

Supplementary Information

I. Survey Questions and Demographic Characteristics

Text of Experimental Treatments and Questions

A local disabilities advocacy group is planning on filing a lawsuit against a local city alleging that people with disabilities experiencing homelessness could not access the city managed homeless shelter or its transportation system and were harmed by the actions of the city's elected officials. The organization alleges differential treatment of disabled and non-disabled individuals by the city and several former employees have come forward with strong statements alleging non-responsiveness on the part of city managers to complaints.

Respondents randomly viewed one of the following texts as part of the information provided:

- (1) This story has not been published previously in a paper.
- (2) This story was broken yesterday by a small town local paper.
- (3) This story was broken yesterday by a mid-sized city daily.
- (4) This story was broken yesterday by a nationally recognized newspaper.

Respondents were then asked both questions below and provided a scale from 0 to 10 with 0 indicating not important and 10 indicating very important.

How important is it to your readers that you cover this story?

How important is it to your editors that you cover this story?

Demographic Survey Questions

What would come closest to how you would classify the current paper you work for?

National newspaper (1)

Midsized paper (2)

Small-town paper (3)

Specialty paper (i.e. ethnic or racial group focused or business or industry focused) (4)

What is your role at the paper?

Reporter (1)

Editor (2)

Publisher (3)

Other (4) _____

How would you describe your work in journalism?

Full-time employment (3)

Part-time employment (2)

Volunteer (1)

How would you describe your personal ideology?

Very Liberal (1)

Liberal (2)

Moderate (3)

Conservative (4)

Very Conservative (5)

Table A1 displays the descriptive characteristics of the sample. The vast number of respondents are full-time journalists, with only 3% indicating they are volunteers or part-time employees. The survey also received responses from respondents working at a variety of newspaper outlets, mostly midsize dailies and small local papers.¹ Consistent with previous surveys of journalists, we find that a plurality of journalists indicate that they are ideological moderates and that liberals outnumber conservatives in the sample (Willnat and Weaver 2014).

¹ Journalists self-reported the type of newspaper for which they worked. Specialty papers in the survey were defined as “Specialty paper (i.e. ethnic or racial group focused or business or industry focused).”

Table A1: Sample Characteristics

	Percentage of Sample
Role at Paper	
Reporter	43.9%
Editor	36.9%
Publisher	11.1%
Other Role	8.2%
Paper Type	
National Paper	1.3%
Midsized Paper	27.3%
Small Local Paper	65.6%
Specialty Paper	5.8%
Employment	
Full-Time Journalist	96.9%
Part-Time Journalist	2.9%
Volunteer Journalist	0.2%
Ideology	
Very Liberal	12.1%
Liberal	30.4%
Moderate	45.7%
Conservative	9.4%
Very Conservative	2.0%
Gender	
Male	56.8%
Female	43.2%
Observations	1,510

Note: The number of observations in the ideology, employment, and gender categories have smaller sample sizes (n=896 and n=927 respectively).

Supplementary Materials References

Willnat, Lars, and David H. Weaver. 2014. *The American Journalist in the Digital Age*. Bloomington, IN. <http://archive.news.indiana.edu/releases/iu/2014/05/2013-american-journalist-key-findings.pdf>.