "stories" included might be useful from time to time to act as reminders of the

pioneering spirit that was required to build perhaps the most powerful organization in the world today, the "fourth estate."

Before beginning a formal class the Handbook section, Part 1, should be read and discussed. "Organizing the Staff for Production" should be studied and understood before turning to the first lesson. These seven pages (1: 400-407) give the duties of staff members, plus the main steps in publication, a sample production schedule and just what the heading "Beats and Assignments" means.

Other than choosing to vary class work with outside material to add interest, this text can be used for class and home work in promoting the ideal situation where every member of the staff is able to write something that will be acceptable for publication in a high school newspaper.

## SUMMARY

A number of books and articles on the subject of high school journalism have been read. Several questions were answered in the process. A course that will not overburden student or teacher can be set up in the high school and still leave time to supervise an edition of the paper each week.

At the turn of this century and into 1930, the function of a high school publication was mainly the practice of writing--a part of the English course. Its values were considered to be in the form of increased ability with which a student might perform this art of writing after practicing on the newspaper. World War II may have helped to change some of these concepts, because, from about 1949 through 1956, a number of texts and books on the subject stressed the function of the paper as that of informing students and members of a community, or writing news.

One opinion was that the value of learning to write in a journalism class situation was negligible in view of the fact there was insufficient practice. Writing for a newspaper requires a special vocabulary somewhat removed from that of the English class.

Recently texts are including as some of the functions of high school journalism the creativity it may inspire; improved English composition is acknowledged, plus learning to work cooperatively with others. Forming judgments and being self-reliant are other values and attitudes. Discrimination between fact and opinion, and an increased sensitivity to school and community purposes are learning experiences gained as a member of a high school journalism staff.

It may be that some high schools have kept their sights narrowed in dispensing occupational information, encompassing only the world of work in the immediate area. Journalism as a career is now pointed out as available to anyone who has found the high school practice exciting and rewarding. There are many kinds of jobs in the publishing business.

The educational value derived from this activity is present now as it was in the 1930's. The difference lies only in the increased amount of learning gained. It might be classed as one of the prime courses in preparation for adult life. Judgment, decisions, sensitivity, and civic interest--these are a few of the educational concepts which high school journalism is cultivating.

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