THE IMPACT OF THE 1985 PHILADELPHIA NEWSPAPERS, INC.
STRIKE ON PHILADELPHIA TELEVISION STATION KYW

By
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ABSTRACT

Within the framework of General Systems Theory, the United States mass media can be viewed as an open system composed of interdependent components which rely on the audience and advertisers for survival. A change in one component means a change in another. The 46-day Philadelphia Newspapers, Incorporated strike in 1985 provided the opportunity to study the changes that took place for Philadelphia television as a result of the lack of the city's two major newspapers, the Inquirer and the Daily News.

Using historical and field research methods for the critical descriptive analysis, NBC affiliate KYW-TV in Philadelphia was chosen as the site to study the impact of the missing newspapers. Major changes were made to the station's news, including: extending the schedule; reformatting existing programs; adding newspaper-like elements; developing new graphics; hiring newspaper
personnel; and creating a "Sunday paper" program. With regard to feedback from the environment (the audience and advertisers), no significant ratings gains were made, and the advertisers made no sustained or increased demand.

While the 1985 Philadelphia newspaper strike and its impact on a local television must be considered a unique event, certain aspects of it are potentially applicable to media systems in other metropolitan areas. Reactions of the television station centered around its dependency on the environment—an attempt to improve ratings—satisfy viewers and garner new ones. But innovation was only to the point of being non-obtrusive to other programming, in order to not alienate the audience. Television and newspapers have become highly specialized and dependent on one another to provide their own kinds of news.
CHAPTER 1
MEDIA INTERDEPENDENCE

On Saturday, September 7, 1985, at 12:01 a.m., nine unions representing 4,774 employees, struck the Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily News (Radolf, 1985). The two newspapers, owned by Philadelphia Newspapers, Inc., a subsidiary of Knight-Ridder ("Strike cancels," 1985) have a combined week day circulation of 804,300 and the Inquirer has a Sunday circulation of 1,011,000 (Radolf, 1985), the largest in the city. The strike shut down the two newspapers for 46 days, the longest strike in Philadelphia newspaper history ("Back at work," 1985).

In response to the strike the smaller area newspapers expanded coverage and circulation ("Coping with," 1985). And area television stations instituted contingency plans in the form of expanded news and new formats in hopes of filling the void caused by the newspaper strike (Darrow, 1985).

The interdependence of the commercial mass media of the United States goes largely unnoticed until the
equilibrium is disturbed. The newspaper strike in Philadelphia provides an opportunity to explore the reactions of a media system when it is without one of its key components.

General Systems Theory and Mass Media

General Systems Theory, which has its origins in the sciences, focuses on the idea of a "whole composed of a number of interrelated parts" (Borden, 1985, p. 29). The whole is more complex than the sum of all its parts (Devito, 1985). Elements of the whole exist within an environment and interact with each other on various levels of interdependence, needing various levels of energy to maintain their activity (Borden, 1985). Biologist Ludwig Von Bertalanffy described systems as either 'closed' or 'open' (Myers, 1982). A closed system "has no interaction with its environment--it is isolated, neither affecting nor being affected by it" (Borden, 1985, p. 30). An open system exchanges information with its environment (Barnhart, 1976). All parts interact, each part influences every other part (Devito, 1985). The 'wholeness' of open systems is composed of interrelated, interdependent components and each of these components may interact with their particular environment.
In the communication field, the "open system" aspect of General Systems Theory has been applied to interpersonal, group, and organizational communication. The principles of an open system in General Systems Theory can also be applied to the commercial mass media of the United States, and similarly, but on a smaller scale, to the mass media within a United States city, such as Philadelphia.

Mass Media: The Components and the Environment

Mass media in the United States are typically subdivided into the following groups (components): television, radio, film, newspapers, magazines, books, and records/tapes. Because "the mass media are . . . only one part of a very large industry that provides and circulates knowledge" (Schramm, 1973, p. 138), these categories are quite broad and may not be all-inclusive when discussing mass media. However, for the purpose of examining the mass media as an open system, each medium mentioned above will be considered a component. Taken together, these media create the "whole composed of a number of interrelated parts" (Borden, 1985, p. 29).

One general rule about open systems is that they depend on interaction with the environment to continue to exist (Myers, 1982). Energy comes into the components of
a system from the environment, is transformed within the components, and is returned to the environment (Myers, 1982). "Components are differentiated from, and dependent upon the environment in which the system exists" (Myers, 1982, p. 47).

If the mass media are considered the components in an open system, what is the environment in which they interact? Upon what are the mass media dependent?

To profit, and thus to live, the media must collect payments from the two groups who benefit from their services--the audience and the advertisers. (Murphy, 1977, p. 178)

The mass media system is composed of the components--television, radio, film, newspapers, magazines, books, and records/tapes--which are dependent on their environment--the audience and the advertisers--for survival.

In the United States, the "energy" that comes into the commercial mass media components from the environment generally works in one of two ways. Some media rely on the audiences as their sources of income (Murphy, 1977). Book publishers, film and record companies, and some magazines are this way. For other media, the dependence on the audience/advertiser environment is more complex. The interaction for most television, radio, newspapers and magazines follows this general pattern:
By answering information and entertainment needs of a certain group, a publisher or broadcaster attracts an audience. Having attracted an audience, the media manager can then go to companies that have something to sell to that audience and offer space or time at a given rate. To put it crudely, the advertising salesperson "sells the audience" to an advertiser. (Murphy, 1977, p. 178)

In the United States, the commercial media are part of the private enterprise system—they work for a profit. If they do not produce a profit, they die (Murphy, 1977).

An example of how reliant the components of a commercial media system are on their environment (audience/advertisers) can be found in today's newspaper industry. Declining readership of newspapers, due in part to audiences shifting to television for news, is leading advertisers to put their money elsewhere (although the majority of advertising dollars still goes to newspapers).

This loss of revenue forces the newspaper to cut back on various features or coverage, which further reduces readership, which further cuts down advertising revenues. The end result of this spiral is the closing of the paper. (DeVito, 1985, p. 411)

A system receives input signals "about its environment and its own functioning in relation to that environment" (Myers, 1981, p. 48). Negative feedback to the system can help regulate the system. "Without negative feedback the system cannot correct itself and get back on course after a deviation" (Myers, 1982, p. 48).
Again using the example of the newspaper industry, the negative feedback to the newspapers was that more people were turning to television for their news. One company, Gannett, Inc., took this negative feedback and created a newspaper, USA TODAY, that emphasizes color photos, business and sports—a format that "appeals to a generation hooked on TV" (Whetmore, 1985, p. 30).

The energy that a system takes from its environment is transformed and returned to the environment (audience/advertisers) (Murphy, 1982, p. 47). What do the components of a mass media system return to their environment?

For advertisers, the opportunity is afforded to publicize products on a large scale, and make money. For the audience, the energy taken from the media components manifests itself in tangible and intangible ways. "There are always people seeking the information and entertainment the media provide" (Murphy, 1977, p. 81). The uses and gratifications approach to media consumption makes the assumption that the audience actively puts the media to use and derives certain gratifications from that use (DeVito, 1985). Typical gratifications that have been hypothesized are escape from everyday worries, emotional
support, social contact, acquisition of information, and relieving of loneliness (DeVito, 1985).

**Nonsummativity**

In General Systems Theory, an open system is also looked at in terms of nonsummativity, which means that "one cannot simply add together the . . . characteristics of a group . . . and expect to describe that group" (Barnhart, 1976, p. 142). The components of a system do not exist in a vacuum. The open system is synergistic.

In the late 1940s, when television emerged as a mass medium, it was not simply added to the existing media to make a larger system. Instead, it interacted with them, and the whole system underwent redefinition. Similarly, if one medium were to be removed from the mass media system, other media would not continue existing in their current state. The whole is not equal to the sum of its parts. It is synergistic.

**Wholeness**

The most important concept in General Systems Theory is that of wholeness. Wholeness means that "a change in any part of the system will cause a change in the other parts of the system" (Barnhart, 1976, p. 142). Systems have a tendency toward entropy—or disorder—and
cannot maintain a steady state without the input of energy. "Any disruption in the equilibrium of a system is countered by forces trying to return the system as closely as possible to its previous steady state" (Myers, 1982, p. 49).

Does a change in one medium effect a change in another medium? One way to answer this is to look at some of the changes that have taken place in the United States' mass media system over the last forty years.

Of the media--television, radio, films, newspaper, books, magazines, and records/tapes--none has had a stronger impact on the system than television. Its introduction into the mass media system and its emergence as the dominant medium in United States society, have had great impact on other components of the system, clearly demonstrating media's interdependence.

"Before the advent of television, radio was the dominant mass communication system" (DeVito, 1985, p. 408). Television forced radio to "adopt new strategies, find new sources of appeal, develop new markets. In the process, the medium greatly widened its scope and variety" (Head, 1972, p. 316). Radio turned its focus on the individual listener, as television "drove radio out of the living room and into the kitchen, the bedroom, the study,
the car. Radio became personal and mobile" (Head, 1972, p. 316). While TV was winning over the large audience, radio concentrated on the smaller audiences in attempts to cater to more specialized interests—for example, opera and symphony music lovers (DeVito, 1972).

The film industry "experienced a sharp decline in attendance, leading to large absolute declines in receipts and profits, beginning in 1947" (Stuart, 1976, p. 195). More people started watching television instead of going to the movies, and the film industry hit "rock bottom in 1962" (Head, 1972, p. 326). Although television ended the age of large ornate movie palaces in downtown areas, new markets emerged, first for drive-in theaters, then for theaters in suburban shopping centers (Head, 1972).

As mentioned earlier, newspapers (specifically, afternoon papers), have lost many readers to the quick fix of television news. In order to compete with television, newspapers have become more visual and more entertainment-oriented.

In the 1940s, the big, general-interest magazines such as Life, Look, The Saturday Evening Post, and Collier's were in their heyday. But television "preempted the role of the general-purpose magazines and stimulated development of special-interest periodicals" (Head, 1972,
p. 328). In 1956, Collier's was the "first modern mass circulation, general-interest magazine to go bankrupt and cease publication" (Whetmore, 1985). In 1971, Look magazine ceased publication, and in 1972, Life followed. In 1974, TV Guide overtook Reader's Digest as the largest-selling magazine in America (Whetmore, 1985). Many magazines lost their audiences to television--and with the audiences went advertising. The smaller, special interest magazines that have become more and more prevalent are able to survive because they can lure advertisers with lower rates and promises of a clearly delineated audience.

Books also have been affected by television. Like magazines, there are many more specialized books on the shelves today--from how-to books to romance novels. Also, a successful television series or motion picture invariably has its counterpart on the bookstands, in fact many authors automatically write for several media simultaneously. (Head, 1972, p. 328)

The process can work either way: a successful television movie can become a book, or a successful book may be rewritten for television.

As in any open system, the interdependence is complex and rarely is it confined to a simple cause and effect between two components. More often than not, a change in one component will cause a change in another,
which in turn will cause a change in another, and so forth. A good example of this is the changes that took place in the phonograph-record industry.

As television emerged, it caused radio to change its format. This change in radio "popularized music and stimulated the urge to buy recordings" (Head, 1972, p. 315). The record industry, which seemed to have been doomed by radio's popularity, was indirectly affected by television, and experienced a resurgence and new growth.

Interdependence within a system also means that each of its components can be both cause and effect of change. While it is apparent that television caused many changes in other media, it is not just a cause, it has also felt the effects of causes from other media. F. Stuart's (1976) observations of television's beginnings demonstrate this point:

Television is also attributable in part to assistance from the two industries which were most damaged. If television had made its appearance twenty years earlier, its rate of growth would have been much smaller, simply because the motion picture and radio industries had not matured. The advanced state of development of the radio industry in 1946 provided television with facilities and a backlog of experience for broadcasting, set manufacture and distribution, network operation, and federal regulation. The expensive trial-and-error period which most new industries encounter was largely eliminated. In addition, the motion picture industry, though reluctant at first, ultimately provided program material in
the form of old feature films and new filmed programs. (pp. 194-195)

In addition to television's effects on other media, examples of the reciprocity of the mass media are numerous. Broadcasting discovered one of its own most successful programming strategies in the "magazine forms" (Head, 1972, p. 328). Magazines and newspapers have found their success in successful trends in other media. The disposable magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *TV Guide* . . . are treated much as newspapers. Others, however, are treated more as books and are retained for long periods of time (DeVito, 1985, p. 412). Book-like magazines include *National Geographic* and *Architectural Digest*.

The mass media in the United States can be seen, then, as an open system. Sydney Head (1972) relates this concept back to the roots of General Systems Theory:

Relationships among the media, despite fierce competition for advertising dollars and consumer attention, might be described, in biological terms, as symbiotic. They interrelate in complex ways which turn out in the long run to be mutually helpful. They use each other's material and talent; they invest in each other's stock; they benefit from each other's technological developments. (p. 315)
Differentiation and Specialization

As open systems grow, they "grow in the direction of greater differentiation and specialization" (Myers, 1982, p. 49). This aspect of General Systems Theory is especially true of the mass media in the United States. With the availability of cable, the number of television stations has grown beyond the original three to include such things as an all sports network, all news networks, and religious networks. As the number of magazines has increased, they have moved toward addressing smaller, more specialized audiences. The same is true with radio, books, and records.

The concept of differentiation and specialization of services also applies to the whole structure of economic relationships in our society.

In general each individual becomes attached to a unit which is geared to produce services or goods of a particular, specialized type. So familiar are we with this principle of specialization of labor --which forms the basis for our mass production industries, on which our rising standards of living have largely depended--that we have taken certain of its corollaries for granted . . . Each individual can afford to specialize only because other specialists will make available goods and services which he demands. (Chamberlain, 1954, p. 8)

We all carry expectations that the local transit service will pick us up in the morning, that schools will take care of our children, that restaurants will feed us, theaters and
In this relationship of mutual dependence, individuals come to experience a right of expectancy of the provision of the goods and services on which they rely. (Chamberlain, 1954, p. 9)

An Open System Within a Community

The concept of media as an open system can also be applied to a single city or community. The components are the same (TV, radio, film, newspapers, magazines, books, and records/tapes), and the energy in and out of the system generally operates in the same manner. It is just on a smaller scale--different boundaries. Whoever defines a system, draws its boundaries.

Changes in a Mass Media System

The mass media in the United States make up a system that is both differentiated and specialized. Each commercial mass medium, coordinating the work of hundreds of individuals, functions like one communicating person (Schramm, 1973) in an open system. Each medium (or person) has expectations of what the other will provide. What happens when there is a change in one component of the mass media system? What happens when one medium fails to meet these established expectations?
On September 7, 1985, when employees of Philadelphia Newspapers, Inc. walked off their jobs for what was to be a 46-day strike, a major component in the mass media system of Philadelphia changed. Without the city's major newspapers, the product (or information) sent to the environment (audience and advertisers) from the media was not the same. And for the remaining media, change was almost certain and probably expected. This research comprises an examination of the changes that took place in one component of a mass media system--Philadelphia television--during the absence of the city's two largest newspapers.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE SEARCH

One of the most thorough means of searching for information relevant to a particular topic is to undertake a computerized literature search. Most libraries are equipped with the hardware and software that enables access to commercially or federally run data bases (also known as "indexes").

The Computerized Literature Search

By entering appropriate key words on a topic, the researcher will be supplied with bibliographic references in which the key word or combination of key words appears (Bowers and Courtright, 1984). The two greatest advantages to this method are that the researcher is saved a great deal of time and he/she is no longer limited to the resources available at nearby libraries.

The computerized search for relevant literature on the impact of newspaper strikes produced a surprisingly small number of references. The key words, used alone and
in various combinations, were: newspaper, media, strike, television, change, program, effect, impact, and repercussion. When considering the large size of the data bases explored (which included business and social sciences indexes), and the fact that only four remotely relevant articles were found, it is probably accurate to say that the impact of newspaper strikes on other media is not a heavily researched topic.

Indeed, most of the bibliographic citations (on the printout) were popular/trade press articles (e.g., *Time, Saturday Review, Advertising Age*), which barely scratched the surface of the topic. In the January 25, 1979, issue of *Advertising Age*, for example, the focus was on the estimated $25 million in losses for the St. Louis newspapers during a strike ("St. Louis strike brings," 1979). Another of the citations in the computer search was a short, seven-paragraph article in the February 1, 1963, edition of *Library Journal*. It reported that book sales in New York City did not change substantially during a 1962 newspaper strike there.

While the computerized literature search can be considered thorough and time-saving, it cannot be considered the last word on available information, because: 1) not all articles/reports are in the data
bases; 2) the use of key words or combinations of key words may limit findings; and 3) investigating every citation may be too time consuming and prove irrelevant for the researcher.

For example, in one of the searches, the single key words, and combinations of key words entered into the computer produced the following information:

Table 1
Example Computer Literature Search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of citings</th>
<th>Key Word(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4533</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6158</td>
<td>Strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Newspaper strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8303</td>
<td>Effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Repercussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Newspaper strike and Effect/Impact/Repercussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only two articles address all the key words, suggesting that if the researcher limits the choice of words, other articles might be missed. However, 74 articles relate to "newspaper strike." Since this is a magazine index, the researcher must decide if these
articles are worth the expense of printing and the time to look them up. If the researcher decides to forgo these 74 articles, the computer data base is not being used to its fullest potential by the user. But using all the computer makes available will very likely be beyond the time and labor constraints of the researcher. Fortunately, each magazine citation has a short abstract describing the article, providing a sufficient overview. These 74 abstracts confirmed the researcher's belief that the magazine articles did not do much more than report the events of a newspaper strike.

Problems such as these can help a researcher realize that the computerized literature search is not a cure-all for lack of information. In addition to computerized literature searches, traditional methods must also be used.

**Traditional Literature Search**

Like the computerized literature search, the traditional communication journals (*Journalism Quarterly, Communications Research, Public Opinion Quarterly, Journal of Communication, Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, etc.), and books on communication and mass communication, offer little on the impact of media
strikes. In over 40 years, only four major studies exist on the subject.

Before discussing what was found in the traditional media search, one should consider why the quantity of research on the effects of a media strike on remaining media is so small. One possible explanation is that because media strikes are not a regularly occurring event, they cannot be, and are not, studied with any regularity. This lack of regularity leaves researchers generally unprepared for the event and therefore the research cannot be properly planned, primarily because no one can tell in advance how long the strike will last (Cohen, 1981).

Berelson - 1945. Perhaps the most well-known study of the effects of a media strike is Bernard Berelson's 1945 exploratory survey of New York City residents who were deprived of newspapers for over two weeks (Berelson, 1949).

Through extensive questioning of a sample of New York City residents, Berelson reported that the people identified needing the newspaper: 1) as a "tool for daily living" (p. 118)--radio schedule, stock information, fashion and merchandising information, and others; 2) for respite (p. 119)--escape from life's pressures; 3) for
social prestige (p. 119)—to appear informed at social gatherings; and 4) for social contact (p. 120)—gossip and personal advice columns, feature stories, and others. Berelson also found that "the act of reading itself provides certain basic satisfaction" (p. 124), and that "the reading of the newspaper has become a ceremonial or ritualistic or near-compulsive act for many people" (p. 129).

Kimball—1958 and 1962. In 1958, Penn Kimball took advantage of another newspaper strike in New York City to reexamine Berelson's findings and address some new questions. Kimball confirmed the uses and gratifications reviewed by Berelson. He also examined whether newspaper readers filled the void left by the strike with other media:

An increase in attention and time devoted to radio news broadcasts was the most striking change in media habits during the newspaper stoppage. Radio listening and TV viewing both increased . . . 52 per cent of those interviewed said they were aware of listening to radio more during the newspaper stoppage, against 35 percent who reported watching more TV. (Kimball, 1959, pp. 392-393)

Kimball also conducted research during a 114-day New York City newspaper strike that lasted from late 1962 into early 1963. Subjects were interviewed before and
during the strike on several issues related to newspaper usage.

When the concept of substitution was addressed, Kimball (1963) found that before the strike, 58.6% of those interviewed said they would keep themselves informed through television if tomorrow there were no newspapers available. By the third month, that figure had actually risen to 80.2%—far above the early forecast (Kimball, 1963). One explanation for the high rate of substitution of TV for newspapers was that New York TV stations expanded their news staffs and news broadcast time. New Yorkers were highly aware of expanded coverage (Kimball, 1963).

Cohen – 1978. Akiba A. Cohen studied the effects of a newspaper strike on citizens in Israel. Although the media system in Israel cannot be directly compared to the media system in the United States, media consumption in Israel is quite heavy (Cohen, 1981), and in that respect, it is similar to the United States. Israeli citizens reported missing primarily headlines, news, and feature articles (Cohen, 1981). Cohen found that most of the respondents surveyed during the 1978 newspaper strike "mentioned media-related as opposed to non-media-related activities as the main thing which they engaged in"
There was a large increase in the amount of reading books and a moderate increase in viewing Jordanian television, picked up from across the border (Cohen, 1981).

Elliot and Rosenberg - 1985. William Elliot and William Rosenberg (1987) took advantage of the 1985 Philadelphia newspaper strike to undertake a uses and gratifications study to "test the relationship between newspaper gratifications sought and media use during and after the newspaper strike" (p. 697). "It was predicted that substitute media activity would occur wherever a nearly equivalent medium existed" (p. 681). Through telephone surveys, it was found that the surveillance/contact gratification of newspapers was "modestly associated with substitute newspaper use and with some compensatory media behavior" (p. 687).

It is worthwhile to note that Kimball's research in the late 1950s, Cohen's in the 1970s, and Elliot and Rosenberg's in 1985, all refer to Berelson's study as the primary work done on the subject of newspaper strikes. This strengthens the evidence that little research has been done since 1945.

The research of Berelson, Kimball, and Cohen provides insight into peoples' attitudes and behaviors
during newspaper strikes. However, the focus of their analyses is the consumers of media. Only as a segment of their research do Kimball and Cohen address the issue of people, when deprived of one medium, turning to another. Their studies focus on how the audience is affected by a newspaper strike, not what the lack of newspapers means to those media still in force.

The Social Impact of Strikes

Neil W. Chamberlain wrote extensively on the social impact of strikes. Although his approach is from the standpoint of general labor strikes (especially large strikes, like coal for example), many of his points are applicable to the study of the impact of a newspaper strike, and offer some insights into why research on this topic is limited.

Chamberlain (1953) states that all products can be looked at in terms of their individual deferability of consumption:

The consumption of certain kinds of items may be postponed, making them less immediately necessary. [One product] must be had now if its value is to be realized, while the other retains its value even if consumption is deferred. (pp. 83-84)

Necessity of the newspaper is more immediate. In terms of deferability, most newspapers cannot be consumed
later and still retain their full value (particularly the daily newspaper). What do people do when this immediate necessity cannot be fulfilled? According to Kimball and Cohen, many turn to other media. Chamberlain (1953) refers to this as the "substitutability effect."

The substitutability effect is "the extent to which consumers find another product acceptable as a substitute for the struck product" (Chamberlain, 1953, p. 88). A newspaper strike may not be felt as strongly by society as, say, a railroad or a coal strike, because the consumers have available a number of alternative media outlets. When viewing the mass media as individual products, each has some degree of substitutability. People without newspapers have been known to turn to other available papers, radio, or television. Newspapers are not entirely deferable but they can, to some degree, be substituted.

Substitution and its Research Implications

The fact that substitution takes place during a newspaper strike makes two important points regarding this research. First, if a product has some degree of substitutability, then the impact of a product not being obtainable is lessened. The effects on society are not so overwhelming, and another component of the system can be
used to fill the void. Cohen (1981) elaborated on this when he was comparing Israeli and United States media systems:

Even if all newspapers in a city are on strike, newspapers from surrounding communities could be brought in to partially alleviate the problems caused by the lack of local newspapers . . . Moreover, other mass media outlets . . . would still be available to partially substitute for the striking newspapers. (pp. 171-172)

Kimball (1963) holds a similar view:

The communication resources available to a metropolitan resident are so extensive, so pervasive that the removal of any single one could hardly be expected to touch off as much reaction as, say, a bus strike or a power failure. (p. 47)

If society can continue to function somewhat normally during a newspaper strike, the strike may not draw a great deal of attention. This lack of attention may help explain why more research has not been done on this subject.

Second, if the public substitutes products during a strike, then there are bound to be effects on the "substitutee." According to Chamberlain (1953),

if firms are related to each other in complementary fashion . . . when down separately, each transmits the repercussions to the other. (pp. 248-249)

With one medium gone, i.e., newspapers, repercussions will be passed on to the remaining media, i.e., television. Substitution can cause such repercussions. Output (by
available producers) is expanded to meet the needs of those who are substituting (Chamberlain, 1953). If people turn to television for lack of newspapers, what are the repercussions for television?

This is what seems to be missing from research on newspaper strikes. During a newspaper strike, the other media are affected, perhaps in more ways than are reported in short articles in the popular and trade press. If the mass media are considered interdependent, it is worth going beyond the study of what the strike means to the public. A change in one part of the system is felt in other parts of the system.

Therefore, questioning what the consequences of a newspaper strike are on television appears to be a subject that has been touched upon, but never examined in depth. The Philadelphia Newspapers Inc., 1985 strike provides the backdrop for further examination of this subject, and is the focus of this research. What changes took place in Philadelphia television as a result of the September 7, 1985 Philadelphia Newspapers Incorporated 46-day strike?
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

As was seen in Chapter 2, most research on the impact of newspaper strikes takes place during the strike. Because strikes of large proportion do not occur on a regular basis, and researchers are generally unprepared at the time of a strike, little research exists on the topic. It is likely that after strikes are over, researchers feel much of the evidence of the strike's impact is gone, and the opportunity to study it is largely lost. However, a wealth of information can still be discovered and analyzed even though the event itself is past.

Historical Nature of the Study

This research was undertaken between February and October, 1986, four to 12 months after the strike ended. The 1985 Philadelphia Newspapers Inc. strike was an event of the past and therefore can be approached (partially) as a historical event. The process of studying what changes took place at Philadelphia television stations as a result
of the strike can be aided by using some of the basic assumptions of historical research.

Because the strike is over, one must rely on records of the past in order to analyze what happened. The first place to start is with "secondary sources":

There is no end of data available for analysis in historical research. To begin, historians may have already reported on whatever it is you want to examine. These "secondary sources" can give you an initial grounding in the subject, a jumping off point for more in-depth research. (Babbie, 1983, p. 300)

"Secondary sources" in the case of the 1985 strike are found predominantly in newspaper and magazine articles. This is due in part to the fact that the research was undertaken relatively soon after the strike. The secondary sources do not provide in-depth information, but they do recognize that the major very high frequency (VHF) Philadelphia television stations underwent changes during the strike. This information, regardless of how brief, is valuable in that it sets the stage for the research and provides direction for seeking "primary sources" of data. While the secondary sources come first, (providing a "jumping-off point" for the research), it is the primary sources which provide the researcher with the data necessary to describe and analyze an event.
Primary sources vary depending upon the topic under study (Babbie, p. 300). In order to study the changes that took place at a Philadelphia VHF television station as a result of the 1985 Philadelphia Newspapers Inc. strike, the logical choice for gathering primary data is at one of the television stations in the city. This research, therefore, also embodies some of the elements of field research. It is necessary to choose a site for gathering the primary data (i.e., a television station).

Judith Fiedler (1978) sums up the situation this way:

Research must be done somewhere. The type of location depends on the design of the study. Among the places that meet your research specifications, you will need to find out which are available, convenient, and most efficient in furthering the work. (p. 19)

Choosing the Research Site

Philadelphia has three VHF television stations: WCAU--Channel 10; WPVI--Channel 6; and KYW--Channel 3. Letters of inquiry were sent to the managers of each station. Cooperation of the people at the research site is of extreme importance in this study, as the television station chosen is the fundamental source of data. The letters to the three stations made initial contact in an attempt to see which managers would respond and offer assistance.
The manager of KWY-TV, Channel 3, routed the inquiry letter to the Assistant Director of Public Relations who, in turn, responded enthusiastically shortly after the letter was sent. A subsequent phone conversation with the Assistant Director reinforced her willingness to assist with the project in any way.

KYW-TV was chosen as the research site for a number of reasons, including its timely response, the need to move ahead with the research, and the wealth of resources offered. In addition, many secondary sources noted that KYW-TV was more of an innovator during the strike. Beyond expanded news coverage (something all three stations did), Channel 3 also broadcast a live three-hour Sunday news show during the strike.

Individuals and organizations participate in research for a number of reasons. The subjects may have a real interest in furthering scientific investigation, but it is common for them to participate primarily because they believe the research will benefit either themselves or causes that they support. It is even more common for them to agree out of simple courtesy and desire to help the researcher who asks their assistance. (Fiedler, p. 39)

Given that the General Manager of KYW designated someone in the public relations department as the liaison between the researcher and the TV station, it is probably accurate to assume that he viewed responding to the research request as a public relations function--assisting
someone from the viewing audience. Any possible benefit to KWY-TV as a result of this study did not conflict with the study itself, so a positive and productive working relationship with the station was easily established. In addition, there appeared to be a genuine interest in telling the station's story (a desire to have the efforts documented).

The original idea to conduct research at all three Philadelphia stations was dropped for two main reasons: 1) time constraints of the researcher; and 2) the decision to undertake a more thorough study by focusing on the endeavors of one station.

Method—Making Use of the Primary Sources

It has been established and confirmed by secondary sources (newspaper and magazine articles) and the Assistant Director of Public Relations at Channel 3 that KYW's programming underwent significant changes during the 1985 P.N.I. strike. This research examines first what programming changes were actually made at Channel 3. Because Channel 3 is a formal organization and organizations generally document themselves (Babbie, 1983), this study involves examination of TV scripts and video tapes of broadcasts, as well as other documents.
Personal interviews with the people at KYW who were a part of the station's changes during the strike is a major part of this analysis. This includes talking with the decision-makers as well as those who were involved with implementing and dealing with changes. Personal interviews are one of the most important elements of this study because people involved in the changes at Channel 3 provide necessary information and perceptions of the situation that cannot be found in any written or taped records.

Limitations of the Study

The P.N.I. strike of 1985 should also be considered a "unique event." It took place within a singular context: at one point in time, in one specific place, under specific conditions. To all research that seeks to explore the unique (in its function as such), there are two insurmountable obstacles. First, the material is incomplete so that a complete picture would have to rely upon analogies. Second, when studying a unique event, we must admit that precisely on that aspect there is no known regularity from which we might draw analogies. (Dovring, 1960, p. 51)

This study, therefore, is unique because it surveys a particular event and the changes of a specific television station. But,
even if unique combinations are unprecedented and hence cannot be identified in previous
experience, yet their components can. So
[researchers] sit down and explore as many as
possible of the components' factors. (Dovring,
1960, p. 54)

It is these "component factors" that will be
analyzed. Each helps make up the total picture of a
unique event. When taken separately, each component's
analysis has the potential to be generalized to another
city, another point in time, and another newspaper strike.
In terms of General Systems Theory, this means that the
mass media system of Philadelphia and the 1985 newspaper
strike are unique. But the concepts of changes in a
system (interdependence, nonsummativity, wholeness) may be
applicable to other similar situations.

Organization of the Paper

With KWY-TV (Channel 3) chosen as the research
site, this study takes the following direction:

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the
Philadelphia media, and its primary news sources.

Chapter 5 deals with the September 7, 1985
Philadelphia Newspapers Inc. strike itself--the events
that led up to the strike, what caused it to last 46 days,
how it was resolved, and what happened in the broadcasting
area (news) that also affected the television station's
actions. It delineates the changes that were made at KYW-TV in response to the strike, including a comparison of Channel 3's endeavors to those of Channels 6 and 10.

Chapter 6 surveys the environment—the audience and the advertisers.

Chapter 7 examines long-term changes at KYW-TV as a result of the 1985 P.N.I. strike.

Chapter 8 is a summary and an analysis of Channel 3's activities in the broader context of media interdependence.
CHAPTER 4
THE 1985 PHILADELPHIA MEDIA SYSTEM
AND ITS PRIMARY NEWS SOURCES

The elements of a system must exist within a boundary (Borden, 1985). In order to gain a clear picture of Philadelphia's mass media system, and thus, the news sources available during the newspaper strike, its boundaries must be defined.

Defining the Market

The statistic commonly used for putting boundaries on, and evaluating markets in the United States is the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area, or SMSA.

The general concept of an SMSA is one of an integrated economic and social unit with a large population nucleus. With minor exceptions the nucleus must have a minimum population of 50,000. (Sandage, 1983, p. 137)

Defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and followed by the U.S. Bureau of the Census,

the area boundary of an SMSA is made up of a county or a combination of counties although for identification purposes markets are referred to by the name of the central city or closely allied multiple cities. (Sandage, 1983, p. 137)
The Philadelphia SMSA includes eight counties:
Philadelphia, Chester, Montgomery, Bucks and Delaware (in Pennsylvania); and Gloucester, Camden and Burlington (in New Jersey).

When evaluating media, markets are typically defined by Area of Dominant Influence, or ADI. (This designation is used by Arbitron, a company that surveys TV viewing habits in the United States. The Neilsen Company defines markets by Designated Market Area, or DMA. Both are derived in a similar way.) An ADI is a geographic market design that defines each television market exclusive of the others, based on measurable viewing patterns. Each market's ADI consists of all counties in which the home market stations receive a preponderance of viewing, and every county in the U.S. (excluding Hawaii and Alaska) is allocated exclusively to only one ADI. There is no overlap. The total of all ADI's represents the total television households in the U.S. (Broadcasting and Cablecasting Yearbook, 1985, p. c-134)

Twenty counties are included in this Area of Dominant Influence (Broadcasting and Cablecasting Yearbook, 1985, p. c-128): Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton and Philadelphia (in Pennsylvania); Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Mercer, Salem, and Warren (in New Jersey); Kent and New Castle (in Delaware).
It is not possible to precisely delineate the boundaries of Philadelphia's media system because each medium reaches a certain distance and/or population. For example, residents of New Castle County, Delaware who watch network television, watch the Philadelphia stations, but they do not rely on the Philadelphia Inquirer or Daily News as their principal newspapers. For purposes of definition, then, Philadelphia's media system can be seen as having primary boundaries, those eight counties in Philadelphia's SMSA, and secondary boundaries, those counties in Philadelphia's defined ADI (which encompasses its SMSA counties). The primary boundaries might be more applicable to the print media and the secondary boundaries to the broadcast media. Within these boundaries, television, radio and newspaper have their own niches with regard to the news they provide.

Television

The Philadelphia ADI is served by three network (VHF) stations. WPVI, Channel 6, is an ABC affiliate owned by Capital Cities Communications, Inc.; WCAU, Channel 10, is owned and operated by CBS; and KYW, Channel 3, is an NBC affiliate owned by Westinghouse Broadcasting Company--Group W (Broadcasting and Cablecasting Yearbook, 1985, p. c-128). The other TV stations in and around
Philadelphia are characterized as either independent or educational. Independent stations include: WPHL, Channel 17; WTAF, Channel 29; WGBS, Channel 57; WTGI, Channel 61 in Wilmington, DE; and WSJT, Channel 65 in Vineland, NJ. They offer primarily syndicated programming. The educational (PBS) stations serving this area are: WHYY, Channel 12 in Wilmington, DE; WNJS, Channel 23, Camden, NJ; and WNJB, Channel 58, in New Brunswick, NJ. They are part of the New Jersey Public Broadcasting system. (Broadcasting and Cablecasting Yearbook, 1985, p. c-128)

Three areas are considered supplementary to the Philadelphia TV market: Allentown and Reading, PA, and Wildwood, NJ. A total of four stations are found in this market, 2 independents, one educational, and one network, WAAT, NBC Channel 40, Wildwood, NJ (Broadcasting and Cablecasting Yearbook, 1985, p. c-128). Local television news programming is provided primarily by the three network stations, WPVI, WCAU and KYW.
Table 2

Philadelphia Local News Programming - 1985

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>65</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News time slots</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday - Friday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 - 6:30 a.m.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 - 7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 - 12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 - 5:30 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30 - 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 - 6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 - 11:30 p.m.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 - 6:30 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 - 11:30 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 - 6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 - 11:30 p.m.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hours Per Day</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cable Television

Many homes within the Philadelphia city limits were still without the option of cable in 1985. In that year, only one company had cable operations in the city,
In 1985, approximately 30 AM and FM radio stations were serving Philadelphia (Broadcasting and Cablecasting Yearbook, 1985, p. b-232). However, when the radio stations of outlying communities in the Philadelphia ADI are included, this figure jumps to around 60 (Balthase, 1986). Most of the stations have a music format that may or may not include occasional news breaks on the hour or half hour. Typical formats include top 40, adult contemporary, Black/soul, religious, classical, rock, and golden oldies. Few are dedicated solely to the
news or talk format. The format of WCAU-AM, an affiliate of WCAU-TV, is non music and is listed as a news, talk and sports station (Broadcasting and Cablecasting Yearbook, 1985, p. b-232). A smaller station, WDTV-AM, has all talk programming (Balthase, 1986). Only one radio station classifies itself as "all news," KYW-AM, an affiliate of KYW-TV.

Newspapers

While the P.N.I. strike left people in the Philadelphia market without the two leading newspapers, the extensive network of smaller suburban papers remained intact, including many dailies. This is not to say that the absence of the Inquirer and Daily News had no impact on the area, as these papers far surpass the nearest suburban paper in size. The nearest suburban daily in size is The Courier Post, of Cherry Hill, NJ, which has circulations of 123,496 Monday through Saturday, and 111,397 on Sunday. The Mercury and The Morning Call located in Pottstown and Allentown, PA, respectively, have larger circulations, but are in outlying areas of the Philadelphia market (see Appendix A).
Summary

In 1985, Philadelphia was considered the fourth largest ADI in the United States (behind New York, Los Angeles and Chicago), with a population of 4,768,000 (Bertrand, 1986), and over 2,481,800 TV households (Broadcasting and Cablecasting Yearbook, 1985, p. c-209). It is a market consisting of a densely populated city surrounded by the heavily populated suburbs and large cities of closely neighboring states.

The media environment is rich and varied, due primarily to the size of the area, but also to fact that the market encompasses three states. Although the television, radio and newspaper outlets are extensive, only a few are truly dominant in the market, especially in providing news on a daily basis. The three network television stations, KYW, WPVI, and WCAU provide the most local news. Only one radio station markets itself as "all news," KYW. And the Inquirer/Daily News are the city's largest daily papers, with the smaller suburban dailies are geared more toward their individual communities.

For people in the Philadelphia area, the P.N.I. walkout created a major void in the available mix of daily
news. Local network television, already equipped to provide daily news, took significant steps to fill this void.
CHAPTER 5

CHANGES IN KYW-TV'S NEWS AS A REACTION TO THE NEWSPAPER STRIKE

The 1985 Philadelphia Newspapers Incorporated (P.N.I.) strike began at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, September 7. P.N.I.'s 14 contracts with 9 unions (representing 4,774 employees) expired on August 31, but the unions had agreed to continue negotiations with the newspapers on a day-to-day basis (Radolf, 1985, p. 13). Talks broke off after one week.

The 1985 strike was the 11th in 15 years for the Philadelphia newspapers ("Settlement in," p. 16), and the longest. On Friday, October 18, a tentative agreement to end the strike was announced. Five unions had ratified the agreement at that time, but the Teamsters' rejected it ("Settlement in," 1985). It wasn't until Tuesday, October 22, that the 46-day strike came to an end ("Back at work," 1985).

Before the end of August, WCAU-TV (Channel 10) had outlined a contingency plan in the event of a strike,
WPVI-TV (Channel 6) said it would not do anything special if a strike occurred, and KYW-TV (Channel 3) did not have anything to announce yet (Zoren, 1985). However, as the threatened strike became probable, local TV stations began mapping out their strategies and were prepared when the newspapers "disappeared" after the publication of the morning Inquirer on Saturday, September 7 (Bianculli, 1985b). By September 8 (Monday), all stations had initial strike programming plans in place.

WCAU and WPVI React

WCAU-TV's only programming change during the P.N.I. strike was the addition of a 35-minute news show week nights at 11:30 p.m. ("Local stations fill," 1985). After their regular 11:00 p.m. broadcast, the regular late news anchors for Channel 10, Alan Frio and Larry Kane moved from the news set to the news room for the 11:30 - 12:05 broadcast of what was called the "Late Edition" (Bianculli, 1985b). The broadcasts included a segment featuring an in-depth look at a particular story, "something the time limitations of regular newscasts normally preclude" (Darrow, 1985). In the news room, anchors Frio and Kane talked with sportscaster Al Meltzer (Bianculli, 1985a). Robin Palley, a business columnist with the Daily News, and Susan Stewart, the Daily News
gossip columnist, also appeared on "Late Edition," as did Neal Zoren, a television critic for suburban Philadelphia newspapers ("New ballgame," 1985). Paul Gluck, WCAU's 11:00 p.m. news executive producer described the nature of the show as "a little more laid back" than the 11:00 news ("Local stations fill," 1985).

In addition, sports was expanded, while business and feature news was added. Terry Ruggles (a Channel 10 reporter) read the funnies (Zoren, 1985), expanded coverage was given to national weather, and bumpers provided local theater listings ("New ballgame," 1985). The 11:00 - 11:30 p.m. newscast remained the same. "We decided not to do anything to the 11--to keep the show intact and hold its integrity," said Paul Gluck ("Local stations fill," 1985, p. 266).

WPVI-TV, the top-rated ABC affiliate (Bianculli, 1985b), expanded its existing newscasts and "dropped in" extra editions at other points during the day and night ("Local stations fill," 1985). Generally, Channel 6 kept its basic product, "Action News." As the first week of the strike progressed, more additions were made to WPVI-TV's news programming. ABC's "Good Morning, America" was preempted with local news from 8:00 - 8:30 a.m., and 15-minute news updates were added at 10:00 a.m. (over the
local talk show "AM Philadelphia"), 4:00 p.m. (preempting the syndicated "Merv Griffin Show"), and 11:30 p.m. (tape delaying ABC's "Nightline"). On Sunday, September 15, a 15-minute newscast was added at noon ("New ballgame," 1985). All the extra segments were called "Action News Special Edition." "Our whole goal was to give as many people as much opportunity as possible to see our regular newscasts," explained Art Moore, WPVI director of station's promotion and advertising (Bianculli, 1985a, no page).

Although expanded Channel 6 news did not differ greatly from its usual news, there were some additions of more specific information, for example, baseball standings, and batting leaders in the sports segment. And the 11:30 - 11:45 p.m. segment provided more business and entertainment coverage ("Local stations fill," 1985). All the extra segments were called "Action News Special Edition" ("New ballgame," 1985).

**KYW's Revised News Schedule**

Like WPVI, KYW-TV's, response to the newspaper strike evolved during the first days of the walkout. The strike began on the weekend, but none of the stations implemented changes until Monday. The following chronology of KYW's first week of strike programming came
from two sources: news scripts, and videotaped broadcasts.

On Sunday, September 8, the first full day of the P.N.I. strike, there were no changes made in news programming. However, an announcement was made on the Sunday evening newscasts that a reformatted 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. "Eyewitness News" would be shown beginning Monday, September 9.

Monday, September 9 was the first day of "strike programming" for KYW. Elements that would become a regular part of KYW-TV news during the strike, began to be used. Sports were first expanded at 6:30 a.m., on the "3 Today" show, and the first strike-oriented visual, or "graphic," appeared on the 5:30 p.m. news. No schedule changes had been made yet, but as was promised on Sunday, the 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. newscast was reformatted and called the "Strike Edition of Eyewitness News."

On Tuesday, September 10 more additions were made to KYW-TV's quantity of news. The usual 8:25 - 8:30 a.m. news break ran instead from 8:22 - 8:30. Two 5-minute news breaks were added in the morning, 9:30 - 9:35, and 10:55 - 11:00, preempting a few minutes of regular programming. In the afternoon, two-minute news breaks came at 2:58 - 3:00 and 4:28 - 4:30. The regular evening
schedule (5:30 - 6:00 and 6:00 - 6:30) was followed by an expanded 11:00 - 11:30 p.m. news that ran until 11:45 p.m. NBC's "The Tonite Show" was tape delayed 15 minutes.

**Wednesday, September 11** was the most aggressive news day for KYW-TV during the strike. A half-hour morning news show was added which overrode the 8:00 - 8:30 segment of the NBC "Today" show. Short news breaks ran throughout the day (as on Tuesday), and the 11:00 - 11:30 p.m. newscast was again expanded fifteen minutes.

The news schedule on **Thursday, September 12**, was the same as Wednesday's with the exception of the two- and five-minute breaks, which were dropped from the schedule. By Thursday, the schedule changes that had been made to the weekday news (Monday through Friday), were in place for the duration of the strike. On weekdays during the strike, KYW-TV was broadcasting forty minutes more news per day (including commercial time and excluding one-minute news breaks throughout the day). Late night news (11:00 p.m.) was not expanded on Saturdays and only occasionally on Sundays.
Table 3

KYW-TV Weekday News Schedule Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regular Weekday Schedule</th>
<th>Strike Weekday Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:30 - 7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>6:30 - 7:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:25 - 7:30 a.m.</td>
<td>7:25 - 7:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:25 - 8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>8:00 - 8:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 - 12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>12:00 - 12:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30 - 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>5:30 - 6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 - 6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>6:00 - 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 - 11:30 p.m.</td>
<td>11:00 - 11:45 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 2 hrs. 40 min. 3 hrs. 20 min.

In terms of hours, the major programming change came on Sunday, September 15, when KYW-TV added the "Eyewitness News Sunday Edition." This show, designed to provide news, sports, weather, and other Sunday paper features, was a three-hour live broadcast, which ran from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. A total of 6 "Sunday Editions" were broadcast, making KYW-TV's strike programming the most extensive of the three Philadelphia network stations. Its altered weekday and weekend schedule remained in place for the duration of the strike.
Elements Added to the News

Once it had committed itself to serving the viewing audience with special strike programming, KYW-TV added a number of small and large elements to its news. The goal at Channel 3 was not to be a substitute for the newspaper. The obvious differences between the two media made that an accepted impossibility. "We never said that we could duplicate. All we said was that we're going to try to step in and offer a little bit of a supplement," said Randy Covington, KYW-TV News Director (personal communication, July 15, 1986). However, the elements supplementing the news were based on some of the basic components of a newspaper.

Several newspaper-like elements were added to the Monday through Friday news telecasts, representing some of the more typical features and sections of a newspaper.
Table 4
Elements Added to KYW-TV Weekday News

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local stock closings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold and silver prices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prime time TV listings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local movies and other entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job want ads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar of weekend events (Fridays only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sports:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball standings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro football statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Football League standings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College football AP/UPI top twenty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Golfer's Association standings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth area sports scores (high school, college)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The non-sports elements were used in many of the newscasts. For example, stock and metal closings were run in the evening as well as the following morning, the comics were run morning, evening and night, as were want ads and entertainment, much like the morning and evening
papers. These smaller elements were also used to a lesser extent in the regular news broadcasts at 6:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. although these time periods were not designated "Strike Editions." The prime time TV listings were run during early evening only.

The non-sports elements became regular highlights in the news. The same is true for the sports elements, except they were not used in the news every day/night. The use of sports elements (which were largely statistical in nature), coincided with sports activity at the given time and their release varied throughout the strike. The college football top twenty, for example, ran after the weekend games, while baseball standings were shown almost daily, after every game.

Cumulatively, the above elements accounted for several minutes of each newscast, but individually, they were fairly short. Almost always they were used as "bumpers" into commercials and were presented in listings-type information.

Utilizing Newspaper Personnel

In addition to the small elements added to the news, a major part of the effort to provide viewers with services of the newspaper included hiring some of the more
noted writers from the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Daily News to do pieces for Channel 3's news. These can be seen as larger elements.

The News Director, Randy Covington, wanted to make newspaper personnel a part of the news during the strike. The assignment desk manager, Marty Gill, was in charge of deciding who would be good to bring to television from the newspapers (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986). Randy Covington (personal communication, July 15, 1986) explained his expectations for KYW-TV's news:

What we were looking for were those things in the newspaper that were special, and that people would miss -- sports opinion, editorial opinion ... We were looking, obviously, for a mix of people. We were not skewing it towards general assignment reporters, because we felt we did that already.

KYW-TV hired the following newspaper people as on-air talent: Clark DeLeon, a Philadelphia "scenes" columnist; Ray Didinger, a sports columnist; Jacqueline Bigar, an astrologer; Claude Lewis, an editorial columnist; and Greg Byrnes, a business writer. The three most well-known columnists, Clark DeLeon (Inquirer), Ray Didinger (Daily News), and Jacqueline Bigar (Daily News), were contacted about working at Channel 3 during the week before the strike, the period of time when the newspaper unions' contracts had expired, but a strike had been
postponed for seven days (R. Didinger, personal communication, September 22, 1986) (C. DeLeon, personal communication, August 29, 1986) (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986). Claude Lewis was called by Randy about a week into the strike (C. Lewis, personal communication, October 14, 1986). Greg Byrnes had approached Randy Covington several months prior to the strike about doing business or real estate reporting for Channel 3, and when the strike became a reality, Randy contacted Greg about working for KYW during the strike (G. Byrnes, personal communication, October 2, 1986).

On Monday, September 9, the first day of strike programming for Channel 3, Clark DeLeon, Ray Didinger, and Jacqueline Bigar all appeared on the 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. "Strike Edition" broadcast (News Script, September 9, 1985). On Wednesday, September 11, Greg Byrnes did his first business story (News Script, September 10, 1985) – delayed due to illness – and on Thursday, September 12, Claude Lewis did his first TV editorial for Channel 3 (News Script, September 12, 1985).

The first strike programming change had been a reformatting of the 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. news. It was in this time slot that all the newspaper people were first used. During the first week of the strike, Clark, Ray,
Jacqueline, Claude, and Greg appeared during the 6:00 p.m. news, and sometimes again in the newly-added 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 - 11:45 p.m. time slots. Claude Lewis, for example, sometimes aired on the 6:00 p.m. news and sometimes on the 11:00 p.m. news (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

As more people were brought in and more new elements were being tried during that first week, less and less time was available to include all the newspaper people in every show. More news time was added to the strike schedule (i.e., 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 - 11:45 p.m.), and it became apparent the strike would be long, so the resources began to be spread out (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986). Eventually, the newspaper people settled into loosely established patterns.

Clark DeLeon and Ray Didinger maintained a constant presence throughout the strike, each doing six pieces per week—Monday through Friday, and for the "Sunday Edition" (C. DeLeon, personal communication, August 29, 1986) (R. Didinger, personal communication, September 22, 1986). Their appearances were scheduled (always put in the news). While 6:00 p.m. was the usual
slot for these columnists, one or both was sometimes rerun during the 11:00 - 11:45 news.

Greg Byrnes' news reports were treated more as straight news reporting (although he was specially introduced as a newspaper person), facing the possibility of being cut like any news story. However, an average of three or four of his reports ran during the week. They were broadcast either at 8:00 a.m. or 6:00 p.m., depending on available time. Reports that did not air during the week were often used to fill the three hours Sunday morning (G. Byrnes, personal communication, October 2, 1986). Some of his pieces were done specifically for Sunday. Claude Lewis' editorials were treated in a similar manner, averaging four times a week, but facing the possibility of being cut, and some editorials were prepared expressly for the "Sunday Edition" (C. Lewis, personal communication, October 14, 1986).

Within the first week of strike programming, Jacqueline Bigar's astrology report was moved from the 6:00 p.m. news to the 8:00 a.m. news because time was limited at 6:00 p.m. and other elements were deemed more important than horoscopes (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986). Also, it seemed more appropriate to begin the day with horoscopes rather than
end the day with them (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986). The astrological forecasts remained in the 6:00 p.m. broadcast as bumpers only; a zodiac sign and a single word would often take the news into a commercial break.

The pieces done by the newspaper personnel were limited to the same amount of time as a typical reporter's story, ninety seconds (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986). Some of the "Sunday Edition" pieces, however, ran two to three minutes (G. Byrnes, personal communication, October 2, 1986). The horoscope report was originally quite long, but was eventually limited to 50 seconds (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

The employment arrangements made with the newspaper personnel were informal verbal agreements. The understanding was that they would be used as part of the news on an experimental basis--to see if it worked.

It was a very open-ended kind of thing . . . it was kind of a "Let's both see how this works and if either one of us at some point decides it's not working, we'll just forget we ever decided to try it." There was no promise on their part that they were going to keep me on for the whole length of the strike. And I never made a promise that I would go on for the length of the strike. (R. Didinger, personal communication, September 22, 1986)
My deal with Channel 3 was a handshake deal. (C. DeLeon, personal communication, August 29, 1986)

[The agreement was] strictly verbal--give it a try and see how it works out . . . It was a day-to-day thing. (G. Byrnes, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

The loosely structured agreements that kept the newspaper personnel at the station from day to day was also reflected in the expectations of what the columnists should do for Channel 3. According to Randy Covington, the News Director (personal communication, July 15, 1986), the columnists were not expected to do more than sit in the news room and read their commentary.

They said "We want you to do, basically, a video representation of what you would normally do in a newspaper . . . get your thoughts together . . . come in, we'll put it on film, we'll put some pictures to it . . . Don't worry about it. (R. Didinger, personal communication, September 22, 1986)

I didn't know what I was supposed to do. There was never any understanding on my part of what I was supposed to do . . . I just went out and winged it. (C. DeLeon, personal communication, August 29, 1986)

[The arrangement was] just to essentially do what I do at the newspaper and to provide . . . editorial commentary on issues. (C. Lewis, personal communication, October 14, 1986)

But within a day or two, Ray, Clark, and Greg were gathering at the general assignment desk along with the regular TV reporters, requesting camera crews (R.
Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986). Claude Lewis did most of his editorials in the stations, although occasionally, if a camera crew was available, he would do editorials and sometimes interviews from the field. Randy Covington (personal communication, July 15, 1986) felt the columnists had high personal standards and they had accurately perceived that effective video makes a better TV column. Although Clark DeLeon and Greg Byrnes said they were anxious to add visuals to their commentary, Ray Didinger (personal communication, September 22, 1986) admitted it was the intimidation of the news room that made him seek a more controlled comfortable climate. Once they tried reporting from the field, nearly all their pieces were done on location—something that pleased the News Director.

Generally, they had free reign. Clark began doing his own editing (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986), and Greg Byrnes often directed his photographer (G. Byrnes, personal communication, October 2, 1986). Each newspaper person was assigned a producer who acted as a "coach" and worked with the newspaper person to acclimate him/her to television as long as he/she was needed. Each producer kept that role as long as he/she was needed by the newspaper person.
Changes in News Graphics

In addition to the schedule and content changes in the news, Channel 3's television news graphics underwent extensive transformation during the strike. The creation of special strike graphics was designed to get peoples' attention.

Clearly, we were doing a lot of things that were special. What I wanted to do was to make certain that when we did something special, the viewer knew it was special. Graphic presentation is arguably the single most important way of addressing that. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

The execution of strike graphics came from Keith Wasserman, Producer of Pre-Production, and Larry Solitrin, Graphic Designer. Larry (personal communication, October 2, 1986) said the development of special graphics for the strike began with the decision to use newspaper columnists as a regular part of the news. A notable transition was needed to move from the news into each columnist's commentary. A reinforcement was needed for what would normally be just the typewritten page, and the first thought was to do headlines, "like it was a newspaper," to introduce each columnist (L. Solitrin, personal communication, October 2, 1986). A full screen "newspaper look" graphic was developed.
We took the first piece of their [columnists] video, put that into the page, took the color out of it, with the thought in mind that we can then go to dissolve black and white into a color version and bring it out full, so that they came out of the newspaper almost to life. (L. Solitrin, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

The newspaper "pages" created by the graphic designer had a unified look:
HELP WANTED
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

JOB: FIBERGLASS FABRICATOR

QUALIFICATIONS: HIGH SCHL. DIPLOMA & 2 YRS. EXPERIENCE

SALARY: $4.50/hr.
If the graphic contained a still photo in the corner, it would first turn into a color photo, then into moving video as the piece began, and the video "picture" would then grow to fill in the whole screen. (An image growing to take up the entire television screen is known as a "push to full.")

As subsequent strike elements were added to the news, the newspaper page graphic was used in varied forms. The goal was to create a consistent "strike look" (L. Solitrin, personal communication, October 2, 1986). Anything that was new (different from normal news) was contained in the graphic newspaper page.

Every time you saw that newspaper, people knew that they were getting something different... we wanted to totally distinguish what we were doing. (C. Voron, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

One element in particular that required a great deal of effort from the Art Department was the comics.

[Their] original goal was to first take the comics, put them on an easel, shoot them with a camera. But because we started to package everything else, we decided there was something more we could do to it. (L. Solitrin, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

A basic background was created and each frame of the comic strip was photographed on the background. Each strip would be shot on a different color of the background.
The process of preparing the comic strips for television was especially time consuming for the Sunday comics. First, the Sunday comics had to be flown in from another city on Saturday. In addition, the Sunday comics average 12 frames per strip as opposed to the 1-4 frames in daily comics, and an average of 6 strips were done for Sundays. "The comics wound up being more work than anything, I think," said Larry Solitrin (personal communication, October 2, 1986). Other elements, such as closing stock prices and sports scores, and the astrological forecasts, required daily attention, but were easier to change because the basic graphic remained and only text had to be updated.

The openings of the strike newscasts also underwent transformation to reflect the special strike format. The 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. "Strike Edition of Eyewitness News" did not begin with the usual scenes of Philadelphia and background music. Instead, the image was more stark and serious. There was no music, only the sight and sound of newspapers in production--uncut, printed newspapers, moving quickly through the rollers. From the center of this scene, a newspaper-page graphic "rolled out" (flipping end over end, as if being tossed toward the viewer) and filled the screen. The same opening was used for the 11:00 - 11:45 p.m. news. The
only difference between the two was the 6:00 graphic said "Strike Edition," and the 11:00 graphic said "Strike Edition" and below that, "Nightcast" (the name of the regular late night news). Over this opening the announcer would say "This is a special (expanded) strike edition of Eyewitness News." The 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. news carried a similar announcement, but used the standard, non-strike opening.

The images of the "Sunday Edition" opening were not as severe as the 6:00 and 11:00 p.m. broadcasts. Tranquil piano music accompanied placid morning scenes of Philadelphia: scullers on the Schuylkill River, joggers in the park, and a skyline view of the city, were some of the images that eased the viewer into the show. The "flipping" newspaper graphic followed the city scenes. Instead of "Strike Edition" it said "Sunday Edition" on a royal blue banner.

One particular piece of equipment is credited for enabling the Art Department to produce the extensive array of graphics for the strike. It is known as a "Paint Box" and is a highly sophisticated digital computer system made by SONY. Graphics are created on the screen (where they can be manipulated or adjusted, and fine detail
added), and stored in the computer for retrieval and/or editing.

KYW-TV had purchased the Paint Box approximately four months prior to the newspaper strike. During the strike, they were the only Philadelphia television station to have one (WCAU-TV purchased one in 1986) (K. Wasserman, personal communication, October 2, 1986). The networks have had Paint Boxes for some time, but they are just starting to appear in the larger United States markets. It is felt that they will be the norm in TV graphics in a few years. It is a complex technology and "there aren't that many good Paint Box operators" (K. Wasserman, personal communication, October 2, 1986). Larry Solitrin had Paint Box experience and had been hired shortly after the system was purchased.

The Eyewitness News Sunday Edition

As the P.N.I. strike progressed beyond the expected two or three days, the concept of adding a Sunday strike program was suggested by an employee at KYW-TV. Randy Covington (personal communication, July 15, 1986) described the evolution of the "Eyewitness News Sunday Edition."

Right around the middle of the week, we really started to understand this could be more than a two-or-three day strike. And it was at that
point that the idea of doing a Sunday morning Strike edition was first suggested. And that suggestion was made by the station program director. His name is Chuck Ingall. He has since left the station, but Chuck proposed it. And my initial reaction was a little negative and I said "Well, I think we can do an hour." Then I started writing things down on a piece of paper. And "well maybe we can do two hours." And I kept writing things down and I came downstairs and met with some of the news managers and we went through it. And we really decided we could do three hours. That clearly was the most ambitious thing that we did. What we did is we took what we were doing for the 6:00 and then expanded it.

The three-hour live broadcast ran on Sundays from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Unlike the weekday/weeknight newscasts, which were alterations of an existing news format, the "Sunday Edition" was not an altered product, but a brand new one. A special set was created for the show. KYW-TV's two main anchors, dressed in casual attire, hosted from a set that resembled a living room. The news segments came from another anchor in the news studio.

The strike news programming during the week made use of a number of newspaper-like elements, and the "Sunday Edition" also contained these elements (stock closings, TV listings, horoscopes, national weather, sports statistics, newspaper columnists, etc.). In addition, the three-hour time frame allowed room for more elements--elements more often found in a Sunday
newspaper: Vox Populi (Voice of the People) involved taking a camera out on the street and interviewing passers-by on a current issue; real estate listings informed viewers of one or two pieces of residential property for sale; the grocery basket compared prices of basic grocery items at major markets; Adopt-a-Pet pictured a dog or cat available for adoption from a local shelter; travel pieces were used from, and introduced by the hosts of, KYW-TV's "Evening Magazine" (a magazine show whose theme and features are syndicated but whose hosts are local); and sports sections included extensive listings of Saturday college football scores.

Each hour of the show was in a style similar to the sections of a Sunday newspaper. A typical hour began with the top news stories of the day, then moved to weather, sports, interviews, editorials, and other features. Like the weekday news, the small strike elements were used as bumpers leading into commercials, providing listings-type information. Below is an example of one hour, from the September 13 "Sunday Edition" (blocks, in minutes, of 11:00 a.m - 12:00 p.m. hour).

1st (8:00): The News of The Day. Solo anchor in news studio, 2 reporter live shots from the field, including strike talks update.

2nd (5:00): One Big Story--Baseball Drugs. A taped report from the Pittsburgh trial, and a newspaper columnist's taped commentary.

4th (7:00): Weather and Entertainment. Weather live from the street. Entertainment reporter in studio with a rundown on who's performing.

5th (5:00): Interview and Comics. A two minute bite from the station's news interview show. And the comics taped with a local comedy group.


7th (5:00): Closing Headlines and Goodbye.

("Local stations fill," p. 266, 1985)

This block is representative of the usual "Sunday Edition" hour. The general consensus at Channel 3 was that the format and most of the elements of the first "Sunday Edition" were successful. Hence, the show did not undergo any significant changes over the course of the strike. It was also viewed as an excellent outlet for showcasing Channel 3's talent (C. Voron, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

Rationale for Strike Programming

The reasons KYW-TV made any changes at all in response to the newspaper strike is best described as a combination of competitive opportunity and obligation.
Channel 3 News Director, Randy Covington, the orchestrator of strike activities, described the rationale (personal communication, July 15, 1986):

It was a major competitive challenge. To look at it selfishly, as the number three station in a market where there are only three news stations, I'm looking for opportunities. And a newspaper strike represented an opportunity. It was an area where loyal viewers of channel 6 or 10 might want to tool around in search of information. And my goal was to have for them a product that would be superior to what they saw on our competitors... there was more than a need, there was selfish motive as well, which was a way of attracting viewers. We looked at this from the very beginning as an opportunity. It was a challenge and we didn't want to lose. We wanted to do the best job we could and we wanted to do everything we could think of... we were looking at this all along to improve our ratings a little bit.

There was [also] the need in the community for information. The newspapers play an important role in any community, and certainly in Philadelphia, both the Inquirer and Daily News are a very important ingredient to those peoples' lives. There was a real need that was created.

It was important to gain viewers, but there was also a sense of obligation to make sure the viewers were well served, to position the television station as "a place that's creative, a place that cares, a place that's willing to go the extra step." (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986) Steve Schwaid, Executive Producer - Night (personal communication, October 2, 1986), explained that the obligation to serve viewers
without papers was even more important than the fact that
the strike programming was not even relevant for some
Channel 3 viewers,

Keep in mind, we cover three states—Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey. How many people in Jersey get the Inquirer? So you've got a big portion of Jersey that's still getting the paper. Delaware—some of them are still getting the paper. Outlying areas are still getting a paper to some degree. So you got a lot of people that were getting one. But you got a lot of people who weren't... You have to figure out what your responsibilities are.

The competitive moves of WPVI-TV, the top rated news organization in Philadelphia, heavily influenced the actions taken by KYW-TV. The original strike change, reformattting the 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. news, was KYW-TV's original idea. But the addition of an 11:30 - 11:45 p.m. news segment and an 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. newscast were moves made in direct response to the actions of WPVI-TV, something Randy Covington readily admits (personal communication, July 15, 1986).

We expanded the 11:00 news to 45 minutes. Our competition had already done that on the first day of the strike and we thought is was a good idea.

The 8:00 a.m. show was added for the same reason (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

While WPVI-TV was drawing competitive lines, KYW-TV was crossing them, making comparable changes in news.
The final competitive line in strike programming was drawn by KYW-TV when it added the three-hour live "Eyewitness News Sunday Edition." Neither WCAU or WPVI reacted by adding additional programming, so KYW-TV had positioned itself as the station providing the most extra news to help Philadelphians through the strike.

The extent to which KYW altered its usual news product was guided by the desire to meet and beat its competition through improved ratings and enhanced public image. But another consideration influenced heavily the course taken by KYW-TV: the assumed length of the newspaper strike. The more recent P.N.I. strikes had not lasted long: drivers refused to cross picket lines during a 17-hour janitor strike in April, 1985; in October, 1979, there was a two-hour strike by the teamsters; and there was a brief strike in February, 1977 (Radolf, 1985). It was this history of short strikes that strongly influenced what the stations undertook. Recollections of the strike are similar for employees of KYW-TV:

The first three days of the newspaper strike, I don't think anybody thought it was going to go as long as it did. So everybody went whole hog, overboard, overdid. And then they thought 'hey, we may have to do this for the long haul. Let's catch our breaths and see where we're going with this'. . . I think [this] was probably true of all the stations here in town. We all believed it wasn't going to go as long as it did. (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986)
Initially, the word was it was not going to be a long strike. Our initial planning was for that eventuality. Right around the middle of the week, we really started to understand this could be more than a two- or three-day strike. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

Nobody thought the strike was going to happen. It didn't happen for a week there. We were getting signals it's not going to happen. (S. Schwaid, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

Everybody dove in and all of a sudden they realized that this is going to last a long time and everybody was stuck doing all this massive work. (C. Voron, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

The columnists also thought the strike would not last long.

As it turned out, nobody knew the strike was going to last more than three days. When it started, it was a lark. (C. DeLeon, personal communication, August 29, 1986)

I didn't think the strike was going to last very long. I thought it was going to be maybe two, three days, certainly no more than a week. TV was something of a lark I could look back on years later and laugh about a week I was on television. (R. Didinger, personal communication, September 22, 1986)

The actions for television were geared toward the short-term. The approach was to do everything possible for a few days, make sure the competition did not do more, and make as much an impression as possible on the audience. It was seen as an opportunity to gain new viewers.
Promoting the Changes

During the early days of the strike, every schedule change or element addition made by KYW-TV was written into the news script for announcement by the show's anchors. Anything new received special attention, as can be seen in the following excerpts from KYW-TV news scripts:

Until the newspaper strike is settled, channel three will present an Eyewitness News Strike Edition every weeknight at six. The special edition will feature some of Philadelphia's favorite newspaper columnists. That's the eyewitness news strike edition, at six o'clock all this week.
(11:00 p.m., Sunday, September 8, 1985)

Because of the newspaper strike, we will have expanded news cut-ins for you all morning long to keep you informed about local and national news. And at noon, we'll have a complete package of information, and a special entertainment report . . .
(6:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 10, 1985)

Because of the strike, we've added some special features on our newspaper strike edition of eyewitness news at six o'clock. Inquirer columnist Clark De Leon will tell us about an Indian he's found in Fairmount Park. Daily News sports columnist Ray Didinger gives us his thoughts on a new play the Eagles will be using this Sunday: It's called "The Quarterback Switch." And the Daily News star gazer Jacqueline Bigar looks at your horoscope. In our effort to keep you up to date on what's happening during the newspaper strike, arts and entertainment editor Judi Barton is here with the scoop on some movies that you might want to catch tonight.
(5:30 p.m., Tuesday, September 10, 1985)
Tonite at 11 we'll have a special edition of Eyewitness News Nightcast. We've expanded it to give you more news and information you would normally get in your newspaper.

(6:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 10, 1985)

It's just about 11:30 and if you're tuning in to see the Johnny Carson show, you'll be able to see it in its entirety following this expanded version of Eyewitness news nightcast, this is a special newspaper strike edition of Eyewitness News.

(11:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 10, 1985)

We'll be with you every morning starting at 8:00 for the length of the newspaper strike.

(8:00 a.m., Wednesday, September 11, 1985)

Eyewitness news will continue to keep you up to date in a very special way this Sunday morning. You may not have your Sunday paper, but you will have a three-hour special eyewitness news "Sunday Edition." Between nine a.m. and noon on Sunday, you will find all the things you would expect to find in a Sunday paper here on Channel 3. All the news, the latest sports scores, weather, business news, travel updates, magazine features, even the comics. Again, that's Sunday morning right here on channel three.

(11:00 p.m., Friday, September 13, 1985)

. . . but first, what you could have read in tomorrow's newspapers, the closing stock market report and some blue chip stocks. . .

(11:00 p.m., Friday, September 13, 1985)

Some of the people hit hardest by the newspaper strike are those people in need of a job. So tonite, and every night on Eyewitness news we'll be telling you about some openings in the tri state area. . .

(6:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 17, 1985)

Randy Covington (personal communication, July 15, 1986) explained why verbal fanfare accompanied the changes.
TV is not a subtle media. It's not like a movie theater where people are sitting there with the lights turned out and the big screen and the booming speakers. If you don't tell them you've got something special for them, you can't expect them to know better.

The self-promotion in the news scripts became progressively less evident, and after about two weeks into the strike, it was gone altogether.

A Change in News Style

In order to accommodate the additions to the news, the style of the strike newscasts (8:00 - 8:30 a.m., 6:00 - 6:30 p.m., and 11:00 - 11:45 p.m.) differed from the normal newscasts.

Time Constraints: Incorporating strike changes into the already limiting half hour news broadcasts presented the greatest challenge.

Our half hour news holds 22 minutes ... take out sports ... that takes you down to 17:30 . . . you got weather, let's say 2:30, you're down to 15 minutes. Lost a minute to breaks. Lost a minute to your opener. That's a 12 minute news you've got. (S. Schwaid, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

There's a finite amount of time. It you're starting out with a news hole, say, of 24 minutes, excluding weather and sports . . . and you have eight two-minute features, that leaves eight minutes for news. Every time that we added the business column or Clark deLeon . . . the time had to come from harder news. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)
The addition of new elements to the news made tight time constraints even tighter. The resulting alterations were made in "hard news" (the day's top stories). The dilemma of how to fit the hard news into a half hour was solved by changing the way it is typically presented. The top stories are usually done as "reporter packages."

You might have five reporter packages running a minute 30 each. Those packages allow you to get into a lot more of the emotion, a lot more of the detail, a lot more of the event. (S. Schwaid, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

Instead of this format, the top news stories were "packed" at the top of the newscast (the A section), and presented in briefer form by the news anchors. This was done for all three strike shows. The A section was lengthened slightly and more news put in than normal. This style resulted in "far fewer reporter packages, more voiceovers -- basically, 'here are the top headlines of the day'" (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

Cindy Voron, Producer at 6:00 p.m. (personal communication, July 15, 1986) said,

I had to eliminate certain [things] that our own TV reporters went out to do . . . basically I'd have a first block which was all news.
Even though the broadcast was longer, the same idea was used for the 11:00 p.m. news.

... you have to sacrifice [reporter packages]... a lot of the stuff we have on the air, may be stories the newspapers do the following morning. We have to make sure we give them that story at night... you have more of an obligation to get all that news in because there are no papers... (S. Schwaid, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

By packing the hard news at the top of the newscast, the intention was then to turn over the rest of the program to newspaper people and newspaper information (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986). Although the smaller strike elements were relegated to bumpers leading into commercials, they still accounted for a large portion of the news.

TV listings, the arts and entertainment calendar, sports averages, stocks, weather around the country -- when you add all of that up, there were several minutes of the program devoted just to really statistical information. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

The strike edition newscasts, which had already changed dramatically in style from regular news, underwent even further changes as more strike elements were created and added to the news. The 11:00 - 11:45 p.m. news in particular began with the 11:30 - 11:45 section containing mostly international news, but that lasted only for the
first three or four days of the strike. Randy Covington (personal communication, July 15, 1986) explained,

While initially we may have filled up the hole with what was available, in a relatively short period of time, we started creating newer material, [and] we filled it up with other things.

The stories covered also changed.

Things you'd say 'that's a newspaper story'--during this period it wasn't a newspaper story. We had to do the story... That is not the first criteria of whether you do the story or not. But that becomes a criteria. Let's say... taxes. It's more of a newspaper story. But you can't ignore that story. You have to do the best you can to explain it. But how much can you tell people in minute 30 about their taxes? ... Newspapers have inches and inches. They have their place. (S. Schwaid, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

Sports Coverage In addition to time constraints, increased number of newspaper elements and more news to cover (the "newspaper" story), an increased quantity of time was allotted to sports. This also changed the style of KYW-TV's news. Philadelphia, one of the largest metropolitan areas in the United States, has professional sports teams in baseball, football, basketball and hockey, and several area colleges with sports teams. Another reason the number of reporter packages was reduced in each newscast, according to Steve Schwaid, Executive Producer - Night (personal
communication, October 2, 1986) was because sports is a basic news component, it cannot be shortened.

Sports and weather are like basic needs. To me those are the most basic needs in television... You can't sacrifice sports, you can't sacrifice weather. You're never going to lose the commercials. The reporter packages go.

Two factors affected the reasoning as to why sports could not be shortened, but rather was lengthened. First is the belief that sports is extremely important to Philadelphians. Steve Schwaid (personal communication, October 2, 1986) described it this way,

Sports is so important in this town... Philadelphia is an incredible sports town... you have a novel sports audience. There might be one or two towns above this town that have more interest in sports.

Recent events in Philadelphia sports reinforce this perception. For example, in 1984, when the owner of the professional football team was negotiating to sell his team to someone in Arizona, the Mayor became involved in serious negotiations that kept the team in Philadelphia. And when the professional hockey team's star goalie was fatally injured in a car accident, the story topped the news for several days.

Second, was that the 1985 P.N.I. strike took place during the fall, the time of year when there is great
overlap in the seasons of professional and college sports.

Here you are with the strike starting. You're in the baseball season, [and] college football. Pro football starts. Mid-October you got hockey [and] basketball. You gotta cover it. (S. Schwaid, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

The addition of a sports columnist, more scores, statistics (e.g., baseball standings and football game stats), plus the usual highlights and sports stories—made sports a more dominant section of KYW-TV's news, including the "Sunday Edition."

**Softer News** The end result of reshaping these broadcasts was newscasts that were softer, more feature oriented in nature (most notably, the 6:00 p.m. news), with less of the overall broadcast dedicated to hard news. When asked if there was a concern the news would become too soft, Randy Covington (personal communication, July 15, 1986) said,

No. What we were saying was basically, that we were increasing our news time at both 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. and the tradeoff was that the 6:00 news was softer, I guess. But those people who wanted to see a traditional news program could watch the 5:30 news and get all the top stories. At 6:00 you had an alternative.

The 5:30 - 6:00 p.m. news (nonstrike) is characterized as more feature oriented and the 6:00 - 6:30
is more fast paced, with more hard news (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986), but during the strike, the 5:30 news became more fast-paced, absorbing the hard news to compensate for the softening of the 6:00 broadcast. Viewers could get hard news of the day at 5:30 as well as in the first section of 6:00.

External Factors Affecting KYW-TV's Actions

Between September 7 and October 22, 1985, two major events (in addition to the P.N.I. strike) took place in the Philadelphia region that led to changes in KYW-TV's programming. The strike programming schedule, already an alteration of regular news, underwent further, but temporary, changes because of these events.

On Thursday, September 26, 1985, hurricane Gloria was moving up the Atlantic coast toward the Delaware and Southern New Jersey coastal region. By Friday, September 27, the storm had reached the area and threatened to move inland toward Philadelphia. For that Friday, all regular programs, including strike programs, were suspended in lieu of live up-to-the minute coverage of the hurricane.

In May, 1985, a confrontation between the city of Philadelphia and MOVE, a Philadelphia-centered cult (Starr, 1985), left 60 homes burned after police bombed a
row house occupied by the MOVE cult ("How big," 1985). Questions about responsibility for the bomb and ensuing fire led to the formation of the MOVE Commission. In mid-October, 1985 (during the newspaper strike), the Commission held daily hearings in an attempt to determine what happened. The hearing involved the Mayor of Philadelphia as well as several other high-ranking city officials.

The 11:30 - 11:45 p.m. "expanded" news added by KYW-TV at the beginning of the newspaper strike was converted to present an update on that day's MOVE commission hearings. The 15-minutes of extra news time usually called the "Expanded Strike Edition of Eyewitness News," was renamed "MOVE Update." MOVE Updates were first run on October 8, 9, and 10 (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday). If the hearings were not held (e.g., October 14 was a religious holiday), the 11:30 - 11:45 p.m. news returned to its strike edition format (News Scripts, September and October, 1985). Other than these two external factors, KYW-TV maintained its strike schedule during the P.N.I. strike.

Internal Factors Affecting KYW-TV'S Actions

Available manpower is also cited as shaping the efforts of KYW-TV during the newspaper strike. Some of
the programming decisions were directly related to manpower availability.

Except for the hiring of newspaper personnel, the KYW-TV news staff was not increased during the strike. Instead, existing staff worked six or seven days a week (C. Voron, personal communication, July 15, 1986). The heaviest staffing requirement was for the three hour Sunday program.

The Sunday Strike Edition, basically, was done over the weekend. We weren't able to really get very far ahead on that. The same people who do all of our other things over the week had to do the Strike Edition. We didn't have the luxury of creating a separate staff in producing the show every week. It was a massive commitment on the part of the television station, as well as the individual employees, and the engineering department as well as in the news department. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

It was the manpower requirements of the "Sunday Edition" that affected strike programming elsewhere during the week, specifically, the weekend. Because so many people were reporting to work at 5:00 a.m. on Sundays to prepare for the Sunday Edition (C. Voron, personal communication, July 15, 1986), the decision was made not to do any expansion of or add special strike elements to, the regular Saturday and Sunday evening newscasts. Randy Covington (personal communication, July 15, 1986) described the primary reason for this decision:
Resources. Just plain and simple. We physically didn't have the resources. And, very pragmatically, that's when we were doing the Sunday Edition. Everyone in this news department was working on the weekend . . . We could have done an expanded show on Saturday [and Sunday] but the people who would have done [it] were the same people already working on . . . a three-hour broadcast on Sunday.

The relevance of strike programming was a secondary factor in the decision to retain the standard Saturday and Sunday news. Beside the fact that weekends are not the heaviest news day, it did not seem appropriate to present editorials, comics, horoscopes, etc. at 11:00 p.m. on Saturday or Sunday night, "the mood is a little different then" (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

Even though sometimes considered part of the weekend, Friday's evening and late night news was the same format as Monday through Thursday (including an expanded 11:00 p.m. news) because the staffing level on Friday night is higher than the weekend. "It was easy for us to do it on Fridays and maintain the consistency, even though it was a weekend item" (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

As the strike wore on, new arrangements were made so the people did not have to work both weekend days. The six- or seven-day schedule was a strain.
Internally, the strike was hell because everybody was working six and seven days. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

Here we are doing a lot more with the same number of people, who are getting awfully tired. (S. Schwaid, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

However, not everyone could take days off. Larry Solitrin (personal communication, October 2, 1986), the Graphic Designer was needed every day to generate the strike graphics. He described one way he handled the pressure:

During the strike we [Larry and Keith Wasserman] were working 7 days a week, so it was an effort every time, even to do the same thing over and over, made it even more of an effort. So we would find little things to amuse ourselves. At one point we were doing horoscopes and we had our sign in the night sky, and we would start to put our names in the stars, and things like that. And it did come up once, someone did catch our names in the sky, Randy. It was very subtle, and they found it. It was kind of like a release for us.

Only one deletion was made from the strike news schedule because of manpower constraints, the two- and five-minute news breaks. Once the realization was made that the strike would go beyond a few days, the focus was turned away from providing news throughout the course of the day to working specifically on the full strike newscasts. It was "the logistics of how hard can you work people" (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986) plus the fact that to do the small breaks in the morning meant taking people away from preparations for the
noon news, and the breaks in the afternoon took manpower from work on the evening editions. "To do a newsbreak, you're stopping all the work for the 5:30 newscast to do these" (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986).

Management's Role

First approval for strike programming had to come from the person who is in charge of running KYW-TV, the General Manager (Jim Thompson). His major contribution to the management of strike activities was to say "Do it." (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986). But simply giving the go-ahead meant a large financial commitment on the part of the station, in the form of overtime for the news department and the engineering department. Jim Thompson saying "Do it" meant "he was unwavering in his support for the program and his willingness to pay the cost for it" (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

The General Manager was not involved in the day-to-day decisions, such as content. Overall management duties of strike programming fell on the News Director, Randy Covington. The News Director is the highest ranking position in Channel 3's news department, reporting
directly to the General Manager. Randy Covington describes his position this way:

My job is I'm responsible. It doesn't matter what it is, if it has something to do with the news department, I'm responsible. Day in and day out, I'm usually fairly removed from the news coverage. I'm more involved in related with other departments --whether it's the engineering department on a technical problem, or the promotional department on what sort of commercial approach we're going to be taking in the fall, or whether it's public relations on we're going to be doing something with the schools, or whatever. . . Generally, day-to-day, I'm a step removed. I'm involved in a conference call in the morning, and I critique the shows at night and in between, I'm available if there's problems. But I'm not out there dealing things out.

Reporting to the News Director are the Executive Producers, of which there are two: a "day" and a "night" Executive Producer. The "day-side EP" is responsible for news decision made in the morning and early afternoon, the "night-side EP," for news decisions made in the late afternoon and evening. They oversee the staffs of respective newscasts. The night EP is often senior management in the building during night hours (S. Schwaid, personal communication, October 2, 1986).
CHAPTER 6

KYW-TV'S INTERACTION WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

Open systems are dependent on interaction with the environment to continue to exist (Myers, 1982). The environment on which the components of a mass media system rely for survival are the audience and the advertisers.

Although no major changes were made by KYW-TV beyond the initial ones during the strike, constant evaluation of the audience took place during the six weeks. Attempts to get feedback on strike changes—to ascertain whether certain concepts or specific elements were "working"—ranged from the standard, formal methods to the informal. All played a key part in decisions made, but no one method overrode another for decision-making. In addition, programming changes meant adjustments for the advertisers.

Market Research

No formal research was employed specifically for the strike programming. Again, the uncertainty of how
long the strike would last played into the decision not to spend the time and expense of specialized audience research. Joan Kiessling, Director of Research for KYW-TV explained (personal communication, June 25, 1986) that the only specialized research was the addition of a question to an existing survey:

The questionnaire that we use . . . is something we've actually been using for two years. It's called a traffic study . . . a news study and it specifically asks people about both content and talent issues . . . The best thing to do in a traffic study is to leave all the questions alone, because what we're looking for is an over time kind of trend. For that particular questionnaire, we did include a question about the newspaper strike, in terms of content--how the people feel about the handling of the newspaper strike. We had our own perceptions, but in this business, perception is reality, so we wanted to know what the mentality was of the viewers. The mentality of the viewers, I really can't get into it deeply, but it didn't surprise me. It went pretty much along the lines of whoever's number one in this town came out number one on most issues . . . If we'd seen anything significant there, I guess we could have gone into it further, but it was a question of 'how long is this thing [strike] going to go on?"

Ratings

The customary source of audience feedback for television stations is ratings. Both the Nielsen and Arbitron companies measure television ratings in the Philadelphia market. A "rating" consists of two numbers, both are percentages. For example, a show with a rating
of 9.8/23 is interpreted the following way: the top number—known as the rating—is the percent of all households in the market with televisions, that watched the show; the bottom number—the share—is the percent of households using television at that time, that watched the show. In this example, 9.8% of the market owning televisions was watching the show, and for those households that had the television on, 23% were tuned to the show.

In news, no significant gains were made for any of the television stations during the newspaper strike. A comparison of the ratings a week before the strike to two weeks into the strike showed WPVI, for example, with a 16/34 to 15.9/34 change for its 6:00 p.m. news, and KYW went from 5.2/11 to 4.9/11 for its 6:00 newscast (Darrow, 1985b). In this case, ratings actually went down slightly while market share remained constant.

No overall cause and effect could be drawn between the ratings during the newspaper strike and KYW-TV's strike programming. One reason was the time of year the strike took place.

September is a very weird month. We have people coming back from the shore, networks starting to premier their programs at staggered times. If one network is still in repeats, that network's newscast will suffer because the other network has a new program. What goes on
in September is a massive amount of weird sampling, which is why Nielsen doesn't do a survey during September. They wait until October until things have settled in a little bit. Plus the weather's going through that change and through the end of September we actually go through that daylight savings change. It's a strange TV viewing time. It's like July, when it's too nice out. Suddenly all that's left is old people, and it's just their voices. I wouldn't draw any correlations. September has always been a strange month for ratings. (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986)

In October, the ratings were "pretty much where they belonged" (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986). Any increase could not be directly attributed to the strike programming due to an upward trend that was already taking place.

We increased our ratings during that time, we increased our share from July, but I don't want to hypothesize that it had anything to do with the newspaper strike so much as it had to do with Channel 3's steady improvement, and the strike happened at the same time. We tried to use it to our benefit. I don't think we lost anything for it. (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986)

In broad terms, no correlation could be drawn, but in more specific instances, i.e., each newscast, there were specific, although sporadic instances where ratings fluctuated. The Philadelphia market gets ratings every day from Nielsen, although they are not as in-depth as the monthly ratings surveys released seven times during the year. Daily ratings come from meters located at select
households, whereas the survey period includes diaries completed by individuals as well as data from the meters.

But the household ratings can still serve as a guide as to whether you're totally turning your audience off with something new that you're doing--be it news or whatever--or if you're on the right track. (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986)

In the case of the 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. news, no drastic daily ratings change was interpreted to mean that it was not a problem to schedule local news over one half hour of the "Today" show, which, according to Joan Kiessling (personal communication, June 25, 1986):

... didn't surprise me a whole lot because people that are watching the TODAY show at 8:00 have chosen to watch TV news in the morning as opposed to listening to WMMR [radio]. I guess that's why it didn't cause a massive tuneaway, because where are they going to go, but to more of the same. If they're not radio people [in the morning] they're not going to turn it [television] off and go to radio. Those are people who are very interested, first thing in the morning, in the news of the day.

Ratings even went up slightly.

I wasn't convinced and then I started watching the ratings, how ratings actually went up. And there really was an appetite at 8:00 in the morning. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

The most dramatic ratings change came with the "Eyewitness News Sunday Edition," which averaged a 5.5 rating over the three hours, more than twice what KYW normally does between 9:00 a.m. and noon on Sundays. At
one point during the show, the rating went as highs as 8
(Rundown, p. 266).

Expanding the 11:00 p.m. newscast and delaying
"The Tonight Show" was the only decision that decidedly
hurt ratings--both the 11:30 - 11:45 p.m. quarter hour
rating and the complete newscast rating. The extra
fifteen minutes hurt ratings for two reasons: 1) it
displaced a very popular late-night show; and 2) the
strike show was reported as a 45-minute show to Nielsen.

We sacrificed our ratings here [11:30 - 11:45
p.m.]. If we can catch people for the [Johnny
Carson] monologue, we can get a nice healthy
quarter hour rating. You can sell the spots in
the first quarter hour for a pretty hefty price.
What you have is not just our people who watched
the news coming in, but the people who watched
Channel 6 and 10 show up to watch Carson. Now
they're showing up at 11:30, and they're finding
that Channel 3 news is still going on. That
didn't make everybody happy--they don't jump in
in the middle of a newscast. So we did
sacrifice ratings in what we call our "late
fringe area" to what we considered to be the
responsible thing to do. And we knew going in
that we were going to do that. We know whenever
we delay our news that we're going to destroy
parts of this network. I'm sure NBC loves us to
death.

[But you ran the whole Carson Show, just later?]
Yes, but there's a habit that people have.
They say that when his monologue is done, that
more toilets are flushed in America than any
other time, that people get up and turn the
television off. It's hard to keep them waiting
until quarter of twelve for the monologue.
Habits are so hard to break. For our viewers,
we thought we were doing the right thing in
expanding it so that we could get everything in
that we needed. There's a lot of news--
business, sports—that we don't (and can't) cover regularly on television. 22 1/2 minutes is not a heck of a lot of time. (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986)

In this instance, the responsibility to provide news took precedence over the need to get a high rating in the 11:30 - 11:45 quarter hour. Ratings for the entire 45-minute newscast also suffered in comparison to the 11:00 - 11:45 p.m. news of WPVI (beyond the fact that its news is typically rated above KYW), because WPVI was not calling its late-night strike news a 45-minute broadcast.

Our competitors fell onto a little trick where they [WPVI] stopped doing—from the point of view of the rating services—they stopped calling the last fifteen minutes. They basically said, that at 11:30 they were doing another news broadcast. And then Channel 6, which originally did 45 minutes, for the purposes of the ratings services, said they did a half an hour broadcast and then a 15 minute broadcast. What was happening to us was, and this was during the fall rating period, that our audience was dropping off in the third quarter hour and the rating for our 11:00 news was an average of the 3 quarter hours. Both our competitors (initially just Channel 10 and ultimately Channel 6 as well) were just counting the first half hour. So we were taking a [beating] in the ratings because our third quarter hour was pulling us down. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

The MOVE Commission Hearings afforded the opportunity to remedy this situation.

What we did was we made a decision that, at that point, basically, to eliminate the expanded edition in favor of the MOVE Commission update, which would start at 11:30.
And that was a tactical sort of decision, that we felt that it's what we should be doing, number 1; that given the fact that the MOVE commission was meeting and given the fact that there was no newspaper... what we should be doing was running MOVE Commission. Basically there was an advantage to us, and there also was a content consideration. We felt that the MOVE Commission, we should be devoting special attention to the MOVE Commission.

We still, basically were doing the same thing. We were calling it different, and we changed the format. Instead of doing a 45-minute broadcast, we were doing a half-hour broadcast and then a 15 minute MOVE Commission Update. That did tie into the situations where--Channel 10 all along had two half hours. Channel 6 saw what was happening in the ratings and even though on the air it looked like they were doing a 45 minute show, to the rating services, they told them they were doing two shows--a half hour show and a fifteen minute show. So that's what was going on behind the scenes. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

While ratings are an important measure of success for a program, Joan Kiessling (personal communication, June 25, 1986) does not believe it should be used as the "total guide" for decisions made or determining the success/failure of a program. "The news director led the way, made the decisions, and then used me as a consultant to see where his decisions were leading us." (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986)

Phone Calls and Letters

In the normal, day-to-day operation of KYW-TV, phone calls and letters from the viewing audience are not
uncommon. Phone calls are routed to the appropriate department, as are letters (A. Jones, personal communication, July 15, 1986). Telephone and mail response to Channel 3's strike programming was not overwhelming according to Randy Covington (personal communication, July 15, 1986).

There was not overwhelming feedback. Because we did, in my opinion, a very good job. There were a few letters and a few phone calls. Most of them were on the Sunday thing, and a number of them were "Please don't cancel it." But as far as any overwhelming public response, no [there was not any].

This type of feedback is helpful but the type of person who would take the time to write or call with a complaint or compliment is not considered representative of KYW-TV viewers (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986). No changes were made because of phone calls and letters.

**Professional Opinion and Gut Instinct**

"Professional opinion" and "gut instinct" as forms of feedback, received attention equal to that of the more tangible, standard evaluation techniques—Nielsen ratings and surveys—in determining whether strike programs or their elements were or were not working. (Although employees at the television station are an internal group, they can also be considered an audience.)
When asked how he knew something didn't work, Randy Covington said (personal communication, July 15, 1986), "We just looked at the tape, our professional opinion. You watch the tape and it just doesn't really work. It was hard to understand." Steve Schwaid (personal communication, October 2, 1986) reiterates this approach.

We're terribly critical of ourselves. You are making corrections while it's on the air. Even if the reporter did something going into the piece and you go to a tape piece for 2 minutes, you may call the reporter and say "I don't want you doing that coming out of the piece.

An example of how the subjectivity of personal opinion as feedback affected the strike programming decisions is the horoscope report. It began with the full horoscopes being dropped from the evening news. "This was a gut instinct after three days--that horoscopes are something that people read in the morning. Telling someone their horoscopes when the day was over was pointless" (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986). But the horoscope report was kept as a bumper during the 6:00 p.m. news. Through a personal feedback method of the News Director, the horoscopes were deemed a popular aspect of the news:

I'm sensitive to what's going on out there [the newsroom]. When something special is on TV,
things stop. People turn it up and gather around the set. Every time the astrology forecast came on, every time, they stopped in the newsroom and would gather around the set to watch it. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

**Missing Feedback**

One form of feedback that could not be relied upon by television stations during the strike was critique from those who review TV/entertainment for the *Inquirer* and *Daily News*.

Whenever there's news coverage in this town, the newspapers critique how the TV stations handle it . . . Now the catch 22 was that while we were covering the newspaper strike incredibly well here—we really bent over backwards to do that—the newspapers weren't there to critique the effort . . . It wasn't until much after the fact when the strike ended, and they came out and did their critiques, that we were complimented on our coverage for the newspaper strike. (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986)

If you look at the print media, look at the article that Bianculli wrote [after it was over]. There was no question who did the best job. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

**KYW-TV'S Advertisers**

The Channel 3 advertising sales department is responsible for selling all the commercial time they are allotted by the network (NBC). Time available to sell is based on three factors: 1) network commitment—
affiliate of a network, all network shows have a small portion of time open for sale at the local level; 2) local programming, of which all the commercial time is owned by Channel 3; and 3) barter syndication programs, which come with some spots already sold and the rest open for sale by Channel 3 (G. Houghton, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

KYW-TV's advertising department is divided into two sections, local and national advertising sales. The local sales staff sells time to any and all advertisers within approximately a 50 mile radius. The national staff handles the sales for clients beyond that radius--the rest of the United States (G. Houghton, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

The PNI newspaper strike began on September 7, 1985, but response by advertisers was not immediate. There was some reluctance to make any immediate changes because the retailers believed the strike would not last very long. It took about two weeks before activity began to pick up, as there was a realization that the strike was going to be long (J. Gallagher, personal communication, October 2, 1986).

Locally, fall is a busy time of year for retailers, so the station was very well sold to begin with.
(J. Gallagher, personal communication, October 2, 1986)—
keeping in mind that commercial time is often booked
months in advance (G. Houghton, personal communication,
July 15, 1986). The newspaper strike left local retailers
without their major advertising vehicle.

What did happen—not to an outrageously great
extent—was that they did try to quickly bone
up their schedules. They did try to put on an
extra spot. They didn't go crazy and want to
spend three times what they typically spend, but
they did want to spend a little more. (J.
Gallagher, personal communication, October 2,
1986)

Certain types of sales are seasonal, e.g., "Back to
School," and the advertisers could not wait to find out
whether or not the strike would end (G. Houghton, personal
communication, July 15, 1986).

From national advertisers, there was minor change
in activity during the strike:

We did service some accounts, that because
there was a strike, did increase their
activity, but it wasn't as measurable. It was
mostly those who had already been committed to,
say, advertising to support a coupon, or a
national advertiser that was committed to a
sale. Columbus Day fell in there. There were
some that have franchise operators that had
already said "We're going to support your
Columbus Day sale with such-and-such
advertising." (G. Houghton, personal
communication, July 15, 1986)

Television advertising is usually referred to by
"day parts." The most expensive day part is prime time
[Monday-Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m./Sunday 7:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. (Sandage p. 316)]. News is the next highest premium area (G. Houghton, personal communication, July 15, 1986). Rather than set a blanket news rate for the new news times, the rates took on the complexion of the day part into which it fell. For example, the time given to NBC affiliates to sell during the 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. segment of the Today show is quite expensive. When KYW-TV took over this particular half hour, they had much more commercial inventory to sell. Rates were set only slightly lower than it usually costs to advertise on Channel 3 at that time (J. Gallagher, personal communication, October 2, 1986).

The additional 15 minutes at 11:30 p.m. was incorporated into the 11:00 - 11:30 news for rates. The Sunday morning hours (9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.), which usually are not very expensive, remained so, with only a slight increase in the price of a 30- or 60-second spot (J. Gallagher, personal communication, October 2, 1986).

Reaction by advertisers to the revised programming varied. National advertisers who buy air time in the Philadelphia market buy primarily audience delivery. "They aren't too involved with what is on the air. They're general advertisers...they're just looking
for bodies...National decisions are...based more upon a medium, upon regional distribution, what needs support, what doesn't" (G. Houghton, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

For the most part, national advertisers had no great concern about what ran on Sunday morning, the biggest content change. But normal Sunday programming is geared toward family--specifically children. Therefore if a youth-oriented ad (cereal, for example) was scheduled, the advertiser might not want to be in a news edition. Calls were made to clients scheduled in the Sunday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. block to explain the general content of, and seek approval for placement in, the "Sunday Edition." "...is it issues and answers and confrontational or is it a lighter, magazine format. They had the right to know" (G. Houghton, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

Both local and national advertisers bought time in day parts they previously had not, because they had to take what was available, and because of new programming. One example is a major Philadelphia-area department store chain. Normally, it would not have bought any advertising time on Sunday mornings, but when presented with the "Sunday Edition," a newspaper-like show, three spots were
purchased (J. Gallagher, personal communication, October 2, 1986). Many local advertisers bought time on the Sunday Edition on a contingency basis, realizing the program itself was on a contingency. If the "Sunday Edition" ran, so would the ads.

The only negative reaction by advertisers was their placement in the 11:00 - 11:45 p.m. late news broadcast. From the outset, a number of advertisers, especially national, requested that their spots only run during the normal half hour, (high air audience). At the beginning, such requests were honored because not many advertisers made the request and the sales department was trying to please. And once promised, it had to be honored. If a spot ran outside the 11:00 - 11:30 p.m. time frame, the advertiser did not have to pay KYW-TV (G. Houghton, personal communication, July 15, 1986).

Problems arose because advertisers who did not request the first half hour were more likely to have their ads run in the last 15 minutes. When one grocery store chain's ad ran at 11:40 p.m., they "weren't thrilled" (J. Gallagher, personal communication, October 2, 1986). As more advertisers began requesting the first half hour (about a month into the strike), KYW-TV had to stop honoring the request. Rather than hurt a particular
client, all were given an "even shuffle" on the inventory-rotated through the whole 45 minutes (J. Gallagher, personal communication, October 2, 1986).

When the strike ended, there was no noticeable dropoff in demand for commercial time. However, any sustained or increased demand cannot be attributed to advertiser activity of the strike because the strike ended on October 22nd, during the busiest quarter of the year for sales (and thus, advertising).

No advertisers added television to their regular media mix because of using TV during the newspaper strike. This opinion is felt from both the local and national divisions of the sales department: "I don't remember anyone saying 'oh wow, I would have never gotten so-and-so on television if it hadn't been for the strike'" (J. Gallagher, personal communication, October 2, 1986). "We do have accounts that are new to us but...I can't necessarily say that there were those who 'saw the light' because of the newspaper strike." (G. Houghton, personal communication, July 15, 1986)
CHAPTER 7

AFTER THE STRIKE--LONG-TERM CHANGES

On October 18, 1985, the PNI strike came the closest to being settled it had been since September 7. But one union's refusal to accept the new contract postponed the strike's end for four more days, until Tuesday, October 22.

The KYW-TV news department had committed itself to providing special strike news for the duration of the strike. The near certainty of a strike settlement on Friday, October 18 did not alter the strike programming. It was not until Monday, October 21, when the impending end to the strike was much more definite that KYW began to disassemble its strike schedule and return to its normal news schedule and formats. But the "normal" Channel 3 newscasts after the 1985 PNI strike were not the same as before the strike. Changes were directly attributable to the strike programming. In addition, from the perspectives of the KYW-TV staff, the news department itself had changed as a result of the strike.
The 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. news, an existing program which underwent a format rather than a schedule change during the strike, returned to its regular form on Wednesday, October 23. The PNI strike was resolved in the afternoon on Tuesday, October 22 (KYW-TV News Script, 1985, October 22, 6:00 p.m.). The 6:00 p.m. "Special Newspaper Strike Edition of Eyewitness News" was run as the final strike broadcast, with the usual strike elements, including a farewell version of the comics. By Wednesday, October 23, Channel 3 had returned to its regular news schedule and general formats.

Post-Strike Changes in the News

As the strike wore on and finally drew to a close, decisions had to be made about what to do with the new shows and elements that had been added to the news.

A major decision involved what to do with the "Sunday Edition." It had meant higher ratings on Sunday morning for Channel 3. Randy Covington, News Director, was very pleased with the three-hour live broadcast, and believed it would have been a popular show even after the Inquirer and Daily News were again available. He said it was a difficult decision:

Ultimately [it was when] the strike was over and we just had to decide what stayed and what didn't stay, that most of the stuff that we had
done did not stay. The hardest part was the "Sunday Edition" itself, which we liked, and as far as we could tell was very successful. But it was incredibly time consuming, we just did not have the ability or resources to continue it. I would have loved to have continued the Sunday Edition. I thought there was a void there. I thought there was room for that program . . . there was an audience there. The issue, though, was the audience wasn't large enough to generate enough advertising revenue to even begin to pay the cost. The economics weren't there. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

While KYW-TV's news schedule and general format returned to normal after the strike, a number of innovations developed during the strike were retained. One year after the strike ended, these elements were still being used. Two of the elements came directly from the "Sunday Edition," Adopt-a-Pet and Vox Populi. Adopt-a-Pet, is one of the smaller elements of the "Sunday Edition" that was retained for use on the noon news each Friday. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986) A pet available for adoption from an area shelter is pictured and a phone number given for anyone interested. Vox Populi, another element from the "Sunday Edition" moved to Saturdays on the 6:00 p.m. news. People on the street are interviewed on current issues in a fashion similar to a "letters to the editor" column in a newspaper. Randy Covington concedes that these are elements he never would have thought of making part of the
news if it had not been for the strike. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

The most noticeable change for KYW-TV as a result of the PNI strike was the decision to keep three of the newspaper columnists as regular contributors to the news. Clark DeLeon, the "scene" columnist, Ray Didinger, sports columnist, and Jacqueline Bigar, astrologist, were all hired by Channel 3. The decision was Randy Covington's, which he explained:

People come in, they do a good job and you want to keep them around. And in the case of the people we've kept, I felt that they were making very positive contributions. I wanted those contributions to continue. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

Clark DeLeon explained his negotiations with Randy:

It was a mutual desire. I could tell he liked what I was doing and I liked what I was doing, and I thought it might be neat to continue it. He more or less pitched me to come over full time, leave the Inquirer . . . I indicated . . . I wouldn't want to do that. And then we started talking about options, maybe we could do two pieces a week. That's the way it was originally agreed upon . . . we're still working on a handshake. (C. DeLeon, personal communication, August 29, 1986)

Ray Didinger's situation was similar. Both he and Clark were approached some time before the strike was over. Clark recalls that for him, it was three to four weeks into the strike that he began talking with Randy about working for Channel 3 (C. DeLeon, personal
communication, August 29, 1986), while for Ray, it was quite early into the strike, three to four days.

It was after about three or four days that Randy started talking about the possibility of me staying on when it was all over with . . . He said, "I really like what you guys are doing, would you be interested in staying on and doing things after this is all over with?" . . . It wasn't until later on in the strike that I began thinking "this is really a heck of an opportunity, I'd be very foolish if I just let it go." (R. Didinger, personal communication, September 22, 1986)

Again, the agreements with these columnists was the informal "handshake deal"--to work for KYW-TV as long as it seemed to be working out. After the strike ended, they could still be seen on Channel 3 news. And they returned to their Inquirer jobs. There was no time lag. Their pieces were no longer set off in the newspaper page graphic, but became a regular part of the news, shown at 6:00 p.m., and, time permitting, at 11:00 p.m. Their pieces are guaranteed a spot on the news, they do not face the possibility of being cut like a reporter's story.

The original plan for Ray and Clark after the strike ended, was that each would do two pieces a week for KYW-TV. But because Ray Didinger travels a great deal for the Inquirer (to sporting events), his frequency of appearance is more erratic. Ray's primary job is still with the Inquirer, and Randy Covington was agreeable to
remaining flexible around Ray's schedule, so long as Ray maintained a reasonable constant presence on Channel 3.

I go out of town for a week, ten days at a time. So I explained to Randy that there could be some problems and he said "We'll try to work two [times a week], if we can't work two, we'd at least like you to do one a week, so that there is some sense of continuity to it, so people are aware that I'm there. That's what we agreed upon. (R. Didinger, personal communication, September 22, 1986)

One year after the newspaper strike began (September, 1986), Clark DeLeon "renegotiated his handshake" with Randy Covington to move from two to three pieces a week for KYW-TV (C. DeLeon, personal communication, August 29, 1986). Ray did only one piece a week during the 1986-87 professional football season, as KYW-TV had also added a national sports commentator, Tom Brookshier, to provide commentary on the NFL Philadelphia Eagles twice a week. Randy Covington said there is no correlation between the decision to hire Brookshier and hiring Ray Didinger (R. Covington, personal communication, October 14, 1986).

Jacqueline Bigar's astrological forecast was kept after the strike and is used on the 6:30 - 7:00 a.m. "3 Today" news show. Jacqueline only appears in person twice a week, and just the graphically represented horoscopes are used the other three days, in a fashion similar to
that of the horoscope "bumpers" on the 6:00 - 6:30 p.m.
"Strike Edition" news.

She's on camera on Mondays and Fridays and she does "Jacqueline's Stars" on Tuesday, Wednesday [and] Thursday. It's like we did during the strike . . . the different signs of the zodiac and one word and the stars . . . It really is a direct descendent of the newspaper strike. She started out on camera then they would do kind of the stars and now we're back, kind of doing a combination . . . I wouldn't leave out news to put it in, but I think that I'm happy to leave out a feature story about mud wrestling in Idaho to put it on. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

Changes in News Graphics

The graphic look of KYW-TV news was noticeably different after the strike, but two perceptions exist as to why. Randy Covington believes the graphics on Channel 3 news after the strike are a direct descendent of the strike graphics. In non-specific terms he says,

The challenge of the strike gave this television news department a much better look than it had had in the past . . . If you look at the graphic approach that we're using . . . today, it is a direct descendent of, and derivative from the graphic approach that we took to the newspaper strike. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

Both Larry Solitrin and Keith Wasserman--the two directly involved in the news graphics created for KYW-TV during the newspaper strike--take a different view from Randy. They view the post-strike graphic look of Channel 3 news
as something that would have evolved regardless of the strike.

I don't think it's [graphic look] a direct descendent from the newspaper strike, I think it would have happened anyway. (L. Solitrin, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

It's just that the strike got us there a lot faster. A lot of people downstairs, the producers and other reporters, didn't understand what could be accomplished with the new equipment . . . I think the newspaper strike was a catalyst that probably got us doing it a lot faster than we would have. It may have taken us another 6 months to a year to become as sophisticated on a normal basis. (K. Wasserman, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

Randy uses the video graphic technique of "pushing to full" as an example of a technique that was used during the strike and is used now.

If you look back at the newspaper strike graphics, and if you look at the graphics that we're using . . . on the City Worker's strike [July, 1986] . . . you'll see a great deal of similarity, even down to the picket sign, where the video starts in the middle of the picket sign and pushed full; where in fact before [during the strike], we'd start with a newspaper page and push full. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

Larry Solitrin, on the other hand, views the "push to full" as a common technique, but does recall some graphic techniques that were developed during the newspaper strike and are now common.

The push to full is fairly common . . . Truthfully though, that [strike programming] is where we started to create . . . banners across the top [and] violators that would violate the
corners. Probably we would have done it eventually anyway, but that kind of lent itself because of the newspaper look to it. Now it's standard but it really wasn't at the time. (L. Solitrin, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

Larry and Keith do see the strike as impacting the quantity of graphics produced for the news, particularly in the sports segment of the news.

The more sophisticated you get, you can never go backwards. That's good and that's bad. The bad thing is it takes more man hours, and the workload increases quite a bit. Sport is finally catching up to where news was. Sports is now moving into using a lot of this stuff [computer-generated graphics]. The only limitation is the amount of time we have. (K. Wasserman, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

Night Executive Producer, Steve Schwaid (personal communication, October 2, 1986), reiterated the fact that graphics are used more frequently than they were before the strike, "We use graphics now more extensively in certain areas than we did before."

Perceived Changes

The changes made to KYW-TV news—the addition of columnists, the more frequent use of graphics, smaller elements that were kept after the strike was over—are all tangible changes as a result of the strike. But the actions of KYW-TV in response to the 1985 PNI strike also left the employees interviewed with perceptions of how the
strike endeavors have changed the Channel 3 news department.

The KYW-TV's news department emerged from the strike as a stronger operation. This is a sentiment felt by both the Night Executive Producer and the News Director.

We're a better news operation because of the strike and there have been a number of benefits both direct and indirect. . . . I generally was pretty pleased. When we hit something it was pretty well done. I think our level was fairly good in terms of the quality of what we did. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

We've had an evolution of our writing anyway to make it clearer and more understandable. But I think the newspaper strike was a tremendous benefit to our operation. (S. Schwaide, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

Personal growth, self confidence (pride), and closer working relationships are also cited as changes due to Channel 3's actions during the strike.

We learned an awful lot. We understood everybody a lot more and we accomplished a lot more. . . .
What would you say is the biggest change around here as a result of the strike? Self confidence. Leadership. Trust. Security. Self confidence again. Security meaning? They can do it. They've done their jobs well, they've proved themselves. It was a very positive impact, I think, on the station. Do you think it helped the station? 100%. (S. Schwaide, personal communication, October 2, 1986)
It brought people a lot closer together too. You had to like the people you also learned not to like them and not to offend them at the same time. Like there are a lot of barbs that are traded on and off, which continue today. It's all with a grain of salt that we take it all. We've also learned to respect each other for the fact that if news calls up, which news sometimes does, but overall, if something's called up and things are really heavy, then it's understood why somebody can refuse to do something. And it's not because they won't do it, it's because feasibly, people suffer for it. (L. Solitrin, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

Everybody had a freer hand to do everything, not just here [art department], editorially we did things different, things were written different. They were approached different. And although we didn't carry all the philosophies over, certain things were carried over. The approach --that probably changes, but maybe not apparent to the average viewer. It was more of an internal thing. I think we found what we can do. (K. Wasserman, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

We really, I think in the end, learned what television does well, and what television does less well. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

The newspaper personnel hired by KYW-TV also saw changes, both in their jobs and in their opinions of television people.

I found the people there to be very good; to be more hard working than I thought. (G. Byrnes, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

I really see the station getting better. I don't know if it's because I'm there. It's hard to divorce myself. (C. DeLeon, personal communication, August 29, 1986)
The one thing I guess struck me first and maybe the hardest, was how much more difficult I found TV to be than what I thought it was going to be. I always kind of had the feeling that you just put a microphone in front of somebody and then you took the tape back and put it together with a couple of highlights . . . I have a whole new level of appreciation for good TV people now. I realize how good those good people can be. (R. Didinger, personal communication, September 22, 1986)

Both Clark DeLeon and Ray Didinger have had changes in their newspaper jobs as a result of also having a job at KYW-TV. The changes for them are both technical and perceptual.

It's [TV] still so challenging. I feel like in newspapers I understand the business so well and the job so well, when I do it, I don't know that I learn as much day to day as I used to. I'm not necessarily saying I'm grinding it out, but I'm just, you know, each day there's kind of a sameness, and you get kind of comfortable in that after awhile. The neat thing about TV is each day there's so much more to learn, there's a starting over kind of quality about it, which is kind of exciting. (R. Didinger, personal communication, September 22, 1986)

The TV stuff enhances the newspaper stuff and vice versa. For one thing, it gets me out to do stuff that I wouldn't ordinarily be doing. I work the phone, you know. With newspaper stuff, especially my column, I don't have to witness the event . . . I was getting into--I won't call it a rut, but I was getting into a comfortable pattern, I had my job down. I'd do what I had to do to get it done, and I didn't have to go out that much. (C. DeLeon, personal communication, August 29, 1986)

According to Clark DeLeon (personal communication, August 29, 1986), "I can't write about TV, which used to be one
of my favorite topics." And sometimes if Ray Didinger is out of town for the paper, the station will also use him (e.g., a report from the 1986 Super Bowl).

Some of those who were involved in the changes in Channel 3's news during the strike perceive that the changes also had positive impact on viewers' opinions of KYW-TV.

I think they [gains] might have been perceptual changes that this station is a more responsible news organization, reacting more to the public need . . . I think that the gains that we made were definitely in making those people who were watching us feel better about watching us. I think that was our aim in the first place, to make sure that they keep coming back and they know that we can be what they need us to be when they need us to be it. (J. Kiessling, personal communication, June 25, 1986)

I can't say the newspaper strike gave us this number of viewers. The newspaper strike without a doubt, introduced us to the viewers, especially the morning show [Sunday Edition]. (S. Schwaide, personal communication, October 2, 1986)

The reaction was not profound, but I genuinely think that it was appreciated. (R. Covington, personal communication, July 15, 1986)

Long-term changes for the KYW-TV's advertising sales department are most notable from the activity of local retailers. Jim Gallagher (personal communication, October 2, 1986), believes,

The retailers learned that their sales weren't crippled without newspaper...they never rally believed it until they couldn't have the
newspaper...We've seen the purse strings loosen up. They're all up [retailers]. And I do believe they probably would have been up 10% but some are up about 50%. I also think they are irked by the fact print prices have gone up so high...They've cut back lineage, they've taken the dollars they have cut back in lineage and they've pushed it to TV...What the retailers learned is that you can truly advertise a specific item at a specific price for a limited time as a sale, and people will buy that product, they'll come into your store based on the fact that they saw it on TV.

The national advertising sales manager feels both tangible and intangible long-term changes as a result of the strike:

[Also], we did a lot of mailing to our national clients on all of the positive articles about our particular handling of the strike and news coverage during it. And I really think that that helped give us a positive image campaign to the national advertisers... They see what is being read and reported... I think it makes a difference. They feel they have a little more of an understanding of the marketplace as an entity filled with people as opposed to [numbers]. (G. Houghton, personal communication, July 15, 1986)
CHAPTER 8
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Within the framework of General Systems Theory, the mass media in the United States can be described as an open system. Each medium is an interdependent component that relies on interaction with its environment—audience and advertisers—for survival; and whose changes affect one another. Any disturbance causes the system to try to return to a steady state.

The concept of the mass media in the United States as an open system can be viewed in general terms as well as on a smaller scale—such as the mass media within a given city or region. The present research is centered around the mass media system in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and surrounding communities served by those media. It is a critical descriptive analysis from a systems perspective of the Philadelphia newspaper strike of 1985.

On September 7, 1985, employees of Philadelphia Newspapers, Inc., went on strike for 46 days, the longest
strike in Philadelphia newspaper history. The city was left without its two largest papers, the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Daily News. Response by other mass media in Philadelphia--smaller newspapers, radio, and television--was immediate.

Summary

The major newspaper strike of 1985 disrupted the equilibrium of Philadelphia's media system, and other media reacted to try to return the system to normal. Most notable were the activities of Philadelphia television news, whose normal programming underwent significant changes. The changes of one station were the focus of this research.

Computerized and traditional literature searches showed that very little research has been done on how a strike in one medium affects another. Posited reasons for this include lack of regularity of strikes--leaving researchers unprepared for a study, and the uncertainty of how long a strike may last.

Past research on media strikes has dealt primarily with the uses and gratifications approach--more specifically, what people do when deprived of newspapers (where do they turn) and what they therefore rely on
newspapers for. Studies done by Berelson in 1945, Kimball in 1958 and 1962, and Cohen in 1978 concluded that people without newspapers tend to turn to other available media.

Chamberlain's studies of the general impact of strikes (1953) pointed out that the lack of certain items in society may not have as great an effect/impact if the item is substitutable. While newspapers are not deferrable (cannot be consumed later with full value), they are, to some degree substitutable. If newspapers are substitutable with other media, their impact on society in general may not be that strong, and may not be seen as worthy of attention or impact research.

Chamberlain also pointed out that if people do substitute during a strike, there are bound to be effects on the "substitutee." In the case of this research the substitutee is television, a medium that people are known to have turned to in the past when deprived of newspapers.

This study was historical in nature, taking place four months to one year after the strike. Secondary sources (records of the past)--newspaper and magazine articles reporting on the strike--acknowledge that indeed, the P.N.I. strike of 1985 led to changes at Philadelphia television stations. The findings from the
secondary sources lead to primary sources, gathered at one of the television stations in the city.

Selected for the research was KYW-TV, an NBC affiliate station. It was chosen for willingness to help, offers of a wealth of information, and the fact that the secondary sources had pointed to KYW-TV (Channel 3) as more of an innovator during the strike than the other network affiliates, WCAU-TV (Channel 10) and WPVI-TV (Channel 6).

The specific primary sources used in this research were television scripts, video tapes of broadcasts, and personal interviews.

The boundaries of the Philadelphia media system were roughly defined using two established classifications: first by Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA)—an integrated economic and social unit; and second, by Area of Dominant Influence (ADI) or Designated Market Area (DMA)—a "geographic market design that defines each television market exclusive of the others" (Broadcasting and Cablecasting Yearbook, 1985, p. c134).

Philadelphia's SMSA includes eight counties: Philadelphia, Chester, Montgomery, Bucks, Delaware,
Gloucester (NJ), Camden (NJ), and Burlington (NJ). As an ADI, Philadelphia's television market is made up of 20 counties that surround the city, including counties in Delaware and New Jersey. The boundaries cannot be precisely defined precisely to encompass all media, because each reaches a different distance and population.

Within these boundaries of the 1985 Philadelphia media, local news was subdivided as follows: television news was provided primarily by the three network stations (approximately 4 - 4.5 hours per day). Cable television did not exist in the city but did in the suburbs. The majority of the nearly 60 AM and FM radio stations within Philadelphia and outlying areas were classified as having primarily a musical format. Only KYW-AM was classified as "all news." The Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily News were the two major newspapers in Philadelphia in 1985. A number of community-oriented newspapers were available in the suburbs.

The probability of a newspaper strike at Philadelphia Newspapers, Inc. was known about a week before the actual walkout. When the strike began, all three network stations--KYW-TV (Channel 3), WCAU-TV (Channel 10), and WPVI-TV (Channel 6) made changes in their news programming.
Channel 10 added a 35 minute newscast after its regular 11:00 p.m. news, and called it the "Late Edition." Channel 6 expanded existing newscasts and "dropped in" fifteen-minute extra editions during the day and night. Both Channels 10 and 6 presented more in-depth stories, expanded sports, and presented elements typically found in newspapers.

KYW-TV, Channel 3, expanded its weekday news schedule by 40 minutes: a 30-minute show from 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. (instead of the usual 8:25 - 8:30 a.m.), and an extra 15 minutes at 11:30 p.m. Two-minute news breaks which originally appeared throughout the day were dropped after a few days. The 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. news was converted to a "Strike Edition of Eyewitness News." A major addition was made on Sundays with the "Eyewitness News Sunday Edition"--a three-hour, live broadcast which aired from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

A number of small newspaper elements were added to the news, with the intent to supplement what people were missing by not having a newspaper. These included local stock closings, gold and silver prices, prime time television listings, comics, local movies and entertainment, national weather, job want ads, calendar of weekend events, and sports statistics (baseball and
football standings, pro football stats, college football standings, golf standings, and in-depth area sports scores). These elements were most often presented as bumpers leading into commercials.

Newspaper personnel from the Inquirer and Daily News were hired: a Philadelphia "scenes" columnist; a sports columnist; an astrologer; a business writer; and an editorial columnist.

The scenes and sports columnists were a scheduled presence throughout the strike (weekdays and Sundays), the astrologer appeared in the mornings, and the business writer and editorial columnists contributed pieces in reporter-like fashion (included when there was time). All contributed pieces were around 90 seconds long—similar to a typical reporter story. Through informal verbal agreements with KYW-TV management, the newspaper personnel agreed to work with KYW-TV for the duration of the strike.

The "Sunday Edition," which was added when it was realized the strike would not be over in two or three days, was essentially laid out like a Sunday newspaper. It was a three-hour live broadcast. A special, living-room-like set was created. The show included the elements that had been added to weekday news as well as new
elements: Vox Populi, real estate listings, grocery basket, adopt-a-pet, and travel pieces. A typical hour contained news, weather, sports, interviews, editorials and other features.

Special television graphics were created to attract viewers' attention and present a consistent "strike look." Much of what was developed was designed to look like a newspaper page, and the look surrounded any new elements found in the news. In addition, the opening was changed for the "Strike Edition" broadcasts at 8:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., and 11:30 p.m. A sophisticated computer known as a "Paint Box" is credited for enabling the extensive and complex graphics to be created for the strike programming.

The rationale for making the changes at KYW-TV was described as a combination of competitive opportunity and obligation to provide information to viewers. The opportunity existed to gain new viewers with the strike programming actions. In addition, the overall opinion was that the strike would not last long, so as the lowest-ranked news station in Philadelphia, KYW-TV went "all out."

The style of the news changed to accommodate the "newspaper" additions. Hard news was "packed" at the top
of the newscast and presented by the news anchors rather than as reporter packages. The range of stories covered also changed. What would normally not be covered because it was a "newspaper story" (due to its length or complexity), was considered and often used. Overall, the news was softer, more feature oriented.

Sports and weather were seen as basic components to the news, and their time allotment could not be sacrificed. More time was allotted to sports in part because Philadelphia is a major sports town, and because the time of year (fall) is typically very busy for sports.

Other external factors also caused temporary changes in KYW-TV's strike programming. A hurricane threatened the area during the strike, so all programming was suspended on one day to track the storm. Also, in May, 1985, a major confrontation between police and the MOVE cult left 60 homes burned after police bombed the home occupied by the cult. Subsequent hearings to determine responsibility for the disaster received summary coverage from 11:30 - 11:45 p.m. for several days in October. Called "MOVE Update," this coverage temporarily replaced the late-night "Expanded Strike Edition" news.

Internally, available manpower also shaped KYW-TV's actions. With the exception of hiring newspaper
personnel, the existing news staff was responsible for all the changes. Regular news was not expanded on the weekends (Saturday and Sunday) because employees were working on the "Sunday Edition." The original two- and five-minute news breaks were dropped early in the strike due to manpower constraints. Most decisions were made by the News Director, after initial approval from the General Manager.

Interaction with the environment--the audience and the advertisers--is considered crucial to the survival of a mass media system. For KYW-TV, methods of determining whether strike changes were "working" with the audience ranged from standard formal methods, to informal.

In the area of market research, only one question about strike changes was added to an existing survey that KYW-TV uses on an ongoing basis. It provided no significant information.

No significant ratings gains were made for any of the television stations during the strike. No cause and effect could be drawn between ratings fluctuations and strike programming changes except for the "Sunday Edition," which led to slightly higher ratings for KYW-TV's Sunday morning hours. Lack of drastic ratings changes was interpreted to mean that the new programming
met with general favor from the audience. Also, the regular influx of phone calls and letters to KYW-TV did not change a great deal either during the newspaper strike.

Professional opinion and "gut instinct" were methods of feedback that received the same degree of attention as the more formal evaluation methods. If an element was added to the news and the news director felt it did not "work," it was dropped or changed.

One form of feedback absent during the P.N.I. strike was reviews by the newspaper people who regularly report on, and critiqued television's actions.

Because fall is typically a busy time of year for retailers, many advertisers added more television advertising to make up for the loss of the newspapers, though not to a great extent because advertising time is often booked months in advance. Some of the national advertisers made minor changes to their previous plans, but it was mostly those who were committed to supporting a local promotion. The main concern for national advertisers is audience delivery during certain times of the day, and there was no objection to different programming.
Any sustained or increased demand for advertising after the strike cannot be attributed to the strike because fall is a busy time of year for sales.

The long-term changes can be seen as those things that were different for the KYW-TV (as a result of the strike) up to a year after the strike, and beyond.

After the strike ended, none of the schedule and format changes made in response to the strike were kept. Three of the newspaper columnists were retained as regular contributors to the news. The scenes columnist and sports columnist were retained to do two to three pieces for the news per week, and the astrologist was kept to make appearances on the morning news program.

KYW-TV's post-strike news retained its more sophisticated graphic look. Graphics were also used more often. The strike is credited with "speeding up" the use of new graphics technology--changes that would have taken place eventually, but happened sooner because of the strike.

Perceived long-term changes from the employees in the news department included the belief that people experienced personal growth, gained increased self-confidence, and developed closer working relationships.
Overall, they felt the news department became a stronger operation, and that the public genuinely appreciated what Channel 3 did. For advertising sales personnel at KYW-TV, perceived changes include positive relationships with advertisers, advertisers have a more positive image of KYW-TV, and that some advertisers may have realized they are not crippled without newspapers.

Conclusions

Viewing the mass media as an open system within the overall concept of General Systems Theory provided the framework for this research. When held up to the major criteria of Systems Theory (interdependence of components, interaction with and reliance on the environment, and a change in any part of the system causing change in other parts) the symbiotic relationship of the mass media is evident.

It was known going into this study that a change in the newspaper component of Philadelphia's media system had led to changes in Philadelphia's television component. The actions taken by KYW-TV were directly related to the void left by the city's loss of its two major newspapers. KYW-TV (and the other two Philadelphia network stations) moved to return the system to a steady state by attempting
to provide the audience with what it was missing from the newspapers.

The newspaper strike itself and resulting changes in local television must be considered a "unique event" because it took place within a singular context, at one point in time, in one specific place, under specific conditions. Specific factors that may have affected what was done by KYW-TV include: the highly competitive nature of Philadelphia television (it is a market where all three network stations are in the same city); KYW-TV's news rating (the lowest in Philadelphia in 1985); the time of year the strike took place (during the fall, a busy time of year for retail business and sports); Philadelphia as a major sports town (which resulted in a strong sports emphasis in the strike programming); and the occurrence of events that had city-wide impact (and subsequently overrode strike programming). However, certain aspects of this event are more general, and are potentially applicable to newspaper strike effects on television in other metropolitan areas.

Assuming that people will, to some degree, substitute television for newspapers in the event of a newspaper strike, this research was designed to study the effects on the "substitutee" during such a strike. The
effects on television were that its reactions centered around its dependency on its environment—the audience and the advertisers. This manifested itself in an attempt to improve ratings, the only real reason behind all the actions taken. Everything developed and broadcast by KYW-TV represented an attempt to satisfy current viewers and garner new ones. More viewers means improved ratings, improved ratings means continued increased advertising and therefore financial survival for the television station.

However, while dependency on the environment for survival is one of the key traits of an open system, the steps taken by KYW-TV did not seem to be related to survival during the strike, but survival for the long-term, beyond the strike. Although the strike programming was meant to give the audience that which would satisfy its need for newspaper-like information, based on the interviews with KYW-TV personnel, retaining the audience after the strike (for purposes of higher ratings) appeared to be the true motivation for any actions.

Also related to the concept of higher ratings and long-term survival is that while "new and innovative strike programming" was being touted by KYW-TV, the additional amount of time it actually gave to more news
was not substantial. Although the obligation to provide information was claimed to be important, there was a noticeable hesitancy to deviate too far from the norm of television programming, i.e., do not change too much or interfere with other programming that the audience expects or risk alienating them. Even the most radical change, "The Eyewitness News Sunday Edition," was placed in a non-obtrusive time slot on Sunday morning. Change in newspapers, then, caused change in television, but for KYW-TV it was a cautious, temporary change, with the assumption that the system would return to its previous state and viewers needed to be retained.

As systems grow, they become more differentiated and more specialized. It is evident from this research that television and newspapers have evolved to the point of being highly differentiated and specialized in their presentation of current information, i.e., news, weather, sports, and other features. Beyond the physical differences of the two media, they have become dependent on one another to each provide their own kinds of news. Formats are fixed and allow little flexibility.

Television has evolved to the point where it has forced news to occupy a set amount of time in a given day. The in-depth stories and a number of non-news elements are
left to be covered by the newspapers. Newspapers have remained more flexible with regard to their length, but have still come to be counted on by the audience, advertisers, and television, for regular presentations of certain elements. When KYW-TV began to fill the void left by Philadelphia's major papers, it found that a 30-minute newscast filled up very quickly.

Timing and Sources of the Study

If the actions and decisions being made as the strike evolved had been tracked on a day-to-day basis during the strike, it is possible that additional insights may have been made. However, the efforts of KYW-TV during the P.N.I. strike were well documented on videotape, in the news scripts, and the collection of press clippings the station kept on file. This helped facilitate accuracy even though study of the event took place well after the strike was over.

Particularly valuable as resources in this study were the personal interviews. They provided perspectives and details that could not be found anywhere else. The length of time that had past since the strike may have affected recollections of those interviewed, but it was also advantageous because it helped point to the main aspects of the strike the people remembered. Everyone
interviewed told similar stories, and it is believed a clear picture was gained about the strike activities.

Suggestions for Future Research

As with any study of the impact of media strikes, the ideal scenario would be to conduct the study at the time of the strike. However, this study shows that such timing is not entirely necessary. The next logical step would be to conduct a similar study in another city so comparisons can be made with the observations from the 1985 Philadelphia newspaper strike. Questions could be answered regarding the "unique" aspects of Philadelphia's media system to determine if such factors can be generalized to media strikes: Does level of competitiveness with the market affect actions? Does time of year have any meaning?

Expanding on this research could be done by studying in-depth the reactions of more than one station with the market, interviewing more people, performing content analysis of broadcasts, or perhaps becoming a participant who works at the television station every day during a strike. Given the current lack of research on the impact of media strikes, one should not go by without being studied in some capacity. Perhaps then we would
have more information about the effects of being without a media component, and learn more about how the mass media interact with each other and their environment.
REFERENCES


Back at work (1985, November 9). Editor & Publisher, pp. 16, 38.


How big was the bomb? (1985, August 26). *Time*, p. 19.


## APPENDIX A

### PHILADELPHIA AREA DAILY COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS - 1985
(in descending order of circulation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>City Published</th>
<th>When Published: Circulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Philadelphia Inquirer</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>Monday-Friday: 519,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday: 459,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday: 1,001,837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily News</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>Monday-Friday: 284,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday: 196,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courier Post</td>
<td>Cherry Hill, NJ</td>
<td>Monday-Saturday: 123,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday: 111,397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Trentonian</td>
<td>Tranton, NJ</td>
<td>Monday-Saturday: 68,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday: 68,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucks County Courier Times</td>
<td>Levittown, PA</td>
<td>Monday-Saturday: 62,708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday: 62,053</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The Times
Trenton, NJ
Monday-Saturday: 62,080
Sunday: 77,199

Delaware County Daily Times
Primos, PA
Monday-Saturday: 58,398
Sunday: 44,835

Burlington County Times
Willingboro, NJ
Monday-Friday: 43,152
Sunday: 45,236

The Intelligencer/Record
Doylestown, PA
Monday-Friday: 40,626
Sunday: 41,785

Daily Local News
West Chester, PA
Monday-Saturday: 38,481

The Times Herald
Norristown, PA
Monday-Saturday: 31,050

The Gloucester County Times
Woodbury, NJ
Monday-Friday: 29,935
Sunday: 29,935

The Reporter
Lansdale, PA
Monday-Saturday: 19,691

The Record
Coatesville, PA
Monday-Saturday: 8,000

The Free Press
Quakertown, PA
Monday-Friday: 8,000

The Evening Phoenix
Phoenixville, PA
Monday-Saturday: 8,000

(Balthase, 1986, pp. 50-61)