

MIDDLE GRADE ARMY OFFICERS' PERCEPTIONS
OF MASS MEDIA CREDIBILITY

PAUL AMBROSE DARCY

MIDDLE GRADE ARMY OFFICERS' PERCEPTIONS
OF MASS MEDIA CREDIBILITY

An Abstract
Presented to the
Graduate and Research Council
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Paul Ambrose Darcy
March 1993

ABSTRACT

The major purpose of this study was to determine how middle grade Army officers perceive the credibility of the media. This study also examined the relationship between the military and the media, as viewed by Army officers. Data were collected by a survey. Questionnaires were distributed to 16 battalions, eight combat arms and eight non-combat arms, of the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Data were analyzed in terms of frequencies, a Pearson correlation and a t-test. Results indicated that middle grade Army officers viewed the mass media as having low credibility. Results also indicated the respondents viewed the military-media relationship as adversarial and one of distrust.

MIDDLE GRADE ARMY OFFICERS' PERCEPTIONS
OF MASS MEDIA CREDIBILITY

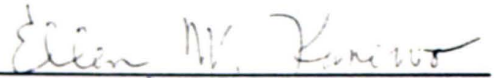
A Thesis
Presented to the
Graduate and Research Council
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Paul Ambrose Darcy
March 1993

To the Graduate and Research Council:

I am presenting herewith a Thesis written by Paul Ambrose Darcy entitled "Middle Grade Army Officers' Perceptions of Mass Media Credibility." I have examined the final copy of this paper for form and content, and I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Art, with a major in Speech, Communication and Theatre.

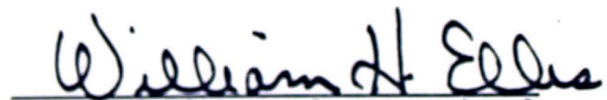

Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:


Second Committee Member


Third Committee Member

Accepted for the Graduate and
Research Council:


Dean of the Graduate School

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express appreciation to Dr. Ellen Kanervo, thesis director, for the time, encouragement, and enthusiasm given during the research process. Appreciation is further expressed to Dr. Mike Gotcher for his assistance and guidance through the analysis of the data and to Dr. Paul Shaffer for his support and interest in accomplishing this work.

Special thanks must also be expressed to Monica Darcy for her support and friendship throughout this project as well as Command Sergeant Major Paul and Joan Darcy for always stressing the importance of education and the value of reading.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables.....	vii
---------------------	-----

CHAPTER

1. Introduction.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Purpose of the Study.....	4
Statement of Hypotheses.....	5
Limitations of the Study.....	5
Importance of the Study.....	5
2. Review of Literature.....	8
Military-Media Relationship.....	8
Media Credibility.....	25
3. Methodology.....	33
Design of the Study.....	33
Respondents.....	37
Procedure.....	38
4. Results.....	40
Demographics.....	40
Data Analysis.....	42
5. Discussion and Conclusions.....	46
REFERENCES.....	51

APPENDIXES

A. Media and Military Credibility Questionnaire.....	55
B. Informed Consent Statement.....	59

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Demographic Summary of Respondents.....	40
2. Comparison of Combat Arms and Non-combat Arms Officers on the Variable of Media Credibility....	44

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The dynamic relationship between the military and the media has ranged from cooperation and trust to contempt and distrust (Sidle, 1991). Both sides can cite numerous past events to explain why the relationship has changed so drastically from the Revolutionary War to the present. A review of military-media relationships found that, although cooperation and trust have existed in the past, the relationship has had more than its share of conflict and controversy (Daniels, 1985; Diehl, 1989; Ondracek, 1985). It is ironic that the military and the media, the two national institutions that have been traditionally charged with the defense of our Constitution, have so often been at odds with each other (Sidle, 1991).

There is little research available concerning specifically how the military views the credibility of the media. This study encompasses a history of the relationship shared by the military and the media during military operations to compensate for the shortage of research. The historical analysis of the relationship between the military and the media begins with World War I and ends with the Gulf War, and it reveals the fluctuations of opinion, which have ranged from total trust to utter contempt.

Thomas M. DeFrank (1984) noted that the senior officers who planned and executed the most recent operations in Saudi Arabia were the junior company and field-grade officers in Vietnam. A military-media credibility gap formed during this time of the Vietnam war and DeFrank (1984) believed the present day leaders' attitudes toward the mass media were shaped by the Vietnam experience. These attitudes may now strongly influence military-media relations and since distrust and contempt ruled the relationship in Vietnam, it is a logical deduction that the current senior Army leaders do not trust the media. Because of the military system for promotions and assignments, this study focused on today's middle grade Army officers because they will be the Army's future senior leadership.

The issue of media credibility is important in this study because of the current idea that the public, and thus the military, may not believe the media (Gaziano, 1988; Kohut & Robinson, 1988; Sarkesian, 1987; Smith, 1984). Although the media have complained about how they were handled by the military during Desert Storm, polls have shown that the public thought press coverage was adequate, even excellent at times (Sidle, 1991). The alleged lack of credibility can severely hinder the mass media's ability to inform the public, monitor the government, and govern their own profession.

The lack of credibility with the general public, in the long term, could lead to weakened freedom of the press and threaten to put some mass media sources out of business (Gaziano, 1988). A lack of credibility with the military has several other potential severe repercussions. It can block the public's right to know, deepen the credibility gap which presently exists between the military and the media, and weaken the defense of the Constitution (DeFrank, 1984; Pontuso, 1990; Sidle, 1991).

Thus this study focused on today's middle grade Army officers and their opinions of the military-media relationship to try to determine if there is a credibility problem and what military aspects are involved.

Statement of Problem

The media have always played an important role in keeping the public informed during military operations. During the past decade the military has been involved in three combat operations, Grenada, Panama, and Iraq. In each of these operations the media were treated in a different manner (Pontuso, 1990; Sidle, 1991). These actions appear to be the forerunners of the future for military-media relations because the military is convinced that the media were handled appropriately.

The media have a responsibility to inform the public about what the military is doing, both in combat and in peacetime (Sidle, 1991). A relationship must exist where

the media are able to fulfill their role of watchdog. If the media have a credibility problem with the military, they will be unable to accomplish the roles designed for them through the First Amendment. Censorship may be imposed, but more significantly, military leaders will just stop talking to or supporting the media. Military support is important for the media, partially for their success but more importantly to fulfill their responsibilities to inform the public (DeFrank, 1984). The media will not receive the support they need and deserve if they are viewed by the military as having a credibility problem.

Purpose of the Study

The scope of this study is to determine media credibility as viewed by the military. Specifically, the purpose of this study will be to determine if the media have a credibility problem with middle grade Army officers. The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Do middle grade Army officers view the media as a credible source of information?
2. If there is a credibility gap, is it because of personal experience, influence by a senior officer or a combination of the two?
3. If middle grade Army officers view the media as having low credibility, will combat arms officers view the media as less credible than will non-combat arms officers?

Statement of Hypotheses

Three hypotheses will be tested in this study:

1. Middle grade Army officers view the mass media as having low credibility.
2. Middle grade Army officers' views of media credibility have been influenced by a senior officer rather than personal experience.
3. Combat arms officers view the mass media as less credible than do non-combat arms officers.

Limitations of the Study

Subjects of this study were limited to those middle grade Army officers in 16 randomly selected maneuver battalions at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. For the purpose of this study, a middle grade Army officer is any commissioned officer in the U.S. Army who is the rank of captain, major or lieutenant colonel, regardless of branch or gender. Middle grade officers in other units throughout the Army, to include the National Guard and Reserves, were not included. This study surveyed officers from the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division which seems to be a representative group to survey because media coverage of the Army tends to concentrate primarily on combat maneuver units (Hammond, 1988) such as the 101st.

Importance of the Study

Sarkesian (1987) noted that the views of the military

are compatible with society. He argued that the military presents a good cross-sectional look at society. It is reasonable to conclude that Army officers hold views generally in accordance with the public (Sarkesian, 1987).

Some researchers begrudgingly admit that the military and the media need each other (Sidle, 1984, 1991). The public has the right to know what the military is doing and how well or poorly it is doing it, except when such information can affect security or troop safety issues. The media are responsible for providing this information and are protected by the First Amendment in order to do so (DeFrank, 1984).

The military needs public support and accolades for the job that it is doing. The primary method of informing the public about the accomplishments and achievements of the Army is through the media (Sidle, 1991). If middle grade officers, the Army's future leadership, believe that the media lack credibility, they may not communicate with the media at all. The media would be unable to inform the public. Some studies note this has already happened (DeFrank, 1984; Smith, 1984).

Smith (1984) noted that some Army officers who served in Vietnam believed they were treated unfairly by the media. Those captains and majors who served in Vietnam are now influential generals who still regard the media with suspicion (DeFrank, 1984). This can account for the way

the media have been handled in the recent military operations.

The historical military tradition of promotions and assignments contributes to the importance of this study because the middle grade officers of today will be the commanders of tomorrow. Their view of media credibility may determine the future of military-media relations.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

Military-Media Relationship

There is little research available that specifically addresses the military view of media credibility. The research that is available was published in the mid-1970s. In 1974, a study by Orwant and Ullman reported that officers were less favorable than civilians with regard to media credibility. They also noted that there was a "particularly high degree of uncertainty about the credibility of media reporting of military affairs" (Orwant & Ullman, 1974, p. 469). Conversely, Sarkesian (1987) noted the views of the military were basically compatible with those of American society. The slight contradiction between these studies may be attributed to the fact that Orwant and Ullman's (1974) study dealt only with officers whereas Sarkesian's (1987) study generalized all ranks and positions as "military." Orwant and Ullman's study (1974) was consistent with Sarkesian's (1987) interpretation: the military is a snapshot picture of our society.

A study of attitudes of military officers and censors (Singletary, 1977) stated that officers were more favorable than censors to the notion of censorship. From the data of

these three studies, a consensus of officers' attitudes toward media credibility being low can be drawn. The same consensus of officers' attitudes of media credibility can be drawn from a historical analysis of the relationship between the military and the media.

It is unlikely that the United States will ever again participate in a military operation that resembles World War I. The entire nation mobilized and was caught up in the wartime atmosphere. The media were directly tied to the war effort. During World War I, the relationship between the military and the media was one of mutual respect and consideration (Ondracek, 1985) even though journalists had to submit their work to military censors prior to being released. Throughout World War I the media and the military enjoyed generally good relations, primarily due to the patriotism of the media (Diehl, 1989).

World War I censorship was criticized by both the military and the media. The media claimed they were being censored too much and the military countered they did not censor enough. World War I censorship was not always successful, but was usually offset by the patriotism of journalists (Sidle, 1991) who often did not report bad news even though they knew about it. Early in the war, regulations governing the journalists who covered the American Expeditionary Forces were strictly enforced. As the war continued, with few exceptions, the military and

the media enjoyed a relationship of respect and trust. A key to the generally good relations enjoyed by both sides during this period of censorship was the formation of the Committee on Public Information (Diehl, 1989).

President Woodrow Wilson formed the committee to manage censorship and public relations during the war. He chose George Creel, a prominent journalist, to chair the committee (Millet & Maslowski, 1984). Creel's support gave representation and credibility to the committee among the media. The government, through the Committee on Public Information, established extensive accreditation procedures for media covering the war zones. Censorship was enforced by the military in accordance with guidelines issued by the committee. The media adhered to these guidelines because of their patriotism, support for the nation meant support for the military, (Ondracek, 1985; Sidle, 1991) and because they felt they had representation on the committee in the form of Mr. Creel (Diehl, 1989). As a result, only five journalists of the more than 60 at the front lost their credentials during the war. More importantly, the military-media relationship was one of mutual credibility, trust and respect during World War I.

During World War II, in which total censorship was imposed, the relationship between the military and the media remained stable. Journalists accompanied U. S. forces worldwide during World War II. Military-media

relations were productive (Smith, 1984) even though military leaders had taken the World War I experience and imposed total censorship during World War II. One reason for the success of the relationship was that the military attempted to assist the media as much as possible (Ondracek, 1985). The positive relationship was also due, in part, to the patriotism displayed by the media (Sidle, 1991). During this period, the tendency of the majority of the media was to show more support toward the military in an effort to help the war effort (Ondracek, 1985).

The military added to the positive relationship with the media by giving and assisting them with almost complete freedom of movement and access to commanders. General Dwight Eisenhower went to extra efforts to bring the media in and conduct sensitive briefings as well as provide them with access to his subordinate commanders such as Generals Omar Bradley and George Patton. In particular, both Generals Eisenhower and Bradley held and publicly expressed high opinions of the media (Halloran, 1991). At one point, General George C. Marshall briefed the media on highly classified Allied invasion plans. Although he trusted them to keep information confidential, which they did, his purpose was to prevent them from printing speculations (Ondracek, 1985).

In Europe, the Joint Press Censorship Group did an excellent job of maintaining the security of press

dispatches and prompt delivery to media organizations. They insured that the media received assistance from the military for food, equipment, transportation, and access to communications equipment (Diehl, 1989). There were incidents; however, disclosures were generally inadvertent. At the end of World War II, the overwhelming feeling within the military was that the war had been accurately and fully covered (Ondracek, 1985). The military and the media enjoyed a good relationship during World War II.

The decaying relations between the media and the military can be attributed to several events, starting with the Korean War. The Korean War sprang up as a series of surprises, from the invasion by North Korea to the commitment of American forces. The relationship between the military and the media got off to as bad a start as did the Army's involvement. Censorship was not initially instituted by the Truman administration (Diehl, 1989) and most censorship was voluntary on the part of the media. Many of the members of the media were veterans of World War II and were knowledgeable of appropriate restrictions (Diehl, 1989).

Military pride about how the Army image is portrayed to the public caused the military-media relationship to worsen (Ondracek, 1985). It was embarrassing to see reports that the American Army was not prepared or equipped for the war and almost immediately went into full retreat

(Millet & Maslowski, 1984). The media, reporting the retreat, told of panicky, poorly equipped soldiers who often broke contact and ran.

The media coverage of the disorderly retreats was not well received by the Army, in particular, General Douglas MacArthur, General of the Army and Commander of the United Nations Command (Millet & Maslowski, 1984). The strained relationship between the military and the media worsened as the war went badly for the Army. The relationship improved briefly after the successful amphibious landing at Inchon and the recapture of the capital of Seoul, but quickly soured when the Chinese intervened into the conflict in November 1950 and the media reported humiliating defeats that were inflicted upon the Army (Diehl, 1989; Millet & Maslowski, 1984). By early 1951 the credibility of both the military and the media with each other was low (Diehl, 1989; Ondracek, 1985).

Unlike Generals Bradley and Marshall, General MacArthur did not establish a good rapport with the media and ordered 17 correspondents to be expelled from the war theater (Ondracek, 1985) before he took more drastic measures and imposed full censorship on December 21, 1950 (Diehl, 1989). Full censorship was far more restrictive and punitive than it had ever been in the past. Although the censorship restrictions were eventually lessened and military-media relations stabilized to polite indifference,

the Korean War severely damaged the trust and confidence in the relationship between the military and the media (Diehl, 1989; Ondracek, 1985).

Shortly after the Korean War several things occurred which directly affected the relationship of the military and the media. The media grew in size, and through technological advances, television matured into a real media force (Daniels, 1985). Further influence on the military-media relationship came from advancements in communication technology which greatly improved news-gathering activities and capabilities (Sidle, 1991).

The government also influenced the relationship between the military and the media by shying away from the use of censorship. Without question, the largest change in the relationship came with the Vietnam War (Sidle, 1991; Smith, 1984). The influence of television as well as lack of censorship made the Vietnam War an entirely new experience for the media, the military, and the American people (Daniels, 1985; Diehl, 1989; Sidle, 1991).

The Vietnam War was the lowest point of the relationship between the military and the media. The American military presence began in 1954 with 200 military advisors (Millet & Maslowski, 1984). By 1963 there were over 16,000 military advisors, and in this early phase of the war, the small media corps in Saigon was only seven full-time reporters. Despite these small numbers, the

military and the media both felt they were being undermined by the other (Ondracek, 1985).

Between 1963 and 1965, the antagonistic relationship between the military and the media decreased in intensity; however, mutual distrust remained (Ondracek, 1985). One factor in this distrust was the arrival in Vietnam of many young, inexperienced reporters who knew little about the military or the Vietnamese (Sidle 1991). Their presence did not help military-media relations. Although there were many reporters who attached themselves to military units and gained the knowledge and experience necessary to make the military-media relationship better (Sidle, 1991), it was not sufficient to make a sizeable difference (Ondracek, 1985).

Unfortunately for the military and media relationship, the Johnson administration made several attempts to manipulate the media to show only one side of the truth. This manipulation is credited with creating the credibility gap (Sidle, 1991). The credibility gap is a phrase coined during this period in the Vietnam era to describe the relationship and attitude the military and the media had for each other. The military felt media coverage was inadequate; conversely, the media felt they were being manipulated (Hammond, 1988).

The irreconcilable split in the military-media relationship occurred during the Tet offensive of 1968

(Daniels, 1985; Diehl, 1989; Ondracek, 1985). Tactically, the Tet offensive was not successful, but strategically it was a victory for the North Vietnamese Army. The government had been stating the enemy was near defeat and the end to conflict was in sight. On January 30, 1968, a major offensive led by the Vietcong and North Vietnamese Regular Army soldiers was launched throughout South Vietnam. The attack was not a complete surprise. Military intelligence had collected evidence of a major offensive for months (Millet & Maslowski, 1984). What was surprising to the media, the American people, and a large number of soldiers was that an enemy on its last legs could mount such a daring assault (Diehl, 1989; Ondracek, 1985). The media, which had for the most part dutifully reported the military's optimism, felt betrayed (Cohen, 1983).

The media perceived that they had been lied to by the military officials who had attempted to portray the war as a certain victory (Hammond, 1988). The military, on the other hand, felt that their efforts and sacrifices in an unappreciated war were being undermined by reporters who were only searching for a sensational story (Sidle, 1991). The relationship of the military and the media during Vietnam quickly turned to resentment and in some cases hatred (Ondracek, 1985). These two institutions were no longer adversaries; they were now bitter enemies.

Not all the Vietnamese war coverage was negative. Postwar studies and analyses have shown that most of the coverage was either favorable or neutral (Sidle, 1991). Summers (1982), a Vietnam era infantry officer, noted that although there were some discrepancies between what was reported and what actually occurred, the majority of reporting from Vietnam was factual. Unfortunately, many of those who served in Vietnam felt that the media were a major factor in the United States' backing out of Vietnam (Daniels, 1985; Sidle, 1991; Smith, 1984).

The Vietnam War caused the most significant detrimental relationship change between the military and the media (Sidle, 1991). For many of the reasons discussed, the relationship became one of distrust and dislike and culminated with a credibility gap. Both professions are still dealing with the Vietnam era credibility gap, as evidenced in later military-media relations.

The dislike and distrust between the military and the media continued after the war. A 1982 study by the U.S. Army War College (Ondracek, 1985) showed that the majority of Army officers surveyed distrusted the media. It is important to note that both the military and the media have equally contributed to the dislike, distrust and credibility gap (Diehl, 1989; Sidle, 1991; Summers, 1982).

The review of the historical military-media relationship offered here has shown that although cooperation and trust between the two professions has existed in the past, the relationship has had more than its share of conflict, controversy and credibility issues in the last 40 years (Daniels, 1985; Ondracek, 1985; Sidle, 1991). After Vietnam and before Grenada, the military felt that the media continued to be somewhat antagonistic and negative, so the distrust between the two institutions continued unabated. Although never admitted, the military's distrust of the media had a direct impact on the way media were handled during the invasions of Grenada and Panama (Sidle, 1991).

As a result of the distrust of the media, the U. S. government did not allow any media representation for the first two days of the Grenada Operation in 1983. Journalists were barred from reporting on the operation until the outcome was no longer in doubt. On the third day, a small pool from the nearly 400 journalists waiting on the island of Barbados was allowed to fly to Grenada (Willey, 1989) under the control of the Public Affairs Team of the 82nd Airborne Division. This pooling concept was a serious departure from past, accepted practices.

Smith (1984) and Summers (1982) both noted that the junior Army officers, lieutenants and captains, who served in Vietnam and believed they were treated poorly by the

media are now the influential, decision-making generals. Several other sources (Diehl, 1989; DeFrank, 1984; Ondracek, 1985; Pontuso, 1990; Sidle, 1991; Smith, 1984) also noted that the exclusion of media from Grenada was largely a result of the media coverage in Vietnam. In fairness to the media, it is important to note that during the Vietnam War and the Grenada invasion the media proved their credibility on more than one occasion (Smith, 1984; Willey, 1989).

The military's stance, that its exclusionary media policy was proper, was reinforced by the public's support, not only of the invasion, in general, but of the media's exclusion, in particular (Sidle, 1991). Ondracek (1985) noted that polls by the New York Times, CBS, and Newsweek showed 54 percent of those polled supported the decision to initially exclude the media from the Grenada invasion.

As a consequence of the confrontation between the media and the military over Grenada, the Defense Department appointed a commission to study military-media relations. The panel was named the Sidle Commission after its chairman, retired Major General Winant Sidle, a former public affairs officer (Diehl, 1989). The panel was made up of members of the media, military and civilian experts. It is interesting to note that many members of the media declined to sit on the panel (Daniels, 1985).

The Sidle Commission Report (Sidle, 1984) concluded that:

. . . the optimum solution to ensure proper media coverage of military operations will be to have the military - represented by competent, professional public affairs personnel and commanders who understand media problems - working with the media - represented by competent, professional reporters and editors who understand military problems - in a nonantagonistic atmosphere. (p. 17)

It will continue to be debated that the eight conclusions and detailed recommendations of the Sidle Commission on how the military-media relationship might be improved are flawed (Pontuso, 1990). The Twentieth Century Fund, a private research group, also conducted a Grenada military-media study. Many of their findings are similar to those noted in the Sidle Commission report (Daniels, 1985), but there were some glaring differences.

The Twentieth Century Task Force report called for a clearer understanding of the role of the news media in wartime. The study stated that "the presence of journalists (in U. S. military conflicts) is not a luxury but a necessity" (Daniels, 1985, p. 140). The Sidle panel report concluded that the media cover military operations to the maximum extent possible, as long as it was consistent with mission security and the safety of the

soldiers involved (Sidle, 1984).

The Task Force also felt, perhaps somewhat prophetically, that the Grenada press exclusion set a dangerous precedent. This study was clearly more disapproving of the media's exclusion from Grenada than the Sidle report (Daniels, 1985; Diehl, 1989). The Sidle panel report did not specifically address the impact of the Grenada press exclusion on future operations. Another contrast between the two reports dealt with censorship. The Sidle panel never ruled out the option of imposing complete field censorship (Sidle, 1984), whereas the Task Force report called for clearly stated ground rules and excluded the possibility of field censorship (Daniels, 1984).

Despite their different approaches to the study, neither report addressed the role of new technology and its impact on the future of military-media relations in a wartime environment. Because it was commissioned by the government, the recommendations of the Sidle panel are the measures which were adopted for the military-media relationship of the future (Pontuso, 1990). It is clear that these findings are somewhat biased in the favor of the military.

The Sidle Commission has already affected the military-media relationship. It was as a result of the Sidle Commission that the National Media Pool was organized

and used in Panama (Pontuso, 1990) and later, Operation Desert Shield/Storm.

The National Media Pool concept, a recommendation of the Sidle Commission, had several practice runs in 1985. The runs were held during major military maneuvers to help work out the bugs. The practice runs, one held at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, ranged from dismal failures to sterling successes (Daniels, 1985). The Pool's first use was during the Persian Gulf naval tanker escort operation in 1987, and the "show of force" to Honduras in March 1988. Although there were some complaints, it seemed to function adequately (Sidle, 1991; Willey, 1989).

During Operation Just Cause in Panama in December 1989, the National Media Pool was used, but the concept did not work well (Pontuso, 1990; Sidle, 1991). The members of the pool did not arrive until four hours after the fighting began, they were unable to file their first dispatches until six hours after that, and they were not permitted to adequately cover the operation (Pontuso, 1990; Sidle, 1991). Because of these, and many other examples, the relationship between the military and the media once again turned adversarial (Pontuso, 1990).

When Operation Desert Shield began, the Department of Defense chose to activate the pool concept. This concept was modified considerably before the operation finished. A 17-member National Media Pool accompanied the first

soldiers into Saudi Arabia in early August 1990. According to Sidle (1991), the pool concept worked well for the two weeks it operated. However, as more soldiers came into the operations area, so did more media representatives. By the time the war ended, there were over 1,600 journalists in the operations area (Sidle, 1991). By comparison, the largest number of in-country correspondents in Vietnam at any one day was 648 (Diehl, 1989). The National Media Pool was shut down after two weeks because the number of non-pool reporters in the area made it unnecessary.

The relationship between the military and the media did not improve greatly during Operation Desert Shield. The failure of the National Media Pool left many wary of the concept during the impending war; however, some lauded the military's efforts to improve the relationship (Rather, 1991). The relationship between the military and the media going into Operation Desert Storm could be described as neutral, at best (Sidle, 1991).

Operation Desert Storm caused several modifications to the concept first started with Operation Desert Shield. The large number of journalists caused the Department of Defense to improvise a new system of pools to attempt to provide access to as many journalists as possible. Some sources noted that there were simply too many journalists for the military to accommodate (Dennis, et al., 1991; Ethiel, 1992; Sidle, 1991). Another modification put in

place for Operation Desert Storm was that all material prepared by a pool member had to be reviewed by the Army public affairs officer escorting that pool. If the public affairs officer approved it, the material was forwarded as soon as possible for release. If the journalist and the public affairs officer could not agree on a point, the material was forwarded to the Joint Information Bureau in Dahran for review (Dennis, et al., 1991).

There were several problems with the modified pool concept during Desert Storm (Dennis, et al., 1991; Ethiel, 1992). The review system often caused delays in putting out the story, but the review system applied only to journalists in the pool. Pool members covering a unit were not allowed to split up and go off individually. In some cases, the pool was not deployed in a timely fashion and missed unit actions. Another sore point for the media was that public affairs escorts kept reporters under tight control (Dennis, et al., 1991; Sidle, 1991).

The relationship between the military and the media did not improve during Operation Desert Storm. Because of the problems cited, and others, the media came out of the operation with a feeling of greater distrust and manipulation by the military. The military finished Desert Storm without a workable concept to include the media in future operations (Dennis, et al., 1991).

Sidle (1984, 1991) notes the secret to a successful relationship between the military and the media is cooperation. The military and the media rarely recognize the fact that they really need each other. It is virtually impossible for wars to be fought, especially in a democracy, without public support, and public support is unattainable without an informed public. The American taxpayer has the right to know how and what the military is doing, taking into account operational security and troop safety. Viewed in this manner, it becomes clear that the military and the media must develop a working relationship which will allow fair reporting of the military's actions.

Media Credibility

Credibility is an important issue to this research because of the current idea that the public, and thus the military, does not believe the news media (Gaziano, 1988; Wyatt, 1991). This alleged lack of credibility can hinder the mass media's ability to inform the public, to monitor the government, and to govern their own profession. There is a further danger that lack of credibility, in the long term, could lead to weakened freedom of the press and threaten to put some mass media sources out of business.

Compounding and increasing the significance of the credibility problem is the large body of conflicting research findings. Despite the importance and interest in

the concept of credibility, there is still no widely agreed upon definition.

Herein lies the greatest challenge to studies of credibility. The dimensions that comprise the definition of credibility may vary from something as simple and broad as Webster's definition of believability (Mish, 1986) to a specific and complex definition of 18 separate components (Gaziano & McGrath, 1986). There is a need to develop a concise operational definition of credibility upon which mass media and researchers can agree.

Media credibility problems have been an issue for several decades. As the review of the relationship of the military and the media indicates, individual perceptions of how the media are doing their job are continually influenced by the current political and historical atmosphere. In order to have an accurate and consistent picture of media credibility, it is important to develop a reliable measuring technique. Research and discussion on the magnitude of the credibility problem have focused primarily on how credibility is measured, and have currently included a definition that is so large and all encompassing that it is no longer functional.

The research on credibility stems from as far back as 1936 with the work of Mitchell T. Charnley who studied newspaper reporting accuracy (Gaziano & McGrath, 1986). Since the 1950s, much of the research on credibility has

focused on factors or dimensions that are strongly associated with credibility. One of the early attempts at a definition of credibility was proposed by Hovland and Weiss (1951) who identified two dimensions of credibility: trustworthiness and expertness. Neither of these dimensions was directly used in this research although they were not completely ignored. Because of their broad scope and the difficulty in measuring them, they were incorporated as parts of other dimensions which are measurable.

In the research on developing a definition of credibility, the Yale group in 1953 then looked at "believability of source" as a component of persuasive communication impact (Gaziano & McGrath, 1986). In 1959, the interest in credibility increased after the Roper polling organization asked a question about believability for the Television Information Office. Their results pointed to increased public trust in television compared with other media. The Roper organization concluded that television's lead over other media in terms of how much the public believed it as a news source increased during the 1960s and 1970s (Nass & Newhagen, 1989).

Researchers' interest in credibility began to increase in the 1960s and with it came a further interest in developing the concept of credibility more fully. Much of this research has concentrated on the dimensions of the

source that people use to determine credibility (Gaziano, 1988; Meyer, 1988).

After Hovland and Weiss's (1951) proposal that credibility can be measured as trustworthiness and expertness, factors of credibility continued to expand. Berlo, Lemert and Mertz (1970) identified three factors of credibility: safety, qualification and dynamism. These factors were also discarded for the definition of credibility in this research for reasons similar to the dismissal of Hovland and Weiss's dimensions: the scope of these factors is very broad and difficult to measure.

In addition to the above mentioned dimensions of credibility, it is important to consider the actual definition of credibility. According to Webster's New Collegiate dictionary, "to be credible is to offer reasonable grounds to be believed (Mish, 1986)." This definition is not complicated and if that were all there were to measuring media sources, it would be fairly straightforward. This extremely broad definition, however, does not take into account the many variables that make up the "reasonable grounds" part of the definition.

Although the dimensions change from study to study, several researchers have proposed that credibility is a multidimensional concept. One study worthy of note is the American Society of Newspaper Editors' (ASNE) survey which used a variety of definitions of credibility, including

broad and narrow measures (Gaziano & McGrath, 1986). Because most of these factors have been treated as indicators of credibility previously, this multidimensional concept was labeled as the "definition of credibility." This definition is not universally accepted and has been criticized for not taking into account the different kinds of media and various media functions.

Although Gaziano and McGrath's (1986) operational definition of credibility appears to be reasonable, it is important to remember that there is still no generally accepted definition for mass media credibility. Of the 16 factors cited by the ASNE survey and Gaziano and McGrath (1986), many of them can be grouped or discarded (Meyer, 1988). Using Meyer (1988) as a guideline, this research uses the operational definition which comes from combining or discarding some of the 16 factors down to five categories.

The definition of credibility, for the purpose of this research, is believability of the five factors: accuracy, fairness, unbiasedness, objectivity and telling the whole truth, as previously defined. This will be done without consideration of different criteria for various sources of mass media.

The review of Gaziano and McGrath (1986) brings the operational definition of credibility for this research more in line with Meyer's research. Meyer's Believability

Index (1988) includes many factors, five of which are accuracy, fairness, unbiasedness, objectivity, and telling the whole truth. Each of these provides a degree of redundancy. This repetition will give this research a far more accurate measure than would have been made by one of the items independently. These five factors not only meet the face value test, but treat the different kinds of media and various media functions equally. These factors are equally applied to all mediums despite their differing nature and how information is perceived because they deal with the concept of believability.

In addition to the broad concepts in the definition of credibility, one may also consider source comparison. Nass and Newhagen (1989) propose that the criteria people use to determine television credibility are different from those used to judge newspapers. They further state that television news credibility will be influenced by a person's perception of the individuals presenting it. Because of the separation in space and time between the public and the people who produce newspapers, perception of newspapers will be as an organization or institution, rather than an individual. Much credibility research does tend to compare broadcast against print journalism, but this is not a distinction the public generally makes (Kohut & Robinson, 1988). It seems that the five composite

factors can be equally applied to both broadcast and print journalism.

This research did not focus on defining relationships to the source that receivers use in assessing credibility. The five factors of credibility used in this research apply equally to all mediums. Each person's perception, whether it be that the source of information is an individual or an institution (Nass & Newhagen, 1989) will be evaluated the same.

Some research suggests that there may not be a credibility crisis (Gaziano, 1988; Kohut & Robinson, 1988). Based upon current research and articles (Smith, 1984), as well as earlier findings (Baxter & Bittner, 1974; Lee, 1978, Shaw, 1973) and the extensive use of the Roper question, it appears justified to do further research on the issue of credibility.

History is replete with examples of the media damaging their own credibility with the military. The 1984 case of General William Westmoreland and CBS is such an example. A 1975 CBS documentary had wrongfully charged a conspiracy led by Westmoreland. Fifteen years later it was revealed that CBS had gotten the story wrong. They had relied on a paid consultant whose account of events was tailored by his bias and allowed the producer to avoid or discard interviews that rebutted the documentary's premise (Sarkesian, 1987).

Incidents such as this only validate the existence of a credibility problem and make the issue of credibility that much more difficult to research. For this study Meyer's Believability Index (1988), the mass media credibility index of Cornelius Pratt (1982), and Gaziano and McGrath's definition of credibility (1986) were the driving influences for defining credibility.

One of the most demanding issues facing mass media today is credibility. The lack of agreement on an operational definition for credibility severely hinders mass media's ability to perform the myriad roles they have to society and themselves. This issue is further complicated when studied from the military aspect.

The following chapter describes how the study was conducted. It lays out the design of the questionnaire, the subjects and the procedure.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This chapter discusses the respondents and the design of the questionnaire as well as the derivation of the terms used to define credibility.

Design of the Study

Data to test the hypotheses were collected using a questionnaire (see Appendix A). The questionnaire was structured with five sections. Reliability of the measures, as assessed by Cronbach's alpha, was established at 0.86 (Bruning & Kantz, 1977). This measure needed to be 0.7 or above in order to establish reliability of the survey.

The first six questions provided demographic and military background information on the respondents. Specifically, they asked for age, gender, rank, branch, source of commission and combat experience.

Question seven was a modified version of the Roper question which was first asked in 1959: "If you got conflicting or different reports of the same news story from radio, television, magazines and newspapers, which of the four versions would you be most inclined to believe (Gaziano, 1988, p. 277)?" This question was asked because of the Roper question's extensive use in past research on

media credibility.

Questions 8 through 12 formed the major portion of the index used in this study to measure perceived credibility of the mass media. Specifically this section employs a series of Likert-scale questions to measure these components of media credibility: accuracy, fairness, unbiasedness, objectivity and telling the whole truth. Questions 13 through 18 use a Likert scale to determine whether the officers' views of media credibility had been influenced by a senior officer, a bad personal experience with the media or a combination of the two. Questions 19 and 20 also used a Likert scale to determine how these officers viewed the relationship between the military and the media today. A single measure of credibility was developed by combining questions 8 through 12 with questions 19 and 20.

It is important to clarify for the purpose of this study that mass media refers to the mediums of television, newspaper, radio, and magazine news. This study does not specify one medium because past studies have shown the degree to which people differentiate for concepts of credibility and different kinds of media has not been clear (Gaziano & McGrath, 1986; Gaziano, 1988; Orwant & Ullman, 1974). Most credibility research studies compare broadcast against print journalism, but it has been noted that the public does not categorize the news media that way (Kohut &

Robinson, 1988). Gaziano (1988) also noted that measuring attitudes toward media separately can lead to variations in findings even within the same study.

The extent of media credibility problems has been an issue for several decades. Research and discussion on the problem relies primarily on how credibility is measured and defined. Currently some studies note that the definition is so large and all encompassing that it is no longer functional (Kohut & Robinson, 1988; Meyer, 1988; Nass & Newhagen, 1989).

With as many as 12 previous operational definitions of credibility in 1985 surveys alone, by refining and regrouping credibility factors into a smaller inter-related set, this research was an attempt to develop a concise operational definition of credibility.

Elements discarded from Gaziano and McGrath's (1986) definition of credibility were "factual" and "reporters are well-trained" because of their ambiguity. Furthermore, establishing criteria and standards to determine whether reporters are well-trained would be extremely difficult. The category "respects people's privacy" does not directly deal with the concept of believability and will also be discarded. Four factors were combined because of their similar meanings: "unbiased," "tells the whole story," "can be trusted," and "separates facts from opinions."

Further elements discarded were "patriotic," "concerned about the community's well-being," "concerned mainly about public interests," and "watches out after your interests" because they deal mainly with community affiliation. The scope of this research attempted to determine the perceptions of mass media credibility by middle grade Army officers, who generally do not have strong community affiliation because they move so often.

These discarded components leave the following five elements which were investigated in this study. Accuracy is being free from error or mistakes, not only in the content of the story, but also spelling, grammar and punctuation. Fairness is defined as being impartial and involves elimination of personal feelings, interests or prejudices. Being impartial acknowledges that there are many sides to every story and they all must be addressed.

Unbiasedness is one of the more difficult elements to define and apply because the concept of "bias" covers many areas. It could mean political, institutional or personal bias (Gaziano & McGrath, 1986; Meyer, 1988). There is considerable agreement that the media contain political and institutional bias, but there is much less agreement about the direction of the bias (Gaziano, 1988). For this research, unbiasedness is the absence of perceptions of bias by presenting a balance of coverage of both sides of

an issue, even though including opinion may be appropriate (Gaziano, 1988).

Objectivity is the use of facts without distortion by personal feelings. Personal feelings are constantly present in all of us. If it is evident or perceived that personal feelings have significantly affected the reporting of news, that news is no longer considered objective. This in turn contributes to a credibility problem.

Telling the whole truth is the most difficult of the five factors to define. For the purpose of this study, truth is the quality of keeping close to the facts and avoiding misinterpretation or distortion. The problem is that the public and sometimes the media do not always know the truth, particularly when dealing with the military. Telling the whole truth will be defined as the public's perception that a news medium has given the facts with no misinterpretation or distortion.

Respondents

Subjects in this study were volunteers from various maneuver battalions of the 101st Airborne Division stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Officers assigned to Brigade Headquarters and the Division staff were not included in this study because of the study's focus at the maneuver level units. All subjects were middle grade Army officers in the rank of captain, major or lieutenant colonel. Only middle grade Army officers were selected

because of their potential to be the Army's future senior leadership. A total of 200 surveys were distributed to 16 battalions. Completed responses were received from 166 officers, for a 83% return rate.

Surveys were distributed to combat and non-combat arms officers. Combat arms officers are those officers in branches which are directly involved in combat such as Infantry, Armor, Aviation, Field Artillery, Air Defense Artillery, Special Forces, and Engineers. Non-combat arms officers are those officers in branches not directly involved in combat such as Military Police, Transportation, Signal, Chemical, Ordnance, Military Intelligence, Judge Advocate General Corps, Quartermaster, Veterinary Corps, Chaplains, Dental Corps, Army Nurse Corps, and Medical Service Corps.

Procedure

There were a total of 48 maneuver battalions available to survey. This total is divided into 29 combat arms battalions and 19 combat support or service support battalions. Based upon the average personnel staffing of captains, majors and lieutenant colonels in the typical battalion, approximately 12 questionnaires were distributed to each selected battalion.

A total of 16 battalions, eight combat arms and eight non-combat arms, were randomly selected. Permission to distribute the questionnaires was received through direct

coordination with each battalion's executive or operations officer.

Questionnaires were given to each battalion and distribution was coordinated with the executive or operations officer. Generally, questionnaires were handed out at the end of a training or command and staff meeting, filled out and immediately returned. The cover sheets (see Appendix B) were filled out and returned before questionnaires were answered to ensure confidentiality of responses. In those cases when the questionnaires were not completed immediately, the executive or operations officer collected them later. There was no apparent pressure in any of the units to complete the questionnaire.

The following chapter presents a summary of data collected and the statistical analyses of them. Data were analyzed in terms of frequencies, a Pearson correlation and a t-test.

CHAPTER 4

Results

Demographics

Table 1 provides the demographic data of the subjects. It includes the number of respondents, distribution of officers by age, gender, rank, type of branch, source of commission and combat experience.

Table 1

Demographic Summary of Respondents

CATEGORY	TOTAL N	PERCENT (%) OF POPULATION SAMPLE
Middle Grade Army Officers	166	100.00
Age:		
25-27	26	16.00
28-30	60	36.00
31-33	24	15.00
34-36	22	13.00
37-39	19	11.00
40-42	9	5.00
43-45	6	4.00
Gender:		
Male	159	96.00
Female	7	4.00
Rank:		
Captain	123	74.00
Major	33	20.00
Lieutenant Col.	10	6.00

(table continues)

Table 1 (cont.)

CATEGORY	TOTAL N	PERCENT (%) OF POPULATION SAMPLE
Branch:		
Combat Arms	88	53.00
Non-Combat Arms	78	47.00
Commission:		
ROTC	127	77.00
USMA	18	11.00
OCS	18	11.00
Other	3	1.00
Combat:		
Yes	115	70.00
No	51	30.00
War:		
Vietnam	4	2.00
Grenada	1	0.60
Panama	4	2.40
Southwest Asia	106	64.00

An examination of the questionnaires revealed that 67% of the respondents were between the ages of 25 and 33. The distribution of rank showed 74% of the respondents were captains. These two demographic categories verify that the questionnaires reached the targeted population of the future Army officer leadership.

In reporting branch of service, 53% indicated they were combat arms, while 47% marked that they were non-combat arms branches. The almost equal distribution between combat and non-combat arms branches was accomplished by taking the total number of battalions available to survey, dividing them into combat or

non-combat arms groups, and randomly drawing eight from each group.

The source of commission most widely represented was ROTC, with 77% of the total respondents followed by the US Military Academy and Officer Candidate School each with 11%. The high percentage of ROTC respondents is consistent with the demographics of the total Army officer corps in which 75% of all officers receive commissions from ROTC.

Data Analysis

Data from the study supported the first hypothesis that middle-grade Army officers viewed the mass media as having low credibility. Data for determining credibility were derived by creating a composite variable of eight questions (Numbers 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 19 20) on the survey dealing with the area of mass media credibility. The variable was created to account for and combine the results of each factor in the definition of credibility. The variable also took into account the data on the military-media relationship. An analysis of this variable showed that while 22% of the subjects surveyed felt mass media were credible in their reporting of the military, 78% of the officers noted the mass media lacked credibility.

Looking at responses to questions 19 and 20 as separate from the credibility index gave more specific information. Responses to these questions revealed that 54% of the officers thought the relationship was

adversarial, while 73% noted the relationship was not one of trust.

The second hypothesis that middle grade Army officers' views of media credibility have been influenced by a senior officer rather than personal experience was not supported. When responding to the question on influence, 61% of the officers surveyed noted that personal experience most influenced their view of the mass media. Only 9% stated their views were influenced by a senior officer.

Additionally, correlation coefficients did not support the second hypothesis. The correlation of personal experience with perceived credibility ($r=0.368$, $p<0.01$) showed a significant positive relationship. The correlation of senior officer influence with personal experience ($r=-0.287$, $p<0.01$) had a significant negative relationship. Data indicated that personal experience was generally positive or neutral. It was interesting to note that when senior officer influence was correlated with perceived credibility it showed no correlation.

Three questions on the survey (Numbers 13, 14, 15) dealt with senior officer influence. They were combined into one variable to determine whether senior officers were attempting to give an overall positive or negative view of the media. Analysis of data from this variable indicated that 62% of the subjects noted that their senior officers had told them not to talk to or trust the mass media.

The third hypothesis was not supported. A t-test was done to compare combat arms officers' responses ($\bar{M}=28.25$) to non-combat arms officers ($\bar{M}=27.19$) on the variable of credibility. There was no significant difference ($t=1.43$, $df=164$, $p=0.155$) between the two groups. The t value needed to be greater than 1.64 in order to be significant (Bruning & Kantz, 1977).

Further analysis of data by each element of credibility for the third hypothesis is portrayed in Table 2. It reveals that combat arms officers rated the mass media lower in all five factors of credibility than did non-combat arms officers. It is interesting to note that both groups rated the mass media lowest on the unbiased factor.

Table 2

Comparison of Combat Arms and Non-Combat Arms Officers on the Variable of Media Credibility

	Combat Arms N=88			Non-combat Arms N=78		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Accuracy	12	24	52	17	20	41
Unbias	5	12	71	9	24	45
Objective	10	31	47	20	18	40
Fair	10	26	52	18	22	38
Tell the Truth	14	27	47	14	29	35

The next chapter evaluates and interprets the results. It also draws several inferences and potential consequences of the results to both the military and the media.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion and Conclusions

Data from this study support one of the three hypotheses. The first hypothesis, middle grade Army officers view the mass media as having low credibility, is supported. Data suggest that more than half of the respondents perceive that the mass media are inaccurate (56%), biased (70%) and not objective (52%) in their reporting on the military. A plurality of the subjects in this study also note they believe the mass media are unfair (54%) in their reporting of the military.

The mass media need to improve their credibility with middle grade Army officers, particularly in the five areas noted. The age and rank of the majority of the respondents show that they represent the future Army officer leadership. Their present perceptions and attitudes toward the mass media can have a long range, adverse impact on the future of military-media relations.

Middle grade Army officers feel the relationship is adversarial (54%) and not one of trust (73%). If the mass media improve their credibility with military officers, it can be inferred that the relationship will improve primarily in the area of trust. The adversarial nature of the relationship will probably remain constant. It is more

important to both institutions that the relationship becomes one of trust and respect, even as adversaries.

The second hypothesis that middle grade Army officers' views of mass media credibility have been most influenced by a senior officer rather than personal experience was not supported. It is interesting to note that although the majority of the respondents expressed their personal experiences with the mass media to be positive and to be the most influencing of their mass media attitudes, the majority also indicated that their senior officers mentored them not to talk to or trust the mass media. Add to this the data from the first hypothesis which shows they feel the mass media have low credibility, and, even though the survey responses failed to show a link, it can be logically inferred that the overall low credibility standing is influenced, in some degree, by senior officer mentoring.

When responding to the question on influence, the majority of the respondents note that personal experience, not a senior officer, most influenced their view of the mass media. Given the nature of the profession as an Army officer, it can be reasonably argued that the respondents who noted personal experience for influence gave the socially acceptable and professionally correct answer. The Army stresses the need for leaders to think and make decisions in the absence of senior officer guidance.

The third hypothesis was not supported. There is no significant difference between the way combat and non-combat arms officers view the credibility of mass media. The mean difference between combat arms and non-combat arms officers is 0.0577, with a t value of 1.42. This lack of significant difference can probably be attributed to the fact that both groups of officers are products of the same system, indoctrination and structure. Even though the differences are too small to be statistically significant, combat arms officers did consistently rate the media lower on every credibility component.

While this study provides empirical data on the issue of mass media credibility, as viewed by selected members of the military, and the military-media relationship, it is important to note the potential limitations. The first potential limitation is the operational definition constructed for credibility. Although there is no totally accepted definition of credibility, the five factors used in this study may seem too simplistic for some. Future research may want to incorporate more factors and narrow the focus to one mass medium.

Second, the primary focus of this investigation was on middle grade Army officers' perceptions of mass media credibility. Data were also collected to determine the effect of senior officer influence and mentoring. In retrospect, the variable of influence is very complicated

and should be done as a separate study or at least some more sensitive measures should be employed.

A third potential limitation of this study is that the questionnaires may have been answered with socially desirable and professionally correct responses. The Army, as a profession, stresses and values leadership. One aspect of leadership is independent thought and decision making (Military Leadership, 1990). The questions on senior officer influence may have been answered with the socially desirable response rather than what the respondents truly believed in order to show that the officers consistently used independent thought rather than reporting that senior officers truly influenced their impressions of the media.

Despite the limitations, the findings of this study provide data concerning specifically how selected members of the military view the credibility of the media. If you take into account Sarkesian's study (1987) that Army officers hold views generally in accordance with the public, an argument could be made that this study may reflect the public's views.

Further studies are needed to validate the five-factor operational definition of credibility and to gather specific data on senior officer influence on mass media credibility views. This study produces empirical data on middle grade Army officers' views of mass media credibility. It shows that among middle grade Army officers, the Army's future

senior leadership, mass media have a credibility problem. It also shows that the respondents feel the military-media relationship is not one of trust. The long-range impact of these perceptions and attitudes is significant. If the military and mass media do not work together to improve the credibility standing, the military-media relationship will remain on a low level.

This study will not resolve military-media problems. Perhaps it will increase the awareness level on both sides and inspire future studies to develop courses of action for both the military and the media to improve the military-media relationship and credibility.

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

- Baxter, L., & Bittner, J. (1974). High school and college student perceptions of media credibility. Journalism Quarterly, 51, 517-520.
- Berlo, D. K., Lemert, J. B., & Mertz, R. J. (1970). Dimensions for evaluating the acceptability of message sources. Public Opinion Quarterly, 33, 563-576.
- Bruning, J. L., & Kantz, B. L. (1977). Computational handbook of statistics (2nd ed). Illinois: Scott, Foreman & Co.
- Cohen, S. (1983). Vietnam: Anthology and guide to a television history. New York: Knopf.
- Daniels, D. C. (1985). The military and the media: Historical development and prospective study of the relationship. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Missouri, Columbia.
- DeFrank, T. M. (1984, May). Elements of crisis response: The military, media and public opinion. In General alliances, particular interests: Crisis and consensus in the west. Symposium conducted at the conference of the Naval War College, Newport, RI.
- Dennis, E. E., Stebenne, D., Pavlik, J., Thalhimer, M., LaMay, C., Smilie, D., FitzSimon, M., Gazsi, S., & Rachlin, S. (1991). The media at war: The press and the Persian Gulf conflict. In C. LaMay, M. FitzSimon, & J. Sahadi (Eds.), A report of the Gannett Foundation. New York: Gannett Foundation Media Center.
- Diehl, J. G. (1989). Lights! Camera! Action! The operational commander and the media. Unpublished master's thesis, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.
- Gaziano, C. (1988). How credible is the credibility crisis? Journalism Quarterly, 65, 267-278.
- Gaziano, C., & McGrath, K. (1986). Measuring the concept of credibility. Journalism Quarterly, 63, 451-462.
- Halloran, R. (1991). Soldiers and scribblers revisited: Working with the media. Parameters, 21, 10-20.

- Hammond, W. M. (1988). Public affairs: The military and the media, 1962-1968. Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office.
- Hovland, C., & Weiss, W. (1951). The influence of source credibility on communication's effectiveness. Public Opinion Quarterly, 15, 635-650.
- Kohut, A., & Robinson, M. J. (1988). Believability and the press. Public Opinion Quarterly, 52, 174-189.
- Lee, R. (1978). Credibility of newspapers and TV news. Journalism Quarterly, 55, 282-287.
- Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation (1992). Reporting the next war. In N. Ethiel (Ed.), Cantigny Conference Series. Chicago, Illinois: Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation.
- Meyer, P. (1988). Defining and measuring credibility of newspapers: Developing an index. Journalism Quarterly, 65, 567-574.
- Millet, A. R., & Maslowski, P. (1984). For the common defense: A military history of the United States of America. New York: Free Press.
- Military Leadership, Field Manual 22-100. (1990). Washington, DC: Department of the Army.
- Mish, F. (1986). Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary. Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster.
- Nass, C., & Newhagen, J. (1989). Differential criteria for evaluating credibility of newspapers and TV news. Journalism Quarterly, 66, 277-284.
- Ondracek, T. H. (1985). The changing relationship between the military and the media. Unpublished master's thesis, School of Systems and Logistics of the Air Force Institute of Technology, Air University, Las Vegas, Nevada.
- Orwant, J. E., & Ullmann, J. (1974). Pentagon officers' attitudes on reporting of military news. Journalism Quarterly, 51, 463-69.
- Pontuso, J. F. (1990). Combat and the media: The right to know versus the right to win. Strategic Review, 18, 49-60.

- pratt, C. (1982). How media credibility of African and U.S. students compare. Journalism Quarterly, 59, 581-587.
- Rather, D. (1991). Letter from Dan Rather. Army Public Affairs: Monthly Update, 91(4), i.
- Sarkesian, S. C. (1987). Soldiers, scholars, and the media. Parameters, 17, 77-87.
- Shaw, E. (1973). Media credibility: Taking the measure of a measure. Journalism Quarterly, 50, 306-311.
- Side, W. (1984, August). Side panel report. Available from Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), Washington, D. C. 20301.
- Side, W. (1991). A battle behind the scenes: The gulf war reheats military-media controversy. Military Review, 71, 52-63.
- Singletary, M. (1977). Attitudes of military censors and other officers on mass media issues. Journalism Quarterly, 54, 727-732.
- Smith, J. M. (1984). Wanted: A responsible free press. Proceedings of the United States Naval Institute, 110, 77-85.
- Summers, H. G., Jr. (1982). On strategy: A critical analysis of the Vietnam war. New York: Dell.
- Willey, B. E. (1989). Military-media relations come of age. Parameters, 19, 76-84.
- Wyatt, R. O. (1991). Free expression and the American public. Murfreesboro: The American Society of Newspaper Editors Foundation.

APPENDIXES

9. Unbiasedness is the absence of perceptions of bias by presenting a balanced perspective on a military issue, even when including opinion is appropriate.

Mass media are unbiased in reporting news on the military.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

10. Objectivity is the use of facts without distortion by personal feelings.

Mass media are objective when covering the military.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

11. Telling the truth is defined as your perception that a news medium has given the facts with no misinterpretation or distortion.

Mass media tell the truth in reporting on the military.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

12. Fairness is being impartial and involves elimination of personal feelings, interest or prejudices.

Mass media are fair in their news reporting of the military.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

13. I have been warned by my senior officers not to trust the media.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

14. My senior officers have advised me not to talk to the media.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree

15. I have been mentored by my senior officers that I
should be honest and open with the media.
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| strongly agree | agree | neutral | disagree | strongly disagree |
16. I have been "burned" by the media.
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| strongly agree | agree | neutral | disagree | strongly disagree |
17. My experience with the mass media is that they are
trustworthy and quoted me correctly.
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| strongly agree | agree | neutral | disagree | strongly disagree |
18. My view of the mass media has been most influenced by
(Circle one) senior officer
 personal experience
 combination of the two
19. I feel the relationship between the military and the
media is adversarial.
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| strongly agree | agree | neutral | disagree | strongly disagree |
20. I believe the military/media relationship is one of
trust.
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| strongly agree | agree | neutral | disagree | strongly disagree |

For identification only, please write the month and day of
your birthday _____.

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Statement

The purpose of this investigation is to determine the mass media's credibility among middle grade Army officers. Your responses are confidential. This consent cover sheet will be removed from the questionnaire upon receipt. At no time will you be identified by name nor will anyone other than the investigators have access to your responses. There are no potential hazards which may occur from participation in this research. You may benefit by exploring your attitudes about the mass media as you approach further leadership positions. The demographic information collected will be used only for purposes of analysis. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to terminate your participation at any time without any penalty.

The scope of this project is to determine whether or not mass media have a credibility problem with middle grade Army officers.

If you have any further questions regarding this procedure, please contact the investigator at Austin Peay State University, ROTC Department, ATTN: MAJ Paul Darcy, Clarksville, TN 37040 or call (615) 648-6135.

Thank you for your cooperation.

I agree to participate in the present study being conducted under the supervision of a faculty member of the Department of Speech, Communication and Theatre at Austin Peay State University. I have been informed in writing about the procedures to be followed and about any discomforts or risks which may be involved. The investigator has offered to answer any further inquiries I may have regarding the procedures. I understand that I am free to terminate my participation at any time without penalty or prejudice and to have all data obtained from me withdrawn from the study and destroyed. I have also been told of any benefits that may result from my participation.

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

SIGNATURE

DATE