HARLOTTE POST - Thursday, April 18, 19



Twenty percent of the nation's adults deeply distrust the media, according to a recently completed study sponsored by the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE).

The study revealed, too, that threefourths of American adults question the credibility of newspapers and television news reporting and that public skepticism arises largely from what the study called "media explosion."

Delivered at ASNE's annual convention in Washington, D.C., the study points out that nearly two-thirds of the 1,600 respondents agreed that "the press often takes advantage of victims' circumstances who are ordinary people" - particularly from the standpoint of invading the privacy of victims of tragedy or disaster.

The study conclusion, in part, urged newspapers to "enhance their role as a populist institution" so the public will develop an attitude and feeling of "my newspaper" instead of "that newspaper" in order to regain their position as a "peoples" advocate."

The irony of the study's findings is that it is the reading and news viewing appetite and desires of the nation's adults that primarily influences and determines what newspapers print and what television news shows present. It is in fact the somewhat sadistic and nosey attitude of most Ameri-can news readers and viewers that lead newspapers and television news reports to feature stories on tragedy, misfortune and petty gossip about the personal lives and lifestyles of famous people.

Thus, on any given day most news feature stories deal with the national deficit, bank failures, war or the threat of war somewhere, major tragedy and death such as from forest fires and the Union Carbide gas leak in India. While these may all be "news worthy" there is too much emphasis on the misfortune that befalls people. In this regard, too, most people don't mind the news media taking advantage of the other guy - just not me. For example, in the "nosey" category, it was bad enough that

just because Chris Washburn happened to be an N.C. University basketball player, much news copy was made over his theft of another student's stereo equipment. Worst yet, his very low college entrance board score was included in the new stories, yet it was in no way related to the criminal charge against the young man.

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that are often developed from totally misleading captions under a single picture.

The relatively low rating of news report-ers and newspaper editors with regard to honesty and ethical standards arise from the sometimes unfortunate consequences of the competition in news reporting. Too often, the haste to be first in releasing a news story leads to the so-called "media. explosion" in which the public gets conflicting news reports. For example, when presidential press secretary Jim Brady was shot during the attempt on President Reagan's life a few years ago early news

reports were that Mr. Brady had been killed. This occurred because reporters were competing to be first in releasing their stories and, therefore, did not fully re-search the facts. This is a justifiable criticism of the media because false or incorrect information about people or events can often result in the same consequences as if the reports were accurate.

Except for "media explosion" competitive news reporting factors which justifiably generates some criticism, we believe that David Lawrence Jr., chairman of the ASNE's credibility committee, spoke truthfully when he told his convention colleagues "some good journalists would argue that all this talk about credibility does our craft no good and maybe some damage." We agree for the reasons we gave about the hunger newspaper readers and television news viewers have an appetite and desire for.

## **Adult Appetite**

The news reporting industry is in part a victim of its collective success in providing news that people want to read, see and hear about and yet often having to face the criticism of individuals or groups who at times are reported on unfavorably.

We certainly don't want to leave the impression that the news media never offers any good news or happy ending stories. Leaving the possible ethical questions aside, recent news reports on heart transplants, cancer research and longer life expectancy are positive and should offer some sense of happiness.

Undoubtedly, too, when a news story of a family facing hunger - loss of a loved one or job – often brings response of support from many sources. This reminds us all that even in our sadistic and nosey madness we are a nation of somewhat compassionate, loving people.

For this

BLACKS RETICENCE TO SEIZE THE INITIATIVE TO ORGANIZE THEIR COMMUNITIES" SAID DOUGLAS G. GLASGOW, DEAN OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, IS A MAJOR FACTOR AND COMMUNITY AN IMPORTANT FACTOR CONTRIBUTING TO OUR COMMUNITIES UNDEVELOPED STATUS"

POLITICAN BUSINESS MAN DOCTORS LAWYERS ARTISTS TEACHERS MINISTERS WORKERS COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION SOCIAL WORKERS FRATERNAL GROUPS FINANCE COMPUTER SCIENCE INSTITUTION ADMINISTRATION ENGINEERING PLANNING ARCHITECTURE BLACK PRESS

## **Baby-Boom Generation Taking Charge**

The baby-boom generation is here and taking charge. Those born between 1946 and 1964 comprise about onethird of the population af-fectionately known as the baby-boom generation. The peak year for these births was 1957 when 4.3 million babies were born and the norm was to have two or more children per married couple. The shocker came when the high birth rate lasted for almost two decades. In 1965 the birth rate took a nose dive and has since then remained well below the four million range

for nearly 20 years. Baby-boomers magnify the changes in American society with each occurring stage of life. Upon entering a specific age group, boomers redefine the experience. The objec-tive being - making middle age where the action is.

It is estimated that between 1980 and 1990 those



Sabrina neration whose education levels are the highest. Twenty-five percent of those 25 to

35 have college degrees (only nine percent of Americans over 65 years of age have a college degree). Affluence is the name of the game for this generation: boomers have real incomes higher or as high as their parent generation. Nineteen

are the first generation to be reared on television. Across the country television has been the bond that pulled together boomers with common experiences and symbols, from the disturbances at Kent State in the 1970s to soft drink commercials geared toward a new generation. Boomers are the first generation to grow up under the concept of nuclear war.

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A new ethic comes with the aging of the baby boom. A survey done by the Ameri-can Council of Life Insurance revealed that boomers believe and want stronger family and religious ties and more respect for authority. But by the same token boomers are a great deal more tolerant of diversity and uniqueness than the parent and grandparent generations. One major difference in values is their ideas on marriage and the changing roles of men and women (a majority favor women working). Boomers are marking the marketplace as they enter peak spending years. It is estimated that by 1990 most households will be headed by those born between 1946 and 1964. At present, boomers have more purchasing power than the parent generation did at the same age. In 1984 the median income for those aged 25 and 34 was \$22,776; and nearly 25 percent of the boomers earned a minimum of \$35,000; with 60 percent of the total boomer population owning homes. By the close of the 1980s, it is expected that the baby boom generation will account for more than 50 percent of consumer expenditures. Since consumer spending represents appro-ximately 75 percent of all United States economic activity, executives are reshap-ing and redesigning all of their consumer products to appeal to the aging genera-tion. Their main objective is to capture the yuppies with their goods and services because their salaries are rapidly approaching the \$30,000 plus range. The housing industry, is showing tremendous profits from this generation. During the next 10 years those people 35 to 55 years of age will account for 40 percent or more of total new home purchases. Compared to the 1970s, when it was less than 25 percent. While this is occurring, the youngest of the generation are finding it difficult to purchase new homes because of high interest rates and slow appreciation.

## **Media Explosion**

The American adults' news appetite for gossip is very evident by the major sales and popularity of such gossip/newspapers as the Inquirer and the Star. It takes little reading of stories in such news accounts to determine the shallowness of such stories

all and whatever shortcomings the news reporting industry has, and presumed credibility notwithstanding, a free, less than perfect press is better than any form of a regulated or suppressed news media. Under the latter the study referred to in this editorial would have not been appressed news media. editorial would have never been allowed to be developed.

between the ages of 25 to 45 years old will grow by approximately 30 percent. This is the group who is starting families, paying mortgages, and developing careers while the nation is moving toward conservatism.

Boomers make up a ge-

nne will find itself dominated by boomers in the labor force comprising 54 percent of all workers.

Diversity is their mode of consumerism. They reshape the marketplace as they go from jeans to suits and back pack to homes. Boomers

From Capitol Hill **Reagan Fighting Rights Battle All Over Again!** 

By Alfreda L. Madison Special To The Post The Reagan Administration, in its

accommodation to the Heritage Foundation - to make getting rid of robustion - to make getting rid of civil rights a top priority, is pull-ing out all the stops. It succeeded in blocking passage of the 1984 Civil Rights Acts, through a combination of the Administration, Howard Baker, Orin Hatch and Jesse Helms' strategy strategy. The Civil Rights Commission,

which has become the Reagan Administration anti-civil rights .advocator, appeared before the Joint Education and Labor Committee and the House Judiciary Subcom-mittee on Civil and Constitution Law, to testify on the '85 Civil Rights Restoration Act. Mouthing the Pre-sident's views were commission chairman Clarence Pendleton and staff director Linda Chavez. Civil rights commissioner, Dr. Mary Berry, who opposes the Adminis-tration's determination to return to the pre-civil rights days, also testified.

Committee chairman Repres tative Augustus Hawkins called the entire panel of witnesses to the table at once. Mr. Hawkins called on Dr. Berry to be the lead-off witness. She stated that she would like to speak stated that she would like to speak after Bill Taylor, Center for Nation-al Policy Review and the Lead-ership Conference on Civil Rights. Mr. Taylor responded that he had just tesified recently on the bill that he would rather wait until after that he would rather wait until after the other witnesses had testified, so that he could shed some light on their testimony. So Mr. Pendleton became the first witness. He cited the six principles adopted by the Commission at its retreat in San Diego in January. The panel mem-



Alfreda

bers who spoke at the retreat, on the Grove City decision were, Eva Auchincloss, executive director, Women's Sports Foundation of San Francisco; Ronald Vera, Mexican-Francisco; Ronald Vera, Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund; Bruce Hafen, president of Ameri-can Association of Presidents of Independent Colleges; the pre-sident of Ricks College of Idaho; and Patrick Boyle of the National Grocers Association of Reston, Va. The Commission's office informed The Commission's office informed me that the January meeting was a planning retreat and that Grove City was discussed. Dr. Mary Berry said that no real hearings were held on the '85 Civil Rights Act with the usual Commission variety panel from around the country. Pendleton spoke of the March 5, 1985 Commission adoption stand on legislation to overturn Grove

legislation to overturn Grove City. Dr. Berry, Ms. Ramirez and Mr. Guest dissented from the ma-jority report. In his dissension, Mr. Guest stated that the majority Commission has abdicated its responsibility and objectivity of responding to civil rights. He says they are

talking out of both sides of their mouths by saying on one hand that they are for civil rights and on the other hand they are for a loose construction of civil rights. Dr.

construction of civil rights. Dr. Berry and Ms. Ramirez concurred with Mr. Guest's statement. Pendleton's six points were as follows: first, "some are seizing upon the Grove City decision to seek a vast expansion of federal au-thority in the guise of merely restoring such authority. The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1985, which is the subject of this hearing, may more aptly be called the Civil Rights Expansion Act of 1985." Second, he believes coverage of the Act should be limited to the fe-deral agencies which implement the deral agencies which implement the four statutes. Third, the Commisfor implementation of anti-discri-mination laws. Fourth, Grove City legislation should differentiate be-tween public and private entities. Fifth, federal financial assistance Fith, recersi infancial assistance should be limited to the particular political entity that receives the funds. Sixth, Congress should pro-vide an effective religious exemption in Title IX.

Linda Chavez, read a 27-page statement, in which she highly ex-pressed her anger over the oppo-sition's stand. She referred to the Leadership Conference which is composed of 166 cross ethnic, religious, race, sex and national origin lines and its executive director, Ralph Meas, as radical right schemers using scare tactics to try to tar those who dare question a bill

Iabeled civil rights. Gordon Jones of the Heritage Foundation and Mark De Bernard of the Chamber of Commerce are opponents of the '85 Civil Rights Act.

They also testified.

Dr. Berry spoke of the milestone reached in the 1964 Act with Title VI, which used the receipt of federal funds as a basis for opening op-portunity to persons who were pre-viously denied opportunity on the basis of race. In 1972 Title IX, basis of race. In 1972 Title IX, against sex discrimination, was en-acted, 1973, Section S04, the Reha-bilitation Act, and the Age Dis-crimination Act of 1975. Dr. Berry stated that since Grove City's five complaint cases and one pending compliance review have been narrowed by the Education Department of Commission of Civil Rights, she related that she and commissioner Ramirez have tried, unsuccessfully to get their col-leagues and the staff director to collect additional information on the enforcement practices in federal agencies. Berry emphasized how enforcement practices in federal agencies. Berry emphasized how opponents engaged in arguments about a state government's right to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, or handicapp, even when using taxes paid by all of the tax-payers. She said that this was the argument before the sixties and that now we are fighting the pre-sixties battle over again.

Bill Taylor stated that some cri-ticisms of the '85 Civil Rights Bill are based on misunderstanding and the distinction between a broad and a narrow interpretation, Chavez's statement that the present bill will enter every phase of life, including the farmers and supermarkets, is grossly misunderstood, since neith-er is a recipient of federal funds. Congress and the courts understood Congress and the courts understood this before Grove City. He criti-cized Penleton and Chavez for talking about invasion of states rights.