

# Anchors Agree: Looks Do Count

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out that the jury's ruling simply agrees that Craft was demoted for reasons that directly conflict with statements Metromedia allegedly made when Craft was hired.

Susan Jackson, producer of the six o'clock news at WFMV-TV, says television journalism must operate as a business if it is to be successful. "As journalists, we would like to believe that the communications media don't have to operate as a business," she says, "but, in fact, they do. In a very cold form, that means they have to study their marketability."

"If the product is not acceptable or doesn't please the consumer, changes have to be made," she says.

Bruce agrees: "I think we all must understand -- and I say this with a lot of hesitation -- but it (Craft's demotion) is the nature of business. That's the calculated risk you take when you say, 'I want to sit here seven days a week.'"

But Burke, who has a degree in advertising and commercial art, says she blames much of what happened to Craft on ratings, which she says are viewed as being more valid than they really are. "The salespeople can take any ratings book to any client and read just about anything into it," she says. "The job is to sell that book -- no matter what it says. More of the problem (Craft's situation) had to do with what a consultant's report said."

But most agree that it is more difficult for women to make it as news anchors.

"Women are judged more harshly than men anchors and have a harder row to hoe to get there," says Jackson. "And they are criticized more once they do."

"But you can't blame that on management only," says Jackson. "You have to blame that on the whole society."

"When men get a touch of grey, they look distinguished. When women get a touch of grey, they run for the Clairrol. But (Craft) can't change society with a lawsuit."

Such a societal attitude, Jackson says, sheds some light on why male anchors seem to gain credibility with age, while female anchors seem to suffer an opposite effect.

"I sometimes feel that this is my peak," says Smith, who graduated from A&T State

University with a major in mass communications. "I have to work a little bit faster to accomplish my goals."

Burke says one reason women journalists haven't "really arrived" as anchors is that they haven't been given the time. "Women have emerged in the newsroom in the last 20 years," she says. "They've had to live up to years of expectations that didn't exist for them."

"I, myself, am watching how well-established women journalists are wrinkling -- the Leslie Stahls and the Lee Thorntons," she says.

Bruce adds: "Women will get old on the air when they decide to grow old. Barbara Walters is having the opportunity to grow old on the air and she's wrinkling. So how do you know the opportunity is there if you don't take it?"

And David Emery, news director at WX-II, says he doesn't believe, as others have charged, that women anchors lose credibility with age. He quickly adds that the worth of an anchorperson can't be attributed to any one thing. "I'm not sure I could put my finger on any one important thing," he says. "They must know the news business, how to relate to people, must be dependable and must have a pleasant vocal presentation. There has to be a whole set of criteria."

"Television is a visual medium," says Bruce, who graduated from Towson State University in Maryland with a double major in mass communications and English. "We make decisions about what is and isn't offensive to the viewer. But I don't think that means women are hired solely because of their looks. I think they must be hired on potential as well as ability."

Whether women television journalists are out of the eye of the storm is still undecided. A recent TV Guide article titled "Power To The Women" reported NBC News President Reuben Frank saying that viewer acceptance of women journalists is still a problem.

But as early as 1974, research conducted for ABC indicated that 45 percent of the audience surveyed would like to see a woman anchoring alongside a man. And a private living-room survey conducted in Connecticut last spring resulted in a total acceptance

of women anchors.

Television news people also seem undecided on what the impact of the Craft's suit will be. But the consensus from news people in the area is that the impact will be significant.

"It's going to have some very profound implications, if it's upheld," says Renee Carpenter, news director at WFMV-TV.

Says Burke, "I'm sure management will be careful how they address women on what's important to them. But in this business there are so many trends. I'm going to fall back on my credentials."

Her feelings are shared by Smith, who says time is an important factor in how far women anchors have come and how far they will go. "When I first started (in broadcast journalism)," she says, "there weren't that many women around. So being black and a woman has helped me a lot."

"Take, for instance, Channel 2. We are making a lot of advances on and off the air," she says. "We have a woman news director and producer."

Bruce adds, "I think that there is a market for black female anchors. There's obviously a market, so that works to my advantage. However, there is something more important than my being black and female: I can do the job."

Channel 2 has two females in anchor positions: Sybil Robson, who co-anchors the six o'clock news, and Smith, who anchors the weekend newscast. WXII has four female anchors: Becky Daugherty, co-anchor of the evening news, Gayle Converse at noon, Susan Bruce, co-anchor of the weekend newscast, and newcomer Denise Franklin, who co-anchors weeknights at 11. Channel 2 employs only one male anchor and Channel 12 two.

While female anchors seem to be faring well at local stations, most agree that the criterion of physical attractiveness will remain for both men and women.

The worth of a television journalist "comes under the broad topic of the ability to communicate effectively," says Carpenter. "I wouldn't say that physical appearance is the most important factor, but it is a factor."

# NAACP

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"Last year, we had 175 (more than any other county in the state) and this year we have 316," he says. "I'm not sure that's a workable number, but we will try it. You lose control over folk when you have too many. We (board members and the office workers) don't know what they are doing."

Responds Marshall: "If he (Armentrout) feels uncomfortable with the workload, then he should resign. And if the staff is not able to deal with a full voter registration drive, then we need a new staff. If they can't process all the cards, then somebody needs to leave."

Marshall says the NAACP plans to contest Armentrout's decision. "We plan to fight with Please see page A5

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# Minority Business Program

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Board member Dr. William Sheppard asked if Ford could instead merely serve 20 percent of the schools in a predetermined area with 100 percent of

their cottage cheese and vanilla milkshake base.

After several minutes of deliberation, and after a Flav-O-Rich, the low bid number of questions to der, except for the two

items Ford bid lowest on and the two in which he placed second. The board will decide at its Aug. 22 meeting if Ford will get the contract to service 20 percent of the other four products.

Board member Beaufort Bailey said he remembers Ford coming before the school board during his first tenure on the board. "Ford has come down here repeatedly and never got any response. And I understand that Mechanics and Farmers Bank (a black bank) does not have an ac-

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# Bonds On Ballot

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used to expand the Benton Convention Center and build a parking deck at a cost of \$15 million. The package also includes \$3 million to develop an industrial park between I-40 and Winston-Salem State University, \$900,000 to make the eight-acre tract of land in front of City Hall more attractive for potential buyers, \$1.1 million for repairs and improvements to the center city sewer and storm drainage system, \$2.2 million for improvements to four neighborhoods near the central business district, and \$800,000 for streets, sidewalks and traffic control for the downtown area.

The board also addressed the concerns of black citizens who had criticized the city for putting so much money into downtown improvements while largely ignoring unemployment and housing problems.

The citizens, who included Mechanics and Farmers Bank City Executive Mel White, businessman Tracy Singletary and local NAACP President Patrick Hairston, listened quietly as City Manager Bill Stuart proposed a citywide program to build new housing and rehabilitate existing housing.

"In the past, we have wanted to do more," said Stuart, who met with a group of black residents last week, "but we have been hampered."

Stuart said the city would present the plan to the aldermen "as soon as we can complete it."

Economic consultant David Crane had earlier addressed the board and audience, noting that the improvements the bonds would finance would facilitate housing and employment.

Crane also assured black citizens that the proposed I-40 Industrial Park would include attractive landscaping and buffers between the park and the predominantly black Brushy Fork neighborhood that it would surround.

Crane said a more detailed plan of the park for public review should be available by the week of Sept. 27.

He added that the city would use federal guidelines in relocating families forced to move by the construction of the park.

Winston-Salem State University Chancellor H. Douglas Covington had appeared earlier at the meeting to discuss his concerns about the park and its relationship to WSSU, but left due to illness before the issue was discussed.

Covington said last week: "When I was first contacted about the industrial park, I indicated that I supported the concept in principal. It's a project that could benefit the city economically and have positive educational possibilities for the university."

But Covington said he would like to see a number of issues addressed before he gives his support to the park.

"I want to know what type of industry and commercial development would occupy the park. I also hope all the occupants will be clean industries that will deal more with research, development and training versus manufacturing, storage and distribution," Covington said.

WSSU would like for the city to sell or donate the first 10 acres of the industrial park site facing Claremont Avenue and already zoned for industrial use -- including the old train depot that houses Davis Garage and Body Shop -- to the university. This area would serve as a buffer zone between the university and the industrial park, he said, "and will make the area much more inviting."

If those concerns are not met, Covington said, he cannot support the industrial park.

"What they have proposed has great potential," he said. "We don't want to kill an idea that promises to be a good idea simply because it's not perfect in its present state."

Alderman Martha Wood lauded the black leaders for voicing their concerns.

"When they ask, 'What's in it for us?' we should applaud them," she said. "Everyone is entitled to expect a return on their investment."

Alderman Larry Little voted in favor of the bond issue, but not without some reservation, he said.

"I don't enthusiastically support it," he said, "but the public has the right to make the decision."



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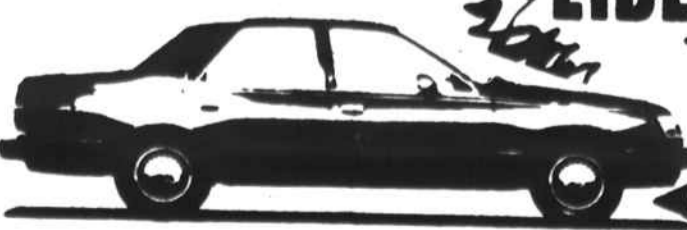
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