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## PRINT vs. ONLINE JOURNALISM: ARE BELIEVABILITY AND ACCURACY AFFECTED BY WHERE READERS FIND INFORMATION?

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PRINT vs. ONLINE JOURNALISM: ARE BELIEVABILITY AND ACCURACY  
AFFECTED BY WHERE READERS FIND INFORMATION?

By  
Burton C. Speakman

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of  
The Graduate College at the University Nebraska  
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Under the Supervision of Professor Linda Shipley

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PRINT vs. ONLINE JOURNALISM: ARE BELIEVABILITY AND ACCURACY  
AFFECTED BY WHERE READERS FIND INFORMATION?

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University of Nebraska, 2011

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Believability and accuracy of print and online news is studied via the comments of newspaper readers of a small Texas community. The readers of the *Normangee Star* were chosen to be the survey recipients to learn if readers in a small community had the same attitude about their local newspaper that national surveys have indicated exist about newspapers in general. The expectation was that those who read more news online would consider their local paper to be less believable and accurate than those who read little to no news online. Surveys were mailed to 200 subscribers of the *Star*, and an online survey was posted on the *Star's* website and Facebook page. Fifty print surveys were returned and one person responded to the survey online. Two focus groups were conducted in the *Star's* coverage area.

This study showed that readers of the *Normangee Star* believe their newspaper is more accurate than the *Bryan-College Station Eagle*, *Houston Chronicle* and the *New York Times*. Results further indicated those who read more than 15 minutes of news online per day believed the *Star* to be less accurate and less believable than those who read less news online. Differences in the believability and accuracy rankings were greater when the other three newspapers were considered. *Star* readers who spent more than 15 minutes reading news online per day were more skeptical about the *Eagle*, *Chronicle* and *Times* than those who read less than 15

minutes. The *Star's* readers gave the newspaper very high believability and accuracy ratings. *Star* reader's views differ from national trends. National surveys showed low credibility ratings for all forms of media with declines over the last decade until there was a small increase in 2010 results. Future research should examine both subscribers to other newspapers and nonsubscribers in rural areas to determine if the believability ratings in national studies are indicative of the public's attitudes simply toward larger media outlets and not the newspaper industry overall.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Statement of the Problem:

Media professionals and researchers have written about and researched declining credibility ratings for the news industry for several years. The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press tracks credibility as part of its yearly reports (Pew 2009 Political/Media Update). The 2009 Pew Research Political Media Update study reported respondents ranked the “average” local newspaper as more credible than “their” local newspaper. The Pew Public Evaluation studies from 1985 to 2009 stated media credibility is at its lowest point in two decades. “Just 29% of Americans say that news organizations generally get the facts straight, while 63% say that news stories are often inaccurate,” (Pew Public Evaluation 2009, 2).

The 2009 Pew Public Evaluation study indicated that a large percentage of consumers receive news from online sources with four in 10 stating they receive their national and international news online (Pew Public Evaluation 2009, 4). The same report showed in terms of local news there are still more than 40 percent of people who receive their local news from newspapers, while 17 percent read their local news online (4).

Some of the harshest critics of the news media are individuals who state they access the majority of their news online (Pew News Values 2009, 2). A growing number of newsreaders read their news online (Pew Press Research 2009, 7). In 2009, 42 percent of Pew respondents stated they received the majority of national and international news online compared to 24 percent in 2007 (7). In that same study, 33 percent of 2009 respondents reported they receive the majority of national and



international news from newspapers (7). Forty-one percent of respondents received the majority of their local news from newspapers (7).

Newspapers in print form are declining in readership, as indicated in the 2009 Pew study. Newspapers are no longer limited to what they put in the hard copy version of the newspaper. The Internet has changed the way news is delivered. Traditional divisions between print, television and radio have been blurred if not eliminated. Television and radio stations now have print stories on their websites, while newspaper sites have video and audio. In addition, the traditional deadlines at some media outlets have been eliminated. Many newspapers, including smaller outlets, now place breaking news updates online and then publish a longer, more-detailed version in the printed product.

It is important to consider all readers of newspaper content, in both print and online. At one time newspapers were the only source of local news in small towns like Normangee, Texas, but readers are no longer limited by geography for news sources. There are many options for news on the Internet and this study was designed to learn where the local population accessed news and how they judged the believability and accuracy of those sources.

## Chapter 2: Literature review

### Studies and Surveys:

To varying degrees online news sources are considered less credible than the traditional media (Banning and Sweester 2007, 458). Banning and Sweester's study showed newspapers were considered the most accurate medium compared to television, radio and online news (458). The use of traditional journalism methods, such as the editing standards, if used in online writing can help to narrow the gap in credibility (458). There is a perception that online news sites publish quickly without stringent editing standards (458). The Banning and Sweester survey included 145 undergraduate students at a larger southern university who received extra credit for participation (457). The research questions were to determine if information has a greater impact if it appeared in a personal blog or a well-known newspaper (457). The students were shown a story and instructed to provide their opinion on the following statements "1. the story I just read is factual; 2. the story I just read is concerned about making profits; 3. the story I just read invades people's privacy; 4. the story I just read is concerned about the community's well being; 5. the story I just read cannot be trusted" (457-458). Media credibility was then measured using a nine-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree (458). This study showed no statistical differences between newspapers, online news or personal blogs in terms of the credibility ratings, but stated the small sample size may have contributed to the lack of statistically significant agreement (458).

The type of information appearing online influences the audience's opinion on credibility (Jo 2005, 69). Jo's study tested how the public would determine credibility

of the traditional media compared to press releases from businesses or organizations (64). The overall hypothesis was the news media would be more credible than organizations when it came to providing information (64). The exception was when it came to positive news and the organization writing about itself (64). This study consisted of 184 undergraduate students at a southeastern university (64-65). The respondents were randomly given either positive or negative stories about an organization that appeared to be from both news and online and then were asked to rate, which of the stories were more credible (65). The results showed newspapers were considered more credible than press releases (69). The difference was greater when negative information was being released compared to positive (69).

Organizations have attempted to use the Internet as a way to avoid the media's "traditional gatekeeping function" and take their message directly to the public (72). The results of Jo's study indicated that media credibility varies depending on the user's exposure to media genres (69). The overall pattern indicated that subjects who were exposed to newspapers were more likely to believe news stories compared to online press releases (69).

According to the results of a study by Flanagin and Metzger, the newness of the Internet as a news medium makes it more difficult for users to determine the credibility of online news sites (Flanagin and Metzger 2000, 517). Information on the Internet is vetted much differently than information in newspapers (515). The study was inconclusive about whether online news sources were considered less believable than mainstream media among readers (518). This study included 1,041 respondents from mostly western U.S. states and was conducted in late 1998 and early 1999 (521).

Sixty-nine percent of respondents were students from introductory and advanced communication courses and 31 percent were non-college aged respondents found using a “snowball” technique (521). This study determined newspapers received higher credibility ratings than television, online news, and radio (524). This remained true despite the purpose of the reader looking at the information (524).

There are theoretical reasons readers might assign less credibility to user-created content relative to content from an established brand, according to researchers Stephen Siff, Thomas J. Hrach and Stan Alost (20). News companies frequently attempt to build their brand using statements touting believability, utilizing phrases such as — “your most trusted source of news” (20). Their research indicated there is little evidence that readers care about the professional norms of the journalism industry (20). Therefore, those norms do not impact the audience’s perception of credibility (20). Two studies of undergraduate students were conducted in 2006 and 2007 by Siff, Hrach and Alost, which attempted to determine if readers would react differently to an editorial in a newspaper compared to one written for a blog (20). Each group of students were shown editorials created by the researchers, one designed to appear as though it was from a newspaper while the other was posted on a website (22). There were a total of 38 respondents included in the two studies. (22) “Respondents were asked to rate on a five-point scale how much impact the opinion article would have if it appeared in a newspaper and how much impact it would have if it appeared in a blog. More than 52 percent of respondents indicated they believed the column would have more effect in a newspaper and about 37 percent said they believed there would be no difference. Only about 10 percent said an article on the

Web would have more effect,” (24). Readers overall did not consider the source as a significant factor in regard to if whether the content was believable or not for opinion pieces (28). They did, however, differentiate between sources in terms of credibility and accuracy in regards to news stories (30). They found that the perception of credibility is more important to readers when it comes to “factual” stories (30).

According to Rosenthal and Mitchell, the news industry has been a late adapter of technology and therefore has been a follower instead of a leader in developing its future technologies (Rosenthal and Mitchell Overview 2011, 1) In 2010, digital media was the only form of media that was gaining audience members (6).

In December 2010, 41% of Americans cited the Internet as the place where they got “most of their news about national and international issues,” up 17% from a year earlier. When it came to any kind of news, 46% of people now say they get news online at least three times a week, surpassing newspapers (40%) for the first time. Only local TV news is a more popular platform in America now (50%). (6)

Newspapers continued to lose circulation in 2010, but at 5 percent the losses were less than half from 2009 (Rosenthal and Mitchell Overview 2011, 8). Newspapers also remained the only segment of the media in 2010 where revenue declined compared to 2010 figures (8).

“As an increased number of traditional media organizations set up shop online, Internet news and information has gained a degree of credibility,” (Banning and Sweester 2007). Banning and Sweester state that while viewers “can’t believe everything you read on the Internet,” the branding of online content with a trusted source name, such as *New York Times* or *CNN*, can increase the credibility of content found online (452). “For over a decade, institutes, pollsters and social scientists have

produced studies that show a steady and serious decline in public confidence in news media, and the standards of journalism.” (Ward 2005, 316).

Not all studies have shown online news sources to be less credible than print. In a study by Abdulla, Garrison and Salwen, online news rated the highest among news sources in terms of credibility (2002, 16). Using a Likert scale the study indicated that online users rated online sources with a mean score of more than two points higher on a Likert scale from one to eight, in terms of credibility (16). Newspaper readers rated the medium lowest in the areas of bias and completeness (16). Online viewers rated web-based news highly in terms of being trustworthy, believable and accurate (18).

The addition of online news to the list of sources of information available to the public has led to concerns about its credibility as well as its perception by the public as a news source in relation to established and more traditional news sources. As access and availability of online news grows, the concern for quality of information found online will also increase. (Abdulla, Garrison and Salwen (18).

Newspapers must have perceived balance in storytelling, complete in providing information, objective and fair, accurate, and unbiased to be considered credible (Abdulla, Garrison and Salwen 2002, 19). To succeed newspapers must be considered honest, believable, and trustworthy, according to the findings of their study (19).

According to Flanagin and Metzger, it must be remembered that credibility is part of perception (2007, 321). The findings from the Flanagin and Metzger studies showed that news websites had higher perceptions of credibility compared to blogs or individual websites, which respondents ranked the lowest. (331) Commercial and

special-interest sites were considered less credible than media outlets (331). Overall both genre and site materials matter in terms of the perceived website credibility (334). Earlier studies did not show the same type of relationship, but this may be because the previous studies were conducted in the infancy of widespread Internet use and represent a base level that will alter over time (335). The results in Flanagin and Metzger's study showed respondents fictitious sites were able to achieve credibility ratings that were largely equal to those of major organizations (336). Users were more likely to consider news sites to be more credible if they believed that others utilized the site (336).

A study by Craig illustrated the ability of readers and authors to communicate and the different ethics associated with online news and blogging, which differ from traditional media and sometimes work in opposition (Craig 2010, 38). Readers of online news have the expectation that online news will be available both more often and quicker than traditional news sources (38). The audience, along with media management and the journalists themselves, expect the product to be produced faster, which therefore increases the opportunity for error (38-39).

Sometimes the medium determines its own limitations in reaching both print and online audiences (Ward 2002, 180). "Effective web sites that attract large readerships on a regular basis take a lot of content maintenance. They don't come along by magic" (179). The expectations of users have been increased with online news (179).

Public journalism techniques use more citizen sources and include more solution-oriented content within media coverage compared to traditional media

(Heider, McCombs and Poindexter 2005, 953). A study at the University of New Mexico found that students who did not have experience working within a newsroom were more likely to support civic journalism efforts (954). The respondents in the study were much more concerned with the media including different points of view, understanding the community and caring about the community than with journalistic expectations of being a watchdog and providing news rapidly (958). According to the findings of this study, the public expects their local media will act as a good neighbor, serving as a benefit to the community and investing in groups within the community, providing a wide range of views and not limiting readers to one point of view (958-961).

#### Pew and Gallup Media Studies:

The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press and Gallup has studied the media for decades. Pew is a non-partisan organization and studies politics, media and public policy issues. They conduct sizable field studies that including questions about the media. The types of questions asked in the Pew and Gallup studies helped in the formation of the questions used in this study. Pew and Gallup polls are also frequently used by academics and professional sources for media trend information.

“A decade ago, just one-in-fifty Americans got the news with some regularity from what was then a brand new source – the Internet. Today, nearly one-in-three regularly get news online” (Pew Maturing Audiences 2006, 3). Online news has evolved primarily into a supplemental news source for traditional media (3). Most readers value online news for headlines and breaking news, but not for in depth information (3). The 2006 Pew study shows that newspaper readership is increasing,



when print and online readership are combined compared to recent years, but remain behind totals from 10 years ago (3). This survey included information from more than 3000 adults and was conducted between April 27, 2006 and May 22, 2006, and was designed to determine the public's overall news consumption (4). The audience for online news is maturing, but users continue to prefer sites that provide brief stories and headlines<sup>1</sup> (4-5, appendix A). News aggregators remain the major sources of online news, with about 45 percent using these types of sites (17). This study showed the public is spending less time online and local news remains the primary draw for local newspapers (6-9). The reach of newspaper websites remains limited<sup>2,3</sup> (21). The study also shows the continued decrease in the credibility of the media in general and newspapers specifically (48-49). Only 19 percent of respondents stated they believed all or most of what is printed in their daily newspaper. (49) This is compared to 25 percent who believed all or most of what was in local newspaper in 2000 (49).

The Internet news audience is more likely than other media users to state the media is critical of America and does not care about the people the media report about in stories (Pew News Values 2009, 2). In 1985, most in the Pew survey (55%) said news organizations get the facts correct (2). Since the late 1990s, consistent majorities – including 53% of respondents in the Pew Survey – have expressed the belief that news stories are often inaccurate (3). “Yet for all of the public’s gripes

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<sup>1</sup> The credibility ratings for most major news organizations are either flat or have slipped since 2004. These ratings are highly partisan, though the political differences for most sources have narrowed over the past year as Democrats take a more negative view in the believability of several leading news outlets (Information from Pew Maturing Audiences 2006 page 8).

<sup>2</sup> About half of Americans (53%) say they went online, either from home or from work. That represents a significant increase (from 47%) since 2004. But far fewer (23%) say they went online for news yesterday, virtually no change from two years ago (24%) (Information from Pew Maturing Audiences 2006 page 10).

about the press, people also say they like various news sources – local TV news, network news, cable TV news and the daily newspapers they are most familiar with.”

(3). According to the Pew findings, Americans have more positive than negative feelings toward their local news sources be they television, radio or newspapers, according to the Pew Press Values from 1985 to 2007 (3). Believability ratings for national news organizations remain low (Pew Audience Segments 2008, 7). Believability ratings for online news aggregators such as Google or AOL were even lower than national news organizations (Pew Audience Segments 2008, 7). Those who get news online through sources such as aggregators are the most selective about where they receive news, trusting some sites more than others (56). Nearly half (47 percent) of those who receive the majority of news through traditional sources believe that all news is pretty much the same (57). “Since the early 1990s, the proportion of Americans saying they read a newspaper on a typical day has declined by about 40%; the proportion that regularly watches nightly network news has fallen by half,” (5). In 2008 there were 37 percent of study participants who stated they received their news from online sources at least three days a week (6). This was a six percent increase compared to 2006 (6).

A slim majority of Americans (51%) now say they check in on the news from time to time during the day, rather than get the news at regular times. This marks the first time since the question was first asked in 2002 that most Americans consider themselves “news grazers. (Pew Audience Segments 2008, 7).

“There has been little change in public perceptions of the credibility of most major news organizations between 2006 and 2008. Over the last 10 years, however, virtually every news organization or program has seen its credibility marks decline.”

(Pew Audience Segments 2008, 58). The majority of Americans view most traditional media as being at least somewhat credible (60).

A Gallup poll published in 2010 showed that no more than 25 percent of Americans reported that they have a “great deal” or “quite a lot” of trust in either newspapers or television news (Gallup 2010, 1). Public confidence in the media decreased between 2003 and 2009 (1). It is unclear how much respondents factored in the online and cable offshoots of “newspapers” and “television news” when assessing their confidence in these institutions (1). Their responses do not provide much encouragement for the media more broadly, according to Lymari Morales, who wrote an overview for Gallup of its 2010 poll results (1). Confidence is hard to find, even among Democrats and liberals, who have historically been more trusting of the news media, according to Morales (1-2). Although these figures have not changed much in the six years, 48 percent of those who took part in the survey said the media were “too liberal.” (Gallup Topline 2010, 1).

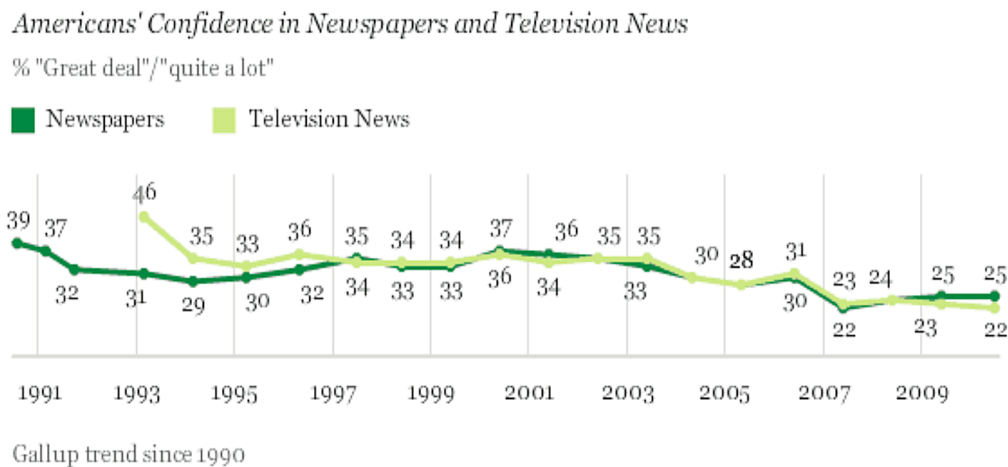


Figure 2.1 American's Confidence in Newspapers and Television News

“The Pew report asserts that 80% of new media links are to legacy newspapers and broadcast networks, making clear that traditional news sources remain the backbone of the media. But so long as roughly three in four Americans remain distrustful, it will be difficult to attract the large and loyal audiences necessary to boost revenues.” according to Morales (Gallup 2010, 3)

*Americans' Confidence in Newspapers and Television News,  
by Age, Party, and Ideology*

% "Great deal"/"quite a lot"

	Newspapers	Television News
National adults	25	22
18- to 29-year-olds	49	24
30- to 49-year-olds	16	16
50- to 64-year-olds	22	23
65-year-olds and older	24	25
Republicans	21	16
Independents	20	18
Democrats	33	31
Conservatives	18	18
Moderates	25	25
Liberals	35	24

Gallup poll, July 8-11, 2010

GALLUP®

Figure 2.2 American's Confidence in Newspapers and Television News by Age,  
Gallup poll media responses

Derek Thompson wrote a review of the Gallup poll for *The Atlantic* entitled “Media Distrust at Record High, but Why?” (2010, 1). The high point for public distrust was during the Iraq War and Great Recession (1). “You can also blame the fragmentation of media, which is siphoning viewers off into their respective ideological corners. Today, you can incubate in hyper-conservative media and or the super-socialist blogosphere and ignore the middle in a way you couldn't when there were only three TV networks and blog was not a word,” (1). Thompson also wrote the media is responsible for the public’s distrust of the news, by telling the public not to believe other outlets (1-2).

Think about all of the mass media today that tells us how stupid mass media is. Bill O'Reilly is the most watched person on cable news, and he regularly complains about the stranglehold of liberals on the news cycle. Fox News and MSNBC attract a good deal of attention by identifying (or sometimes fabricating) media strawmen to slay with a quip. Glenn Beck is the most ascendant figure in modern media, and his central message is: Don't trust anybody. Jon Stewart is the most trusted figure in media, and his central message is: Don't trust Glenn Beck. The former treats media as a conspiracy. The latter treats media as a joke. (Thompson 2010, 2)

### Media Usage

Web portals such as Yahoo and Google dominate the lists of the most visited news sites (Pew Audience Segments 2008, 24). Television websites such as MSNBC or CNN are the next most frequently cited as news sources, while the *New York Times* newspaper was the most mentioned by respondents at four percent (24). Young people are much more likely than older individuals to come across news unintentionally online (26). Older individuals are more likely to intentionally go to news websites (26). “Among internet users, online news video is particularly popular

with young people and African Americans.” (27) The majority of news seekers are becoming news grazers, who tend to go online for news instead of watching television (36). People who obtain news at regular intervals instead of grazing are more likely to read print publications (36). Those who use the Internet as part of their news seeking tend to be heavier users of news (49).

“At a time when daily newspapers are losing readers, the audience for local weekly community newspapers have remained relatively stable (Pew Audience Segments 2008, 21). Currently, 33% of respondents said they read such newspapers regularly, about the same as in 2006 (35%) and 2004 (36%), (21). Credibility is a significant issue with online news because of the unlimited news hole and the speed in which online news is produced and disseminated (Nadarajan and Ang, 1999, 4-5). These two factors compound the possibility of errors, according to a study presented by Peng Hwa Ang and Berlinda Nadarajan (5). A study by Kiouisis showed that credibility ratings of those surveyed about the media with the variables of high credibility, moderate credibility and low credibility ranged from the highest at newspapers, online news and television (Kiouisis 2001, 392). Johnson and Kaye prior to their study stated the perceived credibility of Internet information varies widely, but they theorized the reason could be because of how credibility was measured in prior studies (Johnson and Kaye 2008, 175).

Online readers of news are more likely to also read the print version of the newspaper (Chyi and Yang 2009, 595). Chyi and Yang were studying if online news was considered by users to be an inferior good, by utilizing the survey information collected by the Pew Research Center. (594) They argue that because consumers may

not be willing to pay for online news while free options are available, they still pay for the print version despite it having similar if not the same content as the online version (596). This may be because online news is not as desirable a good as print news (596). Chyi and Yang argue in their article there is an unknown quality about the presentation of news online makes it an inferior good in the eyes of the public compared to the print product (602).

The 2011 Gallup poll results written by Lymari Morales, showed the public was gaining some confidence in newspapers, after the industry had been stuck at record low levels in credibility since 2007 (Morales 2011, 1). Confidence increased from 2009 to 2010 by 3 percent from 25 to 28 percent of the public stating they had a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in newspapers (1).

While the improvement for each is small in absolute terms, it could mark the beginning of the reversal of the trend seen in recent years. The Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism's annual report on The State of the News Media suggests that the state of the media improved in 2010 as content providers found new ways to meet the changing needs of their audiences as well as new revenue models. (Morales 2011, 1)

Confidence in both newspapers and television increased in nearly every subgroup of the population included in the Gallup survey (Morales 2011, 1). The biggest increase was in the 30-49 age group and with men in general (1). The biggest negative rating was amongst 18-29 year olds, which showed a 10 percent decrease in confidence in newspapers (1). Confidence in newspapers still has significant room for improvement and the attitude of young Americans could foretell a volatile future for the newspaper industry (2).

The Internet is considered a separate news source from print, television or radio by more than half of users, according to Lee Rainie, Director of the Pew Internet & American Life Project when discussing the results of the 2006 study (Rainie 2007, 2). This is particularly true of young people as a place where they can dig deeper and make their own contribution to a story (2). Age is not the only factor dividing media use and impacting the views of the public; ideology, particularly political ideology, is creating a dividing line (2-3). This fracturing has led to a decrease in credibility and believability of news sources (2-3). Members of the public can now find news sources more easily that mirror their perception of the world (3). The rise of the “Daily Me” has also had an impact, this allows people to choose only certain topics or types of news and prevents them from receiving different news they would come in contact with through mainstream media sources (3).

#### Party and Ideology

Republicans tend to find mainstream news sources to be less credible than Democrats or independents (Pew Audience Segments 2008, 61). Republicans and Democrats also tend to use different media outlets, particularly in terms of television news where 51 percent of regular CNN viewers are Democrats compared to 18 percent who are Republicans, conversely 39 percent of regular Fox News viewers are Republican (15). “Democrats continue to give most news organizations much higher credibility ratings than do Republicans,” (61). The Pew study showed a 10 percent lower credibility reduction between Republican and Democrats when it comes to their local newspaper (61). Only 14 percent of self-described Republicans believe all or most of what is reported by the Associated Press, while 22 percent of Democrats



believe all or most of what the AP reports (61, see Appendix A for more information).

#### News Professional Commentary

According to Mitch Pugh, from the Sioux City Journal, many mainstream news outlets lack clear rules for reporting news online. (2010, 1) This article was also part of the Associated Press Managing Editors Online News Credibility Study (1). This portion of the study was designed to determine what standards readers expect from newspapers when breaking news online, compared to the standards that reporters and editors have for online breaking news (1). This study included two focus groups, one of readers and the other consisting of news sources and community opinion shapers (1). The overall tone was credibility must be built over time, but that it can be damaged quickly (1-3). Clear editorial policies will help to prevent mistakes that can hurt credibility (1-3). Readers and sources expect that news outlets will have clear and definable rules and ethics (2). This study showed that rules and ethics for online publication are particularly important to community leaders/sources (2). The respondents stated they expect that newspapers will not cross the line between reporting news and being sensational (2). Readers and public officials will forgive factual errors from newspapers, but not errors in judgment (3). Acknowledging when factual mistakes are made helps enhance credibility (3). Readers in this study suggested using forms such as Twitter and Facebook for breaking news until facts become clearer and then move the story to the newspaper's website (3).

The change from print to online publications has increased some ethical rules for online publications that are significantly different than those for mainstream

publications, according to J.D. Lasica, senior editor of the Online Journalism Review at the University of Southern California (2002, 1). According to Lasica, “Online journalists are more indispensable than ever in a mouse-click society that craves authentication of fact, that thirsts for news that's both reliable and instantaneous.” (2) The public and online journalists, despite some ethical lapses, agree that the truth is the most important thing in online news reporting (2). This is occurring because print journalists have been successful in transferring their most valuable contribution, “long-standing values and standards of accuracy, balance, credibility, fairness and trustworthiness to the online medium.” (3) None of the gains made in online journalism would have been possible without online journalists embracing the ethics of traditional media (3). Online news sites use different storytelling techniques and have changed some of the traditional ethical rules (3). As the Internet has become a more mainstream news medium, it has matured and therefore it possesses the values and ethics that the public wants in its news (7).

The challenge facing online journalists is to balance the legitimate desires of the online audience for up-to-the-minute reports with the profession's traditions of fairness, completeness, balance and accuracy. There's an inherent tension built into such an equation, but instantaneous reporting is a skill set mastered long ago by wire service reporters and by television and radio news professionals covering live events. The guideline must always remain: What best serves the interests of the reader and the public while remaining fair to those named in the story? Not: Can we beat our competitors even though we haven't nailed down this story? (Lasica 2002, 5)

But the Internet has also been accused have of having a negative impact on mainstream media's believability with the Tiger Woods affair being an example, according to Paul Farhi, contributing writer for American Journalism Review and

reporter for the Washington Post, based on a review of articles published after the Tiger Woods affair (2010, 1-2). There were several items that could have been questioned regarding the allegations of Mindy Lawton, yet several mainstream papers including the Orlando Sentinel and Miami Herald used the British tabloid's online copy (1-2). While the media got the overall tone of the Tiger Woods story correct, based on Woods own revelations and following hiatus from golf, they did not do nearly enough to truthfulness the veracity of all claims (2).

The Woods story was an example where the mainstream media ignored standard newsgathering and utilized the same type of actions used by tabloid reporting (Farhi 2010, 3). The mainstream media took the risky step of relying on sources like TMZ for information (4).

The mass reporting of poorly sourced (or completely unsourced) information may reflect a hypercompetitive news environment that places a value on speed rather than accuracy or reliability. Given how quickly and widely 'news' travels in the Internet age, news organizations can be quickly left behind unless they, too, report what's already 'out there,' even if it turns out to be wrong. (Farhi 2010, 5)

The rush created by Internet news sources has caused "publishing without knowing," according to Rem Reider, Editor and Senior Vice President of *American Journalism Review* (2010, 1). News outlets resorted to conjecture and try to just get information out, without worrying much about its factual basis or importance (2).

Call it yet another triumph by the 'it's out there' school of journalism. In recent years, that's been the explanation/defense in countless instances when rumors, gossip, half-truths, untruths and pure gossamer get wide distribution. No, we didn't really know. But we couldn't ignore it. Everyone else was going with it. It was out there. (Reider 2010, 2)

Things happen quickly in the world of Internet news and caution is not typically used (Reider 2010, 2). “The rise of the Web led to the end of the era of gatekeepers, when a handful of big-time media outlets could decide what was news and what wasn't. And there's much that's healthy about that (2).

According to David Thompson, a writer for The Atlantic, opinion journalism propagates distrust in the news by telling the public that other media are unreliable (Thompson 2010, 2). Thompson’s theory is that people trust the media they use, but dislike the institution as a whole (2). While Thompson attempted to explain why the Gallup poll had the results it did, a MinnPost in a article by David Brauer attempted to look for a “silver lining” by writing the numbers were fairly level since 2005 (2010, 1). Brauer focused on how trust at other public institutions was dropping more steeply compared to the eyes of the public than the media (1). Another journalist Andrew Malcolm reacted to the Gallup poll information with sarcasm (2010, 1-5). He wrote about how the Gallup poll should have focused on the positive aspects of the poll (1). “But no, Gallup has to go for the sensational, to feed this crazy belief among a few hundred million Americans that the media is somehow biased in its presentation of the people and happenings that go on all over this crazy place.” (1) The overall point of the article was to show how negative the results were that in no way could the information be spun in a way that was positive for journalism (5).



### Chapter 3: Methodology

This study will provide insight into the differences in reader views of the credibility between print and online news products, particularly of a small, weekly publication. The Pew Media Studies are credibility studies based on genre such as television, print or online news sources and these studies focus mostly on larger media markets. (Pew 2009 Political/Media Update). This study will investigate whether credibility perceptions are different for “community” newspapers.

This study will focus on print and online newspaper readers of the *Normangee Star*. The *Star* is a small weekly newspaper with a circulation of 827 located at the southern edge of Leon County, Texas. The paper’s coverage area includes the city of Normangee, which the U.S. Census states has estimated 793 residents, according to the 2009 Census data, within city limits and Hilltops Lakes, an unincorporated community of 3,086 people. The *Star* is one of six weekly newspaper located in Leon County. The others and their circulations are as follows *Buffalo News* (circulation not available); *Buffalo Press*, 3,323; *Buffalo Express*, 2,663; *Centerville News*, 2,125; and the *Jewett Messenger*, 1,708. Circulation numbers are from the Texas Press Association and of those available the *Normangee Star* has the smallest circulation in the county. The *Buffalo News* is not a member of the TPA. The *Star* was chosen partly because it was the only newspaper in the county to have an Internet presence, although since this study began the Buffalo News has begun a site called Leon County Today. The newspaper was also selected because it has a one-person staff, the owner and publisher Hank Hargrave. The *Star* contains a significant amount of public journalism. A sizable portion of the content is written by either community

columnists or is simply contributed by members of the community at large. Taking content in this manner is common in community newspaper, but rare in larger regional outlets. Questionnaires were sent by mail to subscribers of the print product. An online survey program, <http://www.qualtrics.com>, was used to reach the online audience.

Based on the review of the literature, the following research questions are offered:

Research Question 1: *Do online only viewers of a community newspaper consider news stories to be less credible than those who read the same news stories in print?*

Research Question 2: *Do both online and print readers of a community newspaper consider the local news to be less believable than five years ago?*

Research Question 3: *Do both online and print readers of a community newspaper consider the local news to be less accurate than it was five years ago?*

Hypothesis 1: *Respondents who read news articles online will be more likely to consider the articles less credible than those who read the same articles solely in print.*

Hypothesis 2: *Both Respondents who view news online or in print will consider the local news to be less believable than it was five years ago.*

Hypothesis 3: *Respondents who view news online or in print will consider local news to be less accurate than it was five years ago.*

### Demographics:

The *Normangee Star* is located within two very small communities and has penetration of more than 70 percent of households, according to Hargrave. Leon County has a total population of 16,516 with 11,512 being 25 years of age or older. Census data shows Normangee has much lower income levels than the national average. Hargrave, believes that only a few of his print subscribers have Internet access at speeds higher than dial-up access, although the majority of survey and focus group respondents stated they had high-speed Internet. Leon County has no daily newspaper located within its borders, nor are any delivered to homes within the community (Hargrave 2011). The Bryan-College Station Eagle and Houston Chronicle can be purchased daily at two locations in Normangee based on a visual observation of the city.

### Income

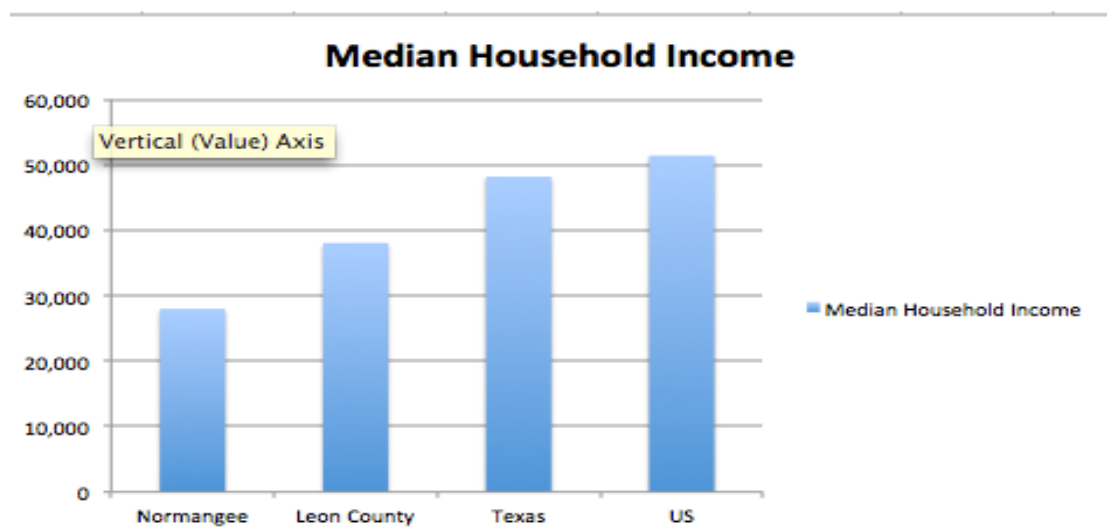


Figure 3.1 Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2005-2009 Community Survey: Household income



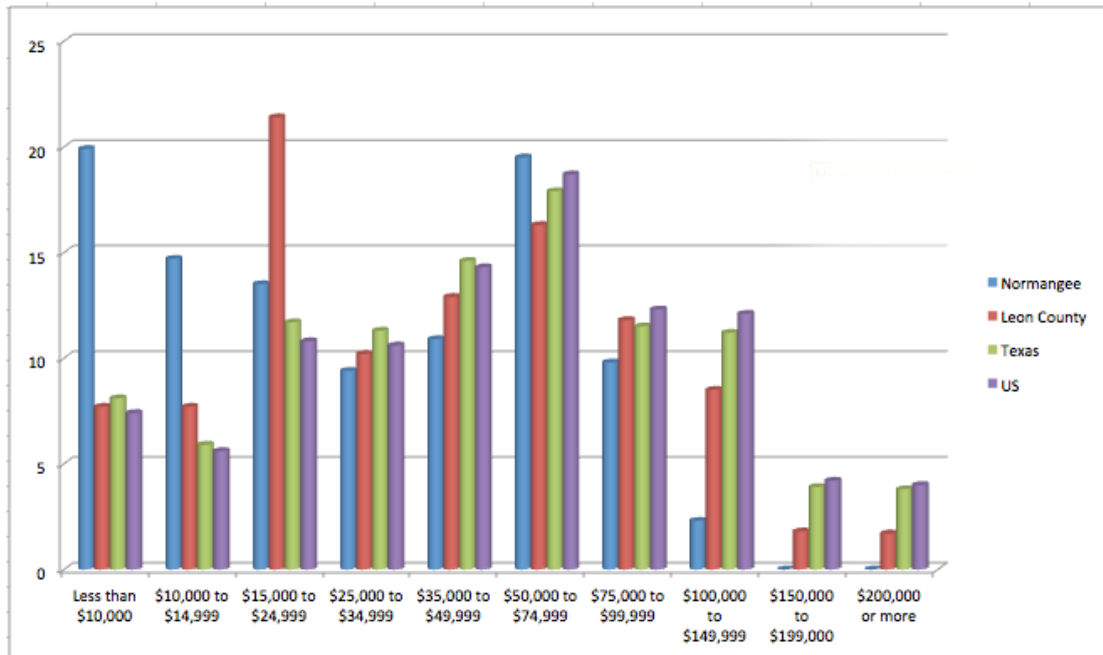


Figure 3.2 Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2005-2009 Community Survey: Income in last 12 months median

The median household income within Leon County is \$38,067, while Normangee has a median household income of less than \$30,000 per year (U.S. Census Bureau). Each of these figures is well below the state and national median incomes. Countywide the unemployment rate is 6.8 percent (U.S. Census Bureau). The largest percentage of the population at 21.4 percent, have a household income of between \$15,000-24,999 per year. The second largest percentage of the population at 16.3 percent have an annual household income of between \$50,00-\$74,999 (U.S. Census Bureau). There are 13.5 percent of families in Leon County who live below the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau). Within Normangee 30.1 percent of families live below the poverty levels (U.S. Census Bureau).

## Race

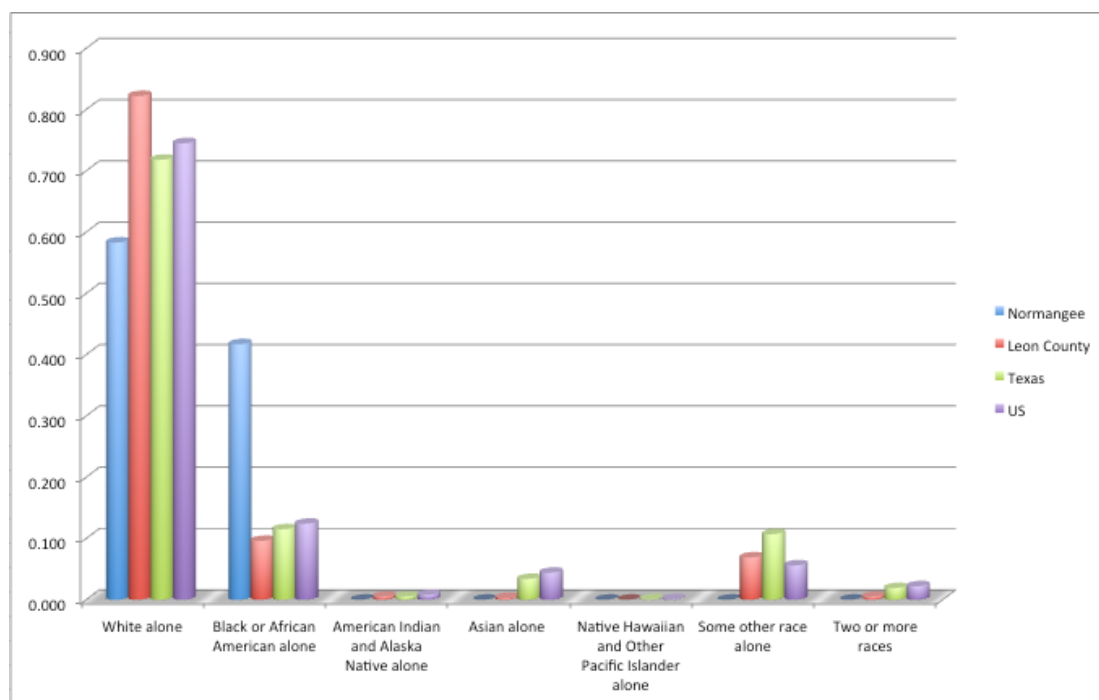


Figure 3.3 Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2005-2009 Community Survey:

### Racial makeup

In terms of race 82.2 percent of Leon County is white, 9.6 percent are black and 11.2 percent of the population identify themselves as Latino. The racial makeup of Normangee is 58.3 percent white, 41.7 percent black and 4.9 percent identified themselves as Latino (U.S. Census Bureau).

### Education

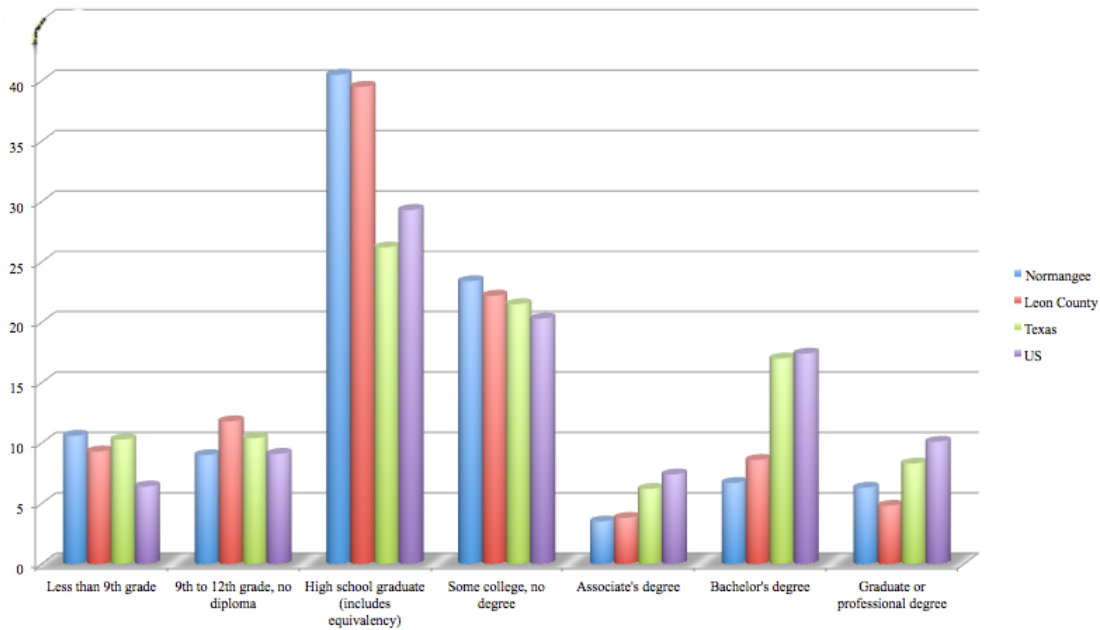


Figure 3.4 Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2005-2009 Community Survey,  
Education levels

Leon County's has a lower level of education compared to the national average (U.S. Census Bureau). The percent of the population who have attained a bachelors degree or more by age ranges are as follows 10 percent of those 25-34; 6.2 percent of those 35-44; 14.7 percent of those 45 to 64; and 17 percent of those 65 and older (U.S. Census Bureau). Normangee has a sizable income split with the largest portion of households at 19.9 percent bring home less than 10,000, while the second largest percentage at 19.5 percent have a household income between \$50,000 and \$74,999. The Census data shows no one in Normangee between the ages of 25 to 34 with a bachelors degree or higher. The rate increases to 7.4 percent of those between 35 to 44, 18.3 percent of those between 45-64 and 12.5 percent of those 65 or older have a bachelors degree or higher (U.S. Census Bureau).

There were 100 initial surveys mailed to subscribers of the *Normangee Star*. Businesses, politicians and other media groups who receive the *Star* were not included in the potential list of survey recipients to increase the odds of response and focus solely on subscriber opinion. Hargrave provides free copies to other media outlets, politicians and businesses. The remaining names were randomly selected from a list of all paying subscribers. The recipients were selected through using the random number generator at [www.random.org](http://www.random.org). Of the initial 100 mailed, 26 recipients responded and five were returned for having an incorrect address, one was returned with an apology note that stated the respondent was too sick to participate. A second grouping of 100 surveys were mailed using the same random number generation to ensure no duplication, from the second mailing another 24 individuals returned the survey for a total response rate of 25 percent. In addition the same questions were placed into an online survey through Qualtrics.com. The link to the study was placed on the *Normangee Star* website, the *Normangee Star* Facebook page and on the personal Facebook page of Hargrave, which is a page used to promote various items for the newspaper and is followed by at least some of his readers. The online survey form did not receive a significant initial response, only receiving a response from one respondent.

Additionally, two focus groups were conducted. The first was done on July 11, 2011, in Hilltop Lakes. The second was conducted the next day at Normangee High School. The focus group in Hilltop Lakes consisted of six people all over the age of 60 who were all Caucasian. It included two men and four women and all participants were retired. The participants were selected by going to the Hilltop Lakes

club and restaurant around lunchtime as a way to find groups of people within the community. The Normangee focus group also included six people. They ranged in age from 23 to more than 60. They were all Caucasian as well. Four of the respondents were teachers and two worked as office assistants within Normangee. The teachers were selected in an attempt to gain the perspective of people with education, who made up a large percentage of the survey respondents. The two office associates were chosen because they had lived in the community for more than 10 years. The purpose of these focus groups was to go beyond the short answers provided by the survey and delve into more detail about why the *Star's* readers are much more confident about its believability and accuracy compared to larger media outlets considered in the survey, the *Bryan-College Station Eagle*, the closest daily newspaper to Normangee, the *Houston Chronicle*, the nearest regional newspaper, and finally the *New York Times* to represent a national newspaper.

It's important to provide demographic data to explain why Hilltop Lakes was used as a focus group location; despite the *Star* being located about 10 miles away. Hilltop Lakes is a community of 3,086 people located in Leon County near Normangee. A homeowners association oversees the community. Its residents include a large number of senior citizens with higher average incomes when compared to Normangee. Based on the subscriber lists, there are about the same number of subscribers in Normangee and Hilltop Lakes. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, nearly a third of the Hilltop Lakes population was 65 or older. In terms of surveys sent, more than half were sent to Hilltop Lakes and a 49 percent of the respondents are from the community. At one time Hilltop Lakes residents were limited to senior

citizens, but the community has now become open to anyone. According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, the two largest segments of the community's population are either between the ages of 0-18 or 55 or older.

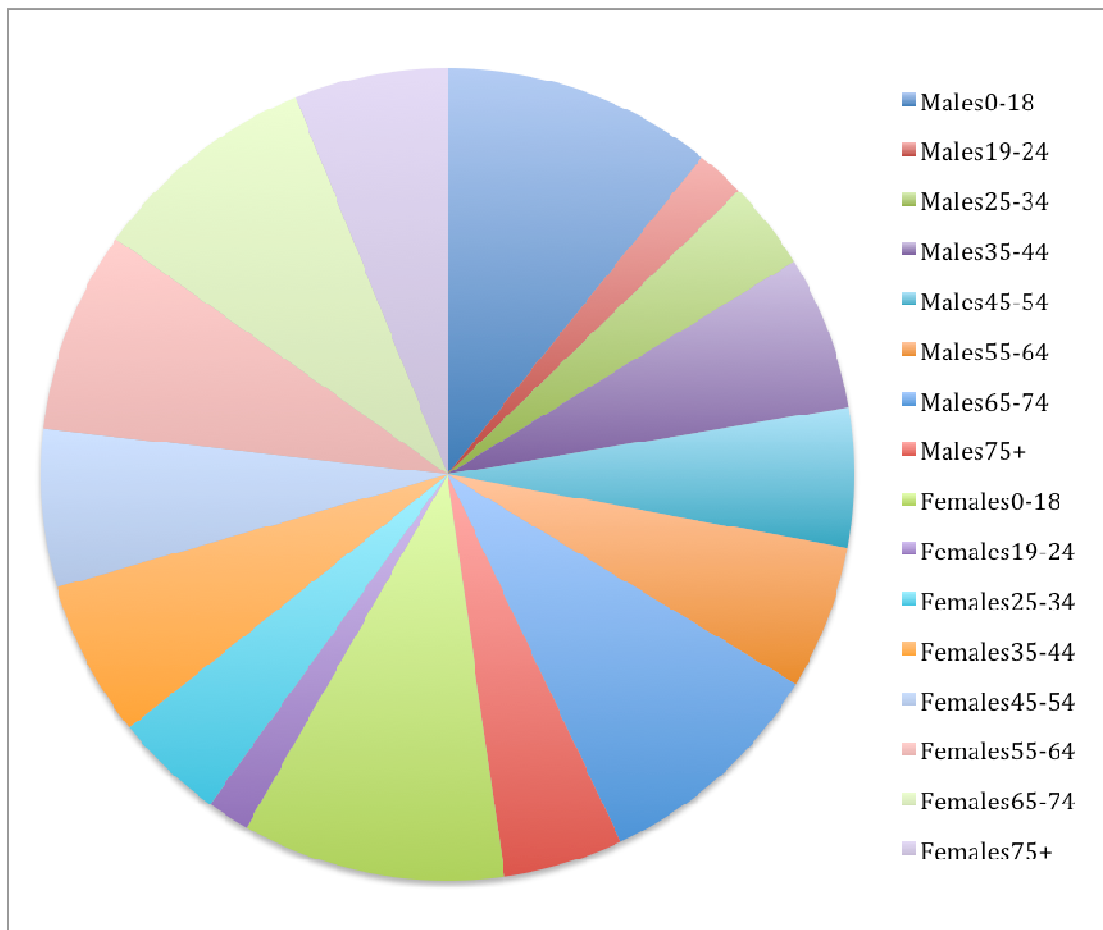


Figure 3.5 U.S. Census Bureau Age Distribution Data of Hilltop Lakes

residents from 2000

## Chapter 4: Results

Prior to contacting the print and online readers, the publisher and owner of the *Normangee Star*, Hank Hargrave, was interviewed about what results he expected from readers. Hargrave said he believed the *Star* would receive higher ratings in terms of credibility compared to regional or national newspapers. “I think that’s pretty much true of all hometown newspapers.” (Hargrave 2011). The reason for this is because the readers have access to him in a way they never would with places like *the Bryan-College Station Eagle* or *Houston Chronicle* (Hargrave 2011). Hargrave also predicts that many of his online readers will be the same people who read the *Star* in print (Hargrave 2011). Although based on the responses to the survey and in focus groups it does not appear that most of those who read the *Star* in print also read it online. “In the outlying areas some of our readers will look online to keep up (because of the time it takes for mail delivery),” (Hargrave 2011). There is one exception, high school football games, most of the *Star’s* online updates are posted on Wednesday, after the print product has been published, but football results are posted on Friday night shortly after the game and periodic updates during the game are posted on the *Star’s* Facebook page (Hargrave 2011).

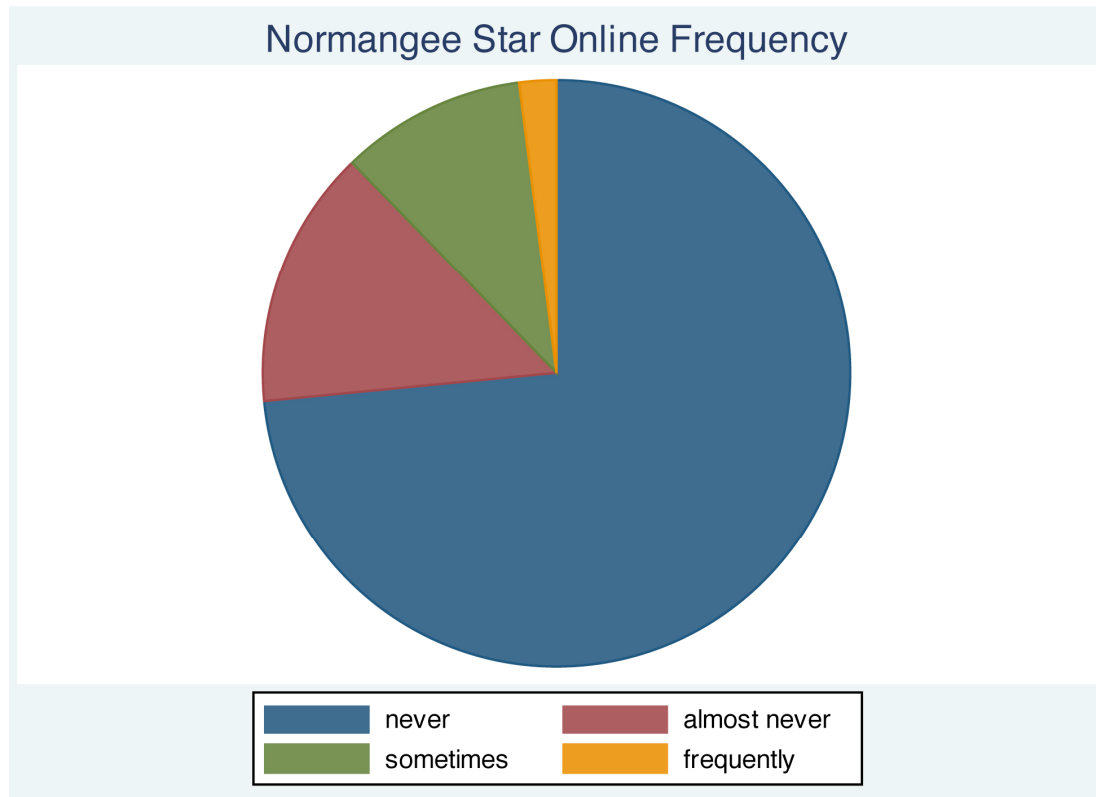


Figure 4.1 Online Frequency of Normangee Star respondents

Individuals looking at the *Star* for news are typically those with some type of connection to Normangee (Hargrave 2011). The website is a service for people who want to know about Normangee, but no longer live there, it is information the typical person is not going to want (Hargrave 2011). Those who read online won't have the same level of skepticism toward the information online compared to other sites because of their knowledge of Normangee (Hargrave 2011). Hargrave believes community newspapers are not having the same problems as larger regional papers, but they are having problems (2011). Larger newspapers are losing credibility, while community papers are losing advertisers (Hargrave 2011). "The first thing people cut in the economic downturn is advertising." (Hargrave 2011). The key to community newspapers remains their market (Hargrave 2011). There just isn't a large enough



market for news about towns like Normangee, Texas to withstand the addition of multiple media outlets (Hargrave 2011). Hargrave said the key to his credibility is based on his reputation, that people know who he is and believe him to be fair (Hargrave 2011). “A man once told me, and I take this as a compliment, ‘I like the way you write because you don’t tell me how to think.’” (Hargrave 2011). There is a tendency amongst some writers to editorialize in their articles, but in a small community like Normangee is very important not to do so (Hargrave 2011).

The focus groups helped to provide explanation about why the online response pool was considerably lower than expected. The only person who responded to the survey online stated the main problem with the Internet version of the paper is that it was infrequently updated. “The only negative thing is that the *Normangee Star* does not update its website. I enjoyed reading the news on line,” according to a respondent. Individuals who were part of the Normangee focus members also stated they used to look at the *Star’s* website, but had stopped due to infrequent updates. Two-thirds of the Normangee focus group respondents and all of the Hilltop Lakes focus group respondents stated they seldom, if ever go online to get news from the *Star*. The Hilltop Lakes focus group did not appear to even consider going online to view the *Star*, meanwhile the Normangee focus group focused on the lack of updates to the website. There were 87.76 percent of survey respondents who stated they never or almost never went to the *Normangee Star* website. A few survey respondents who did comment stated they went to the site once to get a high school football score. According to Hargrave, most of the online updates come through the *Star’s* Facebook page, which has 323 fans. The Facebook page receives a better response than stories

posted online (Hargrave 2011). Two of the focus group respondents specifically mentioned that the newspaper's website had not had a full update since November 2010.

The *Star's* readers seem to be content with the direction of the paper since Hargrave took ownership about five years ago. Every respondent, but one, stated the newspaper was about the same or better in terms of both accuracy and believability in the last five years. The respondents made comments such as: the paper is more professional, has more pages, more obituaries, has a broader coverage area, and they try to cover all local activities. One stated, "What you see and read is true." Another respondent considered the *Star* to be a "good small town paper" that covers items of local interest. One of the comments even specifically mentioned the newspaper has become more professional under Hargrave's ownership.

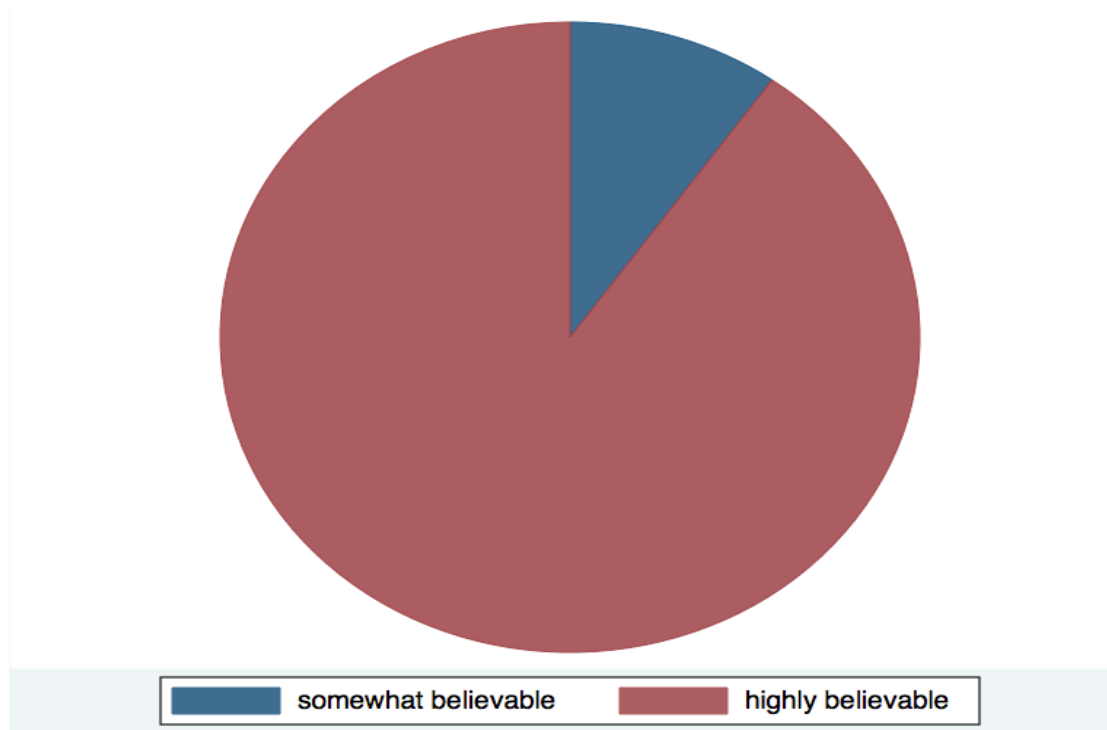


Figure 4.2 Believability of the Normangee Star from all survey respondents

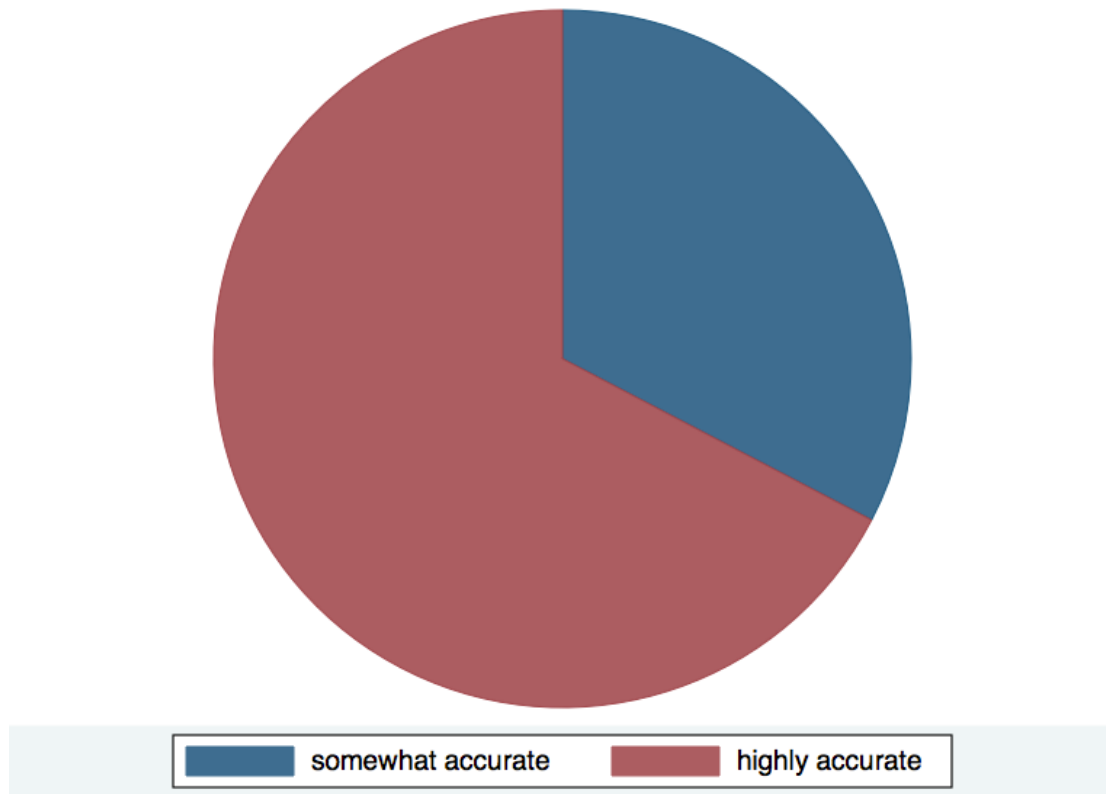


Figure 4.3 Accuracy rankings from survey respondents

Another survey respondent stated that one of the weaknesses of being a weekly newspaper was that it could not keep up with ongoing stories, but that respondent stated the newspaper was about the same as it was five years ago in terms of accuracy and believability. One respondent complained about the opinion section of the newspaper. The respondent considered the Bryan-College Station *Eagle* and the *Houston Chronicle* to be fairly balanced on the opinion page, but said the *Star* is extraordinarily skewed toward conservative columnists. He stated the news reports are factual, but added, “I find the commentary off the ‘deep end.’”

The *Star* serves as an example of “hyperlocal” coverage. Hyperlocal coverage is designed specifically to appeal to a small population either in terms of limited geography or population or both. Hyperlocal coverage is designed to report on a very

small area, essentially or an area that sparsely populated. Normangee is both small in terms of population and even with Hilltop Lakes included the *Star's* coverage area is geographically and in terms of population very small, fitting the definition of hyperlocal.

Hoffman and Eveland showed a relationship between community attachment and local media (2010, 174). The results for the *Normangee Star* indicate a clear community bond between the *Star* and its readers. Most of the *Star* readers have lived in the area for years. The study showed that length of time living within a community did contribute to attachment to the community media (2010, 185).

There were not enough respondents to who participated in this survey to determine if there were any statistically significant results. Therefore the results of this study are described only in terms of percentages of respondents who provided answers. The results from this study indicate that the *Star* may not follow trends in the media industry of declining trust shown in national studies such as the previously cited in the 2010 Gallup Poll (Gallup 2010). Focus group respondents reiterated the survey results. The respondents nearly unanimously stated they thought the small size of the communities helped ensure the believability and accuracy of the *Normangee Star*. In addition, they discussed how the larger size of the other three papers, the *Bryan-College Station Eagle*, *Houston Chronicle* and *New York Times*, made them less believable and more likely to make errors. Respondent 6 from the Normangee focus group summed up the overall believability of the *Star* when she stated, “I believe that most of the articles are true because this is a small town and everyone knows everybody and so the facts are usually pretty accurate.” Several of the Hilltop

Lakes respondents said it is impossible for inaccurate information to be placed in the *Star* without the entire community knowing.

Several of the respondents stated larger newspapers are more likely to provide slanted news. Respondent 2 from the Normangee study stated, “Well, for larger papers if you’re talking New York and stuff, I think it definitely sways towards whichever political market it tends to be geared toward. As far as Bryan, I’m not quite sure. I don’t read that one. I would say on a national level they definitely are geared toward whichever political side they favor.”

In addition, respondent 1 from the Hilltop Lakes group said, “I’ve gotten pretty jaded about media.” The respondent added they believe that larger media outlets slant their news to meet an agenda, and therefore as a reader they could not tell if the news was factual. One of the more humorous responses about believability of the *New York Times* came from respondent 1 in the Normangee focus group who described it as a “Yankee” newspaper.

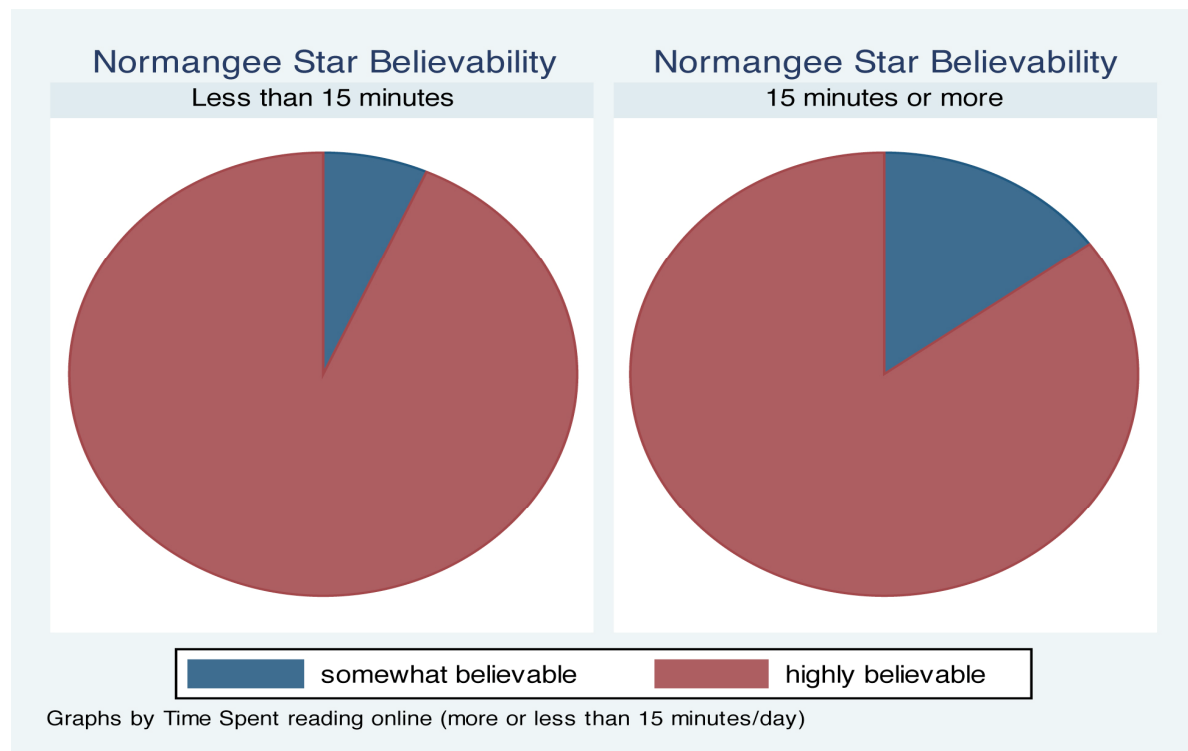


Figure 4.4 Star Believability based on time spent reading online.

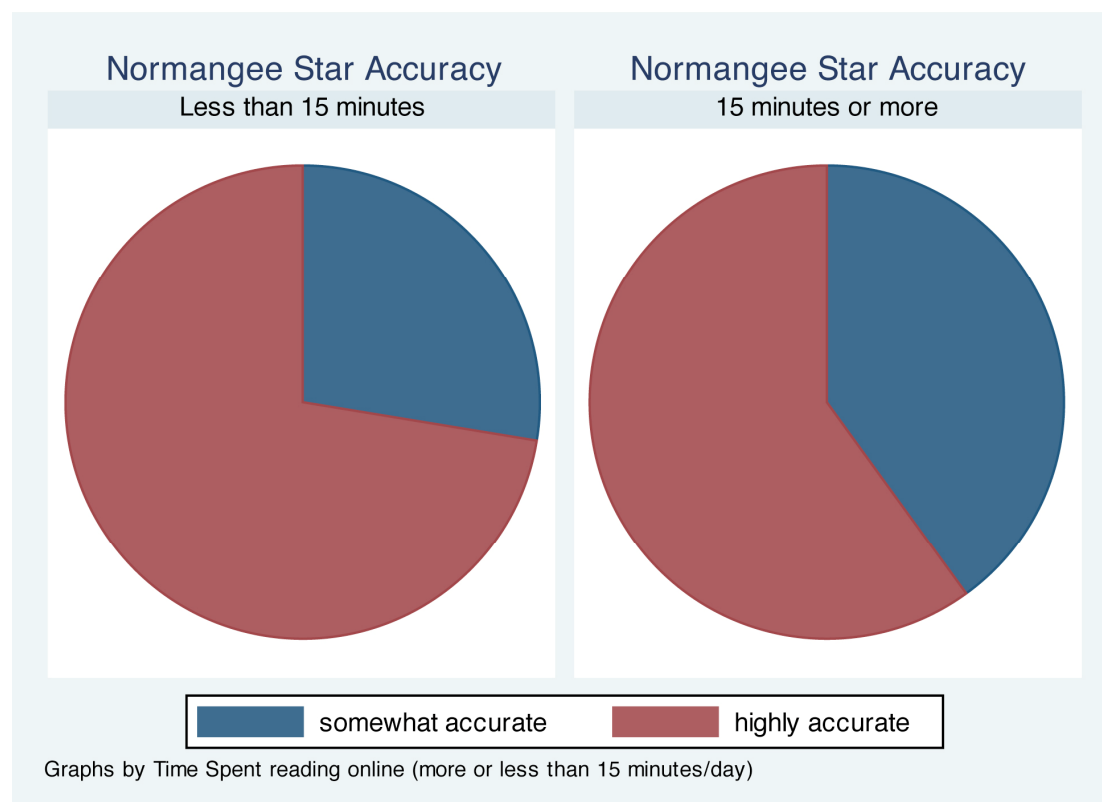


Figure 4.5 Star accuracy based on time spent reading online

Both focus groups and survey respondents believed the *Star* was more accurate than the larger daily papers. The most specific explanation of the reasoning for this came from respondent 2 in the Normangee focus group. She said in response to the question about accuracy at other papers that, “it’s just the size of the paper in general, of course, there’s probably going to be more mistakes than a smaller local paper. He (Hargrave) has a chance to go over each page and especially because it’s just once a week so he has a chance to make sure all that stuff is correct. Then on the larger level you’re doing it daily and getting it out there as quickly as possible, so yeah, you do see mistakes and misprints and stuff like that.”

Despite the recently reported increase in confidence in newspapers in the 2011 Gallup poll, readers of the *Normangee Star* maintain a much more positive view of their local newspaper than the general public’s attitude toward newspapers. Twenty-eight percent of people who responded to the Gallup survey who have “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in their newspaper (Morales 2011, 1). The *Star* readers comparatively stated nearly unanimous confidence in the accuracy and believability of the *Star*.

There were few negative comments about the paper by either members of the focus groups or survey respondents. There were respondents who wrote comments, both negative and positive within the mailed survey responses. The negative comments included comments such as the *Star* uses too much filler copy and provides very little local news. The respondent who stated the *Star* had become worse in the past five years in terms of believability and accuracy made this comment.

Respondents also stated that the information in the *Star* was repetitive with too many quotes used week after week, and too many out of town obituaries. Another complaint made about the *Star*, by one of the survey respondents, was that the newspaper runs too much news that originates from the Hilltop Lakes community. This respondent did not provide an overall negative attitude toward the *Star*. There were 48 percent of respondents to this survey who were from Hilltop Lakes. Based on the number of survey respondents and subscribers who live in Hilltop Lakes, it would appear coverage of the community is expected from the majority of subscribers. Of those who spend 15 minutes or less online per day only 7 percent of respondents considered the *Star* to be somewhat believable, while 93% of the respondents considered the newspapers to be highly believable. Conversely, 18 percent of respondents who spend 15 more minutes reading news online considered the *Star* to be somewhat believable, with the remaining respondents ranking the *Star* as highly believable. Of those who read less than 15 minutes of news online per day, 28 percent rated the *Star* as being somewhat accurate. There were 72 percent of respondents who indicated the *Star* was highly accurate.

The *Star* was not rated as highly in terms of accuracy by those who read more than 15 minutes of news online per day. Forty percent of respondents rated the *Star* as highly accurate, compared to those who read less than 15 minutes per day where 60 percent who rated the *Star* as highly accurate.

There were fewer respondents for each of the newspapers who answered the believability and accuracy questions for the online versions. There were only nine respondents to the *Star* questions related to online readership. Of those who spend



less than 15 minutes reading news online per day 33 percent stated the *Star* web news was somewhat believable and 67 percent rated the *Star* online as highly believable. Those who read more than 15 minutes per day reading news online 44 percent of respondents rated the *Star* online news as somewhat believable and 56 percent of respondents ranked the information as highly believable. The *Star's* online accuracy was rated as somewhat accurate by 40 percent of respondents who read less than 15 minutes online per day. The remaining 60 percent believed the *Star* to be highly accurate. Those who read more than 15 minutes online per day rated the *Star* news online as follows; 67 percent believed the information to be somewhat accurate, while 33 percent rated it as highly accurate.

Accuracy was another area in which time spent online had an impact on the results. Those who spend more than 15 minutes per day believed that the media was less accurate than those who spend less than 15 minutes online per day. The focus groups again yielded information that could help explain this, why the *Star* was considered more accurate than the larger newspaper in the study. The consensus of the focus groups was accuracy at the larger papers was hurt by their nature of putting out a newspaper each day, compared to the *Star*, which had a week to look over information for a weekly publication date. When it came to online believability and accuracy all media outlets were rated slightly worse by survey respondents and focus groups. The public was more apprehensive about news that is presented online.

There were 2 percent of respondents who stated the *Normangee Star* had gotten worse in terms of believability, 28 percent of respondents stated the *Star* had gotten better over the last five years in believability and 70 percent ranked the paper

the same in terms of believability compared to five years ago. The accuracy rankings were 72 percent rated the *Star* the same, 26 considered the *Star* better, while 2 percent considered the paper worse in terms of accuracy compared to five years prior.

One of the apparent differences between the two focus groups was the use of online news, particularly involving the *Star*. None of the respondents, in the Hilltop Lakes study, a community where 43 percent of the population is over the age of 55, looked at the *Star* online. Some even seem surprised by the question, as though they had never even considered doing so. This was true despite the fact that several within the group reported that they now get online news, when they didn't five years ago. Respondent 2 from Hilltop Lakes stated he simply didn't need to read the *Star* online. Respondent 4 said that she did not realize the *Star* even had a website. Respondent 5 from the Hilltop Lakes group stated she doesn't read the *Star* online, despite the fact that she uses the newspaper's web-based submission form to send in information to be published. She then referenced the age of the group and said, "You've got the wrong generation here, dear."

Focus group members in Normangee were on average younger than the Hilltop Lakes group. The Normangee group participants stated problems with the *Star's* online performance and said they would use the online site if it were simply updated more often. Respondent 3 mentioned that when she had recently attempted to go to the site, the news was still from November 2010, nearly seven months prior. Respondent 2 stated she used to visit the *Star* website frequently when it was being updated more regularly. "That's how I was reading it was online, because of where I was living. I wouldn't get it until Monday when it came out Wednesday, just like

through the mail or however. So I would actually read it online.” The respondent stated that she did follow Hargrave and the *Star* on Facebook, but that the information was not nearly as detailed. The Facebook page provided information about what is going on in Normangee at that particular time, but was not effective in informing the public about events ahead of time.

Most of the Hilltop Lakes group use news websites but those tend to be focused toward national news. Normangee focus group members also viewed the news websites of communities where they used to reside. Respondent 1 stated she has actually purchased an online subscription to the newspaper within the community where she used to live. Several of the other respondents in Normangee stated they also view the *Bryan-College Station Eagle* online and the websites of other local news sources in the Bryan-College Station area for news. Two of the respondents stated because they grew up near Houston they read the *Chronicle* online for national news. A third respondent stated she had grown up closer to Dallas, so she would read the *Dallas Morning News* online for national news. Normangee is located nearly midway between Dallas and Houston, just off Interstate 45 that connects the two major cities.

The two groups also provided interesting comments when it came to what media they were using now that they weren’t using five years ago. Respondent 1 stated she used to listen to NPR for two hours a day during her commute to and from work, but now that she has retired she no longer listens to NPR. Four of the respondents stated they watched Fox News. Respondent 6 stated he didn’t listen to talk radio anymore, because of the bias shown by the hosts when discussing the news.

Respondent 5 then added she hated talk radio. Respondents 2 and 3 both stated that nothing had changed in their media use.

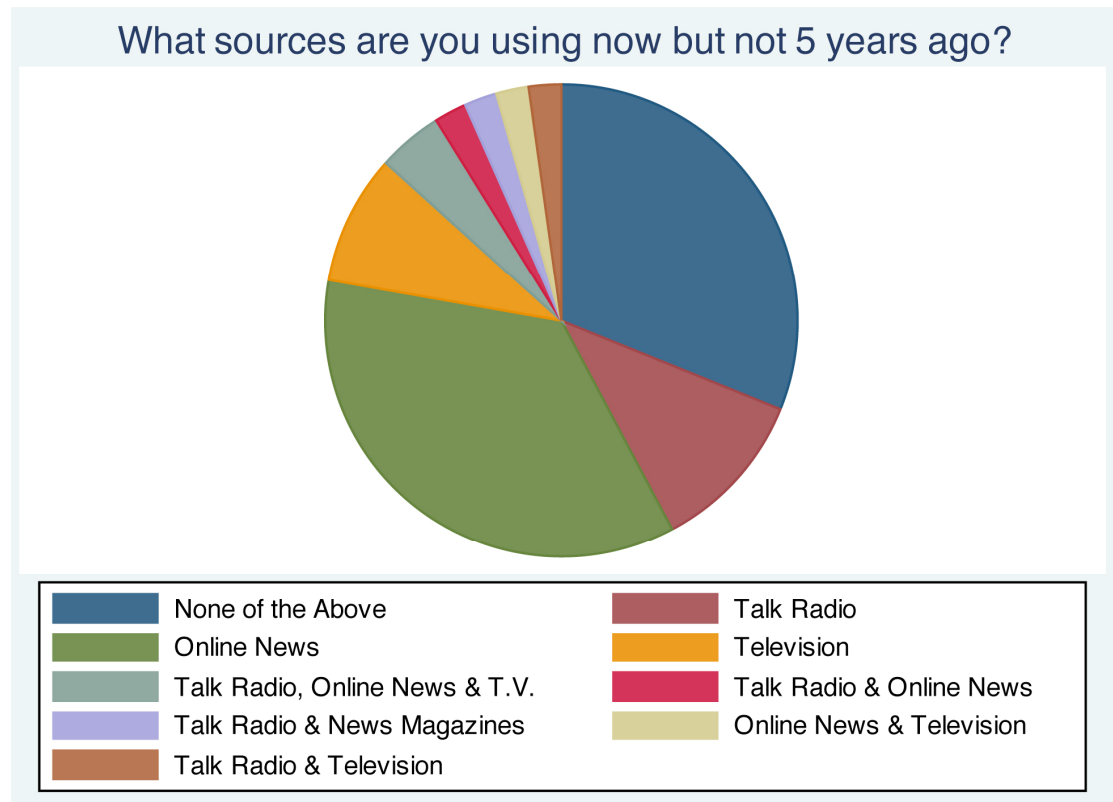


Figure 4.6 Sources respondents are using now that weren't used five years ago

They were the only respondents in either focus group that stated their media use had not changed at all over the past five years. The Normangee group had three respondents 2, 4 and 5, who stated that their media use had changed considerably because they had only begun reading or watching the news within the last five years. Respondent 4 stated that the only news she cared about five years ago was the weather, so she knew what she could wear that day. The three older respondents from the Normangee group all stated the primary change for them was viewing online news. Respondent 6 of the Normangee group said she began using online news because, for areas other than Normangee, it was easier to find information online than

attempting to find a newspaper. Respondent 3 had a very simple reason for her conversion to online news stating that she changed because, “I got a computer at the house. I used to not have one.” Respondent 2 one of the younger respondents gave another source of news, her father, “My dad is obsessed with Fox News so I don’t have to watch the news. I have to listen to it when I talk to him on the phone. That’s my news source — whatever he’s blasting in my ear or blowing out my e-mail.”

Time spent reading news online: Those who say they spend more time reading the news online were less trusting of the selected news media sources. There were a total of 49 respondents who answered the accuracy and believability questions regarding the *Star*, 37 responded for the *Eagle*, 31 to the *Chronicle* questions, and 18 for the *New York Times*.

#### *Bryan-College Station Eagle*

Survey respondents still had an overall positive view of the *Bryan-College Station Eagle*. Those who read more than 15 minutes per day online gave the *Eagle* lower believability ratings. Twenty-three respondents, who read less than 15 minutes reading news online each day, rated the *Eagle* as highly believable. In total, 65 percent of these respondents considered the *Eagle* to be highly believable.

Conversely, of those respondents who read more than 15 minutes of news online per day half of respondents rated the *Eagle* as highly credible and an equal percentage as somewhat credible.

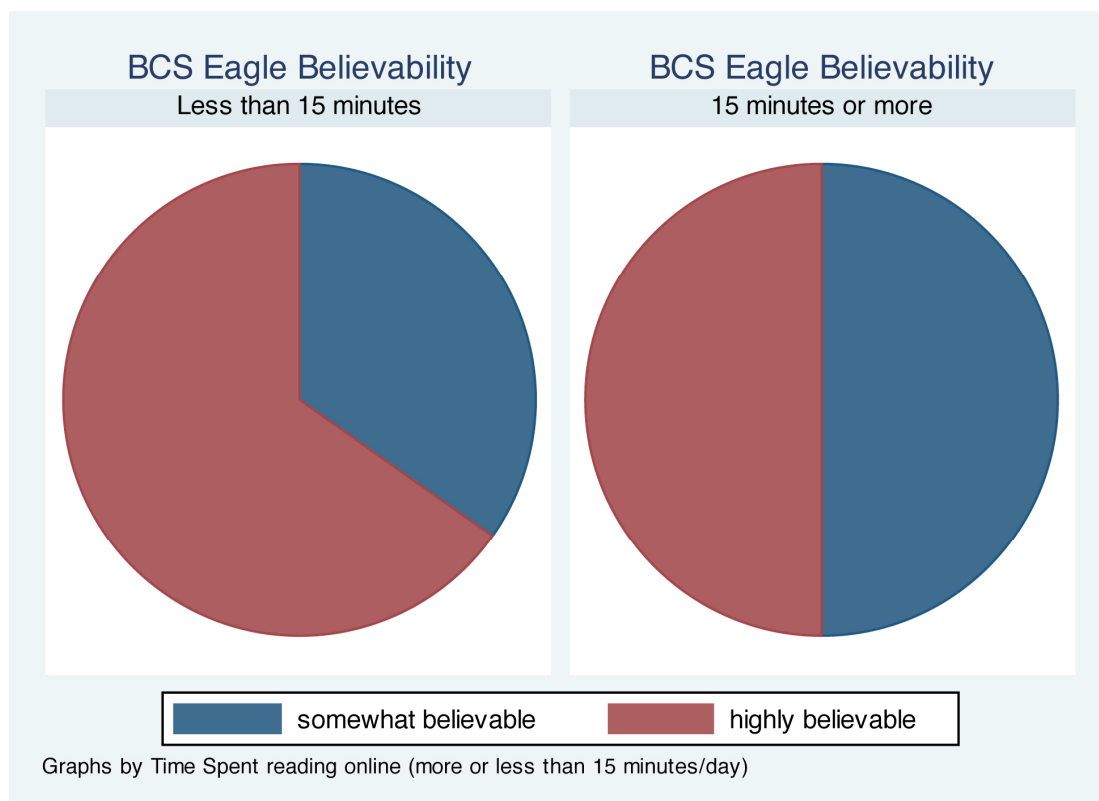


Figure 4.7 Eagle Believability by time spent online

Figure 4.7 shows that based upon the survey those who read more news online were less confident in the Eagle's believability. A sizable majority of respondents found the Eagle to be highly believable, when only those who read news on the Internet less than 15 minutes per day are considered. Yet for those who are heavier readers of online news the figure reduces to half of respondents who consider the Eagle to be highly believable.

When accuracy is considered survey respondents were less confident in the *Eagle*. Most of the respondents rated the *Eagle* as somewhat accurate. A total of 59 percent of respondents ranked the *Eagle* in this category.

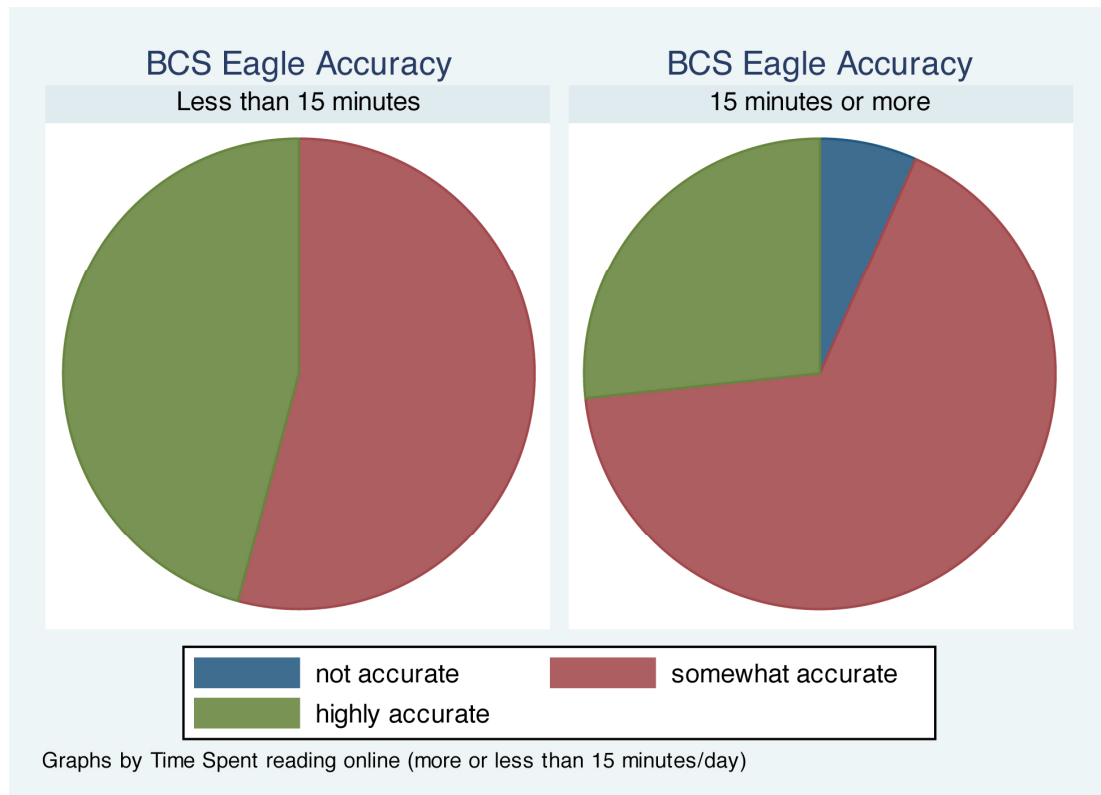


Figure 4.8 Eagle accuracy based on time spent online

As the results show nearly three-quarters of those who read more than 15 minutes of news online per day rated the Eagle as somewhat accurate. Meanwhile just over half of survey respondents who seldom read news online considered the Eagle somewhat accurate. These responses indicate that trust in the believability and accuracy of the news reports are lower as the size of the paper increases and the paper is located farther from where the reader is based. The *Eagle* did well in terms of believability and accuracy among those who read the print version, but these results show those who read the web version consider the accuracy of material on the *Eagle's* website to be much less believable. In this case the majority of respondents ranked the *Eagle's* online material to be somewhat believable and somewhat accurate,

meanwhile highly accurate was most chosen response by survey respondents when print information was considered.

#### Houston Chronicle

Online newsreaders continued rate the media outlet lower than those respondents who read little to no news online when the Houston Chronicle was considered. Meanwhile based on the figure below a visible smaller percentage of heavier online readers view the Chronicle as highly believable.

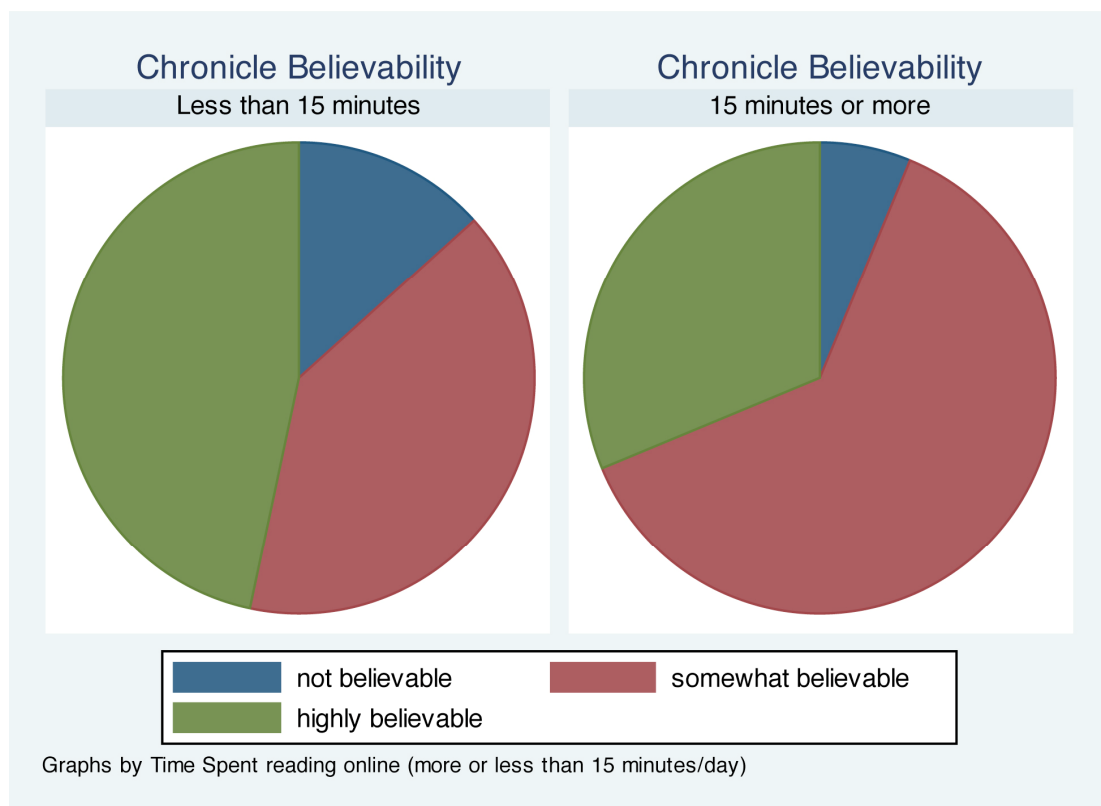


Figure 4.9 Chronicle believability based on time spent online.

One interesting aspect of the findings was that a larger number of those who read less than 15 minutes of news online per day found the *Chronicle* to be not believable.



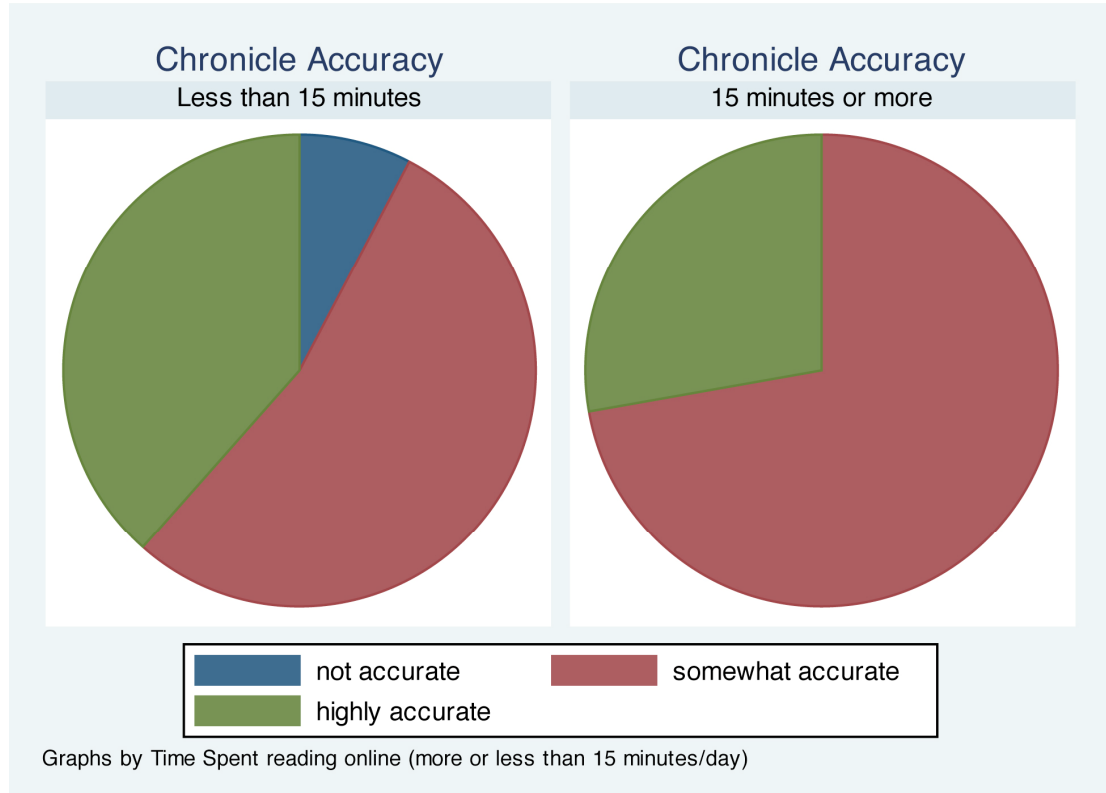


Figure 4.10 Chronicle accuracy based on time spent online.

Accuracy was another area where those who read less than 15 minutes of news online per day were more negative toward the *Chronicle*. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents who read more online news consider the *Chronicle* to be somewhat accurate. While just over half of those who read less news online consider the *Chronicle* to be somewhat accurate. Those who read less than 15 minutes online per day were more likely to consider the *Chronicle* not accurate.

#### New York Times

The farthest newspaper from Normangee received the lowest ratings from all survey respondents. Although in terms of believability the *Times* was unlike the other papers. In this case those who read less than 15 minutes of news online per day

considered *Times* less believable than those who read more than 15 minutes online per day. Most respondents who read little to no news online considered the *Times* to be not believable. Meanwhile those who read news online for 15 minutes or more per day just over 25 percent of respondents considered the *Times* to be not believable.

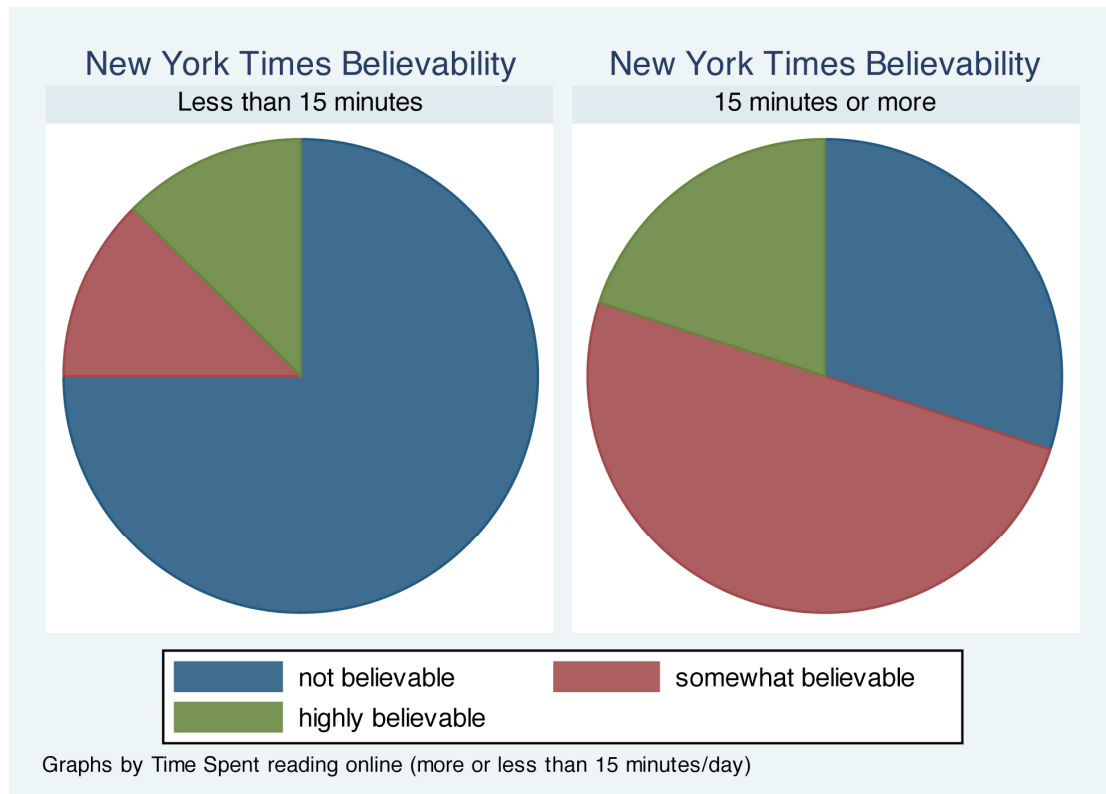


Figure 4.11 New York Times believability based on time spent online

Those who read more news online have a higher level of trust in the *Times* compared to those who read less than 15 minutes online per day.

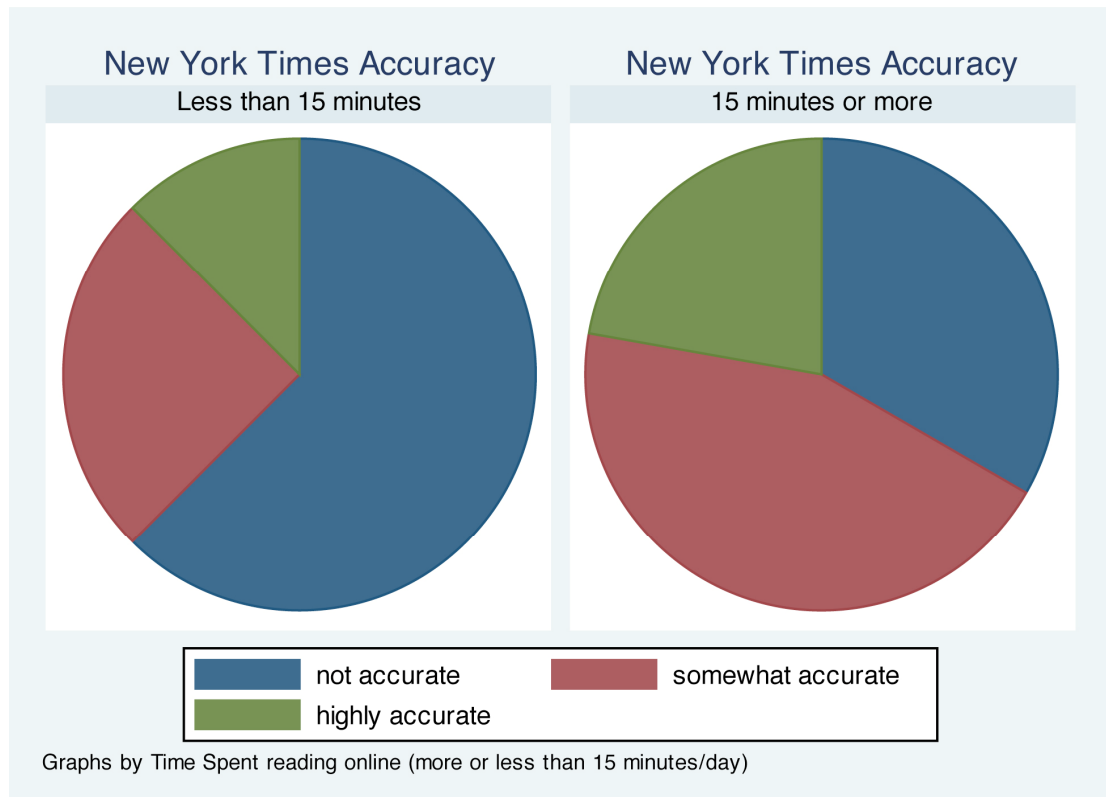


Figure 4.12 New York Times accuracy based on time spent online

Those who read little news online also rated the Times as less accurate. There were only 10 respondents who rated the New York Times who read more than 15 minutes of news online per day. Those who spend less time online reported the *Times* to be less accurate and believable than those who spend more time online.

Based on the results respondents who read more news online rated media outlets lower in terms of believability and accuracy.

News quality compared to five years ago:

Readers differ in their views of the *Star* in terms of how its readers perceive news quality compared to five years ago, compared to the 2010 Gallup Media Poll. The expectation was that the *Star* would have fallen over the past five years in terms of believability and accuracy. The Gallup media poll from 2010 showed that trust in the

media had been decreasing for more than a decade. This study was designed to look at whether the *Star* would be considered to have the same quality as it did five years ago. The findings of this study indicate that the *Star* only had one respondent who stated the paper had gotten worse in terms of believability and accuracy over the past five years. This respondent included comments to explain his response. He stated that the *Star* now had too much out of town information and obituaries and ran too much of the same material week after week.

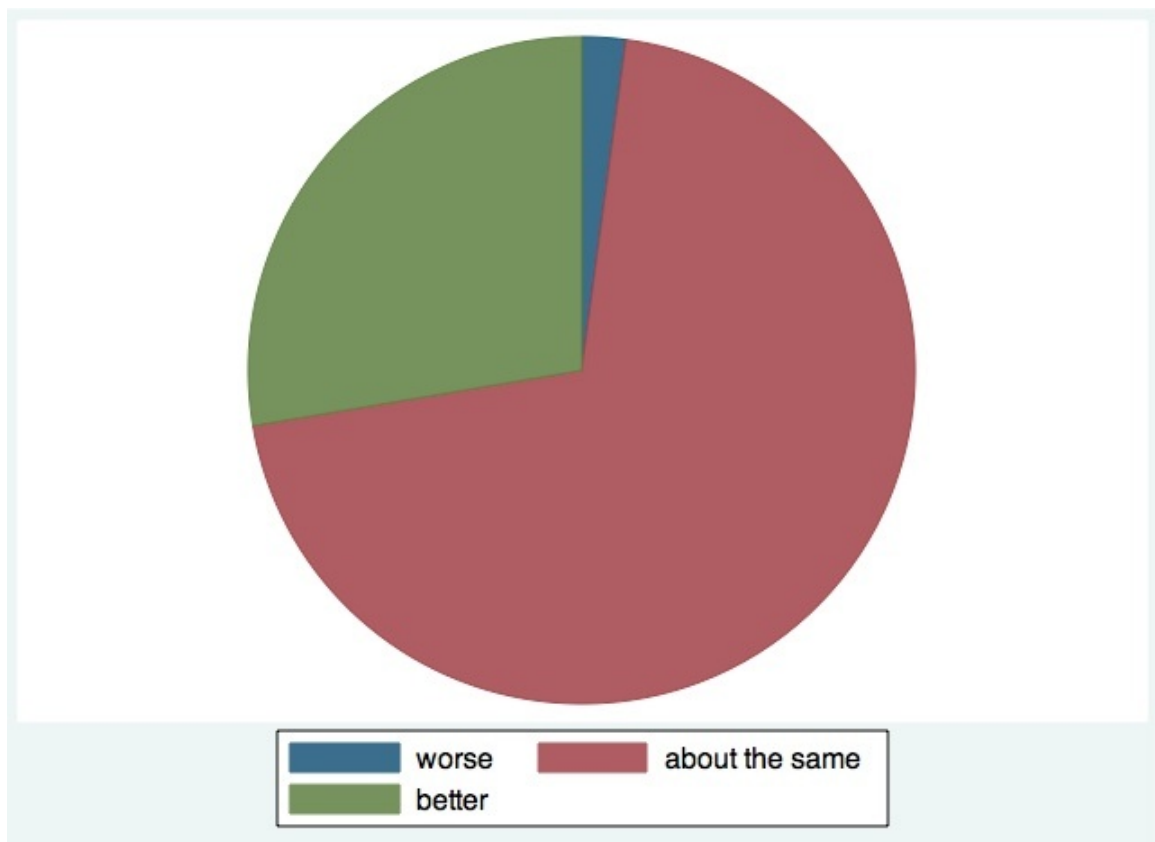


Figure 4.13 Survey Responses about the Believability of the Normangee Star compared to five years ago.

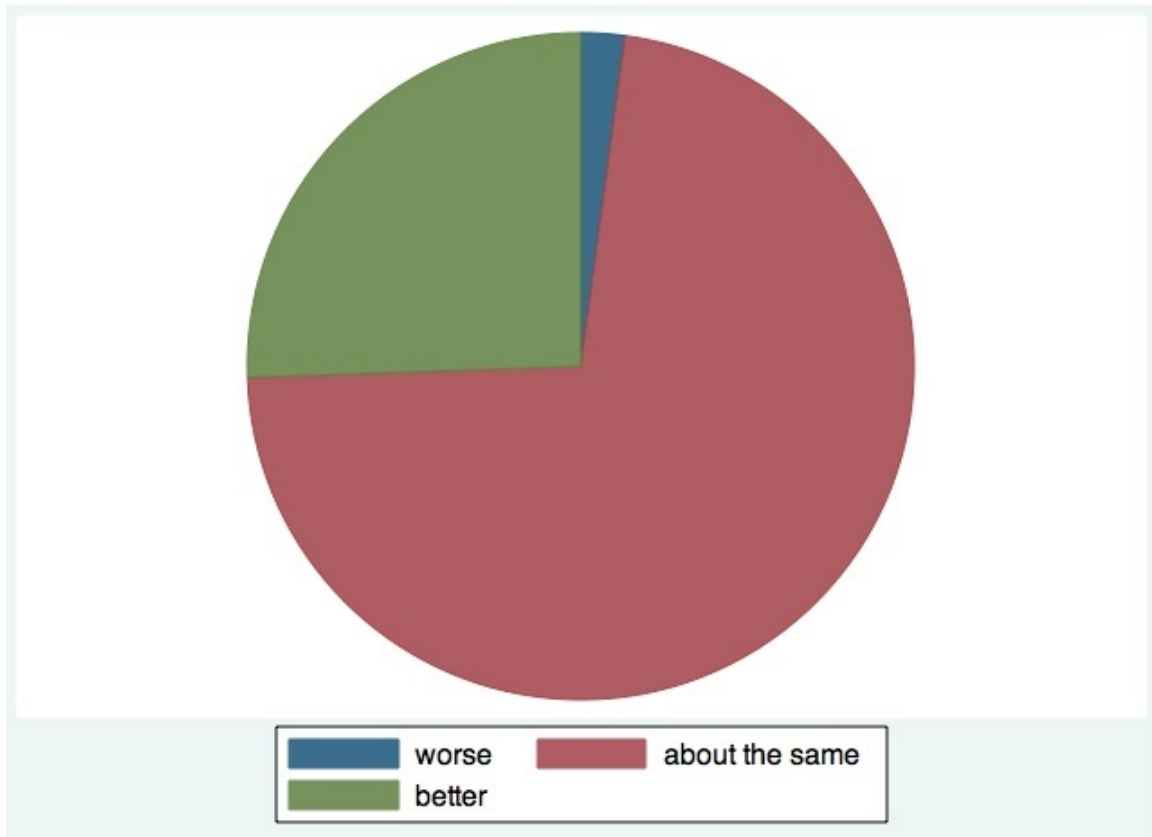


Figure 4.14 Survey Responses about the Accuracy of the Normangee Star compared to five years ago.

Survey results indicate 33 of 47 respondents stated the Star was about the same in terms of believability, 13 respondents stated the paper had gotten better one respondent stated the *Star* had become worse than five years ago in terms of either believability or accuracy. Only one of the 47 respondents ~~who~~ stated the *Star* had become worse over the past five years, 34 said it was about the same and 12 said it had improved. Just walking around Normangee before conducting the focus groups bringing up the *Star* survey would generate comments like “everyone loves Hank.” In addition, most of the focus group members didn’t talk generically about the editor or the *Star* when giving their opinions; they talked about how “Hank” works to do a

good job. There was a general consensus among the focus group respondents that everyone knows and trusts Hargrave. Respondent one of the Normangee focus group when asked about the believability of the *Star* did not mention the paper she referenced Hargrave. She said, “I think he reports very unbiased facts. He’s very good at that.” The same respondent also referenced Hargrave when referring to the *Star*’s accuracy stating, “He does a pretty good job. He tries to verify names, now there’s been a couple of little mess ups, but you know that’s going to happen because sometimes he’s given the wrong names. But Hank is really; he really tries to serve the community well. “ One of the survey respondents specifically noted that since Hargrave had purchased the *Star* it had become more professional. Another while not mentioning Hargrave by named commented that in the last five years the *Star* has gotten a new editor who has improved the paper. It is clear based on the responses and talking with people in Normangee and Hilltop Lakes that a portion of the community identifies Hargrave as the *Normangee Star*. Their trust in him as an individual appears to extend to the publication as an entity.

## Chapter 5: Future Research

The Pew Research Center for People and the Press has shown that community newspapers are doing better in terms of circulation declines compared to larger metropolitan papers. Future research in this area should continue to survey readers of these small community newspapers. It could determine if the Normangee Star is simply an outlier in terms of its credibility and accuracy rating compared to the industry as a whole. Or, are small community newspapers considered to do a better job by its readers when compared to their much larger counterparts at regional or national newspapers? This study could be expanded to additional communities in multiple states. It would be useful to include multiple political ideology, income levels and education levels with a larger number of respondents. If audiences for these smaller newspapers continue to show accuracy and believability rankings from their readers that rank well above their national cohorts, it seems possible there are techniques or tactics being used by these smaller outlets that might be useful to the larger newspapers that are considered the standard bearers for the industry. Focus group respondents stated smaller newspapers were more accurate and believable because “it is local and everyone pretty much knows what’s going on so it’d be hard to tell a falsehood,” according to respondent three from the Hilltop Lakes focus group. The focus group respondents said they think that accuracy and believability improve when reporters and editors live among their readers and that creates better journalism. Respondent one from the Hilltop Lakes focus group stated that the Star, because of the small size of the community, would not continue to be believable to its

readers. If it published false information, people would know the information was not true.

This was opposed to larger outlets where reporters and editors don't have the same social pressure to get things right. Respondent 3 from the Normangee focus group said, that larger papers like the New York Times are swayed toward the political market they are designed to appeal toward.

According to the respondents in this study, the anonymity of these large communities combined with the speed of producing a daily newspaper leads to more bias, less believability and less accuracy including more mistakes in grammar and facts. It would be interesting to speak with individuals in the newspaper industry to determine if their views matched those of these respondents. Professionals within the industry might argue that larger newspaper outlets would do a better job in providing the news and should be more accurate. They may think this was because the larger papers have better resources. There is an opportunity based on this study to determine if media opinion varies based on the size of the community. Do those who live in larger communities distrust the media as a whole, which is suggested by surveys such as those by Gallup and Pew, or do they see the same issues these survey respondents described. If this proves to be the case in other larger communities, then the question becomes, is there some form of action larger newspapers can take to create a small community feeling that would allow them to help bridge the credibility gap?



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## Appendix A

Partisanship and Credibility			
	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Gap</u>
<i>Believe all or most of what organization says</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	
BBC	9	28	-19
NPR	18	37	-19
NewsHour	16	34	-18
NBC News	16	31	-15
C-SPAN	17	31	-14
New York Times	10	24	-14
Time	12	26	-14
CNN	22	35	-13
60 Minutes	24	37	-13
MSNBC	18	29	-11
Newsweek	10	21	-11
Your daily newspaper	19	29	-10
ABC News	19	28	-9
Associated Press	14	22	-8
CBS News	18	26	-8
Local TV news	27	32	-5
U.S. News	19	19	0
USA Today	16	15	+1
Wall Street Journal	29	24	+5
Fox News Channel	34	19	+15
Percentages based on those who could rate each organization.			

The graph above is from Pew Audience Segments 2008

## Appendix B.

### Focus Group Questions

I am contacting you because I am interested in learning about how you go about gathering news about what is happening where you live, other parts of the United States and other parts of the world. We are particularly interested in knowing about your newspaper reading, either in print and/or on newspaper websites.

I am a graduate student at the University of Nebraska. This project is designed to ask for your opinions about both print and online newspapers and is focusing on readers of the Normangee Star. You must be at least 19 years of age to participate. The information obtained in this study will help my understanding of the differences between those who read newspapers online compared to those who read the print version.

What do you think about the Normangee Star in terms of believability? Why?

What do you think about other publications such as the Bryan College-Station Eagle, Houston Chronicle or New York Times in terms of believability? Why?

What do you think of the Normangee Star in terms of accuracy? Why?

What do you think about other publications such as the Bryan College-Station Eagle, Houston Chronicle or New York Times in terms of accuracy? Why?

Do you look at the Normangee Star online? Why or why not?

Do you look at other publications online such as the Bryan College-Station Eagle, Houston Chronicle or New York Times?

What news sources are you using now that you didn't use five years ago? Why have you started using these?

## Appendix C



COLLEGE OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATIONS

Dear Participants:

You have been contacted because we are interested in learning about how you go about gathering news about what is happening where you live, other parts of the United States and other parts of the world. We are particularly interested in knowing about your newspaper reading, either in print and/or on newspaper websites.

This study is being conducted by Burton Speakman, who is a graduate student at the University of Nebraska. Any information obtained during this study that could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. Responses should be returned by mail in the enclosed envelope that does not in any way identify you as the respondent. Please answer all questions to the best of your ability. This project is designed to ask for your opinions about both print and online newspapers and is focusing on readers of the Normangee Star. You must be at least 19 years of age to participate. The information obtained in this study will help our understanding of the differences between those who read newspapers online compared to those who read the print version.

Answering the survey questions involved in this study should take 30 minutes or less to complete. There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research. You may ask questions concerning this study and have those questions answered prior to participating by calling (270) 799-6469. Please contact the researcher if you want to voice concerns or complaints about the survey. If you would like to contact someone other than the researcher about the project, you can contact the University Nebraska Institutional Review Board by calling (402) 472-6965 or you can contact Dr. Linda Shipley at (402) 472-8232. These numbers can be called to voice complaints, to ask for information about the research process or if the researcher cannot be reached.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Thank you for taking time to share your opinions with us. Please keep a copy of this document for your records.

## Appendix D

**1. How frequently do you read the following newspapers?**

Normangee Star • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

Houston Chronicle • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

Byran-College Station Eagle • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

New York Times • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

**2. How would you rate the following newspapers in terms of believability?**

Normangee Star • highly believable • somewhat believable • not believable

Houston Chronicle • highly believable • somewhat believable • not believable

Byran-College Station Eagle • highly believable • somewhat believable • not believable

New York Times • highly believable • somewhat believable • not believable

**3. How frequently do you read the newspaper articles on the following websites?**

[www.normangeestar.net](http://www.normangeestar.net) Normangee Star website • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

[www.theeagle.com](http://www.theeagle.com) B-CS Eagle website • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

[www.chron.com](http://www.chron.com) Houston Chronicle website • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

[www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) New York Times website • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

**4. How would rate the following news websites in terms of believability?**

[www.normangeestar.net](http://www.normangeestar.net) Normangee Star ☐☐ highly believable ☐☐ somewhat believable ☐☐ not believable

[www.theeagle.com](http://www.theeagle.com) B-CS ☐☐ highly believable ☐☐ somewhat believable ☐☐ not believable

[www.chron.com](http://www.chron.com) Houston Chronicle ☐☐ highly believable ☐☐ somewhat believable ☐☐ not believable

[www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) New York Times ☐☐ highly believable ☐☐ somewhat believable ☐☐ not believable

**5. How would rate the following newspapers in terms of accuracy?**

Normangee Star • highly accurate • somewhat accurate • not accurate

Houston Chronicle • highly accurate • somewhat accurate • not accurate

Bryan-College Station Eagle • highly accurate • somewhat accurate • not accurate

New York Times • highly accurate • somewhat accurate • not accurate

**6. How would rate the following news websites in terms of accuracy?**

[www.normangeestar.net](http://www.normangeestar.net) Normangee Star • highly accurate • somewhat accurate • not accurate

[www.theeagle.com](http://www.theeagle.com) B-CS • highly accurate • somewhat accurate • not accurate

[www.chron.com](http://www.chron.com) Houston Chronicle • highly accurate • somewhat accurate • not accurate

[www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) New York Times • highly accurate • somewhat accurate • not accurate

**7. . Thinking about the Normangee Star, would you say it has gotten better or worse, or stayed about the**

same in terms of believability over the past five years?

- Better • Worse • About the same

**8. Thinking about the Normangee Star, would you say it has gotten better, worse or stayed about the**

**same in terms of accuracy over the past five years?**

- Better • Worse • About the same

**9. Please provide an example of how the Star has gotten better or worse?**

**10. We would like to know what you think about the Star as a source of news and information. Please**

**indicate how much you agree or disagree that the Normangee Star displays the following characteristics.**

Trustworthiness • strongly agree • agree • neutral • disagree • strongly disagree

Bias • strongly agree • agree • neutral • disagree • strongly disagree

Honesty • strongly agree • agree • neutral • disagree • strongly disagree

Accuracy • strongly agree • agree • neutral • disagree • strongly disagree

**11. Do you spend more time reading news online or in the printed newspaper?**

- ☐ Online • Printed newspaper

**12. What news sources are you using now that you didn't use five years ago?**

- Talk radio • News magazines • Online news • Newspapers • ☐ Television
- ☐ None of the above

**13. How often do you read the following:**

Printed Local Newspaper • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

Printed National newspaper • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

News magazine • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

Online local newspaper • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

Online national newspaper • frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

**14. How much time do you spend reading news online on a typical day?**

---

**15. How often do you access the Normangee Star website?**

- frequently • sometimes • almost never • never

**16. How much time do you spend on the average week reading the print version of the Normangee Star?**

- 15 minutes or less • 15 minutes to <30 minutes • 30 minutes to <45 minutes
- ☐ 45 minutes < 1 hour • 1 hour or more

**17. Do you have a computer at home that you use on a regular basis? • YES • NO**

**18. If you answered yes to question 17, then please indicate what type of Internet connection you typically**

**use to access news: • Broadband • Dial up**

**19. When thinking about your political views, do you consider yourself to be:**

- Very Conservative • Conservative • Moderate • ☐ Liberal • Very Liberal

**20. What is your current annual household income?**

☐ \$9,999 or below ☐ \$10,000 to \$19,999 ☐ \$20,000 to \$34,999

☐ \$35,000 to \$49,999 ☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999 ☐ \$75,000 or above

**21. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?**

- Some High School • High School Degree or GED • Associates Degree or



Technical Degree

• Bachelors Degree • Graduate or Professional Degree

**22. What is your ethnicity?**

• Caucasian/White • African American • Latino • American Indian • Asian • Other

**23. What is your gender?** • Male • ☐ Female

**24. What is your age?** \_\_\_\_\_

**25. In what city and state do you currently reside?**

---

**26. How many years have you lived in that city?**

---

## Appendix E

May 26, 2011

Burton Speakman  
Dean's Office of Journalism and Mass Communications

Linda Shipley  
Dean's Office of Journalism and Mass Communications  
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IRB Number: 20110511842 EX  
Project ID: 11842  
Project Title: Print vs. Online Journalism: Is credibility  
impacted by where readers find information?

Dear Burton:

This letter is to officially notify you of the approval of your project by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. It is the Board's opinion that you have provided adequate safeguards for the rights and welfare of the participants in this study based on the information provided. Your proposal is in compliance with this institution's Federal Wide Assurance 00002258 and the DHHS Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46) and has been classified as Exempt Category 2.

You are authorized to implement this study as of the Date of Final Approval: 05/26/2011.

1. The approved informed consent forms have been uploaded to NUgrant (files with -Approved.pdf in the file name). Please use these forms to distribute to participants. If you need to make

changes to the informed consent forms, please submit the revised forms to the IRB for review and approval prior to using them.

2. Please include the IRB approval number (IRB# 20110511842 EX) in the on-line consent statement. Please email a copy of the on-line consent state, with the number included, to [irb@unl.edu](mailto:irb@unl.edu) for our records. If you need to make changes to the consent statement please submit the revised documents to the IRB for review and approval prior to using them.

We wish to remind you that the principal investigator is responsible for reporting to this Board any of the following events within 48 hours of the event:

- \* Any serious event (including on-site and off-site adverse events, injuries, side effects, deaths, or other problems) which in the opinion of the local investigator was unanticipated, involved risk to subjects or others, and was possibly related to the research procedures;
- \* Any serious accidental or unintentional change to the IRB-approved protocol that involves risk or has the potential to recur;
- \* Any publication in the literature, safety monitoring report, interim result or other finding that indicates an unexpected change to the risk/benefit ratio of the research;
- \* Any breach in confidentiality or compromise in data privacy related to the subject or others; or
- \* Any complaint of a subject that indicates an unanticipated risk or that cannot be resolved by the research staff.

This project should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines and you should notify the IRB immediately of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project. You should report any unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants or others to the Board.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office at 472-6965.

Sincerely,

Becky R. Freeman, CIP  
for the IRB

## Appendix F

## Survey results

Normangee Star Reader Frequency	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
sometimes	3	5.88	5.88
frequently	48	94.12	100.00
Total	51	100.00	

Houston Chronicle Reader Frequency	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	15	34.88	34.88
almost never	11	25.58	60.47
sometimes	11	25.58	86.05
frequently	6	13.95	100.00
Total	43	100.00	

Bryan-Colleg e Station Eagle Reader Frequency	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	12	24.00	24.00
almost never	3	6.00	30.00
sometimes	4	8.00	38.00
frequently	31	62.00	100.00
Total	50	100.00	

New York Times Reader Frequency	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	38	90.48	90.48
almost never	3	7.14	97.62
sometimes	1	2.38	100.00
Total	42	100.00	

Normangee Star Believability	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
somewhat believable	5	9.80	9.80
highly believable	46	90.20	100.00
Total	51	100.00	

Houston Chronicle Believability	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
not believable	3	9.68	9.68
somewhat believable	16	51.61	61.29
highly believable	12	38.71	100.00
Total	31	100.00	

Bryan-College Station Eagle Believability	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
somewhat believable	15	40.54	40.54
highly believable	22	59.46	100.00
Total	37	100.00	

New York Times Believability	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
not believable	9	50.00	50.00
somewhat believable	6	33.33	83.33
highly believable	3	16.67	100.00
Total	18	100.00	

Normangee Star Web Frequency	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	36	73.47	73.47
almost never	7	14.29	87.76
sometimes	5	10.20	97.96
frequently	1	2.04	100.00
Total	49	100.00	

Bryan-Colleg e Station Eagle Web Frequency	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	31	65.96	65.96
almost never	7	14.89	80.85
sometimes	6	12.77	93.62
frequently	3	6.38	100.00
Total	47	100.00	

Houston Chronicle Web Frequency	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	35	77.78	77.78
almost never	6	13.33	91.11
sometimes	1	2.22	93.33
frequently	3	6.67	100.00
Total	45	100.00	

New York Times Web Frequency	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	44	97.78	97.78
almost never	1	2.22	100.00
Total	45	100.00	

Normangee Star Web Believability	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
somewhat believable	7	38.89	38.89
highly believable	11	61.11	100.00
Total	18	100.00	

Bryan-College Station Web Believability	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
somewhat believable	10	62.50	62.50
highly believable	6	37.50	100.00
Total	16	100.00	



Houston Chronicle Web Believability	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
somewhat believable	10	71.43	71.43
highly believable	4	28.57	100.00
Total	14	100.00	

New York Times Web Believability	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
not believable	3	37.50	37.50
somewhat believable	2	25.00	62.50
highly believable	3	37.50	100.00
Total	8	100.00	

Normangee Star Accuracy	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
somewhat accurate	16	32.65	32.65
highly accurate	33	67.35	100.00
Total	49	100.00	

Houston Chronicle Accuracy	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
not accurate	1	3.23	3.23
somewhat accurate	20	64.52	67.74
highly accurate	10	32.26	100.00
Total	31	100.00	

Bryan-College Station Accuracy	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
not accurate	1	2.56	2.56
somewhat accurate	23	58.97	61.54
highly accurate	15	38.46	100.00
Total	39	100.00	

New York Times Accuracy	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
not accurate	8	47.06	47.06
somewhat accurate	6	35.29	82.35
highly accurate	3	17.65	100.00
Total	17	100.00	

Normangee Star Web Accuracy	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
somewhat accurate	8	57.14	57.14
highly accurate	6	42.86	100.00
Total	14	100.00	

Bryan-College Station Web Accuracy	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
somewhat accurate	9	64.29	64.29
highly accurate	5	35.71	100.00
Total	14	100.00	

Houston Chronicle Web Accuracy	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
somewhat accurate	11	78.57	78.57
highly accurate	3	21.43	100.00
Total	14	100.00	

New York Times Web Accuracy	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
not accurate	2	25.00	25.00
somewhat accurate	4	50.00	75.00
highly accurate	2	25.00	100.00
Total	8	100.00	

Believability over 5 years	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
worse	1	2.13	2.13
about the same	33	70.21	72.34
better	13	27.66	100.00
Total	47	100.00	

Accuracy over 5 years	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
worse	1	2.13	2.13
about the same	34	72.34	74.47
better	12	25.53	100.00
Total	47	100.00	

Trustworthines s	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
neutral	2	4.55	4.55
agree	21	47.73	52.27
strongagree	21	47.73	100.00
Total	44	100.00	

Bias	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
strongdisagree	2	4.76	4.76
disagree	7	16.67	21.43
neutral	15	35.71	57.14
agree	10	23.81	80.95
strongagree	8	19.05	100.00
Total	42	100.00	

Honesty	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
neutral	5	11.36	11.36
agree	20	45.45	56.82
strongagree	19	43.18	100.00
Total	44	100.00	

Accuracy	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
neutral	6	13.64	13.64
agree	20	45.45	59.09
strongagree	18	40.91	100.00
Total	44	100.00	

More time reading online or printed?	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
online	8	17.39	17.39
print	37	80.43	97.83
don't know	1	2.17	100.00
Total	46	100.00	

What sources are you using now, but not 5 yrs ago?	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
None of the Above	14	31.11	31.11
Talk Radio	5	11.11	42.22
Online News	16	35.56	77.78
Television	4	8.89	86.67
Talk Radio, Online News & T.V.	2	4.44	91.11
Talk Radio & Online News	1	2.22	93.33
Talk Radio & News Magazines	1	2.22	95.56
Online News & Television	1	2.22	97.78
Talk Radio & Television	1	2.22	100.00
Total	45	100.00	

Frequency Printed Local Newspaper Read	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	1	2.00	2.00
sometimes	3	6.00	8.00
frequently	46	92.00	100.00
Total	50	100.00	

Frequency Printed National Newspaper Read	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	20	47.62	47.62
almost never	5	11.90	59.52
sometimes	11	26.19	85.71
frequently	6	14.29	100.00
Total	42	100.00	

Frequency News Magazine Read	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	14	33.33	33.33
almost never	12	28.57	61.90
sometimes	11	26.19	88.10
frequently	5	11.90	100.00
Total	42	100.00	

Frequency Online Local Newspaper Read	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	22	52.38	52.38
almost never	9	21.43	73.81
sometimes	7	16.67	90.48
frequently	4	9.52	100.00
Total	42	100.00	

Frequency Online National Newspaper Read	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	27	64.29	64.29
almost never	5	11.90	76.19
sometimes	8	19.05	95.24
frequently	2	4.76	100.00
Total	42	100.00	

Time Spent Reading News Online in Typical Day	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	22	45.83	45.83
1	1	2.08	47.92
3	2	4.17	52.08
5	1	2.08	54.17
10	2	4.17	58.33
12.5	1	2.08	60.42
15	4	8.33	68.75
20	2	4.17	72.92
30	5	10.42	83.33
45	1	2.08	85.42
60	2	4.17	89.58
90	2	4.17	93.75
120	2	4.17	97.92
200	1	2.08	100.00
Total	48	100.00	

Frequency Star Website Accessed	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
never	35	68.63	68.63
almost never	9	17.65	86.27
sometimes	6	11.76	98.04
frequently	1	1.96	100.00
Total	51	100.00	

Time Spent in Average Week Reading Print Version of Star	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
15 minutes or less	14	27.45	27.45
15-29 minutes	17	33.33	60.78
30-44 minutes	13	25.49	86.27
45-59 minutes	6	11.76	98.04
1 hours or more	1	1.96	100.00
Total	51	100.00	

Internet connection	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
dial-up	2	5.00	5.00
broadband	38	95.00	100.00
Total	40	100.00	

Political Ideology	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Very Conservative	14	27.45	27.45
Conservative	22	43.14	70.59
Moderate	11	21.57	92.16
Liberal	4	7.84	100.00
Total	51	100.00	

Income	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
\$10,000 to \$19,999	2	4.35	4.35
\$20,000 to \$34,999	7	15.22	19.57
\$35,000 to \$49,999	9	19.57	39.13
\$50,000 to \$74,999	8	17.39	56.52
\$75,000 or above	20	43.48	100.00
Total	46	100.00	



Education Level	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Some HS	3	6.00	6.00
High School or GED	18	36.00	42.00
Assoc/Tech	9	18.00	60.00
Bachelors	10	20.00	80.00
Grad/Prof	10	20.00	100.00
Total	50	100.00	

Ethnicity	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
White	48	94.12	94.12
AFAM	2	3.92	98.04
Caucasian & American Indian	1	1.96	100.00
Total	51	100.00	

Gender	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Male	32	62.75	62.75
Female	19	37.25	100.00
Total	51	100.00	

. tabulate age

Age	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
31	1	2.13	2.13
34	2	4.26	6.38
48	2	4.26	10.64
51	1	2.13	12.77
53	1	2.13	14.89
55	2	4.26	19.15
56	1	2.13	21.28
57	2	4.26	25.53
58	1	2.13	27.66
60	1	2.13	29.79
61	2	4.26	34.04
65	1	2.13	36.17
66	2	4.26	40.43
67	1	2.13	42.55
69	1	2.13	44.68
70	2	4.26	48.94
71	1	2.13	51.06
72	2	4.26	55.32
73	2	4.26	59.57
74	3	6.38	65.96
75	1	2.13	68.09
76	1	2.13	70.21
77	3	6.38	76.60
78	2	4.26	80.85
80	2	4.26	85.11
81	2	4.26	89.36
82	1	2.13	91.49
84	1	2.13	93.62
86	3	6.38	100.00
Total	47	100.00	

City of Residence	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Alvin	1	2.22	2.22
Bryan	1	2.22	4.44
Flynn	2	4.44	8.89
Hearne	1	2.22	11.11
Highland Village	1	2.22	13.33
Hilltop Lakes	22	48.89	62.22
Houston	2	4.44	66.67
Huntsville	1	2.22	68.89
Katy	1	2.22	71.11
League City	1	2.22	73.33
Madisonville	1	2.22	75.56
Normangee	9	20.00	95.56
San Antonio	1	2.22	97.78
Thornton	1	2.22	100.00
Total	45	100.00	

State of Residence	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Texas	47	100.00	100.00
Total	47	100.00	

Years lived in city	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	1	2.13	2.13
1	1	2.13	4.26
2	1	2.13	6.38
2.5	1	2.13	8.51
5	2	4.26	12.77
6	3	6.38	19.15
7	2	4.26	23.40
8	1	2.13	25.53
9	2	4.26	29.79
10	2	4.26	34.04
12	1	2.13	36.17
13	2	4.26	40.43
14	3	6.38	46.81
15	3	6.38	53.19
16	1	2.13	55.32
17	1	2.13	57.45
19	1	2.13	59.57
20	2	4.26	63.83
21	2	4.26	68.09
24	1	2.13	70.21
25	1	2.13	72.34
28.5	1	2.13	74.47
29	2	4.26	78.72
30	1	2.13	80.85
36	1	2.13	82.98
37	1	2.13	85.11
38	1	2.13	87.23
40	1	2.13	89.36
45	1	2.13	91.49
48	1	2.13	93.62
55	1	2.13	95.74
58	1	2.13	97.87
82	1	2.13	100.00
Total	47	100.00	

## Appendix G

### Hilltop Lakes Focus Group

#### Question 1:

Woman: I believe it's accurate; I never had anything presented in it that I found to be contradicted in another source of news and information.

Man: I'd say it's a very local paper and a lot of people probably know what's going on and if there was something in there that was not correct, why I mean, it probably wouldn't remain a very credible publication, so I'd say I believe what's in there.

Woman: I believe it because it's not a sensationalistic paper. Maybe it should be, it'd be more fun.

Woman 2: I believe the star and really for the same reason as the gentleman over there, because it is local and everyone pretty much knows what's going on so it'd be hard to tell a falsehood and I do think that because it is local, people pretty much know one another so that's what makes it fun.

Woman 3: I like it because it's local, he does a real good job covering everything in the community, it's very informative, and for a small town he does a better than the Eagle as far as I'm concerned, as far as covering what's happening in your community. He does a terrific job.

Man 2: About the same reason as everybody else, you know, I know most of the people that...when articles appear I know most, have a background on it and it seems to be unbiased, maybe a little conservative bias, but not much.

#### Question 2:

Woman 1: I've gotten pretty jaded about media, so I'm, I guess I think media outlets, like the newspapers that you've talked about, are more slanted toward, I don't know that they're factual. I, uh, I think there's an agenda behind the way news is reported in other newspapers, even on TV. I've gotten to where I don't believe any of it.

Man 1: I think that the larger publications, I think are written with good intentions, but I think that a lot of it is dependent on the reader. When we were in Washington, we read the Post all the time, the Post is very much directed inside the beltway and you pay attention to what went on there, but once you leave that area, it doesn't have as much of an impact on your daily thinking. I think a lot of it is intended to change public opinion in the way that that particular publication wants it to be, but I think that the people that probably write them are... intended to be honest and to be forthright, but it's a difficult question to answer.

Women 2: I personally think that all media is written now, for sensationalism, and even if they're honest, they slant the honesty to be sensational, they make more out of it than what it is. So to me you can't really believe what they're saying because they want to make it exciting.

Women 3: I think the Star, I mean the Eagle, probably would to me be more believable than the other two newspapers, because I think newspapers are very political and I think the bigger cities you're in, the more they're swayed with that and so they're very slanted depending on what you think. If you don't agree with them then they are very biased but I'm not sure if the Eagle is that way too much.

Women 4: The Eagle Senator out of the university has a lot of university news, whatever happens out of the university that's what's in the Eagle, they do cover community things and I enjoy reading about what happened because we lived there for 16 years but if you'll notice, everything, headlines, everything is centered around Texas A&M.

Man 2: I tend to believe the Eagle more than the other papers simply because living in this area I know a little bit more about what's going on than I do in the bigger cities. I've read the, what were the two papers...Houston, I've read the Houston paper several times and I think it's very biased, uh, the New York Times, I don't read hardly at all but I do see coverage of some of their articles on the news and they just, fly in the face of the facts sometimes.

Question 3:

Woman 1: I think it's accurate, I don't recall ever seeing a typo or a, uh, something that looked like it wasn't laid out right –

Woman 2: You haven't seen names in the pictures of people and stuff? (laughs)

Woman 1: I haven't. So to me it's accurate.

Man 2: You're talking about the, kind of, the grammatical presentation of the paper? I think it's pretty good for a local paper. I don't have any issues with that.

Woman 2: Are you, is your, what you're writing about the Star or small town papers in general?

Woman 2: Well we came from a town with a small town newspaper a lot bigger than Normangee but still small, it was full of grammatical errors, name errors, everything errors, I think the star does a great job. They switch names now and then but really, they do very well.

Woman 3: Yes, I haven't noticed any big errors; of course I'm a terrible speller so if you spell something wrong I may not notice it. But I really haven't noticed anything that looked like it was wrong in that area.

Woman 2: I guess I catch 'em because I was a secretary for 20 years and my eyes just go to that. It's no big deal though, they do a super job, they do a better job than the Eagle, tell you the truth, the Eagle is terrible for mistakes. To get names mixed up and stuff, sometimes that's hard to, you know, but they do a good job.

Man 3: I don't ever remember any particular errors that jumped out at me; I have to say they're pretty accurate.

Question 4:

Woman 1: I'm sitting here wondering when I read the Eagle or even the Normangee Star if when I see something amiss if my mind doesn't just read it the right way and I don't even stop on it. I don't recall even on the Eagle saying "geez, that's, the grammar's wrong or, I, so I'd have to say it was good.

Woman 2: Unless you're a secretary or a school teacher.

Woman 3: If you've done enough proofreading in your life... (inaudible)

Man 1: Those kind of errors don't bother me, you know I think it's amazing that there are as few errors in all that publication anyway so. I'm more prone to listen to speakers, and when speakers do something wrong, why, it just takes away from all their credibility but newspapers, I don't have any problem with that.

Woman 4: Spellcheck probably helps (laughs). I agree. I don't see that many errors even nationwide and they always put in the next issue tells "sorry we missed, you know, we named it wrong." Of course that's on page two at the bottom where no one reads but...

Woman 1: Well that is the one thing that I've noticed too that there is corrections where, I mean, a lot of times in the Eagle it'll say "correction," but I've never noticed, of course I don't read everything in the Eagle. I read the funnies, the bridge, but yeah.

Woman 3: I read both of them from stem to stern so I catch a lot of stuff just because I'm a secretary, but they do do a good job, I mean you consider all the type, typing that's in those publications, it's hard not to make a mistake even with spell check.

Man 2: I don't read, I don't depend on the newspapers for my news, so I don't read the articles unless it's something that really grabs me, but I don't find them that inaccurate.

Woman 3: One error? Oh one error per page. I can believe that, I could believe that.

Question 5:

Woman 1: No I don't. I haven't, I'm just used to reading hard copy stuff.

Man 1: No, I don't. Don't need to.

Woman 2: Same. Also I've never looked at it online, but other things when I go online, like KWPX, I'll go online sometimes, and they're hard to me to navigate through the site they way I want it to be navigated so I don't know if the Star is or not. Or I'll look up obituaries in hometowns, other newspapers, trying to read something or an article in another town's newspaper and I just think they're hard to navigate the way they're set up.

Woman 3: I have never, I don't know if they even have a webpage, I've never checked.

Woman 4: I've not read the star online, I've sent them articles through the computer, which is easy to do. You can email those, yeah, but once you read the paper you don't have to go online. You've got the wrong generation here dear.

Question 6:

Man 1: Online? Uh, if for some reason I need to, yes, I've gone to the New York Times and I've gone to the Washington Post, if I find something that sounds interesting about the DC area, but I don't regularly do that, no.

Woman 1: I've looked at the Kansas City Star and then that Carlisle Sentinel when that was bad in Pennsylvania, but when I try to read sports or something about someone I might know. Obituaries.

Woman 2: I just check the weather online.

Woman 3: I don't.

Man 2: I read the Steubenville Ohio Herald Star everyday online. I don't read everything, but I check for articles or...

Woman 4: See if anybody we know died.

Question 7:

Woman 1: 5 years ago I would keep up with my news when I would commute, so I'd listen to it on the radio, on NPR, so an hour in the morning going in and an hour in

the afternoon going back. And that was my primary...and so I've retired, and I no longer commute every day so I have tried listening on the radio and doing household chores and I get distracted and I rely more on the Eagle for national news and Fox in the evening when I'm fixing dinner I listen to Fox News.

Man 1: Different from 5 years ago? I would not say anything was different.

Woman 2: nothing different for me.

Woman 3: I'm not sure but, I was reading the Chronicle five years ago, I remember reading it because we used to get it and I used to like to read it. But I do have on the internet I do have Fox News as my browser so I, when I turn it on I look at their news before I do anything else. And that's it, I mean I just kind of change around.

Woman 4: I think I quit listening to the national news, NBC, CBS and all that and I listen to the local news, KETX just to find out what's going in Bryan but my major news channel was Fox and on the radio I listen to, that, Hannity and all that.

Man 2: I have not changed anything on national news, I listen to Fox, on local news, I've been watching the Waco and the Temple stations more than KBTX and I pretty much don't listen to talk radio anymore. They're biased.

Woman (?): I hate talk radio.



## Appendix H

### Normangee Focus Group

#### Question 1: Normangee Star believability

Respondent 1: I think he reports very unbiased facts. He's very good at that.

Respondent 2: I feel that it probably is relevant to the area to those that read regularly.

Respondent 3: It's very accurate for the local, all the local news he has in there. He might have a few names wrong every once in a while, but you know a lot of time he'll fix it the next week.

Respondent 4: I'd say it's very believable especially for the local happenings. I usually read it for school events, community events, garage sales that sort of thing and it's usually right on. All the plays and detail information is usually right on.

Respondent 5: For me it's usually the sporting stuff, the scores and how the game went. It's usually pretty accurate

Respondent 6: I believe that most of the articles are true because this is a small town and everyone knows everybody and so the facts are usually pretty accurate.

#### Question 2: Other paper's believability

Respondent 1: I think the Eagle's pretty good. I think it's the Aggie newspaper. Just like channel 3 is the Aggie channel. So sometimes I switch to Waco so I get more world news. But the Chronicle, my husband brings it home. I think it's pretty factual also. We always get it on Sunday. I have read the New York Times, but I don't make a habit of it. That's a Yankee newspaper.

Respondent 2: Well for larger papers if you're talking New York and stuff I think it definitely sways towards whichever political market it tends to be geared toward. As far as Bryan, I'm not quite sure I don't read that one I would say on a national level they definitely are geared toward whichever political side they favor.

Respondent 3: I pretty much agree with what she said. (referring to respondent 2)

Respondent 4: I live in Bryan and randomly see the Eagle and I'll tell you it definitely is a little more conservative-minded for the town, not really my particular viewpoint so I guess believability sometimes I just keep that in mind that I know it's going to be slanted kind of that way so.

Respondent 5: I also live in Bryan and would have to say pretty much the same thing.

Respondent 6: Not as much as small town, because in a small town I think that they, it's more one on one, instead of just this one said that and this one says this. This is usually the actual people in our town go to the Star to put in the articles themselves.

#### Question 3: Normangee Star Accuracy

Respondent 1: He does a pretty good job. He tries to verify names, now there's been a couple of little mess ups, but you know that's going to happen because sometimes he's given the wrong names. But Hank is really; he really tries to serve the community well.

Respondent 2: No I send in a lot of stuff with yearbook dates and things like that and I've never had anything come back where it was misquoted or misprinted or anything like that, so its always been he always puts exactly what I need him to put in there so.

Respondent 3: About the same (referring to respondent 2's answer)

Respondent 4: Good, names and pictures always match, which I know sometimes gets off in other papers

Respondent 5: I'd agree and I think that event time and schedules and stuff are usually pretty accurate as far as the sports stuff.

Respondent 6: Like I said, I think they're very accurate because most of the times it's Hank that comes out, himself and talks to the people and gets the times and dates from them as to when things are happening or has happened.

#### Question 4: Other newspaper's accuracy

Respondent 1: Well I think they do pretty good, I haven't seen a lot of retractions in the Eagle, or corrections, but because we're really not from here, we've really only been here about three years, I'm really not that familiar with the names and the people over there to know or to form an opinion. The Chronicle does pretty good, they're a little slanted sometimes. Their editorials are, course they always run their, what they call it right now, letters to the editor, and that's good they're not afraid to voice other opinions.

Respondent 2: Yeah I could it's just the size of the paper in general of course there's probably going to be more mistakes than a smaller local paper. He has a chance to go over each page and especially because it's just once a week so he has a chance to make sure all that stuff is correct. Then on the larger level you're doing it daily and getting it out there as quickly as possible so yeah you do see mistakes and misprints and stuff like that

Respondent 3: Agreed with respondent two again

Respondent 4: There's usually more mistakes in the bigger paper, being an English teacher they jump out at me.

Respondent 5: I don't have a lot of experience dealing with it, so I don't know if I could say one way or the other, but I think her (respondent 4s) point was good it's bigger so more mistakes can be made so.

Respondent 6: I don't think they're as accurate because most of the time it's like phone interviews or things like that it's not so much one on one.

#### Question 5: Star online

Respondent 1: No, never have. I go buy it and we got it in the mail when we lived in Brazoria County.

Respondent 2: It's never updated, but when it was yes. That's my biggest thing with them online is it's not. I would rather read it online because that's where I look at news is online so. That's how I was reading it was on Facebook, because of where I was living I wouldn't get it until Monday when it came out Wednesday, just like through the mail or however. So I would actually read it online, but now that its I was looking for the dates when is stuff happening and all that kind of stuff. Now that it's not being updated online. I have, I do follow his Facebook, but to me it's not as

detailed. It's what's he doing at that time, which that's all well and good, but if you need to know something in advance it's not a good source. I think what was confusing for me with his contact and the e-mail address was really confusing I didn't know if I was e-mailing, who I was e-mailing. If it was just sending it off to some service and eventually he would get it or what. Now I know the difference I have both of his e-mail address, but I just think the contact information was very user friendly.

Respondent 3: I haven't tried online lately. But last time I looked online it wasn't up to date. It still had like March (respondent 2 added November) It still have football, November, like he doesn't update it weekly.

Respondent 4: Checked it once because I was trying to figure out how to contact him because I don't live here and I don't really know him so I was looking to see if there was a form I could submit online to send him something for cheerleading and I don't think it was successful because I never got it, I don't think in there. I'd end up calling someone who knows him and they would call him so overall I guess no I don't check it online. I remember being shocked that it was online.

Respondent 5: I've never visited it.

Respondent 6: I haven't in a while. Because most of the time I'm in here on the computer all of the time and when I get home I don't stop and do it. My sister does.

Question 6: Other paper's online

Respondent 1: The only paper I read online is the Facts, which is from our home area, which is Brazosport, Freeland, Jackson. So we subscribe to an online subscription. You can only look at the headlines and a blurb if you're not a paid subscriber. Follow up as to why pay? Not quoted. It's based on her connection to that community.

Respondent 2: Yes, generally I look at (trying to remember name) the Associated Press. That or like Yahoo news or Google news, but usually AP.

Respondent 3: I pull up the Bryan Eagle a lot of time, for everyday news kind of what's going on in the area I pull up it and I pull up KBTX news. The local news station out of Bryan.

Respondent 4: I look at the Eagle online quite a bit. Live there and they have a very user-friendly classified ads section and I guess if I want some bigger national news story I'll usually look up the Dallas Morning News. (Respondent 2 and 3 use Houston, but 4 says uses Dallas, because it was what she was closer Dallas.

Respondent 2 then added she wouldn't even think of looking at the Waco newspaper, about 70 miles away for news).

Respondent 5: I'm one of the bad ones I usually look at CNN.com for news or websites like that I don't really find myself ever looking at newspaper websites.

Respondent 6: No.

Question 7 Other news sources different than five years ago

Respondent 1: Internet, I only started doing that three years ago when we moved up here, uh shoot it was available. It was MSN had the world news.

Respondent 2: Well online news pretty much, honestly five years ago I probably never watched the news. So definitely online. Yeah I don't honestly remember the last time I bought a newspaper that's horrible but I don't. So pretty much online. The only reason I don't watch the TV news is because of the time of the day that it comes

on. I mean I know it's on all the time but it's just I'm usually at work so. My dad is obsessed with Fox News so I don't have to watch the news I have to listen to it when I talk to him on the phone. That's my news source whatever he's blasting in my ear or sending blowing out my e-mail. I listen to what he has to say but honestly online is the easiest one for me.

Respondent 3: Internet, because I got a computer at the house I used to not have one.

Respondent 4: Probably all, because five years ago I wasn't old enough to care, anything about news what I can wear that day so the weather.

Respondent 5: The Internet, I was pretty much the same five years ago I didn't really look at the news. It's changing a little bit now.

Respondent 6: Five years ago I never looked at anything online. I always looked at the paper, but so I would say that I use everything more online now than I did five years ago. Because it's more accessible and I don't have to go and stop and find a paper.