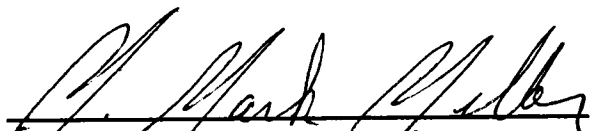
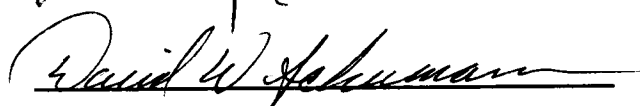
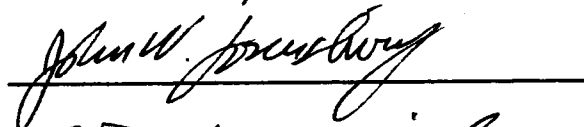


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Julie L. Andsager entitled "Examining the Relationship Between Media and Personal Expressive Rights: the Effect of Need for Cognition." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Communications.


M. Mark Miller, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:


Accepted for the Council:


Associate Vice Chancellor
and Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA AND PERSONAL
EXPRESSIVE RIGHTS: THE EFFECT OF NEED FOR COGNITION

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Julie L. Andsager

December 1993

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When I was finishing my master's degree at Kansas State University, Allen White, then an assistant professor in the journalism school there, told me that I would learn more about quantitative research from Mark Miller than I could anywhere else. Allen's good advice sent me to the University of Tennessee, where I have been learning from Mark Miller ever since. Mark's eagerness to sit around on Friday afternoons and run data have taught me more about research than I have been able to learn in any of the courses I've taken. His expertise and friendship have been invaluable in completing this dissertation as well as my education.

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Many people never find a career that will make them truly happy. I have been fortunate to discover mine early on, thanks in large part to my dissertation committee, my professors at Kansas State University, and my family and friends. This dissertation has been a wonderful experience.

ABSTRACT

This study attempted to determine whether cognitive traits influence the relationship between media rights and personal expressive rights. Previous research into support for expressive rights has seldom used cognitive variables, and those that have been studied lack either parsimony or a driving mechanism. This study used need for cognition (Cacioppo & Petty, 1986) as a measure of cognitive motivation.

Research on expressive rights has used survey methodology, which provides a snapshot of attitudes. Critics of such research argue that survey respondents are asked to respond without being given adequate time to consider the implications of their answers. This experiment used priming messages to provide subjects with a cognitive context for thinking about either media or personal expressive rights.

The experiment was designed with three priming conditions. A sample of 169 students read one priming message – an essay calling either for further regulation of personal expressive rights, media rights or a control message. They then completed two parallel 13-item scales, one designed to measure support for various media rights and the other to measure support for the same kinds of personal rights. The subjects completed the 18-item Need for Cognition Scale. Information on gender and political orientation was also gathered.

It was hypothesized that need for cognition would have the greatest effect on the relationship between media and personal rights in the control condition, a moderate effect in the personal-priming condition and the least

effect in the media-priming condition.

Correlation tests and a multiple regression analysis performed on the data indicated the hypothesis should be rejected.

Subsequent analyses were performed on the mean support for personal rights and media rights. A multivariate analysis of variance with a repeated-measures design was conducted with support for expressive rights as the dependent variables. Need for cognition, priming condition and political orientation were the independent variables, resulting in a 2 X 3 X 3 design, with support for rights as within-subjects measures.

Personal rights received significantly more support than media rights. Need for cognition was a significant, positive predictor of support for expressive rights. Political orientation was also significant, such that liberals were much more likely than conservatives or moderates to support expressive rights. Support for media rights varied according to priming condition while support for personal rights remained stable. Mean scores of support for media or personal rights were highest when the priming message called for further regulation of those rights, in a backlash effect. Support for both kinds of rights was lowest in the control condition.

These findings suggest that when people are primed to think about expressive rights, they may reflect on the implications of restricting those rights. They seem to be more likely to support expression. This notion is supported by the finding that people who are more motivated to think about issues are more likely to support expressive rights. It seems that to increase public tolerance for free expression, people need to be stimulated to think about the potential loss of some of their (and the media's) rights.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The First Amendment proclaims in part that no law shall abridge the freedom of speech or of the press. Nonetheless, the courts have passed a number of restrictions limiting the rights of both the public and the media. For example, individuals cannot use "fighting words" that might provoke violence; the media are subject to restrictions on content, such that they are not allowed to publish information that is slanderous or damaging to national security (Tedford, 1985). These freedoms are not legally absolute; perhaps more importantly for society on a day-to-day basis, they are also sometimes threatened by public opinion.

Public support, or a lack thereof, for First Amendment rights does not in itself have the power to effect substantive legal changes in those rights. It is necessary, however, to understand the effect that public opinion can and frequently does have on the practice of expressive rights. Letters to the editor, telephone trees and boycotts can chill what certain societal groups say or what the media publish – perhaps as much as any libel law. In a roundabout way, then, public opinion has a substantial impact on the extent of free expression, both for the public and for the media, which may well be as effective as the laws themselves (if not more so, as in the case of consumer boycotts of corporations that sponsor programs some people consider offensive). As John Lofton has noted, "[t]rue freedom of expression depends as much on positive implementation ... as it does on enforcement of the First Amendment's guarantee against official abridgement" (1980, p. 289).

What effect these kinds of pro-restrictive messages have on their audiences' support for the expressive right in question has yet to be determined. Further, it remains unclear whether people who support restriction of a specific form of expression are also willing to restrict other expressive rights. In other words, the extent to which people generalize from one type of expression to another is unknown. If an individual wants to outlaw flag-burning, will he or she also be willing to regulate other forms of protest? Would the same person restrict the right of the media to editorialize about such activity?

Freedom of expression is a fundamental principle of democracy, the idea that a free marketplace of ideas is necessary for a democratic society to grow and prosper. It is the inherent right of any citizen to communicate his or her ideas, no matter how distasteful they may be (Tedford, 1985). The notion of free expression can be divided into two parts, as it is in the First Amendment -- free speech and free press. In this study, these concepts will be referred to as personal expressive rights and media rights. This terminology is preferable for two reasons. First, because the freedoms are no longer absolute, it is somewhat misleading to call speech or the press free; this study focuses on expressive activities that remain legal, not the entire range of possible forms of expression. Second, the terms free speech and free press are loaded, in that they are such abstract ideals that people tend to support them. It is when more concrete activities, such as flag-burning or publishing materials that feature graphic sexual acts, are mentioned that some people are willing to encroach upon those abstract ideals. As Robert Wyatt noted, "*Americans believe that they believe in the First Amendment, until they are confronted with expression that runs counter to the grain of their beliefs*"

(Wyatt, 1991, p. 35; emphasis in original).

Personal expressive rights are the legal forms of expression practiced by individuals or groups of individuals. Peaceful protests, speaking in public forums and expressing one's self in public either verbally or nonverbally are included in this concept. Expression conducted in private is not of concern in this study because it is usually not subject to possible regulation.

Media rights comprise what the media can legally publish, whether as journalism or entertainment. This includes newspapers and their editorials, television programs, magazines and films. By definition, the media's expressive activities are conducted in public; that is, the media are an industry that disseminates material and information for public consumption. In the present study, the way in which the media gather that information is not of interest because information-gathering practices are not a form of expression.

Although media and personal expressive rights have been guaranteed in the United States for more than two centuries, little is known about how the public perceives the strength of the relationship between these rights. Journalists and communications scholars sometimes assume that the public needs to be educated about the inherent links between the two freedoms,¹ but no research has been conducted to date that attempts to examine public opinion on this issue. Sporadic research on expressive-rights issues has estimated public support for topical rights, but none has yet compared directly support for media practices with support for similar kinds of personal expressive rights. Moreover, how people think about media and personal expressive rights has not yet been defined clearly.

¹The need for newspapers to inform the public about the relationship between personal expressive rights and media rights guaranteed by the First Amendment was a major topic of discussion at The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center's first seminar on Nov. 4, 1992 (Nashville, Tenn.).

Research has suggested that people are more supportive of their own individual rights to free speech than of media rights (Miller, Andsager, & Wyatt, 1992). Conversely, media have been less supportive of free speech rights for unpopular groups than for their own rights (Bowles, 1977). It is likely that people perceive personal expressive rights to be more personally relevant than media rights. Extrapolating a bit, it seems that individuals would attend to personally relevant messages more than to apparently nonrelevant ones. In an attempt to educate the public about the importance of expressive rights, messages focusing on individual rights may yield the greatest attention and recall. To generalize to media rights, however, more knowledge must be gathered to elucidate the perceived linkage between media and personal expressive rights.

One presumption of public support for expressive rights is that of underlying beliefs in democracy and its fundamental principles, such as free speech and a free press. Early in American education, students are taught that the United States is founded on the principles embodied in the First Amendment. As U.S. citizens, they have the right to say what they think and practice the religion of their choice, while the press has the right to freely disseminate information to help the public maintain democracy. Modern political philosophy posits four main justifications for freedom of expression in a democratic society: to help individuals achieve self-fulfillment, to help them gain autonomy, to allow for free trade of ideas and to maintain democracy itself (Emerson, 1970). These ideals, however, are simply that; in practice, some areas of free expression can become quite murky.

People may be willing to support the idea of expressive rights in the abstract. When they are confronted with forms of expression that offend them, though, some individuals may balk. This is true across political

ideology, gender, race and education levels (Hentoff, 1992). Other individuals might gauge their support levels on the nuisance value of a message -- whether it is provocative, blasphemous or insulting, for example -- or the potential harm the message might cause (Tucker, 1985). The nature of public opinion surveys on support for expressive rights to date has failed to consider the selective manner in which many people think about rights. By asking questions about one or two hot topics, researchers do not capture a construct underlying support for expressive rights. Although a few forms of expression may receive little support from some people, asking respondents about a number of scenarios would provide a richer understanding of how individuals think about expressive rights.

Beyond the question of which forms of rights people support and which they might be willing to restrict, whether people actually associate expressive rights and other civil liberties with their basic freedoms is not clear. The individuals who deliberate on such relationships may more likely to be aware of the vital links among all of their rights; if this is true, these people should perceive a stronger correlation between free speech and a free press. If the cognitive traits are isolated that separate these deliberate individuals from their counterparts who may not have considered such underlying connections, this information might help to improve education about not only expressive rights but other democratic principles. To isolate such cognitive traits, however, it is necessary to measure the perceived linkage between principles.

This study details an experiment designed to examine whether individual cognitive differences can predict the effects of pro-regulation messages on a person's willingness to restrict expressive rights. When someone is exposed to a message that calls for general regulation of

expressive rights (media or personal), cognitive traits may influence whether that message persuades him or her to support regulation of those rights.

People who tend to deliberate on issues may see connections between regulating flag-burning, for example, and potential encroachments on rights to other forms of protest. They may also generalize from their own rights to burn the flag to the media's right to editorialize for or against flag-burning. This study examines the extent of such perceived links by measuring the perceived relationship between support for personal expressive rights and media rights.

The study includes several aspects that have not been dealt with previously in freedom of expression research. First, experimental priming has not been used in conjunction with support for expressive rights; in fact, the vast majority of research on public opinion and expressive rights has used survey methodology, which provides a snapshot of attitudes at one period in time. This study includes the development of parallel scales to measure support for personal rights of free speech and support for media rights entailed in freedom of the press. None of the surveys conducted previously has attempted a direct comparison of support for these kinds of rights. This experiment, then, adds a good deal of information to the body of knowledge comprising freedom of expression research.

Research such as this may contribute to theory development in this area because it encompasses cognitive traits and their relationship to expressive rights. Theorists must move beyond the question of whether the public supports certain forms of expression and generalize to the larger issue of whether people perceive any connections between those forms of expression, the media's rights and their own. This perception would seem to be the first true step toward building a theory of support for expressive rights.

Theoretic Perspective

Support for Expressive Rights

Research into support for free expression and other civil liberties dates back more than 50 years, and it remains a hot topic in social science research. Although the classic Samuel Stouffer study of attitudes toward communists' civil liberties is often cited as the first venture into the topic, the earliest systematic study of public opinion and free expression was done by Hadley Cantril in the 1930s (Wyatt, 1991).

It is difficult to draw accurate conclusions about American support for expressive rights over time because the data lack uniformity (Erskine, 1970). Because the majority of surveys on support for freedom of expression have focused on issues that were highly relevant at the time and then faded from the spotlight, it is virtually impossible to accurately track trends of support. Support for freedom of speech for extremists is the one item that has remained a salient issue in survey after survey, undoubtedly due in large part to the Stouffer (1954) study on communism. (Many of the subsequent studies used Stouffer's survey items.) For example, more than three-fourths (77%) of the respondents in a survey conducted during World War II wanted to curtail the rights of people to make speeches against certain races in the United States (Cantril, 1951). One narrow indicator, a compilation of NORC General Social Survey questions about civil liberties from 1972 to 1990, suggests that levels of tolerance for many forms of free speech increased fairly steadily during that time (Page & Shapiro, 1992). These questions were the same ones that Stouffer asked; public support for allowing communists, socialists and anti-

religionists was much higher in the 1970s than in the 1950s. However, the perception of reduced threat from some dissenters, such as communists, may confound the increased levels of support, giving the appearance of a growing tolerance.

Wider-ranging studies suggest, however, that the public tends to be inconsistent in supporting expressive rights, perhaps because surveys have most often addressed expression issues relevant to the social and political milieu of the time. An often-cited 1970 survey found that nearly two-thirds of its respondents opposed allowing others to make speeches against God, and more than half wanted to prevent the publication of books attacking the government (Wilson, 1975). It should be noted, however, that Wilson's study consisted of only three arguably loaded questions; therefore, its sensitivity is dubious in determining actual support for various rights. One survey designed to measure the relationship between political tolerance and support for civil liberties found that people differentiate sharply between different types of speech, with speech critical of the American system of government receiving most support and speech designed to incite an audience to violence getting the least support (Gibson & Bingham, 1982).

The same inconsistency seems to occur for support of media rights. In 1943, 63 percent of respondents said newspapers should be allowed to criticize the government. A 1990 nationwide survey (Thomas Jefferson Center, 1990) found that a surprisingly high number of respondents believe freedom of expression should not cover the media (28% opposed coverage for newspapers, 31% for network television). Moreover, 58 percent said the government should have the power to censor. More than half (59%) said that the government should keep sex off of television. Fifty-one percent of the

respondents to a recent survey said they would support press rights in two hypothetical situations (Voakes, 1992).

Not surprisingly, media reliance has been examined in terms of its relationship to support for expressive rights. High media consumers are more supportive than low consumers (Wilson, 1975). Individuals reliant on newspapers have been found to be significantly more tolerant of free expression than television-reliant individuals (von Elten & Rimmer, 1992). Newspaper reliance remained a significant predictor, even when the demographic variables in the study were controlled. This is in accordance with the 1992 study by McLeod and his colleagues that found a positive relationship between public affairs media use and support for media rights. When McLeod asked about media use in general, however, there was no relationship between support for media rights (or willingness to control the media) (McLeod, Guo, Huang, Rzeszut, & Voakes, 1992; McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991). Another study found that individuals who were dissatisfied with the press were slightly more likely to support its rights anyway than satisfied people (Voakes, 1992).

The media's role in society has also been suggested as a predictor of support for free expression. Studies have applied a variety of definitions to that role, however, and it is usually measured by only a few items in a survey. In the surveys of Dane County, Wisconsin, conducted by McLeod and his colleagues, respondents were asked to rate the importance of six different functions of the media (McLeod, Guo, Huang, Rzeszut, & Voakes, 1992; Voakes, 1992). Of these, Voakes found that the "watchdog" role was the only significant predictor of support for media rights. McLeod's analysis showed strong positive associations for four functions. In their 1991 study, however,

McLeod and his colleagues found no significant associations. This inconsistency suggests that perhaps the items used to measure functions are unreliable.

Most studies have tended to limit the operational definition of freedom of expression or civil liberties to the summation of only a few items. Other surveys have asked anywhere from three to 58 questions designed to measure support for specific rights (i.e., Immerwahr & Doble, 1982; McLeod et al., 1991, 1992; Wilson, 1975; Wyatt, 1991); each of these studies found a wide range of support among the rights.

These examples suggest that it is not enough merely to ask about support for rights in a few scenarios, a practice that only blurs the picture of public opinion because it fails to provide respondents with any cognitive context or adequate time for consideration. The Immerwahr and Doble (1982) study offers support for this notion. While respondents in the quantitative portion of this study were willing to restrict a number of rights (the highest level of support was 73 percent for an individual's peaceful picket of a nuclear facility), qualitative interviews in the study found that words like "dictatorship" were used to describe similar regulations. It is plausible that the qualitative interviews provided a broader, more thought-provoking situation for the respondents, allowing them to deliberate about the relationship among the various rights about which they were being questioned. Absent extensive interviews, priming messages may be able to stimulate similar kinds of cognitive activity about expressive rights.

Another problem with the traditional approach to measuring support for expressive rights is the fact that a few survey items assessed separately fail to reflect an individual's attitude toward expressive rights. Any number of

intervening variables -- including the lack of cognitive context discussed above -- can affect responses to single items. To better measure support for expressive rights, a reliable scale needs to be developed to attempt to elicit a construct. Scales for personal rights and media rights would allow a broad array of items to be summed into indexes, which would provide insight into the attitudinal component behind support for free speech and a free press. Moreover, such scales that are composed of parallel items will allow for direct comparison of support for media rights with support for personal rights; in order to measure the perceived links between free speech and free press, it is necessary to use parallel situations. Otherwise, the relationship may be obscured by the artifacts of dissimilar rights. The development of such scales is discussed in Chapter II.

Although the previous research comparing support for media and personal rights dealt with nonparallel items, it is possible to extrapolate from the findings. As mentioned above, Miller, Andsager, and Wyatt (1992) found that personal rights received much more public support than media rights. The same finding, to a lesser extent, should emerge from items on parallel rights. The smaller differential is expected because both media and personal expression encompass a wide variety of activities, and when people are asked about (nearly) identical slices of those activities, the gap that normally results from disparate media and personal rights items should narrow. That personal rights should receive more support than media rights is a reflection of their personal relevance.

It is plausible that what appear to be inconsistencies in public opinion about expressive rights may be artifacts of insufficient information; Daniel Yankelovich suggests that because the public is bombarded with conflicting

messages about complicated issues, it fails to reach "public judgment," an enduring and consistent attitude (Yankelovich, 1991). The impression that then arises is one of a divided, confused public that acts against its own best interests frequently. It seems likely that when an issue is hotly debated -- especially in a political setting, as was the flag-burning issue during the 1988 presidential campaign -- people may have less opportunity to elaborate on that issue for themselves without being distracted and misled by rhetoric. (Indeed, it appears that one of the first surveys on civil liberties to address flag-burning was Robert O. Wyatt's 1991 study.)

Such would appear to be the case with regard to expressive rights. Initial reaction to a certain kind of expression -- flag-burning, for example -- may be extremely negative, but over time the reaction becomes more reasoned. The public may reflect on the issue and its relation to other rights; it may realize the restriction of one right may set a precedent for further encroachment. If public reaction has been strong enough to affect policy in any way, this slow realization of the connections among various rights will have been harmful to free expression. Reinforcing this explanation are the comments from authors of a 1982 study that focused primarily on fairness laws, who found several seeming contradictions on the part of its respondents; the researchers wrote that:

people have not worked through the complexities ... the shifts observed above involve respondents' attempts to reconcile two important social goals--freedom of the press and a fair, objective presentation of the news (Immerwahr & Doble, 1982, p. 185).

When abstract ideas are faced with concrete situations, it may be difficult for people to deal with the resulting conflicts. Thus, as people respond to survey items on whatever form of expression is topical, support for expressive rights

may appear to be more inconsistent than it actually is because the respondents have not been given adequate context for thinking about the connections implicit between the abstract and concrete. An index comprised of several items regarding support for various expressive rights would reduce this kind of error because it would encompass the construct of support more fully.

In attempts to further understand who supports what kinds of expressive rights, a number of variables have been included as predictors of support. For the most part, these variables have been inconsistently related to support for expressive rights. Some clues to such a construct may lie in other variables -- mostly demographic -- that have been more frequently tested as predictors for support of expressive rights. The variables discussed below will be included or controlled for within this study.

Gender

Gender has been a problematic variable in predicting support for freedom of expression because it has not been consistent. The lack of conclusive findings about the relationship between gender and support for expressive rights is due primarily to the fact that only a few of the studies to this point have included this variable. As for support of individual rights of free speech or personal freedom, some research has found negligible differences between the sexes (Christenson & Dunlap, 1984; McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991; Prothro & Grigg, 1960).

More recent studies have shown that men are significantly more supportive of expressive rights than women (Miller, Andsager, & Wyatt, 1992), and there are differences in the way the sexes support various media practices (Andsager, 1992). Although Wilson (1975) did not test for

significance, he found that men were somewhat more supportive of expressive rights than women, with 25 percent of males willing to allow expression in all four of his scenarios and 17 percent of women responding affirmatively to all four. Nunn (1973) also found that female college students, especially those who intended to marry soon, were less supportive of civil liberties than men.

These conflicting findings suggest that the relationship between gender and support for expressive rights remains unclear. For this study, gender will be controlled for statistically.

Political Orientation

Political orientation has often been tested as a predictor of support for rights or other politically related activity. In Prothro and Grigg's (1960) study on agreement and disagreement regarding democratic principles, political party did not affect the bases of disagreement. Although personal freedom was rated the most important value out of fifteen on Rokeach's two-value model in one study, only negligible differences were reported between liberals and conservatives (Christenson & Dunlap, 1984). On the other hand, several other studies have found that political conservatism significantly, negatively affected support for civil liberties (Bobo & Licari, 1989; Miller, Andsager, & Wyatt, 1992). Wilson (1975) also notes that people who consider themselves liberal are more likely to allow "unpopular minority views" to be expressed.

Conservatism and identifying as a Republican was related to less abstract support, not to mention concrete situational support, for media rights, according to research by McLeod, Guo, Huang, Rzeszut, and Voakes

(1992). These relationships were not all substantiated in McLeod's 1991 study, suggesting some other variables may be intervening.

Like political orientation, religion is a variable that reflects an underlying mindset. An examination of religiosity may provide additional clues to that attitude. Regardless of how religiosity is measured, it seems to be negatively related to support for expressive rights. Finding the same results through different operationalizations suggests that the construct actually being measured through "religiosity" may have more to do with a personality or cognitive trait than with religion itself. Some differences have been found in religious denomination and support, although no statistical tests were conducted to determine whether these were significant (Selvin & Hagstrom, 1960). The study also examined the relationship between support and church attendance, but the differences appear slight. Active church attendance was negatively related to support for civil liberties among college students in Nunn's 1973 survey. More recently, von Elten and Rimmer (1992) found that church attendance and religiosity were both significant negative predictors of tolerance for civil liberties. These findings may reflect a resistance to conflicting ideas that result from free expression.

Because religiosity and a conservative political ideology seem to be negatively associated with support for expressive rights, they may be correlated with each other and indicative of an underlying trait common to both. None of the above studies reported correlations between religiosity and political orientation, however. More is known about political orientation than religiosity at this point, so political orientation will be included in this study, with the idea that knowledge gleaned from research on religiosity may offer insight into the analysis of this study's results.

Political orientation is related to support for expressive rights in a fairly consistent way, so this study will gather data on subjects' political leanings and control for them statistically.

Age

Whether the relationship is significant or not, studies show that age is nearly always negatively correlated with support for rights. Age was a significant, negative predictor of support for civil liberties in research by a number of studies (Becker, Cobbey, & Sobowale, 1978; Bobo & Licari, 1989; Andsager, 1992; Miller, Andsager, & Wyatt, 1992; Voakes, 1992; von Elten & Rimmer, 1992), but was not significantly related to bases of disagreement on democratic principles in a survey conducted by Prothro and Grigg (1960). Age was an inconsistent predictor in Zalkind, Gaugler, and Schwartz's (1975) analysis, although it was predominantly negative. McLeod and his colleagues (1991), who differentiated between abstract principles and concrete support, found that younger respondents did not support abstract expression as strongly as their elders, but they were more likely to give abstract support to the media, to invoke abstract principles and to support the rights of a neo-Nazi group to march.

A possible explanation for the relationship between age and support is offered by Zellman (1975), who explains that people's attitudes toward civil liberties are shaped during their formative years, between puberty and age 30. The generational model she discusses posits that once individuals are socialized, they do not change much, given normal circumstances. Major events such as war can blunt age differences, however. Zellman adds that age

alone does not account for all findings because education and other variables can fluctuate from generation to generation, but thus far, the oldest respondents in public opinion surveys have tended to be the least supportive of expressive rights.

To control for age effects, the design of this study will incorporate a sample of subjects who are roughly the same age. This design will remove the possibility of generational differences in support for expressive rights compounding the findings.

Education

Intuitively, one might predict that people with more education – operationalized as years of schooling – would support First Amendment rights more than their less-educated counterparts. Bobo and Licari (1989) suggest that “education changes cognitive style in ways that increase the likelihood of recognizing the importance of extending civil liberties to those we dislike” (p. 291). Bobo and Licari found that the highly educated are more tolerant of others’ freedom of expression than are the less well-educated, whether the issue in question is upheld by left-wing or right-wing groups. Indeed, one study of college students even found a steady increase in support for civil liberties across four years of college (Selvin & Hagstrom, 1960). Nunn’s (1973) review of research concerning college students’ support for civil liberties suggests that Selvin and Hagstrom’s finding has been countered by other studies, however.

Education was by far the most influential variable that predicted support for democratic principles in a 1960 study that included questions

about free speech (Prothro & Grigg), as well as in a secondary analysis of 1954 survey data (Jackman, 1972) and in Wilson's (1975) survey. Other studies support the positive relationship between education and support for free expression (McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991; Miller, Andsager, & Wyatt, 1992; von Elten & Rimmer, 1992; Zalkind, Gaugler, & Schwartz, 1975).

Immerwahr and Doble (1982) reported demographics for only one complicated question from their telephone survey: "A newspaper has the right to give opponents of a controversial policy such as the SALT treaty less coverage than those in favor of the treaty get" (p.180). This finding may be attributed to chance, but some disparity was produced at different educational levels, with a direct, positive relationship between higher education levels and disagreement with the statement. Beyond support, McLeod and Huang (1992) found that higher education was positively related to responding to open-ended questions about ideas on press freedom.

This is not always the case, however. For example, education has been found to make people more opposed to government repression but less supportive of protest issues that reflect interests of people with less education (Hall, Rodeghier, & Useem, 1986). Further analysis of additional data suggests that education is related to support for civil liberties, but involvement in a protest or experience can act as substitutes for the effects of education (Rodeghier, Hall, & Useem, 1991). In a secondary analysis of national poll data from the Watergate years, Becker, Cobbey, and Sobowale (1978) found that education was inconsistently related to willingness to criticize the press.

Because education has been the most consistent of all variables in predicting support for expressive rights, further research on its effect would offer little new information to the field. This study will control for it by using

a sample of subjects who have attained the same level of education.

Cognitive Traits

In developing a set of variables to build a theory of support for expressive rights, it is clear that one of the most important considerations is the inclusion of a cognitive construct. While the strong, positive relation between education and support for expressive rights is the most consistent among all variables studied previously (Jackman, 1972; McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991; Miller, Andsager, & Wyatt, 1992; Prothro & Grigg, 1960; von Elten & Rimmer, 1992; Wilson, 1975; Zalkind, Gaugler, & Schwartz, 1975), other measures of knowledge have been examined in terms of their relation to expressive rights support, and these tend to obliterate the effects of education.

Several researchers have attempted to identify the cognitive traits behind support for expressive rights, but none have accomplished this task satisfactorily. Sarat's (1975) principled reasoning measure, which he explained as the process of fitting specific problems into general categories and deducing preferences from the principles governing each category, was positively associated with support for expressive rights. Principled reasoning was operationalized as the score on three case scenarios in which a subject could apply an abstract or substantive principle in deciding how the situation should be handled; it was positively correlated with political knowledge. Although Sarat noted that "cognitive styles may be more dependent on *personality needs* than on the kinds of training which education provides" (p. 259; emphasis added), his principled reasoning measure does not fit within

this criterion. It does not provide any kind of measure of the personality needs that may affect an individual's cognitive style, nor any explanation as to what those personality needs may be.

A measure of cognitive sophistication was found to be a more powerful predictor than education of support for civil liberties in one survey, in which the researchers noted that formal education may be more likely to increase conformity or socially desirable responses than actual support for democratic principles such as free expression (Bobo & Licari, 1989). Cognitive sophistication was operationally defined as the number of correct answers to a 10-item vocabulary list. Again, however, this measure merely documents some form of achievement through cognitive effort. It recognizes no impetus for that cognitive effort. Without a mechanism, the variable does not contribute to theoretical understanding of support for expressive rights.

McLeod and his colleagues have used several cognitive variables to try to explain the processes underlying support for expressive rights. One set of these, referred to as a cognitive learning model, consisted of current events knowledge and civil liberties knowledge (McLeod, Guo, Huang, Rzeszut, & Voakes, 1992; McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991). People who scored well on civil liberties knowledge were more likely to voice responses to open-ended questions on press freedom in an analysis of one set of these data, suggesting that they had thought about the issue; current events knowledge was unrelated to response (McLeod & Huang, 1992). Current events knowledge was the sum of answers to five questions, civil liberties knowledge the sum of three answers to true-false questions. When Voakes (1992) added these variables to his regression model, the effect of education all but disappeared. Both variables were significantly, positively related to

support for expressive rights (defined as responses to three scenarios) in McLeod's 1992 study, but in 1991 civil liberties knowledge was a predictor of abstract support for expression but not for support of media rights, while the opposite was true for current events awareness. This inconsistency suggests that something beyond mere awareness is influencing public opinion.

Although McLeod and his colleagues (1991, 1992) have begun theory-building research on the topic, they have as yet not developed a satisfactory model of the cognitive traits underlying support for freedom of expression. McLeod's measures of the cognitive traits he hypothesizes to predict support have been inconsistent in the two surveys he has conducted thus far; as will be discussed below, a more reliable cognitive construct must be included in any theory attempting to explain support for expressive rights.

Another cognitive model McLeod employed was that of information-processing strategies (McLeod, Guo, Huang, Rzeszut, & Voakes, 1992). This comprised three variables formed from a factor analysis of nine items that intended to elucidate "habits of mind that help [people] deal with the flood of media content that besieges them" (p. 9). Reflective integration, which dealt with information recall and likelihood of discussing it with others, was the most strongly associated with support for expressive rights, with a positive correlation. The other variables, active processing (going beyond the news story to seek information) and selective scanning (merely skimming news content), were unrelated to support after control variables were added to the total model.

This model hints at the personality needs that Sarat suggested, such as the different strategies of dealing with information from news media. It still falls short of identifying a motivational component, however. Interestingly,

McLeod does not report whether (and how) the variables in the information-processing model and those in the cognitive learning model are correlated. It seems intuitive that people high in reflective integration would also be high in civil liberties and current events knowledge, and those who tend to use a selective scanning strategy would be low in such knowledge. A more parsimonious cognitive variable than these would definitely be beneficial in theory-building.

Need for Cognition

Need for cognition (NFC) has yet to be examined as it relates to support for expressive rights, but it has the potential to serve a moderator for cognitive-processing activities. NFC does not in itself affect support for expressive rights; it provides the impetus for going through an elaboration process that may then have an effect on support levels. NFC would seem to reflect the "more complex thinking generally more than topic-bound information" (McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991; p. 18) that seems to be predictive of support, although it has not been measured, probably because studies of cognitive traits in relation to support for expressive rights are so few and far-between. Not only does it explain why some people are more likely to elaborate on issues such as the relationship between personal and media rights, but it offers the parsimony that McLeod's cognitive models lack.

NFC, the motivation to engage in cognitive exercise, is conceptualized as a stable trait, with individual differences among people (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). NFC entails seeking and accumulating information, analyzing evidence, abstracting from past experiences and synthesizing ideas. People

who are high in NFC are likely to enjoy effortful cognitive, analytic activities, while those who are low will tend to shy away from such activity. Petty and Cacioppo created an 18-item Need for Cognition Scale to identify individual differences in NFC (Cacioppo, Petty, & Kao, 1984). The scale produces one dominant factor. The researchers undertook a variety of validation methods to ensure that the scale has nice psychometric properties.

Validation studies of NFC have found the trait to be positively correlated with curiosity and intelligence (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982). It is positively related to reading material and activities that are considered to be highly cognitive (Tolentino, Curry, & Leak, 1990). NFC is uncorrelated with gender and social desirability (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982; Tolentino, Curry, & Leak, 1990).

Other trait-validation studies lend support to the notion that NFC should be related to attitudes toward expressive rights. NFC has been found to be negatively related to anxiety about academic performance, but unrelated to anxiety about other activities such as maintaining personal relationships (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). This finding regarding anxiety seems linked to those of Sarat (1975), who found that because anxious individuals were less likely to reason in a principled manner than secure people, and they were less likely to support civil liberties in concrete situations. These findings are supported in a review of conformity literature, which suggests that individuals may fail to exercise their civil liberties due to anticipated or actual pressure from a group (Hollander, 1975). It is not a great leap to imagine that these individuals may not support expressive rights for the same reason.

Comparing people who feel a strong need for personal and economic security with those who are more interested in helping others, one study

found that the previous group was more willing to control the media and much less likely to support their rights (McLeod, Guo, Huang, Rzeszut, & Voakes, 1992). According to the same study, individuals who perceive the world as knowable are more supportive of media rights than their counterparts who believe in a just world or who are fatalists. Fatalism is most strongly related to failure to support civil liberties (McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991). As mentioned above, in these two surveys cognitive variables were positively related with support for expressive rights; unfortunately, McLeod and his colleagues did not report the correlations between the cognitive measures and the beliefs measures.

Need for cognition should be expected to relate to an individual's support for expressive rights, because it encompasses several of the cognitive variables that have been found to be related to support -- Sarat's principled reasoning, Bobo and Licari's cognitive sophistication and McLeod's cognitive models -- and possibly provides a driving force behind them. By definition, NFC captures a personality need that motivates certain people to seek out and elaborate on information.

Furthermore, individuals high in need for cognition should be more aware of the links between free speech and free press because they are likely to have spent more time deliberating on such issues. Several studies involving need for cognition and deliberation suggest that high-NFC individuals produce more thoughts than low-NFC people about the consequences of certain events, such as elections (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). In other words, it appears that need for cognition is positively related to the ability -- or perhaps merely the willingness -- to extrapolate from known information to consequences. To generalize from these findings, if a high-NFC individual

deliberated about the restriction of media rights, he or she should be more likely than someone low in need for cognition to consider the possibility that similar personal expressive rights might also be restricted.

Priming

Reasoning processes have been found to be key in measuring support for expressive rights. Many people seem unable to make the leap from abstract principles to concrete situations, perhaps because democratic principles are instilled in them in an abstract way. Zellman (1975) notes that

This large and consistent gap at both the aggregate and the individual level has led some to question whether the abstract principles are really principles at all, since they apparently lack, for most, any logical concrete applications (p. 33).

Abstract principles are stated generally and do not contain group referents or contextual clues, while concrete situations include these elements. Sarat (1975) found that no more than about one-third of respondents in his study reasoned deductively from abstract principle to situational preferences; for example, 25 percent of the respondents would allow a Ku Klux Klansman to speak because freedom of speech is a constitutionally guaranteed right. Affect might appear to be an artifact in concrete situations, but the two studies that examined affect found it to be insignificant (Bobo & Licari, 1989; McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991).

On the other hand, another study produced a strong relationship between making decisions on whether to support expressive rights and principled reasoning (McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991). The same study also notes very modest correlations between personal commitment to

freedom of expression and support of the press. Of the two forms of thought, concrete situational reasoning has been found to be more highly correlated with support for press rights than is abstract principled reasoning, and the correlation between abstract and concrete is the lowest of these three (Voakes, 1992). Concrete situational reasoning has been found to be more highly correlated with support for press rights than is abstract principled reasoning, and the correlation between abstract and concrete is the lowest of these three (Voakes, 1992). These findings suggest that while people support freedom of speech in general, they may feel hesitant about supporting certain types of speech; as Wyatt said, they only believe they believe in expressive rights. Another explanation may be that a survey's list of several concrete situations merely give an individual a cognitive starting place. Without any kind of context, the individual may not be able to respond thoughtfully to whether he or she really supports certain (concrete) forms of expression. This exemplifies Yankelovich's (1991) contention that too often, survey subjects are bombarded with questions without a chance to think through the implications of their responses.

One way to provide context and a broader base for responses for expressive rights responses is through priming. If subjects are primed to think in a general way about individual or media rights before they begin considering whether they support certain concrete rights, they have the opportunity to look at the big picture in a fairly abstract way. The priming of relationships between concepts operates on the premise that certain stimuli – words, images, memories – trigger the recall of other, usually related thoughts or memories. Priming itself is the process of offering messages to subjects with the intent of activating certain responses (Berkowitz & Rogers,

1986). Priming has been documented to work in a variety of situations, ranging from cuing for aggressive behavior to negative impressions of others to recall of colors.

The human associative memory theory developed by Anderson and Bower (1974) is generally regarded as the basis for the priming process. This cognitive theory posits that when a person perceives a stimulus, he or she will begin to separate that stimulus into its key components. These components are then labeled as either factual and contextual associations, both of which allow the cognitive processing of the stimulus to begin. Each component travels along through associated memory nodes, which assist the person in interpreting the stimulus by triggering previously recorded information or experience. What the person's response to the stimulus will be, if any, depends on which memory nodes are then called upon. Priming, then, attempts to pinpoint certain of these nodes.

Although the human associative memory theory is primarily structural, a spreading-activation theory that builds upon it adds the notion of automatic processing and thus explains why a priming effect can linger without an individual realizing it (Collins & Loftus, 1975). Once a concept is activated, according to the spreading-activation theory, it increases the probability that it be recalled along with related concepts. This increased probability is the result of the priming effect.

If priming is this extensively involved with cognition, it stands to reason that individual differences in cognitive traits will result in differing levels of priming effects. For example, individuals who tend to engage in more extensive cognition should be less persuaded by priming messages designed to change their attitudes than those who spend little time in

cognitive effort. They also may be more likely to control the processing that results from priming messages. Indeed, Martin, Seta, and Crelia (1990) found that individuals who were high in need for cognition were less persuaded by priming messages because they developed counterarguments.

Priming messages that call for increased regulation of media or personal rights should stimulate general thoughts (at least) about expressive rights by triggering previously held thoughts or beliefs about such rights. By arguing in favor of regulation, the priming messages should stimulate greater cognitive activity, particularly in subjects high in need for cognition because they should develop counterarguments. If the messages favored deregulation, subjects might not be as stimulated to consider their content because the messages would, in many cases, merely be reinforcing the subjects' own beliefs. Those subjects who stop to think about the content of the priming messages – the subjects high in need for cognition – will deliberate on the implications of the proposed restrictions. They should be more likely to realize that if the media are regulated, their own free speech rights may be in danger, or they will receive less information from the media. These are examples of counterarguments.

Similarly, subjects high in NFC who are primed with messages that call for regulation of personal rights should elaborate and develop counterarguments to the message, which would be evidenced by higher levels of support for personal rights from high-NFC subjects than low-NFC subjects. Indeed, because research suggests that people are more supportive of personal rights than of media rights (Miller, Andsager, & Wyatt, 1992), it is likely that subjects will actually develop more counterarguments against regulation of their own rights. This should occur in part because free speech

rights are perceived to be more personally relevant; their restriction could conceivably have an effect on each subject's own behavior. The regulation of media rights might not be perceived to have such a clear-cut impact on subjects.

Statement of Hypothesis

The above perspectives suggest that people who deliberate on the issues surrounding expressive rights will be more likely to perceive a higher correlation between media rights and personal expressive rights than people who do not think about such issues. Deliberative people are more likely to link free speech and free press with the fundamental principles of democracy; thus, they should realize that the restriction of one form of rights may impinge on the other. The need for cognition variable may capture that deliberative quality, such that people who are high in need for cognition should perceive a stronger relationship between personal expressive rights and media rights.

Priming subjects with messages that argue for regulation will provide a cognitive context for their responses and also set in motion the cognitive traits that encompass thinking about expressive rights. Such messages are similar to the letters to the editor and other calls for regulation of offensive expression. By presenting people with pro-regulation messages, it is possible to estimate the extent to which they generalize from restriction of media rights to restriction of personal expressive rights, and vice versa.

If people are encouraged to think about one type of right or the other, their levels of support should vary because their attention is focused on one

particular aspect of expressive rights. When support levels change, the relationship – as measured by a correlation coefficient – will be affected. For example, when people are exposed to a message that calls for regulation, studies suggest that those high in need for cognition should be more likely to develop counterarguments to the priming message (Martin, Seta, & Crelia, 1990). If high-NFC people develop counterarguments, they should also be more likely to remain level in their support of the rights the messages suggest should be regulated. On the other hand, people who are low in NFC should not develop as many counterarguments; thus, they may respond to a pro-regulation message by lowering their levels of support for the right in question. If the high-NFC group's support does not change but the low-NFC group lowers its support, the correlation coefficient will decrease slightly, indicating a lower relationship between media and personal rights.

These patterns of support and their resulting correlation coefficients should occur at different levels depending on whether priming messages call for regulation of media rights or personal expressive rights. Because regulation of personal rights should present a clear danger to both high- and low-NFC subjects, a priming message advocating such restrictions should not change their support levels substantially. High-NFC subjects, however, should develop more counterarguments, perhaps increasing their support, while some low-NFC subjects will accept the priming message and lower their support for personal rights somewhat. Such fluctuations in means will lower the correlation coefficients, indicating a decreased relationship between media and personal rights. When subjects receive messages that advocate regulation of personal rights, then, NFC should have a moderate impact on the relationship between support for media and personal rights.

Because regulation of personal expressive rights would be more immediately relevant than restriction of media rights, subjects who read messages that call for regulation of the media should be less affected by them, in terms of support levels for the rights. While high-NFC people should develop more counterarguments than their low-NFC counterparts, their levels of support should not be affected as much by the media message as by the personal rights message because media rights are not as personally relevant. Little change is then expected in the relationship, as measured by the correlation coefficient. This suggests that need for cognition should not be as strongly related to support for both expressive rights as it should be when subjects read priming messages that call for regulation of personal expressive rights.

If people do not have a cognitive context such as a priming message for thinking about expressive rights, they should perceive a comparatively low relationship between media rights and personal rights because they may not have deliberated about these connections. High-NFC people, who are more deliberative by nature, should perceive a stronger relationship between the two kinds of rights than people who are lower in need for cognition. Thus, the effect of need for cognition on the perceived relationship between support for media and personal rights should be greatest when people do not receive any priming messages regarding expressive rights.

The above perspectives suggest the following hypothesis:

The impact of need for cognition on the relationship between media rights and personal expressive rights will be (a) least with media priming; (b) moderate with personal priming; and (c) highest with no priming.

The effects of gender and political orientation on support for expressive rights will be examined. Because gender and political orientation have not been found to be related to need for cognition, no interactions among these variables are expected. Gender and political orientation should also not interact with the priming messages.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to determine how people think about the relationship between media rights and personal expressive rights. Because the two kinds of rights are bound together in the First Amendment and are sometimes considered to be the foundations of democratic principles, people who tend to elaborate on such issues should perceive a closer relationship between these rights than those who do not deliberate as much. A cognitive trait that may help to explain how people think about expressive rights is need for cognition, which has yet to be studied in conjunction with expressive rights. People who are high in need for cognition are more likely to think about the inherent links among free expression and fundamentals of democracy, while those low in need for cognition should not perceive a strong relationship because they may see media and personal rights as completely separate.

When people are asked to gauge their levels of support for various expressive rights, they may lack a cognitive starting place or context. Thus, those who have not deliberated about such issues may evince a disparate level of support for media and personal rights. This difference should be much greater than for people who have thought about the relationships

between rights. Also, because personal expressive rights appear to be more personally relevant to the individual -- their restriction would have an obvious, immediate impact -- the level of support for personal rights should be higher than that for media rights.

If people are encouraged to think about one type of right or the other, their levels of support should vary because their attention is focused on one particular aspect of expressive rights. However, if they are asked about their support for parallel media rights and personal expressive rights, an estimation can be made of the extent to which people generalize from media to personal rights, or vice versa. By asking about more than one form of expression and summing responses into an index, it may also be possible to identify a construct of support for expressive rights rather than a mere snapshot of a few controversial kinds of expression.

CHAPTER II

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Two goals of this study determined its design. First, the primary aim of this experiment is to further understanding of how people think about expressive rights. One deficit in research on this topic is the perceived relationship between media rights and personal rights. Studies have suggested that people tend to support their own expressive rights to a larger extent than media rights, but no research has attempted to examine the relationship between support for individuals' rights with support for the media's rights in the same kinds of expressive activities. To measure the strength of the relationship between media and personal expressive rights, a set of parallel scales needed to be developed; the scales provide the dependent measure in this experiment.

Another facet of the way in which people think about expressive rights is simply that -- the cognitive differences among individuals. The research to date on support for expressive rights suggests that a cognitive trait mediates people's levels of support -- or at least the way in which they respond to questions about expressive rights -- so the need for cognition variable, discussed in Chapter I, is included in this study to determine its impact on the relationship between personal and media rights.

A second goal of this study is to examine whether messages that call for regulation of expressive rights have an effect on the relationship between media and personal rights. When an individual reads an essay that demands the media be regulated, how will he or she respond? Will his or her response

to the suggestion of media regulation affect his or her support for personal expressive rights? The priming messages in this experiment are designed to stimulate subjects to think about regulating media or personal expressive rights. This design allows for an estimation of the extent to which people generalize from one kind of right to the other.

Previous research on public support for expressive rights indicates that demographic variables are related to support levels. Because education and age are fairly consistent predictors of support -- with education positively related to support and age inversely related to it -- it would add little to the body of knowledge to replicate these findings. The convenience sample used in this study makes it impossible to statistically test for age or education effects. Gender and political orientation, which are not as clearly related to support for expressive rights, must be controlled for statistically. Operationalization of these variables and the experimental design is further discussed below.

Dependent Measures: Expressive Rights Scales

Two expressive rights scales, composed of 13 items each, were written to be as parallel as possible in order to directly compare support for media and personal expressive rights. As discussed in Chapter I, personal expressive rights are defined as those forms of expression that an individual or group of individuals are legally allowed to perform in public. Media rights are conceived of as expression allowed the press or entertainment media. These types of rights may be closely related in people's minds, but previous research has indicated that there are differences in mean levels of support for the two,

with personal rights generally more supported than media rights. Thus, the parallel scales are intended to examine the relationship more closely than previous surveys have been able to, because the parallel items should remove error caused by questions about different kinds of expressive activities.

Some items in the scale are derived from Robert Wyatt's (1991) freedom of expression survey; others have been added to reflect concerns regarding expressive rights that have been addressed recently by the courts and public opinion. The scales are displayed in Figures 2.1 and 2.2. For example, the topic of political correctness is included in three items (on each scale) -- the right to offend people of different races, religions and sexes. Protesting, a hot topic in the last few years due to the Persian Gulf War, flag-burning and the continuing battle over abortion rights, is also included. Unpopular speech -- a throwback to Stouffer's survey on allowing communists and other extremists to speak -- is contained in items on the right to criticize the president, to say that a foreign government is better than the U.S. government or to advocate homosexuality. The right to obtain materials that some people perceive to threaten morality, such as those that feature nudity or graphic sexual acts, are also included. Because individuals usually participate in these kinds of activities, the parallel media items are phrased as "the right to editorialize" about such expression.

The scales are structured with seven-point, Likert-type response sets, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." They are administered as pencil-and-paper exercises. Respondents are instructed to choose the response that best describes how they feel about each item, and they are assured that there are no right or wrong answers.

The Support for Personal Rights Scale (SPRS) was first written as a 12-item scale. Testing among a relatively homogeneous sample produced a

Figure 2.1. Support for Personal Rights Scale.

- | | <u>disagree</u> | <u>agree</u> |
|-----|---|--------------|
| 1. | An individual's right to protest against abortion should be protected by law. | |
| 2. | An individual should have the right to publicly say that a foreign government is better than the United States government. | |
| 3. | An individual's right to make statements that would offend people from a different racial or ethnic group should be protected by law. | |
| 4. | *There should be a law against allowing an individual the right to buy or view material that features nude pictures. | |
| 5. | By law, an individual should have the right to burn the American flag to protest the actions of the government. | |
| 6. | An individual's right should be protected by law when he or she makes statements that offend people of different religious groups. | |
| 7. | *There should be a law preventing an individual from criticizing the president. | |
| 8. | An individual's rights under the law should be protected when he or she makes statements in public that advocate homosexuality. | |
| 9. | An individual should have the right by law to make statements that would offend people of a certain gender. | |
| 10. | By law, an individual should have the right to buy or view material that includes pictures of sexual acts between consenting adults. | |
| 11. | *There should be a law preventing an individual from discussing the sexual habits of public figures. | |
| 12. | The law should allow an individual the right to protest against military actions by the government. | |
| 13. | An individual should have the right to discuss false information about other people when he or she believes it is true. | |

*Indicates items that should be reverse-coded.

Figure 2.2. Support for Media Rights Scale.

- | | <u>disagree</u> | <u>agree</u> |
|-----|---|--------------|
| 1. | Under the law, the media should have the right to print or broadcast statements that would offend people of a certain gender. | |
| 2. | By law, the media should have the right to print or broadcast material that includes pictures of sexual acts between consenting adults. | |
| 3. | The media should have the right to print or broadcast false information when they believe it is true. | |
| 4. | By law, the media should have the right to editorialize in favor of burning the American flag to protest the actions of the government. | |
| 5. | The media's right should be protected when they publish or broadcast statements that offend people of various religious groups. | |
| 6. | *There should be a law preventing the media from discussing the sexual habits of public figures. | |
| 7. | By law, the media should have the right to editorialize for or against abortion. | |
| 8. | The law should protect the media's rights when they print or broadcast public statements that advocate homosexuality. | |
| 9. | *There should be a law preventing the media from criticizing the president. | |
| 10. | By law, an individual should have the right to buy or view material that includes pictures of sexual acts between consenting adults. | |
| 11. | An individual should have the right to discuss false information about other people when he or she believes it is true. | |
| 12. | An individual's rights under the law should be protected when he or she makes statements in public that advocate homosexuality. | |
| 13. | *There should be a law against allowing an individual the right to buy or view material that features nude pictures. | |

*Indicates items that should be reverse-coded.

coefficient *alpha* of .86 for the original scale. Estimates of divergent construct validity were provided by correlating the SPRS with the Need for Cognition Scale (Cacioppo, Petty, & Kao, 1984) and with the Right-wing Authoritarianism Scale (Altemeyer, 1981), which should be negatively related to support for expressive rights because individuals high in right-wing authoritarianism are resistant to change, nontraditional or threatening ideas. As expected, the SPRS was negatively correlated with the right-wing authoritarianism scale ($r = -.46$). The relationship was significant at the $p < .05$ level. The correlation between the NFC and SPRS scales was positive and low ($r = .22$). While this value indicates a slight relationship between SPRS and NFC, it is not high enough to suggest convergent validity, nor is it quite low enough for discriminant validity.

When the two thirteen-item scales were developed, seventy-six subjects enrolled in junior-level communications classes at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, participated in an early pretest for reliability. This relatively homogeneous sample of communications majors should be sensitized to First Amendment issues, so their patterns of support may not be similar to those of the general public. The scales met minimum standards for reliability. For the media rights scale (SMRS), the coefficient *alpha* was .75, and the coefficient *alpha* for SPRS was .70. The two scales were correlated at .68 ($p < .01$).

Validation With Established Scales

In order to validate the SMRS and the SPRS, two established scales were offered to a group of subjects along with the newly developed scales.

One was the twelve-item social criticism scale (Jessor & Jessor, 1977). The social criticism construct is defined as the "degree of acceptance or rejection of the values, norms, and practices of the society" (Shaver, Robinson, & Wrightsman, 1991, p. 355). It has been found to be positively related to problem behavior and thus unconventionality. When tested with a longitudinal college sample, the social criticism scale produced a Cronbach's *alpha* of .85. The scale includes items that deal with economic opportunity, education, the environment, and governmental activities and performance.

Because people who tend to be highly critical of the society in which they live should also be especially interested in obtaining more information about that society, social criticism and the two expressive rights scales should be positively correlated. To be able to criticize society, one must also be able -- in most cases -- to access information that is both good and bad. Therefore, people who are high in social criticism should also be more likely to support expressive rights than those who are low. The notion that people who score high on the social criticism scale are also frequently involved in problem behavior (including, according to Jessor and Jessor, marijuana use), however, suggests that the positive correlation may be moderate at best. Because personal expressive rights, perhaps including behavior or expression that some may consider problematic, are more personally relevant than media rights, the correlation between SPRS and social criticism should be slightly higher than between SMRS and social criticism.

The second established scale was the independence portion of Wrightsman's philosophies of human nature scale (1974). In previous studies, the fourteen independence items produced a corrected split-half reliability of .68, with a test-retest reliability of .75 after three months (Shaver, Robinson, & Wrightsman, 1991). Independence was highly correlated with the

trustworthiness ($r = .64$) and altruism ($r = .61$) portions of the philosophies of human nature scale; it was slightly negatively correlated with complexity ($r = -.16$). Wrightsman conceptualizes independence as the extent to which people can maintain their convictions in the face of pressures to conform.

Independence should be divergent from the expressive rights scales because no research to date has suggested a link between the trait and support for free expression. That independence is negatively related to complexity, and support for personal expressive rights was found in a pretest to be positively related to need for cognition -- a trait that entails some cognitive complexity -- further suggests that the independence construct is unrelated to support for expressive rights.

The four scales -- SPRS, SMRS, social criticism and independence -- were presented to 231 juniors and seniors enrolled in marketing courses at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. A copy of this instrument is attached as Appendix A. To reduce obtrusiveness of the expressive rights measures, items from the two scales were mixed together in a random order. Seven-point Likert-type scales were used to gather responses for each item. The sample included majors from several colleges (business, arts and sciences, communications, engineering). Subjects were told they were participating in a survey of their attitudes toward society. They were asked to complete the four scales, along with recording their gender and political orientation. As noted above, gender and political orientation have been found to predict levels of support for expressive rights, with men typically being more likely to support rights than women and people who identify themselves as liberal more likely to support rights than those on the right.

The validation sample consisted of 112 women (48.1%) and 121 men (51.9%). In terms of political orientation, 23.7 percent identified themselves

as liberal or far left, 34.6 percent identified themselves as moderate, and 32.5 percent said they were conservative or on the far right. The remaining 9.2 percent did not know their political orientation.

When the data were coded and entered into an SPSS file, each scale was analyzed for reliability. Minimum reliability is .70 in order for a scale to be internally consistent, such that each item is contributing toward the assessment of the construct in question (Nunnally, 1967). The coefficient *alpha* for the SPRS scale was .83, and the coefficient *alpha* for SMRS was .82. These figures indicate that the scales are internally consistent. For the social criticism scale, coefficient *alpha* was a low .68. This may reflect in part the moderate to conservative nature of the sample. The coefficient *alpha* for the independence scale was .79.

Correlations were obtained to gauge the relationships between each pair of scales in the form of a multitrait correlation matrix. To further validate the expressive rights scales, t-tests were run to determine whether men and women differentiated in their levels of support for the two kinds of rights. An analysis of variance was also used to look for differences in levels of support by political orientation. Finally, for both the SPRS and the SMRS, item-total and interitem correlations were obtained to further document the reliability of the scales; to test for relationships between the two scales, items from each scale were correlated with the sum of the items from the other scale.

A multitrait correlation matrix was constructed to determine whether the expressive rights scales were indeed divergent from the social criticism and independence scales (see Table 2.1). As predicted, both expressive rights scales were positively correlated with social criticism, but only lowly ($r_{SPRS} = .14$; $r_{SMRS} = .11$). This indicates that the two traits are divergent. The personal

Table 2.1. Multitrait correlation matrix of the four scales. (N=233)

	SPRS	SMRS	Independence	Social crit.
SPRS	1.0			
SMRS	.76**	1.0		
Independence	.05	.04	1.0	
Social criticism	.14*	.11	-.23**	1.0

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

rights scale was significantly correlated with the social criticism scale at the $p < .05$ level, suggesting that perhaps those who are interested in protecting their personal expressive rights may want to do so in part to voice social criticism. The independence trait is even more divergent from the SPRS and SMRS, with virtually no correlation ($r_{SPRS} = .05$; $r_{SMRS} = .04$).

The two expressive rights scales are, as might be expected, highly correlated ($r = .76$; $p < .01$). People who are willing to support one form of rights are fairly willing to support the other. The difference between the two scales lies in the mean levels of support. The SPRS had a mean level of support of 61.6 (standard deviation = 12.2), while the mean support for SMRS was 51.1 with a standard deviation of 12.6. This disparity suggests that while the constructs are closely related, they are not entirely convergent.

Previous research mentioned above indicates that men and women differ in support for expressive rights, and the greatest disparity lies in support for media rights. T-tests to further validate the expressive rights

scales support this finding. For the SPRS, women's mean level of support was 58.9 and men's was 64.1. The difference was significant at the $p < .001$ level ($t_{229} = 3.33$). Mean support for SMRS was lower for both groups, with women's mean at 47.9 and men's mean 54.1 ($t_{231} = 3.87$; $p < .0001$). These mean levels of support are consistent with previous research that has attempted to examine differences between men and women's support for expressive rights, further suggesting that the scales are measuring different constructs.

An ANOVA to further validate the findings relative to political orientation found a significant difference among the political orientation groups in terms of their support for expressive rights. For personal rights, subjects who identified themselves as liberal (mean support = 66.2) were significantly more supportive than those who identified themselves as conservative (mean support = 58.9; $F_{5, 227} = 2.58$, $p < .05$). Moderates fell in the middle with a mean of 61.6. The same trends appeared for the SMRS scale ($F_{5, 227} = 2.95$; $p < .05$). Liberals had a mean of 56.6; moderates, 50.1; and conservatives had a mean level of support of 49.0. Again, these differences in means lend support to the differences between the SPRS and SMRS constructs.

Support for Personal Rights Scale

For both expressive rights scales, corrected item-total correlations and interitem correlations were obtained to further assess the psychometric qualities of the scales. Item-total correlations evaluate individual items on the basis of total variance, and those with high correlations will increase the scale's variance, adding to the total reliability (Nunnally, 1967). To be valuable, each item should have an item-total correlation of at least .20; the

scale should have an average item-total correlation of .40. Interitem correlations should be positive and at least moderate.

The average item-total correlation for the SPRS was .47, indicating that the items each contribute in a positive way to the scale's variance. Individual item-total correlations, displayed in Table 2.2, range from .32 for the right to offend people of another race or ethnic group to .57 for the right to protest military actions by the government. Means were obtained for each item; the highest mean (6.0) occurred for the right to criticize the president, and the item receiving the least support (mean= 3.1) was the right to burn the flag to protest governmental actions.

Interitem correlations were calculated (see Table 2.3). All were positive, ranging from .01 (offending another race and criticizing the president) to .72 (viewing pictures of graphic sex acts and viewing material that contains nudity). The average interitem correlation was .27. Nearly all of the correlations were significant. This finding further suggests that all thirteen items should be retained. When the SPRS items were correlated with the sum of media rights items, all were positively related to the SMRS items, although none of the correlations was high. This indicates that the personal expressive rights and media rights are not exactly the same construct, although they may have foundations in the same general attitude.

Factor analysis is used as a tool for checking construct validity in the development of scales (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). It measures the correlations of items with their underlying factors, which are clusters of interrelated variables. Factor analysis is not as accurate as coefficient *alpha* in measuring the dimensionality of scales because it can produce artificial relationships due to methodological problems that lead to faulty or invalid responses. Nonetheless, if one factor in the initial factor-analysis statistics clearly

Table 2.2. Corrected item-total correlations, means and standard deviations for SPRS items. (N=233)

	item-total correlation*	mean**	standard deviation
Offend race	.32	4.2	1.9
Foreign govt.	.53	5.2	1.4
Criticize president	.41	6.0	1.2
Protest military	.57	5.2	1.4
Protest abortion rts.	.33	5.4	1.5
Offend sex	.58	4.2	1.8
Burn flag	.53	3.1	2.1
Sex habits of public	.45	4.9	1.6
Offend religion	.56	4.7	1.6
View graphic sex acts	.47	4.9	1.7
False information	.40	4.1	1.7
Homosexuality	.56	4.6	1.7
View nude photos	.39	5.1	1.6

*Coefficient $\alpha = .83$.

**On a 7-point Likert-scale, with 7 as strongly agree (or support this right) and 1 as strongly disagree (do not support this right).

Table 2.3. Interitem correlations for the SPRS. (N=233)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Offend race	1.0													
2. Foreign govt.	.20 ^a	1.0												
3. Crit. president	.01	.47 ^a	1.0											
4. Protest military	.10	.54 ^a	.43 ^a	1.0										
5. Protest abortion	.15 ^b	.24 ^a	.14 ^b	.34 ^a	1.0									
6. Offend sex	.44 ^a	.35 ^a	.24 ^a	.32 ^a	.22 ^a	1.0								
7. Burn flag	.22 ^a	.34 ^a	.28 ^a	.47 ^a	.27 ^a	.25 ^a	1.0							
8. Sex -- public fig.	.13	.25 ^a	.40 ^a	.25 ^a	.04	.36 ^a	.23 ^a	1.0						
9. Offend religion	.45 ^a	.39 ^a	.17 ^a	.33 ^a	.32 ^a	.66 ^a	.26 ^a	.31 ^a	1.0					
10. View sex acts	.07	.26 ^a	.21 ^a	.29 ^a	.11	.27 ^a	.31 ^a	.27 ^a	.17 ^b	1.0				
11. False inform.	.11	.16 ^b	.14 ^b	.29 ^a	.17 ^a	.30 ^a	.26 ^a	.33 ^a	.25 ^a	.24 ^a	1.0			
12. Homosexual.	.23 ^a	.30 ^a	.21 ^a	.37 ^a	.26 ^a	.33 ^a	.39 ^a	.31 ^a	.39 ^a	.36 ^a	.36 ^a	1.0		
13. View nude ph.	.13 ^b	.21 ^a	.21 ^a	.21 ^a	.03	.18 ^a	.33 ^a	.23 ^a	.05	.72 ^a	.15 ^b	.26 ^a	1.0	
14. SMRS	.27 ^a	.49 ^a	.39 ^a	.55 ^a	.34 ^a	.49 ^a	.57 ^a	.37 ^a	.49 ^a	.44 ^a	.30 ^a	.51 ^a	.43 ^a	1.0

^a Correlations are significant at $p < .01$.

^b Correlations are significant at $p < .05$.

dominates the others, some further evidence of the scale's dimensionality is provided. A principal-components factor analysis was conducted, although the coefficient *alpha* and correlational analyses indicate that the SPRS is internally consistent. The initial, unrotated analysis produced a dominant factor with an eigenvalue of 4.34, which accounted for 33.4 percent of the variance. The other three factors had eigenvalues of less than two, each accounting for about 10 percent of the variance.

Taken together, the psychometric tests performed on the SPRS indicate that it is a reliable scale that appears to measure the construct of support for personal expressive rights.

Support for Media Rights Scale

Corrected item-total correlations for the media rights scale produced an average of .45, which also surpasses the minimum requirement and suggests that all items are contributing to the scale's reliability. Item-total correlations for the SMRS have a broader range than those of the SPRS: the lowest is .28 for discussing the sex lives of public figures, and the highest is .58 for editorializing in favor of burning the flag. Means for the media-rights items are slightly lower than for their parallel SPRS items. The highest level of support for media rights occurred for the right to criticize the president (5.5), the same item that received the most support in terms of personal rights. For media rights, the least-supported item was that of the media reporting false information they believe to be true (a situation dealing with libel), which had a mean of 2.4. Item-total correlations, means and standard deviations for the SMRS are displayed in Table 2.4.

Interitem correlations for SMRS are all positive, ranging from .02 to

Table 2.4. Corrected item-total correlations, means and standard deviations for SMRS items. (N=233)

	item-total correlation*	mean**	standard deviation
Offend race	.51	3.9	1.7
Foreign govt.	.55	4.4	1.7
Criticize president	.34	5.5	1.5
Protest military	.54	4.7	1.6
Protest abortion rts.	.43	4.4	1.8
Offend sex	.43	3.6	1.8
Burn flag	.58	3.2	2.0
Sex habits of public	.28	4.1	1.6
Offend religion	.55	4.1	1.7
View graphic sex acts	.46	2.9	1.8
False information	.33	2.4	1.5
Homosexuality	.44	3.9	1.7
View nude photos	.44	4.0	1.8

*Coefficient $\alpha = .82$.

**On a 7-point Likert-scale, with 7 as strongly agree (or support this right) and 1 as strongly disagree (do not support this right).

.63. (See Table 2.5.) The average interitem correlation was .25. The lowest correlation appeared between discussing the sexual habits of public figures and editorializing for or against abortion rights; the highest -- not surprisingly -- occurred between offending people of other religions and offending people of other races or ethnic origins. Again, nearly all of the interitem correlations were significant. When SMRS items were correlated with the sum of items from the personal rights scale, each correlation was positive, but only one was high -- that of the media's right to offend people of other religions ($r=.60$).

A factor analysis of the SMRS produced one dominant factor in the unrotated matrix. This factor had an eigenvalue of 4.14; it accounted for 31.8 percent of the variance. Three other factors with eigenvalues of less than two, each accounting for about 10 percent of the variance, were produced. The dominant factor suggests the scale items are fairly unidimensional.

These properties suggest that the SMRS is also a reliable scale; the differing levels of support and patterns of support indicate that the SMRS is not the same construct as support for personal rights, although they are highly correlated. It appears that people tend to think about media and personal rights in the same way.

Psychometric properties of expressive rights scales

The same psychometric tests were performed on the data gathered for this study. (See tables 2.6 and 2.7.) For the SPRS, coefficient *alpha* was .81, with an average corrected item-total correlation of .46. The scale's average interitem correlation was .33. The coefficient *alpha* of the SMRS was .86, with an average corrected item-total correlation of .52 and an average interitem correlation of .39. An examination of the item means indicates that

Table 2.5. Interitem correlations for the SMRS. (N=233)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Offend race	1.0													
2. Foreign govt.	.29 ^a	1.0												
3. Crit. president	.19 ^a	.33 ^a	1.0											
4. Protest military	.31 ^a	.61 ^a	.35 ^a	1.0										
5. Protest abortion	.19 ^a	.35 ^a	.14 ^b	.43 ^a	1.0									
6. Offend sex	.55 ^a	.26 ^a	.05	.19 ^a	.19 ^a	1.0								
7. Burn flag	.21 ^a	.48 ^a	.25 ^a	.41 ^a	.41 ^a	.25 ^a	1.0							
8. Sex -- public fig.	.22 ^a	.18 ^a	.21 ^a	.13 ^b	.02	.21 ^a	.15 ^b	1.0						
9. Offend religion	.63 ^a	.31 ^a	.24 ^a	.27 ^a	.20 ^a	.57 ^a	.32 ^a	.19 ^a	1.0					
10. View sex acts	.29 ^a	.22 ^a	.18 ^a	.19 ^a	.15 ^b	.28 ^a	.31 ^a	.19 ^a	.22 ^a	1.0				
11. False inform.	.21 ^a	.12	.03	.17 ^a	.25 ^a	.16 ^b	.28 ^a	.09	.25 ^a	.25 ^a	1.0			
12. Homosexual.	.26 ^a	.29 ^a	.09	.30 ^a	.36 ^a	.17 ^a	.36 ^a	.04	.31 ^a	.33 ^a	.15 ^b	1.0		
13. View nude ph.	.09	.23 ^a	.31 ^a	.21 ^a	.23 ^a	.05	.38 ^a	.30 ^a	.15 ^b	.48 ^a	.24 ^a	.29 ^a	1.0	
14. SPRS	.51 ^a	.45 ^a	.35 ^a	.45 ^a	.29 ^a	.45 ^a	.58 ^a	.36 ^a	.60 ^a	.38 ^a	.27 ^a	.43 ^a	.41 ^a	1.0

^a Correlations are significant at $p < .01$.

^b Correlations are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 2.6. Corrected item-total correlations, means and standard deviations for SPRS items. (N=169)

	item-total correlation*	mean**	standard deviation
Offend race	.27	4.3	1.9
Foreign govt.	.60	5.5	1.3
Criticize president	.39	6.1	1.1
Protest military	.48	5.6	1.2
Protest abortion rts.	.31	5.6	1.4
Offend sex	.58	4.3	1.8
Burn flag	.49	3.5	2.1
Sex habits of public	.48	4.7	1.6
Offend religion	.64	4.8	1.5
View graphic sex acts	.48	5.3	1.3
False information	.40	4.1	1.7
Homosexuality	.48	4.8	1.6
View nude photos	.39	5.4	1.9

*Coefficient $\alpha = .81$.

**On a 7-point Likert-scale, with 7 as strongly agree (or support this right) and 1 as strongly disagree (do not support this right).

Table 2.7. Corrected item-total correlations, means and standard deviations for SMRS items. (N=169)

	item-total correlation*	mean**	standard deviation
Offend race	.65	4.1	1.7
Foreign govt.	.67	4.6	1.6
Criticize president	.52	5.6	1.4
Protest military	.53	4.8	1.6
Protest abortion rts.	.48	4.8	1.7
Offend sex	.52	3.7	1.9
Burn flag	.57	3.8	1.9
Sex habits of public	.39	4.3	1.7
Offend religion	.65	4.3	1.7
View graphic sex acts	.47	3.6	1.7
False information	.25	2.7	1.6
Homosexuality	.52	4.3	1.6
View nude photos	.53	4.5	1.7

*Coefficient $\alpha = .86$.

**On a 7-point Likert-scale, with 7 as strongly agree (or support this right) and 1 as strongly disagree (do not support this right).

the same patterns of support occurred in this sample as in the validation sample. The average item-total correlations and coefficient *alphas* are fairly consistent from the validation study to the data gathered for this study, suggesting the scales are reliable. Further psychometric tests, including interitem correlations, are attached as Appendix B.

Manipulated Variable

Priming messages serve as the independent variable in this experiment. Priming is intended to stimulate thoughts about a given topic and, in turn, those thoughts trigger others along the same cognitive nodes. Such a process is important for purposes of this study to provide a cognitive context for expressive rights. When people think about media rights, they may or may not generalize from those to personal expressive rights, and vice versa. The priming messages were presented to subjects to get them thinking about either personal rights or media rights so that their responses to the expressive rights scales would theoretically be the result of some prior thought on the topic.

The messages were written as calls for further regulation of the media or personal expressive rights. This pro-regulation stance was chosen over anti- or less regulation for several reasons. First, given that people tend to support rights in a context-driven manner, it would be difficult to contend that all regulation of media or personal rights should be eliminated because nearly all of the subjects would probably develop counterarguments. Such a phenomenon would obscure the impact of need for cognition. Secondly, the experiment was intended to determine whether letters to the editor or other messages that are critical of some form of expression have an effect on

support. Letters or other commentary seem to seldom call for less or no regulation of expressive rights.

Three priming messages were developed, one for each of the three conditions in this experiment. Final versions of each message are attached in Appendix C. The control message was unrelated to expressive rights. Because the data were gathered from a student sample after a lecture on research methods, a reasonable topic for the control message seemed to be an essay on some aspect of research. Five short paragraphs on the history of content analysis were copied verbatim from a textbook on communications research methods to serve as the control message. The headline for the message was "Content analysis useful." An examination of the comments some subjects wrote on their survey instruments shows that the control message was not perceived as relevant to expressive rights; subjects either commented on the scales or, in some cases, on content analysis.

The other two priming messages, one on restriction of media rights and the other on restriction of personal rights, required pretesting to ensure that they were tapping the intended thoughts. These messages were intended to be general enough to avoid the confounding of attitudes toward one particular kind of expression (i.e., "hate speech" on campus or pornography), but specific enough that subjects would not develop counterarguments based on overgeneralizations. The messages were tested and rewritten several times.

The first step in developing the media and personal priming messages was to determine what are perceived to be legitimate reasons to regulate media or personal rights. A list of fifteen arguments was compiled, based on previous expressive rights surveys and statements that have appeared in

materials calling for regulation of some form of expressive rights. Two versions of each argument were written, one dealing with media rights and the other with personal rights.

One set of statements -- either the media or personal version -- was then presented randomly to seventy-six students enrolled in an upper-level communications course at the University of Tennessee. The subjects were asked to decide whether each statement argued in favor of or against placing more regulations on the media or personal expression and then to rate the statement as a strong, weak or neutral argument for/against regulation. According to the sample, the strongest argument for regulation of both the media and personal expressive rights was to protect children, who may be harmed by what they see or hear. The subjects were also asked to list any more reasons they could think of to regulate the media or personal expression. This open-ended question received no response, except for several admonitions to read the First Amendment.

Using the findings from this pretest, drafts of the priming messages were written, emphasizing the need to protect children. Several of the other statements that had been perceived as at least weak arguments in favor of regulation were also incorporated into the essays. The messages do not mention "media rights" or "personal rights," but they make clear that the government should regulate, instead of calling for self-regulation; this device was intended to stimulate counterarguments in people who are high in need for cognition. As mentioned above, the aim of the priming messages was that they get people thinking about regulating expression but not so general that all subjects would counterargue and dismiss them. Another goal in writing the priming messages was to make them as parallel as possible to

avoid confounding by content. For the sake of clarity, personal expressive rights were referred to as "what people say or do in public."

Drafts of the priming messages were presented randomly to twenty-four subjects enrolled in journalism classes at the university, fifteen of whom read the media-priming message and nine of whom read the personal-priming message. The subjects were instructed to read one essay ("Media must be regulated" or "Speech must be regulated") and list all of the thoughts that occurred to them as they read. Results of this procedure are listed in Appendix D. Subjects in this sample completed the first seven items of the Need for Cognition Scale to estimate whether NFC was related to the number and content of thoughts listed. There was no relation between NFC and the number of thoughts generated, probably because so few scale items were included in the survey instrument and sample was homogeneous. Most of the subjects disagreed with parts of the messages, but a few agreed.

To reduce confounding with credibility or other source-related factors, the priming messages were presented without any kind of attribution. The messages were typed in a different font than the scales and printed in one wide column with a headline, suggesting that they may have appeared as an editorial in a newspaper or in a pamphlet. All messages were approximately the same length (about 230 words). Each message appeared on a page by itself, under the instructions: "Please read this essay. Then turn to the next page and complete the questionnaire." At a glance, then, the priming messages appeared identical, so that the only difference among them was their content.

Measured Variable

Need for cognition was operationalized as the sum of scores on the 18-item Need for Cognition Scale (Cacioppo, Petty, & Kao, 1984). The items comprising this scale are attached as Appendix E. Seven-point Likert-type scales were used to gather responses for each item, with 1 as strongly disagree and 7 as strongly agree. Thus, the higher the scores, the higher the individual's need for cognition. A reliability assessment of the Need for Cognition Scale produced a coefficient *alpha* of .90 for this study, consistent with the findings in previous research (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Waters & Zakrajsek, 1990). The sums of scores were plotted to examine their distribution; total scores ranged from 43 to 114 (out of a possible 126) and fell into a normal curve. This suggests that the Need for Cognition Scale is indeed capturing the individual differences in cognitive traits among the subjects.

Control Variables

Priming and need for cognition were the variables of concern in this study. Gender and political orientation were control variables. As mentioned above, education and age have been the variables most consistently related to support for expressive rights. To include them in this study would add little to the body of knowledge. For this reason and to facilitate ease of interpretation of the relationship among the variables analyzed in this experiment, education and age were controlled for by using a sample of college students who were all roughly the same age and at the same level of education.

Although gender has been fairly consistently related to support for expressive rights, with men tending to be more supportive of both media and personal rights, it was not possible to control for it within this sample. After subjects completed the Need for Cognition Scale, they were asked to record their gender. All of the subjects responded. These data were coded as dummy variables (males were assigned 1, females 0).

Previous research indicates that people who consider themselves to be on the left politically are more supportive of rights. Typically, surveys have relied on respondents' self-reports of their political orientation. In this experiment, subjects were asked to describe their political orientation by choosing one of five categories: far left, liberal, moderate, conservative or far right. A "don't know" response was also available. Because only two subjects identified themselves as far left and two as far right (1.2 percent in each category), the political orientation data were collapsed into three categories, such that the far left and liberal responses were combined, and the far right data were placed in the conservative category. Twelve subjects (7.1 percent) did not know their political orientation; for clarity of analysis, their responses were recoded as missing, for a total of 13 missing responses (7.7 percent) on political orientation.

Although each of these control variables was expected to have an impact on support for expressive rights, no interactions were predicted among them. Previous research has not suggested theoretical links between gender and political orientation, perhaps because few expressive-rights studies have examined interactions among variables. Miller, Andsager, and Wyatt (1992) found that gender and political orientation both interacted with age and education in predicting support for rights, but not with each other.

Need for cognition has not been studied in relation to support for expressive rights, but in studies on other topics it has not been found to be related to gender or political orientation.

The Experiment

This experiment was designed to measure the effect of need for cognition on the relationship between media rights and personal expressive rights. To provide subjects with a cognitive context for thinking about those rights, priming messages that called for regulation of either media or personal rights were presented to the subjects, who read them before completing the expressive-rights scales.

One potential danger in this experiment was that it was so straightforward as to be overly obtrusive. In other words, the emphasis on expressive rights might have been so obvious that subjects could have guessed the hypothesis and lowered the internal validity of the experiment through demand characteristics. To reduce the obtrusiveness, the Need for Cognition Scale was administered to subjects about forty minutes before they received the priming message/expressive rights packet. An eight-item trustworthiness scale (Wrightsman, 1974) was attached to the NFC scale as a distractor. (No measures were made of the trustworthiness items.) After subjects turned in the NFC packet, they were told that the questionnaires were part of a survey on social attitudes being conducted by the university's marketing department.

The expressive-rights packets were distributed to the subjects after a short lecture on an unrelated topic. Obtrusiveness was again a concern,

especially within this packet because the content of the priming messages was so closely related to the expressive-rights items. Obviously, the priming messages had to immediately precede the scales. SPRS and SMRS items were randomly mixed together, along with a twelve-item Social Criticism Scale (Jessor & Jessor, 1977), in an attempt to reduce obtrusiveness. The Social Criticism Scale was used because its items fit in well with the nature of the expressive-rights scales. No analyses were conducted of responses to this scale.

All subjects received two packets of stapled questionnaires, which are attached as Appendix F. Instructions at the top of the first page of each packet of questionnaires read, "For each of the statements below, please place an X in the one box that best explains what you think about the statement. There are no right or wrong answers." The first packet contained the trustworthiness scale, the Need for Cognition Scale and the two classification items on gender and political orientation, for a total of twenty-eight items. The second packet consisted of a priming message, followed by the thirty-eight randomly mixed SPRS, SMRS and Social Criticism items.

The three priming messages formed the three experimental treatments. With treatment, political orientation, gender and the two expressive-rights scales, the resulting design was a 3 X 3 X 2 X 2 factorial, with need for cognition as a continuous variable.

The Sample

Because internal validity was an important consideration, this study was conducted as an experiment. A sample of college students enrolled at the

University of Tennessee participated in the experiment. Most of the students were Tennesseans, many with the same kinds of educational and cultural backgrounds. As discussed above, this sample was selected in part to control for age and education. While the relative homogeneity of this sample reduces the study's external validity, it theoretically reduces the number of intervening variables that might threaten internal validity.

Students enrolled in two sections of Communications 100, "Introduction to Mass Communications," participated during their class meeting times for extra course credit. The two sections met in consecutive time slots in the morning, further reducing the potential of confounding variables, such as discussion among students in the different sections or the second group of students possibly being exposed to news about expressive rights that was not available to the first group. Communications 100 is an entry-level class, so students taking it during the spring semester were not enrolled in any of the upper-level communications courses or the marketing courses in which pretests of the instruments used in this experiment were conducted. The course is required for all communications students and is an elective for students in other majors, so the subjects represent a variety of majors.

A total of 169 subjects from the two class sections completed both packets of questionnaires. Three other subjects failed to either complete or turn in both packets, so their responses were dropped from the data set.

The sample comprised eighty-three women (49.1 percent) and eighty-six men (50.9 percent). In terms of self-reported political orientation, forty-nine subjects (29.2 percent) described themselves as liberal; sixty-four subjects (37.9 percent) as moderate; and forty-three (25.5 percent) as conservative. The

remaining thirteen subjects did not know or did not report their political orientation; their responses were coded as missing.

Because Communications 100 is an entry-level course, students usually take it as freshmen or sophomores. The average age of the sample was probably about nineteen years.

Experimental Procedure

The experiment was conducted on March 31, 1992, during the two sections of Communications 100. Both sections met in a large lecture hall that seated about 200 students. The instructor of the course introduced the investigator as a guest speaker and doctoral student in communications at the University of Tennessee. One condition of using students in the course as subjects was that the investigator provide a guest lecture on research methods, so distributing questionnaires before and after the lecture probably did not seem unusual to the students.

After the introduction, the first packet of stapled questionnaires was distributed to the subjects. This packet consisted of the Need for Cognition and trustworthiness scales. All packets were identical. The investigator read the instructions at the top of the questionnaire aloud to the subjects, then told them to take about ten minutes to complete the questionnaire. (A pretest indicated that ten minutes was more than sufficient time to answer the items.) As a few subjects straggled in late to class, they were given the questionnaire to complete. A couple of these subjects filled out the questionnaire during the subsequent lecture.

Because the subjects' responses to the two packets would have to be put

together, some form of identification was needed on the questionnaires. The course instructor informed the subjects that they would receive extra credit for participating, and he told them that they had to write their names on the back of the packet in order to get credit. Both the instructor and the investigator assured the subjects that their responses would remain anonymous; the instructor was merely going to record their names, and the investigator was not concerned with who participated. The subjects did not question this nor complain about lack of confidentiality. All of them wrote their names somewhere on the packet.

When the packets were turned in, the investigator told the subjects that they had just participated in a survey for a friend of hers from the marketing department.

The investigator then lectured for about 20 minutes on survey and experimental research and content analysis, being careful to avoid any mention of the study the subjects were participating in. The discussion of experimental research was purposely kept brief, focusing on laboratory research. When the lecture was finished, the investigator asked the subjects to participate in another survey that she was conducting. She did not explain the purposes or topic of the study.

The set of second packets containing the three priming-message treatments had previously been placed in a random order so they could be distributed randomly without it being obvious that they were different. The packets had been randomized in sets of three -- three media-priming packets, then three personal-priming packets, etc. -- to reduce the chance that subjects sitting next to each other would notice the priming messages were different. The investigator and course instructor passed the second packets out face

down so subjects would not see the first page, which contained the priming message, until they turned them over. If the subjects were aware that there was more than one priming message being distributed, none of them commented on it.

When the packets were distributed, the investigator read the instructions written above the priming message aloud and told the subjects to take as long as they needed to complete the questionnaire. She also told them that they needed to remain until the end of the class and suggested that if they finished early, they should write on the packet any thoughts that occurred to them as they read the essay. About fifteen minutes of class time remained, but subjects read the essays and filled out the questionnaires in less time. About 10 percent of the total sample of subjects wrote comments on their packets, many of which were similar to the comments produced in the thought-listing pretest. Again, the subjects were told that they would get more extra credit for their participation, so they needed to write their names on the back of the packets.

When the packets had been collected, the investigator thanked and debriefed the subjects, informing them that they had participated in an experiment designed to find out how they think about media and personal expressive rights. She explained that both packets were part of the same study and apologized for having to deceive them in order to reduce the obtrusiveness of the experiment.

The same procedure was repeated in the second section of the course. Again, subjects in the second section did not question the instructions or the procedure.

Later, the investigator matched the two sets of packets by subjects'

names and stapled them together. Two subjects had written their names on only one packet; these were matched to the appropriate nameless packets by ink color and the way the subjects had filled in the response boxes.

Summary

An experiment consisting of three treatments was conducted to measure the impact of need for cognition on the perceived relationship between support for media rights and personal expressive rights. Three priming messages served as the independent variable in this experiment, one of which called for the regulation of media and another for the regulation of personal expression. The third essay was a control message about content analysis. These priming messages were intended to provide a cognitive starting place for response to questions about support for expressive rights.

Need for cognition, gender and political orientation were control variables in the experiment. Need for cognition, which had never been studied in relation to support for expressive rights, was of particular interest. It was expected that subjects who were high in NFC would be less affected by priming messages than their lower-NFC counterparts because they would develop more counterarguments; thus, need for cognition was hypothesized to have varying impacts on the perceived relationship between expressive rights, depending on which priming message subjects read.

Two scales were developed to measure support for rights -- the Support for Personal Rights Scale (SPRS) and the Support for Media Rights Scale (SMRS). The thirteen items on each scale were designed to be parallel. These scales provided the dependent measure in the experiment.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The first analysis of these data was descriptive in order to look for trends within the data set. A test of differences in correlations and a multiple regression were then performed to test the hypothesis, and a number of subsequent analyses were conducted to determine whether those results were due to real trends in the data or mere artifacts of the analysis. Further examinations of the data were necessary to attempt to determine what was happening in the data set. These tests and their results are described in the following pages.

Preliminary Analyses

Prior to testing the hypothesis, the data were analyzed with descriptive statistics. Bivariate relationships between the variables were examined.

Gender has seldom been analyzed in relation to support for expressive rights, but when it has, men have been found to be more supportive than women (Miller, Wyatt, & Andsager, 1992; Wilson, 1975). Unlike those in previous studies, women in this sample were slightly more likely than men to support both media rights and personal rights, but the difference was not statistically significant. The mean scores of support by gender are illustrated in Table 3.1.

Gender was also unrelated to need for cognition. Female subjects' scores (mean=81.8) on the Need for Cognition Scale were less than one point higher than males' scores (mean=80.9). No difference in NFC by gender had

Table 3.1. Mean scores on the SPRS and SMRS scales by gender.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
<u>Personal rights</u>			
Women	81	55.19	13.06
Men	86	55.09	13.45
<u>Media rights</u>			
Women	83	64.52	10.93
Men	86	63.56	11.31

been expected. Similarly, no differences appeared between men and women in terms of political orientation, although women tended to be more likely to identify themselves as liberal, and men were more likely to consider themselves conservative.

Political orientation has nearly always been significantly related to support for expressive rights, with liberal respondents more likely than conservative ones to support rights (Bobo & Licari, 1989; McLeod, Guo, Huang, Rzeszut, & Voakes, 1992; Miller, Andsager, & Wyatt, 1992; Wilson, 1975). The same pattern held true in these data. Analyses of variance were performed on the mean scores of both support for media rights and support for personal rights by political orientation. Mean scores are displayed in Table 3.2. Tests of least-significant differences between groups indicated that for the personal-rights variable, subjects who identified themselves as liberal were significantly more supportive than moderates or conservatives. Liberals were also significantly more likely to support media rights than the other two

Table 3.2. Mean scores on the SPRS and SMRS scales by political orientation.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
<u>Personal rights</u>			
Liberal	49	69.10*	9.65
Moderate ^a	77	63.27	11.52
Conservative	43	59.60	10.05
<u>Media rights</u>			
Liberal	49	60.90**	11.60
Moderate ^a	77	54.68**	13.89
Conservative	43	49.51**	11.48

^a Includes missing or "don't know" cases.

* Mean score for SPRS is significantly higher than the other political orientation groups ($p < .05$).

** Mean score for SMRS is significantly different than the other political orientation groups ($p < .05$).

groups; further, moderates were significantly more likely than conservatives to support media rights.

Political orientation was related to need for cognition, with subjects identifying themselves as liberal scoring higher on the NFC scale than moderates or conservatives. This relationship had not been predicted. A test of the least-significant differences among groups indicated that conservative subjects were significantly lower in NFC than both moderates and liberals. The means for these cells are shown in Table 3.3.

Means were obtained for media rights and personal rights in each treatment. As had been expected, support for personal rights was higher than support for media rights. This difference was significant in each treatment. (See Table 3.4.)

Pearson correlations were obtained between scores on the SPRS and SMRS. The correlation was .77, which was significant at $p < .01$, indicating that the two scales are highly correlated. NFC was also correlated with each expressive rights scale. For both scales, the correlation with need for cognition was .27 ($p < .01$), which indicates a fairly low relationship among these variables.

Test of the Hypothesis

The primary hypothesis of this study was that subjects' need for cognition levels would strengthen the relationship between media rights and personal rights. In all treatments, subjects who were high in need for cognition were expected to perceive a stronger relationship than low-NFC subjects. NFC's impact was predicted to depend on which treatment subjects participated in, with its effect being strongest on subjects in the control

Table 3.3. Mean scores on the Need for Cognition Scale by political orientation.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Liberal	49	86.65	15.86
Moderate ^a	77	82.22	13.78
Conservative	43	73.72*	15.22

^a Includes missing or "don't know" cases.

* Mean score for NFC is significantly lower than the other political orientation groups ($p < .05$).

Table 3.4. Mean scores on the SPRS and SMRS scales, overall and by treatment.

	N	Mean*	Std. Deviation
<u>Overall</u>			
Personal rights	169	64.0	11.1
Media rights	167	55.1	13.2
<u>Media-priming condition</u>			
Personal rights	53	64.2	11.9
Media rights	52	58.1	13.6
<u>Personal-priming condition</u>			
Personal rights	59	64.2	11.7
Media rights	58	54.6	14.1
<u>Control condition</u>			
Personal rights	57	63.7	9.8
Media rights	57	53.0	11.5

*In each condition, mean scores for personal rights and media rights are significantly differently from each other at $p < .001$.

condition, moderate in the personal-priming condition and least in the media-priming condition. These effects were expected because subjects high in need for cognition should be more likely to consider the inherent links between media and personal rights guaranteed in the First Amendment; thus, without being primed to think about expressive rights, high-NFC subjects should perceive a stronger relationship among them than the lower NFC subjects. In the personal-priming condition, high-NFC subjects were predicted to make more counterarguments against the message than the low-NFC subjects, which should result in a moderate impact on the perceived correlation. The lowest impact of need for cognition was expected in the media-priming condition, because media rights are not as personally relevant to individuals as personal rights. The subjects in the media-priming condition should therefore develop fewer counterarguments -- regardless of NFC level -- than their counterparts in the other treatments.

The first step in testing the hypothesis was to divide the need-for-cognition variable into high and low groups. A frequency distribution of the variable was examined. The range of responses on the summed NFC items was 43 to 114, with a mean of 81.3 and a median and mode of 82. A median split was performed on the NFC variable, such that responses of 43 to 80 were coded as "low NFC" and those from 82 to 114 were coded as "high NFC" (no responses of 81 occurred). Seventy-nine cases were put into the low-NFC category and ninety into the high-NFC group.

The data were then divided by NFC and treatment into six groups. Pearson correlation coefficients (r), used to quantify the strength of the relationship between two variables, were obtained for each cell to determine the perceived associations between media rights and personal expressive

rights. In other words, six correlations between the summed items on the SPRS and the SMRS were calculated. Each cell comprised at least 25 subjects.

In order for the hypothesis to be accepted, the correlation coefficients must be higher among all high need-for-cognition subject groups than the low-NFC subject groups. The difference between correlation coefficients should be greatest in the control condition, moderate in the personal-priming condition and least in the media-priming condition.

Once the correlations were obtained, the coefficients were transformed to z values, according to a technique developed by R.A. Fisher (McNemar, 1969). The procedure to determine the significance of the difference between two r coefficients involves calculating the standard error of the difference between their two z values. Confidence limits were obtained for each z value (that is, for each of the six correlation coefficients) at the $p < .05$ level. Where significant differences occurred among the values, further tests were conducted at the $p < .01$ and $p < .001$ levels. The correlation coefficients, their transformed z values and results of the significance testing are displayed in Table 3.5.

The correlation tests indicate that the hypothesis should not be accepted. Although the correlations within the control condition were lower than in the other treatments, as predicted, no clear pattern emerged with regard to need for cognition. High-NFC subjects were expected to perceive a higher correlation between media and personal rights regardless of treatment, but this result occurred only in the media-priming treatment, and the difference in correlations between the two NFC groups in that treatment was .04, not even close to significance.

The most striking evidence against the hypothesis was the finding that

Table 3.5. Correlation of SMRS and SPRS by need for cognition and treatment. (N=169)

	Cases	$r_{\text{SMRS, SPRS}}^*$	z transformations
<u>Media priming</u>			
Low NFC	26	.85**	1.256
High NFC	27	.89**	1.422
<u>Personal priming</u>			
Low NFC	25	.86**	1.293
High NFC	34	.79**	1.071 ^b
<u>Control</u>			
Low NFC	28	.77**	1.020 ^a
High NFC	29	.34	.354 ^{a,b,c}

* Overall correlation between SPRS and SMRS = .77 ($p < .01$).

** Correlation is significant at $p < .01$.

^a Correlations are significantly different at $p < .05$.

^b Correlations are significantly different at $p < .01$.

^c Correlation is significantly different than unmarked z values at $p < .001$.

high-NFC subjects in the control condition perceived the lowest correlation between media and personal rights ($r=.34$), which was significantly lower than the low-NFC correlation in the control condition ($r=.77$; $p < .05$). This finding is in complete opposition to the expectation that the lowest correlation would occur for low-NFC subjects in the control condition.

Need for cognition seemed to have no real effect on subjects in the other two treatments. The correlation between media and personal rights was higher for high-NFC subjects ($r=.89$) than low-NFC subjects ($r=.85$) in the media-priming condition, while low-NFC subjects in the personal-priming condition perceived a higher correlation ($r=.86$) than high-NFC subjects ($r=.79$). None of these correlation coefficients differed significantly from the others.

The finding that the lowest correlations for each NFC group occurred in the control condition offered some support for the logic underlying the hypothesis, however. It was expected that subjects in both priming conditions would perceive a stronger relationship among expressive rights than those in the control condition because they had been stimulated to think about rights. Although the differences in correlation were not significant for the low-NFC subjects, they were in the high-NFC group.

While the correlation analysis provided some evidence that the hypothesis should not be accepted, it was possible that the test was not completely accurate. A problem with the above analysis was the fact that a continuous variable -- need for cognition -- was divided into two groups by a mean split. Treating a continuous variable as a categorical variable can be problematic because information is lost when subtle distinctions along the continuum are melded into one or two large groups. In effect, the mean split

performed on the NFC variable meant that subjects who scored 82 on the Need for Cognition Scale were being treated as very different than those who scored 80. The nearly forty-point ranges within the two NFC groups would suggest that more differences should be occurring within those groups than among individuals near the mean.

To further test the hypothesis and avoid the above problems, a multiple regression analysis was performed on the data. Multiple regression provides measures of the impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable, plus it allows for partialling out the effects of control variables (Cohen & Cohen, 1975). This statistical test is particularly useful when the variables of interest are continuous. The B coefficients calculated in multiple regression estimate the effect of each variable on the dependent variable while holding constant all of the other variables in the model.

Because the hypothesis depended on the interaction of need for cognition and treatment, it was necessary to test for parallel regression slopes within the regression model. This meant including interaction terms (i.e., NFC by treatment). Allison (1977) showed that creating product terms by multiplying two (or more) variables together and including those terms in the regression model was a legitimate way to test for interaction, especially when interval-level scales are used as independent variables, as was the case here with NFC and the SPRS. If the B coefficient of the product term is significantly different than zero, the interaction would be significant.

For this analysis, support for media rights was the dependent variable. With support for personal rights, need for cognition and their product term as independent variables, their interaction in predicting support for media rights can be determined. The sum of the B coefficient of SPRS plus the B

coefficient of the product term (NFC by SPRS), which is multiplied by NFC, provides the estimate of slope of the dependent variable (SMRS) on support for personal rights as a function of need for cognition. For proof, see Appendix G.

The summed scores from the NFC, SPRS and SMRS scales were converted into z scores, with means of zero and variances of one. This conversion allowed for clearer interpretation of the regression equation because it lowers collinearity and increases interpretability of the NFC effect. Standardizing independent variables does not affect the coefficients for other variables in the model (Smith & Sasaki, 1979). The effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable were equal to their B coefficients when all other independent variables were equal to zero.

To perform a multiple regression analysis with control variables, it is necessary to regress the dependent variable on three different models (Cohen & Cohen, 1975). In the first step, the dependent variable is regressed on the control variables. The second step adds the independent variables. In the third step, all two-way interactions among control and independent variables are added to the equation. If the R-square value does not increase significantly from step two to step three, the second model can be analyzed as an analysis of covariance, with the B coefficients providing effect size.

For the analysis of these data, the z score of the summed SMRS scores served as the dependent variable. This allowed for an estimation of the relationship between personal and media rights. Independent variables were the summed scores of the SPRS and NFC scales, both converted to z scores, and media-priming and personal-priming conditions. The priming condition variables were created as dummy variables, such that subjects in

the media-priming condition were coded as one for media priming, and subjects in other treatments were coded as zero for media priming. Subjects in the personal-priming condition were coded as one for personal priming, and subjects in other treatments were coded as zero for personal priming. Those subjects in the control condition were represented by their scores on the *z* scores of SPRS and NFC. Gender and political orientation were the control variables. Two-way interactions among each pair of independent variables were computed into new variables for the regression equation.

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was then performed. As discussed above, this analysis required three steps. The *B* coefficients, *R*-square values for each model, change between steps and the significance of that change are displayed in Table 3.6. In the first model, only the control variables were entered. The *R*-square was .09, and the model was a significant predictor of support for media rights ($F=8.20$; $p < .001$). Political orientation was a significant predictor of SMRS, with the liberal subjects being more supportive of media rights ($B = -.27$; $F=16.39$; $p < .001$) than conservative subjects. Gender was not related to SMRS.

Four independent variables -- support for personal rights, need for cognition and the dummy priming condition variables -- were entered in the second model, which included the control variables. The *R*-square for this model was .63, an increase of .54 over the first model. This model was also significant in predicting support for media rights ($F=45.35$; $p < .001$).

Although the regression coefficients of the second model are the ones of interest, it is not accurate to treat them as a proper analysis of covariance until the third model has been examined. The third model contained all of the two-way interactions among independent and control variables, along

Table 3.6. Summary of multiple regression models. (N=167)

	B coefficient	F	R ²	Incremental R ²
<u>Model 1: Control Variables</u>				
political orientation	-.27	16.39**		
gender	.05	.09		
(constant)	.84	12.87**	.09	.09
<u>Model 2: Independent Variables and Control Variables</u>				
political orientation	-.06	1.42		
gender	.07	.46		
personal priming	.07	.41		
SPRS (z score)	.74	207.11**		
NFC (z score)	.06	1.18		
media priming	.35	8.64*		
(constant)	.01	.00	.63	.54**
<u>Model 3: Independent Variables, Control Variables, 2-way Interactions</u>				
political orientation	-.09	1.16		
gender	.00	.00		
personal priming	-.31	.55		
SPRS (z score)	.41	3.64		
NFC (z score)	.18	.78		
media priming	.23	.30		
SPRS by NFC	-.06	1.38		
personal priming by NFC	-.11	.62		
media priming by SPRS	.27	3.83		
gender by NFC	.05	.20		
media priming by NFC	-.01	.01		
gender by SPRS	.04	.14		
gender by media priming	.01	.00		
personal priming by SPRS	.31	4.99*		
gender by personal priming	.21	.76		
political orientation by media priming	.04	.09		
political orientation by NFC	-.04	.45		
political orientation by SPRS	.04	.44		
political orientation by personal priming	.10	.63		
(constant)	.17	.32	.65	.02

* p < .05

** p < .001

with those variables. The two-way interaction between need for cognition and support for personal rights was expected to be important in this model as a further test of the hypothesis. None of the NFC interactions approached significance as predictors of support for media rights, however. Indeed, the B coefficients for NFC and its interactions with priming conditions and personal rights were negative. These findings further support the results of the correlation tests: The hypothesis is not acceptable. In the third model, the only significant predictor of support for media rights was the two-way interaction of personal-priming condition and support for personal rights ($B=.31$; $p < .05$).

The R-square for the third model was .65, a change of .02 from the second model. This increase was not significant ($F \text{ change} = .74$; $p > .05$), indicating that the second model could be treated as an analysis of covariance.

Because the coefficients produced in the second model indicate the effects of the independent variables on support for media rights, the discussion will now turn back to the second model. Adding the independent variables obscured the effects of political orientation, which was not significant in this model. The most significant predictor of support for media rights in the model was support for personal rights ($B=.74$; $F=207.11$; $p < .001$). The media-priming condition was also significantly related to the dependent variable, though to a lesser extent ($B=.35$; $F=8.64$; $p < .01$). Although the B coefficients of the other independent variables indicate slight positive effects on support for media rights, none is large enough to be significant.

Taken together, the multiple regression analysis and correlation tests indicate that the hypothesis should not be accepted. Need for cognition appeared to have no effect on the perceived relationship between media

rights and personal expressive rights, either by itself or as part of an interaction. The correlation between media and personal rights did not fluctuate significantly across treatment, except in the case of high-NFC subjects, whose correlation jumped significantly from the control condition to both priming conditions. No differences in correlation occurred among the low-NFC subjects. It appears that it may have been inaccurate to analyze these data in terms of correlations.

The media-priming message, however, was a significant predictor of support for media rights, suggesting that subjects in that condition responded to the pro-regulation message in an anti-regulation manner. This finding suggests that instead of affecting the perceived correlation between media and personal expressive rights, the priming messages may have had an impact on the level of support for rights. As discussed in Chapter I, cognitive variables have been found to be positively related to support for expressive rights in several studies, not necessarily the relationship among those rights. Further analyses were conducted in an attempt to determine what was happening in the experiment; the subsequent analysis focused on mean scores.

Subsequent Analyses

The preliminary analyses of the data indicated that mean scores fluctuated by treatment and political orientation. An examination of the simple mean levels of support for personal expressive rights indicates that personal rights received more support than media rights ($t_{166}=6.67$; $p < .0001$). This is consistent with previous research. Again, support was expressed by summed scores on the SPRS for personal rights and the SMRS for media

rights. Breaking the data down by treatment showed the mean levels of support to vary across condition, especially for media rights (see Table 3.4). Need for cognition means also varied by political orientation. The fluctuation in means suggests that further analysis of support levels was warranted.

To test for differences in mean support of media rights and personal rights, three multivariate analyses of variance with a repeated-measures design were performed on the data. A repeated-measures design treats all dependent variables as repeated observations of the same subject. Repeated-measures designs provide precision for comparing scores on the SPRS and SMRS because all sources of variability between subjects are excluded from experimental error (Neter, Wasserman, & Kunter, 1990). Between-subjects effects in the MANOVA look at the dependent measures as a whole, while within-subjects effects include the differences between dependent measures as part of the analysis. Both effects are analyzed in the repeated-measures MANOVA model.

For this analysis, dependent measures were the sums of scores on the SPRS and SMRS. Differences in these sums, or more specifically, in the means for each measure within each cell, were analyzed in the MANOVA's. The independent variables were treatment (media priming, personal priming, or control) and need for cognition, which was again split at the median, such that scores below 81 on the NFC scale were coded as "low NFC," and those above 81 were "high NFC."

The purpose of testing the different MANOVA models was to determine which should be interpreted. If the control variables -- gender and political orientation -- were not predictive by themselves or did not interact

with the independent variables in predicting support for expressive rights, there would be no reason to include them in the final analysis. Eliminating a control variable from the analysis without checking to see whether it interacted or predicted alone would result in interpreting inaccurate data that included artifacts. The control variables were added to the models separately to determine whether they had any impact on support for expressive rights. If these variables were not significantly related to support and did not interact with treatment or need for cognition, they could be omitted from the final analysis so as not to reduce cell sizes.

The first MANOVA used NFC, treatment and gender as independent variables in a 2 X 3 X 2 design with SPRS and SMRS as within-subjects measures. Gender was not related to support, nor were any of its interactions significant. Gender appeared to be completely unrelated to support for expressive rights in these data. Because the gender variable added nothing to the model, it was dropped in the subsequent models.

A second MANOVA model was performed, this time using NFC, treatment and political orientation as independent variables. This resulted in a 2 X 3 X 3 design, with SPRS and SMRS as within-subjects measures. As mentioned above, political orientation was based on self-reported descriptions, collapsed into a three-category response set -- liberal, moderate or conservative. Missing values or "don't know" responses were recoded as moderate. In the between-subjects effects tests for this model, political orientation was significantly related to support for expressive rights ($F=3.43$; $p < .05$), with liberal subjects being significantly more likely than conservative subjects to support both kinds of rights. Political orientation did not interact with any of the other independent variables, however.

Before continuing discussion of the second MANOVA model, it was necessary to rule out gender interactions that might occur within the full model (that is, a model that uses gender, political orientation, treatment and need for cognition as independent variables). A third MANOVA was performed on the data, using all four independent variables, resulting in a 2 X 3 X 3 X 2 design. Although this model included some empty cells, which can produce misleading effects, gender and its interactions did not approach significance. The only effects that remained in the full model were the significant difference between support for media and personal rights ($F=39.39$; $p < .001$) and the political orientation main effect ($F=3.29$; $p < .05$). These findings indicate that omitting gender from the primary analysis would not result in lost information.

Therefore, the discussion returns to the second MANOVA model, which included treatment, NFC and political orientation as independent variables. The between-subjects MANOVA table is displayed in Table 3.7. Besides political orientation, NFC was the only significant main effect ($F=7.52$; $p < .01$), with subjects in the high-NFC group (mean scores for SPRS + SMRS = 124.7) being significantly more likely to support expressive rights than those in the low-NFC group (mean scores for SPRS + SMRS = 112.8). This relationship, with support for media rights and personal expressive rights separate, is illustrated in Figure 3.1. Because the lines graphing support for media and personal rights have the same slope, no interaction is indicated between NFC and type of right. Indeed, treatment and the interactions were not significantly related to support for expressive rights.

Political orientation was significant as it related to support for expressive rights as a whole, with liberals more likely than moderates and

Table 3.7. Repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance tests of between-subjects effects. (N=167)

Source of variation	Sums of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean squares	F
Within cells	34,540.46	149	231.82	
Treatment	533.85	2	266.93	1.15
NFC	1,743.82	1	1,743.82	7.52**
Political orientation	1,591.82	2	795.91	3.43*
Treatment by NFC	315.67	2	157.83	.68
Treatment by political orientation	2,057.20	4	514.30	2.22
NFC by political orient.	124.31	2	62.15	.27
Treatment by NFC by political orientation	929.23	4	232.21	1.00

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

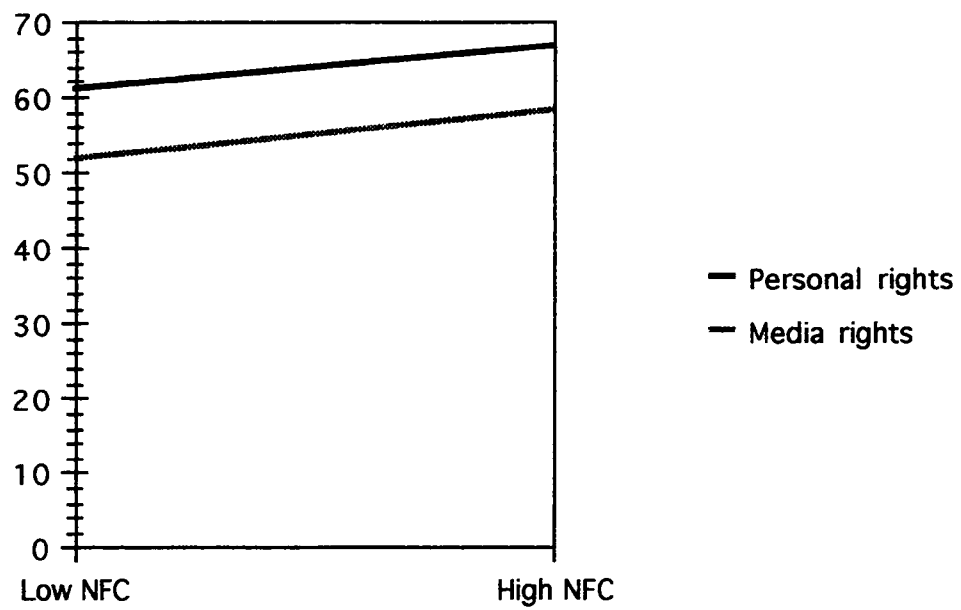


Figure 3.1. Support for media and personal rights by need for cognition.

conservatives to support both media and personal rights. The means for political orientation and support for rights were shown in Table 3.2. These patterns are illustrated in Figure 3.2. Again, the parallel slopes of the lines indicating support for expressive rights show that no interaction occurred between political orientation and type of right.

The within-subjects MANOVA table results are shown in Table 3.8. Within-subjects tests indicated a significant difference in the mean levels of support for media and personal rights ($F=141.9$; $p < .001$). Overall, the mean support for media rights was 55.1, while the mean for personal rights was 64.0. Levels of support for the two kinds of rights varied significantly by treatment ($F=3.56$; $p < .05$), indicating an interaction among treatment and type of right. The mean scores for cells in this interaction were displayed in Table 3.4. For a clearer illustration of the interaction, those means are graphically displayed in Figure 3.3. Support for personal rights did not vary much across treatment, but the support for media rights did, as the nonparallel lines in Figure 3.3 show. For both types of rights, support was lowest in the control condition and highest in the priming condition in which the message called for regulation of that right. A test of the least-significant differences among treatment groups was conducted to determine where the interaction occurred; the test indicated that the media-priming group was significantly more supportive of media rights than the control group ($p < .05$).

Although need for cognition was significantly related to support for expressive rights overall, NFC did not interact significantly with type of right. That is, high-NFC subjects were more likely than low-NFC subjects to support both media and personal rights with approximately the same difference in

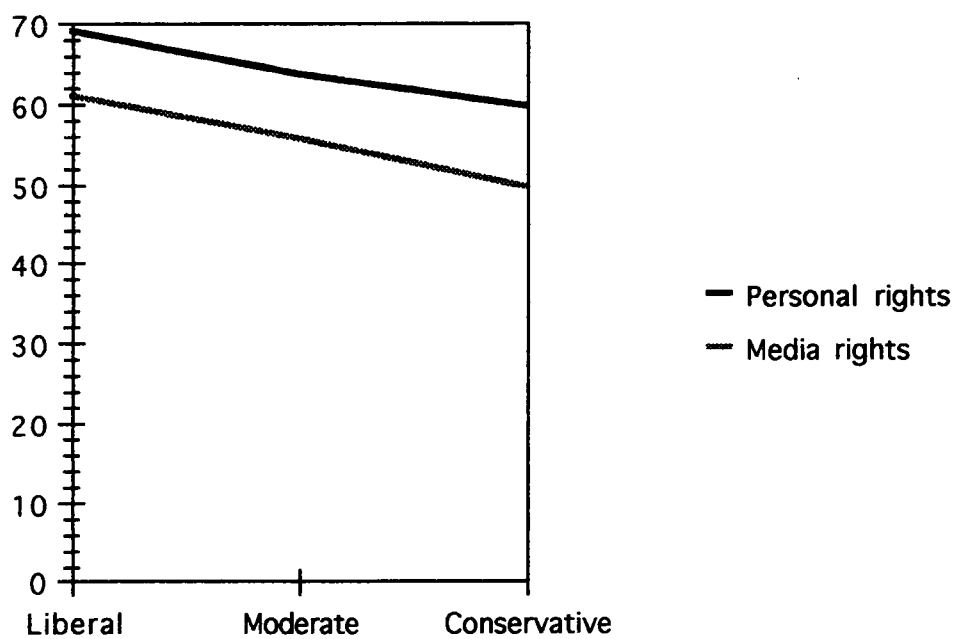


Figure 3.2. Support for media and personal rights by political orientation.

Table 3.8. Repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance tests of within-subjects effects. (N=167)

Source of variation	Sums of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean squares	F
Within cells	5,004.73	149	33.59	
Type of right	4,766.39	1	4,766.39	141.90**
Treatment by type of right	239.02	2	119.51	3.56*
NFC by type of right	.14	1	.14	.00
Political orientation by type of right	15.31	2	7.66	.23
Treatment by NFC by type of right	125.55	2	62.77	1.87
Treatment by political orientation by type of right	183.88	4	45.97	1.37
NFC by political orientation by type of right	16.73	2	8.36	.25
Treatment by NFC by political orientation by type of right	107.90	4	26.98	.80

* $p < .05$

** $p < .001$

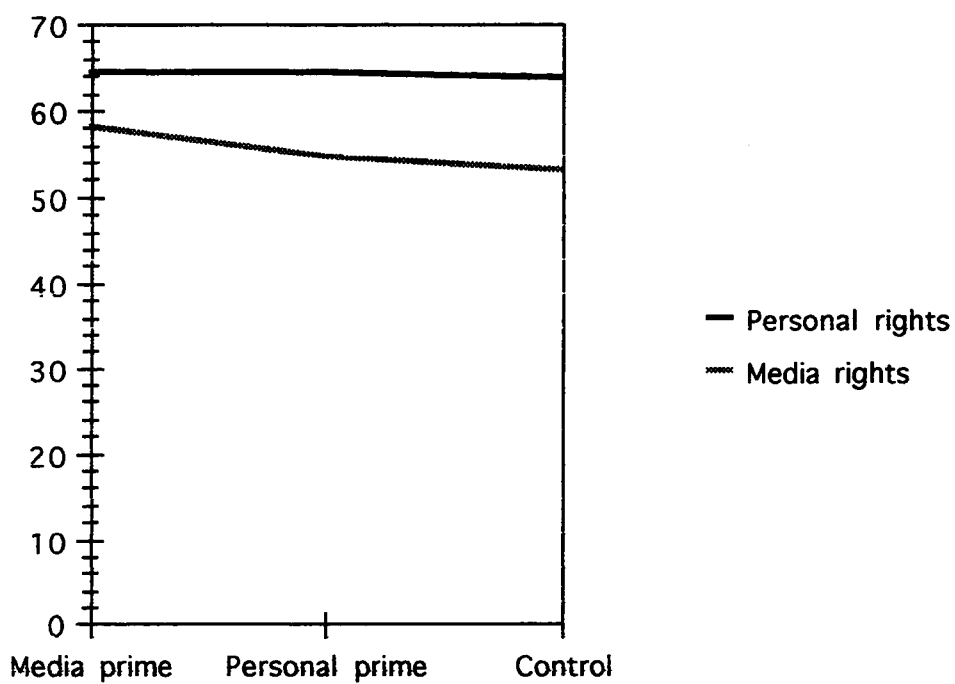


Figure 3.3. Support for media and personal rights by treatment.

means for both. The lack of interaction was shown by the parallel lines graphing means in Figure 3.1.

Similarly, no three-way interaction among NFC, treatment and type of right occurred. The pattern of means produced by this interaction was interesting, however, because it suggested that low and high need for cognition groups responded somewhat differently to the priming messages. These means, shown in Table 3.9, are graphically displayed in Figure 3.4. In both NFC groups, support for personal rights was always higher than for media rights, regardless of treatment. In both, the difference in mean support was greatest in the control condition and least in the media-priming condition. For the low-NFC subjects, the difference in mean support remained steady across treatments, with a 2.5-point difference in difference of means from greatest to least difference. The high-NFC subjects narrowed the difference in mean support by 6.4 points from the greatest difference (in the control condition) to the least (in the media-priming condition). Further, low-NFC subjects in the control conditions were least supportive of both types of rights, but high-NFC subjects in the control condition were actually more supportive of personal rights than their counterparts in the priming treatments. High-NFC subjects in the control condition were slightly more supportive of media rights than high-NFC subjects in the personal-priming condition.

To ensure that the findings from this MANOVA analysis were not artifacts of the median split of NFC, the procedure was repeated with two further breakdowns of the need-for-cognition variable. With all other aspects of the model the same as in the above MANOVA, the middle sixty-four cases of NFC were dropped from the analysis, and a second MANOVA was

Table 3.9. Mean scores on the SPRS and SMRS scales by NFC and by treatment.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
<u>Media-priming condition</u>			
Low NFC			
Personal rights	26	62.81	11.66
Media rights	25	54.60	12.32
High NFC			
Personal rights	27	65.52	12.20
Media rights	27	61.30	14.19
<u>Personal-priming condition</u>			
Low NFC			
Personal rights	25	60.48	9.47
Media rights	24	51.83	13.61
High NFC			
Personal rights	34	66.94	12.54
Media rights	34	56.59	14.36
<u>Control condition</u>			
Low NFC			
Personal rights	28	59.86	9.99
Media rights	28	49.07	11.40
High NFC			
Personal rights	29	67.41	8.15
Media rights	29	56.79	10.52

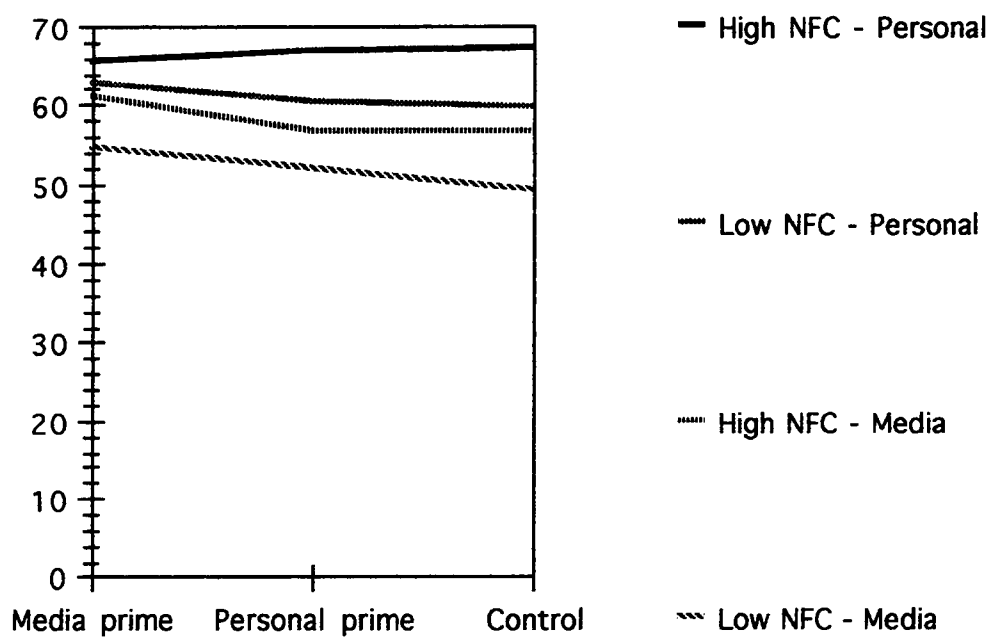


Figure 3.4. Support for media and personal rights by NFC and treatment.

performed on the data using extreme groups of NFC. In this instance, 105 cases were analyzed, with scores below 75 coded as "low NFC" and those above 89 coded as "high NFC." All other variables were treated as they were in the first analysis.

With the middle dropped out of need for cognition, the findings were still consistent with the first MANOVA. The only significant between-subjects effect was need for cognition ($F=4.64$; $p < .05$), with the means for each cell forming the same patterns as above. Again, the within-subjects tests produced significant differences between media and personal rights ($F=6.12$; $p < .05$) and a significant treatment by type of right interaction ($F=3.32$; $p < .05$). No other effects in either part of the analysis were significant.

One more iteration of the model was run, this time with even more extreme groups of need for cognition. Fifty-five cases were included in the third analysis, with scores of less than 64 and scores of more than 96 forming the high and low groups. Need for cognition was still a significant between-subjects effect ($F=5.43$; $p < .05$). With so few cases, however, the within-subjects effect of treatment and the interaction of treatment by type of right disappeared; nothing in the within-subjects tests was significant.

Summary

That need for cognition remained significantly related to support for expressive rights in each of these analyses suggests the effect of NFC on support was real and not an artifact. This finding -- that subjects who are higher in need for cognition are more likely to support expressive rights than their low-NFC counterparts -- is consistent with previous research which

included cognitive variables. In the four surveys that used some measure of cognitive traits, the cognitive variables were significantly predictive of support levels (Bobo & Licari, 1989; McLeod, Guo, Huang, Rzeszut, & Voakes, 1992; McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991; Sarat, 1975).

The hypothesis, now rejected, had predicted NFC would have an impact on the perceived relationship between media rights and personal expressive rights depending on the treatment. Although NFC did not interact with either type of right or treatment, treatment was significantly related to varying levels of support for media and personal rights. Support for personal rights did not change significantly by treatment, but support for media rights was significantly higher in the media-priming condition than it was in the control group. In the personal-priming condition, support for media rights was slightly higher than it was in the control group. For both types of rights, support was highest in the treatment in which the priming message called for regulation of those rights. Support for both was lowest in the control condition.

Political orientation was also significantly related to support for expressive rights, although it had no impact on type of right. In previous research, political orientation had frequently been significantly related to support for expressive rights, with liberal respondents more likely than conservative ones to support rights. The same patterns were evident in this experiment.

As in previous research, support for personal rights was significantly higher in this study than media rights. In this experiment, however, the measures of support consisted of parallel items. Because the measures were parallel, the difference among mean levels of support should be more

accurate than in past surveys, in which questions dealt with disparate media and personal rights.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Research into public support for media and personal expressive rights can provide valuable information for social scientists, journalists and society in general. The findings presented in the previous chapter may be able to offer insight to how people think about expressive rights. After a brief summary of this study, discussion will turn to the theoretical and applied implications of these findings.

This study focused on the relationship between media rights and personal expressive rights. Previous research into support for expressive rights had suggested that people tend to support their personal rights to expression more than they support media rights. None of the surveys conducted prior to this, however, attempted to examine directly the relationship between the two types of rights by asking about support for parallel forms of expression. This study included the development of parallel measures of support for media and personal expressive rights to reduce the error inherent in comparing nonparallel items. The results of the present study indicate that people do indeed perceive a strong relationship between media and personal rights, but they support personal rights to a greater extent than media rights.

A number of personality variables had been studied previously in terms of their effect on support for expressive rights, but cognitive measures seemed to be most predictive. Cognitive traits operationalized in a variety of ways obscured other variables in predicting support for rights in all four

studies in which they were included (Bobo & Licari, 1989; McLeod, Guo, Huang, Rzeszut, & Voakes, 1992; McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991; Sarat, 1975). Because cognitive variables had been important in determining support, it was hypothesized in this study that need for cognition -- a cognitive trait that measures individual differences in engaging in and enjoying thinking -- would have an impact on the strength of the relationship between media and personal rights.

People who are high in need for cognition were expected to think about the underlying relationship among media rights, personal rights and other democratic principles. Because they were more likely to have elaborated on these links more than their low-NFC counterparts, high-NFC people were expected to perceive a higher correlation between media and personal expressive rights. The findings of this study indicate need for cognition has no impact on the strength of the relationship between media and personal rights; instead, need for cognition was found to be a significant predictor of support levels.

To provide a cognitive context for responses to questions about support for expressive rights, priming messages were presented to the experimental subjects. Each subject read one priming message -- an essay calling either for regulation of personal expressive rights or media rights, or a control condition essay about content analysis -- which was intended to get him or her thinking about expressive rights.

It was expected that high-NFC subjects would counterargue the priming messages more than the low-NFC subjects; thus, priming messages were predicted to have little impact on high-NFC subjects, but greater effect on the support levels of low-NFC subjects, who were expected to accept the

essays' arguments. The perceived personal relevance of the priming message was predicted to interact with need for cognition, such that the lower personal relevance of the priming message that called for regulation of media rights would trigger fewer counterarguments in the high-NFC subjects than the personal-priming message. Low-NFC subjects were not expected to develop counterarguments to the priming messages. This meant that need for cognition would have less impact in the media-priming condition on the relationship between personal and media rights because support for both was not expected to change, regardless of NFC level. The hypothesis stated that the impact of need for cognition would therefore be greatest in the control condition, moderate in the personal-priming condition and least in the media-priming condition.

Although the hypothesis was rejected because need for cognition did not affect the correlation between rights, the results of the experiment suggested that the priming messages had an effect on subjects' responses to the expressive-rights scales. Subjects in the control condition were less likely to support both media and expressive rights than subjects in the treatment conditions. Moreover, instead of lowering support among the low-NFC subjects as had been predicted, the priming messages actually seemed to trigger a backlash effect. Support for media rights was highest in the media-priming condition among both high- and low-NFC subjects. Similarly, support for personal rights was highest in the personal-priming condition.

Information about political orientation and gender was included in this study. Like the other variables, they did not have an impact on the strength of the relationship between expressive rights. Political orientation, however, was a significant predictor of support for expressive rights, with

liberals being more likely than moderates and conservatives to support rights. Political orientation was also related to need for cognition, such that liberals scored higher on the NFC scale than moderates and conservatives. Gender was unrelated to both the relationship between media and personal rights and support for them.

In summary, then, the most important findings in this study lie in determining support for expressive rights rather than adding to the knowledge about the relationship between media rights and personal expressive rights. The impact of need for cognition, political orientation and priming on the levels of support for those rights may provide foundations for building a theory about support for expressive rights.

Theoretical Implications

To date, the research on support for freedom of expression has been relatively haphazard. A variety of demographic and personality variables have been measured in terms of their predictive value, but little attempt has been made to build upon the knowledge gleaned from previous research on the topic. In developing the variables to test in this experiment, an attempt was made to examine trends produced in past survey research and build upon them.

Perhaps the clearest pattern that emerges from the body of knowledge on support for expressive rights is the higher level of support for personal rights than for media rights. In study after study, more people have been more willing to support their own expressive rights than those of the media. As discussed in Chapter I, one of the most logical explanations for this is the

perception that personal rights are more personally relevant than media rights. After all, if an individual is restricted from protesting for or against an issue, his or her rights are clearly and immediately affected. The restriction has made an impact on that individual's behavior, but it may not be readily apparent to the individual how society will be affected by the restriction. On the other hand, if a restriction is imposed on the media, the same individual may not quickly perceive that it has any implication on his or her life. For example, he or she may be in favor of restricting the media's right to editorialize for or against that same issue, on the grounds that other people might be unduly influenced by the editorial or that the media present the "wrong" viewpoint.

With the disparate levels of support for media and personal rights established by previous research, then, it appeared that people think about media and personal rights in different ways. To get a better grasp on this difference and its extent, parallel scales were designed to measure support for personal rights and media rights. The items on the two scales dealt with the same kinds of expression in order to reduce the error introduced by asking about a wide variety of expressive activities, as previous studies had done. Summed responses to the two scales served as the dependent measures in this study.

Results of this study indicate that people perceive a strong relationship between media and personal rights. This was true regardless of priming condition or need for cognition level, with the exception of high-NFC subjects in the control condition (discussed below). In other words, the correlation between the two did not vary substantially, but the mean levels of support did. While the subjects supported personal rights more than media

rights, their support levels for each fluctuated nearly in tandem. For example, support was low for offending people of another race or ethnic group and high for criticizing the president, regardless of whether the expression came from an individual or the media.

Because the relationship between media and personal expressive rights is so strong, it appears that people do not think about these rights in disparate ways. Indeed, the underlying attitude toward expressive rights seems to stem from the same mindset. People who support personal rights are fairly likely to support similar rights for the media, though not necessarily to the same extent; people who do not support one type of right probably will not be supportive of the other.

Why the relationship is strong and stable remains unclear. It would appear the relationship is strong because the concepts of free speech and free press are deeply rooted in the democratic principles the United States is founded upon. The two are intertwined in the First Amendment, and they are a fundamental unit in most public education curricula. Perhaps the continual reinforcement of the concepts as two sides of the same coin -- and, moreover, as an integral part of democracy -- ties them together in people's minds. This logic was offered in Chapter I as a reason why high need-for-cognition people would be more likely to perceive a stronger relationship between media and personal rights, but the data do not support this contention. Need for cognition had no impact on the correlation between expressive rights.

Another possible explanation for the high correlation between the rights is that people who are interested in supporting personal expressive rights are also interested in maintaining media rights, but more for reasons of

personal gain than to support democracy. These people may be supportive of media rights in order to be able to receive all of the information the media can disseminate. They might realize that restricting media rights would lead to the denigration of the news and entertainment they currently access. To be sure, this explanation is supported by the findings in the present study that people who are high in need for cognition -- those who find enjoyment in thinking about issues and seeking information -- are more likely to support expressive rights than their low-NFC counterparts.

Responses to the priming messages used in this experiment may help to elucidate the relationship between media and personal expressive rights. Priming messages interacted with type of right, such that support for personal rights did not vary across priming-message conditions but support for media rights did. Across the three conditions, mean support for personal rights was virtually identical, with the highest level occurring in the personal-priming condition and the lowest in the control condition. For media rights, however, a substantial changes occurred in mean support. The highest level of support for media rights appeared in the media-priming condition, the lowest in the control condition.

These findings lend support to the idea that people are more likely to support personal rights because of personal relevance. No matter what message the subjects in this experiment read -- from an essay calling for the regulation of personal rights to a history of content analysis -- their support for their own personal expressive rights never wavered. It seems likely that people believe their rights clearly belong to them, much like their houses or some other valuable property, and they do not want to relinquish any part of those rights. The finding that the highest level of support occurred in the

personal-priming condition suggests that people will counterargue any attempt to persuade them that regulation of personal rights would be beneficial.

Support for media rights seems to be more flexible. Subjects in the media-priming condition, in which the priming message called for further regulation of media rights, were the most likely to support media rights. This suggests that when they are presented with a pro-regulation message, people may begin to realize what the consequences of restricting the media would be; that is, they counterargue the message, resulting in a backlash of support. When subjects read the essay calling for regulation of personal rights, their support for media rights jumped slightly from the control condition, which may indicate that these subjects counterargued the personal-rights message (as evidenced by the slightly higher mean support for personal rights in that condition), then generalized from it to media rights. In the control condition, support for media rights was at its lowest point, suggesting that although people perceive a strong relationship between media and personal rights, they are not as interested in supporting media rights. Again, this finding offers support for the notion of personal relevance influencing the higher levels of support for personal rights. (Further discussion of the priming effects is included in the next section, Societal Implications.)

In developing a theory of support for expressive rights, it would be parsimonious to encompass both the media's rights and the rights of individuals. The findings from this study suggest that the broad phrasing of "expressive rights," which would incorporate support for media and personal rights, is acceptable.

The theoretical question then becomes one of identifying the kinds of people who are most likely to support expressive rights. Previous research has consistently found that people with more education and higher incomes are more likely to support rights than those who are less educated with lower incomes. Age affects support levels, with younger people -- especially those in their early thirties to mid-forties -- most supportive of rights. That support seems to decline with age.

In several studies, gender was found to be related to support for expressive rights, with men more likely than women to support. Because men are generally paid more than women and frequently hold more powerful positions in the workplace (French, 1992), the same explanation may hold true for their higher support levels. Again, it appears that people who are most secure within society are more likely to support expressive rights.

These trends in demographic variables suggest that the people who are most secure within society are most likely to support expressive rights. In other words, well-educated people with jobs that pay in the higher-income brackets who have yet to worry about retirement are arguably among the most secure group in society, both financially and socially. They may perceive that they have little to lose from the exercise of dissent and, thus, they are willing to support expressive rights. After all, the societal structure that has worked for them holds dear the ideals of free speech and free press. They may also presume that protecting their expressive rights will help them to further their own interests by speaking out in favor of issues or candidates they support. In terms of media rights, this secure group may be able to put information gathered from the media to use in maintaining their financial or

employment situations.

On the other hand, people with less power or security may perceive there to be little reason to support expressive rights. This group may be more likely to consider the media as just another powerful entity that supports the societal structure, which has done little to benefit them. They may think exercising their personal expressive rights is somewhat futile, given their comparatively low status in society. This group might also believe there are more important things to worry about than expressive rights; that support is lower when people have not been primed to think about expressive rights is one of the more interesting findings of this experiment, to be discussed in more detail below.

If this assessment is accurate -- that people who are most secure or powerful within society are most likely to support rights -- how do the findings in this study fit in with it?

The only demographic variable studied in this experiment was gender, which had no effect on support. Indeed, the mean support levels of male and female subjects differed by no more than one point. Unlike female respondents in previous studies (Miller, Andsager, & Wyatt, 1992; Wilson, 1975), women in this sample were slightly more likely than men to support expressive rights. However, this lack of difference might be an artifact of the convenience sample. The sample consisted of college students, mostly freshmen and sophomores, who have little direct experience with the structure of society and who are still basically equal in terms of security. Most of these students have yet to begin their careers and compete for the resources of the workplace. This finding, then, does not support the contention articulated above, but it does not refute it.

The contention that people who are have more secure positions in society are more likely to support expressive rights than those who are not as secure is based on findings from demographic variables. Clearly, the notions of security and power are not founded solely on demographics; it is an extrapolation to move from education, income, age and gender to a construct such as security or power. The next step in developing this argument is to examine the findings on personality and cognitive variables from the present study and previous research.

Political orientation has been found to be related to support for expressive rights, with liberals being more supportive than conservatives or moderates (Bobo & Licari, 1989; McLeod, Guo, Huang, Rzeszut, & Voakes, 1992; Miller, Andsager, & Wyatt, 1992; Wilson, 1975). Other studies on political orientation and support for civil liberties, including expressive rights, have found little or no relation between the two (Christenson & Dunlap, 1984; McLeod, Steele, Chi, & Huang, 1991). The former was true in this study, as the liberal mean scores were ten points higher than conservative mean scores for support of both media and personal expressive rights. Moderates fell about halfway between the other two groups. Moreover, liberals produced the highest mean support for expressive rights, with higher means than the high-NFC subjects, while conservatives had the lowest mean scores. In other words, the differences among political orientation groups were greater than the differences between the need-for-cognition groups (high and low).

That conservatives tend to be less supportive of expressive rights is not surprising, considering that many of the organizations which attempt to promote further regulation of expressive rights label themselves as

conservative. In recent years, however, groups that consider themselves liberal have also set out to restrict certain forms of expression, notably such groups that want to ban expression which might be construed as racist or sexist (Hentoff, 1992). Considering this similarity among political orientation groups that differed so widely in the present study, it seems that a closer examination of the political orientation variable is warranted.

The problem with self-reported political orientation lies in its operationalization. Subjects are often asked, as they were in this study, to choose a category that seems to describe their political orientation. While this task might appear to be simple, people have substantial difficulty in correctly defining the terms liberal and conservative (Luttbeg & Gant, 1985). Luttbeg and Gant found that about half of their respondents could not classify accurately pretested terms as belonging to a liberal or conservative ideology, and about 40 percent did not even attempt to classify the terms. Education was only weakly but positively related to correctly defining liberal and conservative ideologies. Self-reporting political orientation may be especially problematic for the subjects in this sample, whose ideologies may still be evolving.

If people have difficulty defining themselves liberal or conservative, it seems apparent that some error will creep into a study such as this one. Nonetheless, political orientation in this study was significantly related to support for expressive rights, so the variable seems to be tapping into an underlying attitude in what appears to be a systematic way. It seems that, given the fairly divergent connotations of the terms liberal and conservative in today's society, people who are willing to identify themselves as one or the other are identifying themselves with a particular mindset. Self-reported

liberals appear to be more comfortable than self-reported conservatives with the idea of free-flowing expression.

To further examine the political orientation variable and its effect in this study, perhaps it must be discussed in terms of its relationship with need for cognition. Liberals in the present study scored higher in need for cognition than moderates, who had higher scores than conservatives. These findings do not agree with those of Gaugler and Zalkind (1975), who found that cognitive complexity was not related to political ideology, but they do not necessarily disagree because cognitive complexity is not the same construct as need for cognition. (Cognitive complexity refers to the way in which an individual differentiates among constructs and forms judgments.) Political orientation and need for cognition did not interact in predicting support for expressive rights, however.

Because need for cognition and political orientation are related, they may be manifestations of the same underlying construct. Indeed, their lack of interaction in predicting support for expressive rights may indicate that little information is added when they are combined, further supporting the notion that the two variables are part of the same construct. As will be discussed below, need for cognition has been found to be negatively related to closed-mindedness and positively related to independence (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Another survey found that flexibility, self-reliance and independence were positively correlated with support for civil liberties, including expressive rights (Zalkind, Gaugler, & Schwartz, 1975). Political orientation may be coinciding with these traits, at least to some extent, given the connotations of liberals as more accepting of change and new ideas and conservatives as cautious and resistant to change (Luttbeg & Gant, 1985). Certainly, change and

new ideas can result from the exercise of expressive rights.

The underlying construct here may be one of a feeling of security, in that people who consider themselves liberal may tend to believe themselves to be independent and willing to engage in any cognitive activity to maintain their security. Thus, they may tend to be more willing than conservatives to support expressive rights because they may think they can adapt to or combat any change that may occur as a result of free expression. People who identify themselves as conservatives may tend to perceive that their positions in society are not secure or are tentative, regardless of their income or education levels. They may wish to maintain the societal structure and may tend to be willing to restrict expressive rights to do so. In this study at least, self-reported conservatives do not seem as willing to engage in cognitive activity; thus, they may be less willing to support expressive rights in part because they do not want to deal with dissent that may occur as a result of free expression.

Explaining the relationship among political orientation, need for cognition and support for expressive rights based on the findings of this study is problematic, however. The findings in this study are based on a sample that is restrictive in terms of income and other variables that relate to a feeling of security. When observing society as a whole, it becomes apparent that there are exceptions to the interpretation presented above. For example, syndicated political columnist James J. Kilpatrick -- who identifies himself as conservative and who, by virtue of his profession, arguably holds a fairly powerful position in society -- wrote that whether people like certain forms of expression (in this case, pornography), they must not restrict that expression because restriction would lead to encroachments on media rights (Kilpatrick, 1992). Future research needs to address the relationship among political

orientation and support for expressive rights in more detail and with a less range-restricted sample; again, it appears that political orientation is the manifestation of another underlying variable.

It appears that variables such as political orientation and need for cognition, which tap into underlying attitudes, are vital to predicting support for expressive rights. Each time cognitive variables have been studied in terms of support for expressive rights, they have been important predictors. As discussed in Chapter I, cognitive measures have been employed in four expressive-rights studies prior to this experiment. The 1975 study by Sarat used a principled reasoning measure (the reasoning used on three case scenarios), which was positively associated with support for expressive rights. Bobo and Licari (1989) found that cognitive sophistication, operationalized as the number of correct answers on a ten-item vocabulary list, was by far the most predictive variable in their study. McLeod and his colleagues (1991, 1992) used several different cognitive measures: current events knowledge, the sum of answers to five questions; civil liberties knowledge, answer to three questions; and information-processing strategies, three variables formed from a factor analysis of nine items. Each of these variables was positively related to support in at least one wave of McLeod's surveys. These various permutations of cognitive traits measure the result of cognitive activity, but fail to provide a driving mechanism as to why some people engage in more cognitive activities than others. Moreover, some of these variables may be artifacts of topic knowledge, not necessarily cognitive ability or effort (i.e., current events knowledge).

Need for cognition, a construct designed to measure differences among individuals in engaging in and enjoying thinking (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982),

was selected for use in this study because it explains why some people are more likely to elaborate on issues -- such as expressive rights and their support -- and it offers the parsimony that McLeod's cognitive models lack. It was hypothesized that NFC would impact the relationship between media and personal expressive rights at different levels, depending on the treatment.

As discussed above, NFC was unrelated to this relationship. The exception was the high-NFC subjects in the control condition. These subjects perceived the relationship between media and personal rights to be much lower than the rest of the subjects (regardless of condition). It had been expected that high-NFC subjects would perceive a strong relationship between expressive rights, even in the control condition, because they were more likely than low-NFC subjects to think about the inherent democratic links between free speech and free press. This was obviously not the case, however. Instead of looking for links between media rights and personal rights, it may be that high-NFC subjects who had not been primed to think about expressive rights may have seen other patterns in the dependent measures. They may have supported certain kinds of expression, regardless of the source. Because they had not been primed to think about expressive rights, they may have generalized from the scale items to other, related issues. That high-NFC people tend to generalize more than those lower in NFC was suggested by the thought-listing pretest performed on the priming messages (see Appendix D). The thoughts generated by high-NFC respondents in that exercise tended to be more abstract in relation to expressive rights.

Like the cognitive variables examined in previous studies, though, need for cognition was positively related to support for expressive rights. In

all treatments and for both media and personal rights, high-NFC subjects were more likely than low-NFC subjects to support expressive rights. Again, the relationship between personal and media rights did not differ by need for cognition level.

Setting aside for a moment the contention made above that people who are more secure in society are more supportive of rights, the disparity between high- and low-NFC subjects merits discussion. People who are high in need for cognition are more likely to seek out information about issues that do not necessarily affect them and to "report possessing more prior knowledge about and confidence in their position on a broad range of attitude issues" (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 52). These tendencies suggest that high-NFC people may be more likely to support expressive rights in part because they enjoy obtaining information through the media or personal expression. They may realize that regulating expression would restrict the flow of information available to them. Low-NFC people, on the other hand, may be more likely to take the media and personal rights for granted, perhaps because they have not considered the consequences of restricting those rights.

It is also possible that need for cognition, as it relates to support for expressive rights, is an outgrowth of another underlying trait. In validation studies, NFC was found to be positively related to independence and negatively related to closed-mindedness (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). High-NFC people also were less fearful and anxious than low-NFC people about academic performance and evaluation, although they were equally anxious about physical harm and nonacademic problems. Generalizing a bit, it seems that high-NFC people might be more likely to support expressive rights because they are not as threatened by the dissent or disturbing information

that sometimes emerges in the media or public expression. Low-NFC people, according to these trait validity studies, may be less supportive in part because they might fear they will be offended or made uncomfortable by certain expression. If this was true, NFC may be closely associated with another trait that might be even more parsimonious in predicting support for expressive rights.

Although need for cognition did not interact with the priming messages in predicting support for expressive rights, high- and low-NFC subjects in this study responded differently to the messages. Subjects who were low in need for cognition were more supportive of media and personal rights in the personal-priming condition than in the control condition, and the low-NFC subjects were most supportive of media and personal rights in the media-priming condition. Low-NFC subjects seemed to make a clear distinction between support for media and personal rights, however, as their support levels for the two were nearly parallel across conditions (see Figure 3.4). This suggests that perhaps low-NFC subjects developed counterarguments to the priming messages, then generalized from one kind of right to the other and changed their support levels accordingly.

High-NFC subjects, on the other hand, did not respond as consistently to the priming messages. For personal expressive rights, high-NFC support was highest in the control condition and lowest in the media-priming condition. Support for media rights among high-NFC subjects was highest in the media-priming condition and lowest in the personal-priming condition. It appears that while high-NFC subjects may have developed counterarguments to the priming messages, thus raising their support levels slightly for the right discussed in the message, they did not tend to generalize

from media to personal rights, or vice versa. The lack of pattern among high-NFC support levels across treatments suggests that high-NFC subjects processed the messages in a different manner than the low-NFC subjects. Again, it seems that people who are high in need for cognition may link expressive rights according to patterns other than a simple media rights-personal rights dichotomy.

Earlier in this discussion, the contention was made -- based on previous research using demographic variables -- that people who perceive themselves to be more secure or to possess more power within society are more likely to support expressive rights. As noted above, need for cognition has been found to be positively related to confidence about attitudes and independence. Arguably, these traits are closely related to a feeling of security and, possibly, power.

Further reinforcing the idea that cognitive traits and a feeling of security may be related are Sarat's (1975) findings that anxiety and principled reasoning (which, it will be recalled, was positively related to support for expressive rights) were negatively related. Sarat suggested that when "people will only reason in a principled way when they can 'afford' to do so" (p. 257). In a review of public opinion on civil liberties and how that opinion evolves over time, Erskine and Siegel (1975) concluded that people act repressively when they feel a need for self-protection. When people feel insecure or powerless, then, they may be less likely to think through the consequences of restricting expression; thus, they may be less likely to support expressive rights. This statement is reinforced by the findings of the present study that people who are more likely to engage in and enjoy cognitive effort are more

supportive of expressive rights.

It seems that NFC, political orientation and the demographic variables of education, income, age and gender may be tapping into a construct underlying support for expressive rights. The trends that appear in the data from previous research, along with the need for cognition findings in the present study, suggest that some measure of a feeling of security may be the most parsimonious way of predicting support for expressive rights.

To this point, the notions of security and power have been discussed together. Security, as discussed above, means that because of his or her position in society -- financially, socially or professionally -- an individual feels that he or she has little reason to be anxious about the immediate social milieu. Such individuals understand the way the society is structured and have made this understanding work to their advantage in order to achieve a secure position within it. They may perceive that free expression is beneficial to them, by virtue of their positions, more than to dissenters who would upset the societal structure. Because secure individuals have little to fear from expressive rights and they tend to benefit from them both by receiving information and exercising their own rights, they are more likely than less secure individuals to support expressive rights. Individuals who do not feel secure within society are those who remain anxious about money, status or their general lack of wherewithal. These people may perceive they have little to gain from supporting expressive rights simply because they have more important problems to worry about. They cannot afford, as Sarat (1975) suggested, the luxury of abstract thought about issues that do not affect them as immediately as the economy, for example.

Power is the concept of possessing adequate resources -- mental,

financial, managerial -- to control at least some aspects of one's life.² People who hold power, like those who feel secure, have achieved it largely because they understand the societal structure and are able to excel within it. In this society, money, education and profession are fundamental to power. The findings from previous research on expressive rights have suggested that people, especially males, with higher incomes, more education and who are at the age where they are likely to have achieved successful positions in their careers are more likely to support expressive rights. These people may feel they have the power to control their own lives, or parts of them. They have the capacity to exercise their expressive rights and may be more willing to support those rights than those who believe they are the underdogs of society, who may see little reason to support expressive rights because they perceive such rights hold few benefits for them. Further, some people who do not possess power may even believe that the media are a tool of the powerful to help maintain the societal power structure; in such case, they would have little incentive to support media rights.

As articulated above, the concepts of security and power appear to be strongly related to each other; they are also related to the variables that have been found to predict support for expressive rights. The demographic variables that are related to support for expressive rights would arguably be predictive of either notion because money and education are often indicative of security and power in this society. Need for cognition, because of its relationship with anxiety, should be related to security at least. It may be

²Marilyn French (1985) contends there are two dimensions of power -- power-to and power-over. "Power-to" refers to an individual's ability to do what he or she wants to; "power-over" is the capacity to dominate others. These notions are closely related and, for purposes of this discussion, will be combined under the rubric of power. The idea of power-to is arguably the stronger dimension for predicting support for expressive rights, however, as it comes closer to the notion of security.

related to power as well, because individuals who have achieved power are (usually) likely to be those who engage in effortful cognitive activity. While security and power may be closely bound notions, they are not the same. People who possess power may not feel secure, and people who feel secure do not necessarily possess power. Indeed, French (1985) argues that people who possess power are often insecure because power is tenuous.

In order to build a theory of support for expressive rights, it seems that it will be necessary to include a construct which encompasses the concepts of security and power. To do so will require further defining and differentiating the two. For now, however, the notion of security seems to be the thread that runs through the variables that have been found to predict public support for expressive rights. Need for cognition -- a more parsimonious cognitive trait than those previously used in studies of expressive rights -- is negatively related to anxiety and positively related to confidence in some areas, suggesting it may be correlated with security. Political orientation may be tapping into a feeling of security or a similar mindset. Finally, the demographic variables studied in previous research also offer support for the concepts of security or power as predictors of support for expressive rights.

Societal Implications

The theoretical implications discussed in the preceding section may offer insight for social scientists, but the topic under investigation in this study is of importance to members of society as well. The findings of this experiment have relevance to people who are concerned with maintaining -- or restricting -- expressive rights.

Because public opinion has the power to create a favorable or chilly climate for free expression, understanding how people react to messages that call for restricting expressive rights is important. Letters to the editor, advertisements and sometimes editorials imply or state directly that regulation of expressive rights would benefit society in some way. For example, the American Family Association under the leadership of the Rev. Donald Wildmon buys advertisements in newspapers across the country, calling for regulation of television programming on the grounds that television is corrupting the morals of society (Hentoff, 1992). Many feminist groups promote banning pornography in order to improve women's lot in society, and they often do so through public meetings and protests (Hentoff, 1992).

How do people react when confronted with such messages? The findings from this study indicate that instead of accepting the opinions presented in the messages, people tend to react with a backlash. That is, when people are told that the media or their own personal rights should be restricted, they become more supportive of those rights. It appears that individuals develop counterarguments to the messages, perhaps because they have been stimulated to think about the consequences of restricting expressive rights.

The notion of stimulating people to think about issues such as expressive rights seems to provide them with a context for their attitudes. As discussed in Chapter I, Yankelovich (1992) contends that public opinion is not as unstable as it frequently appears in poll results. He posits that people who are contacted in a survey are asked to respond to questions without being provided adequate time for considering their responses. The result is that

respondents are not always able to think through the consequences of making it illegal to burn the flag, for example.

Some support for Yankelovich's notion of public judgment -- that is, a reasoned, informed opinion -- is provided by the results of this priming experiment. Subjects who had been primed to think about expressive rights, although in terms of regulating some of those rights, were more likely to support expressive rights than those who were not primed. More generally, people who are provided with a cognitive context for the topic respond to questions about that topic in a different way than those who, presumably, have been thinking about something else (in this case, research methods).

This is not to say that those who were primed to think about expressive rights in this experiment responded more reasonably than the subjects in the control group, but their support levels did increase. The random assignment to conditions means that other potentially intervening variables were distributed evenly among the treatment groups, such that the increasing support levels can be attributed to the only remaining difference, the priming messages.

If an organization wanted to loosen restriction of expressive rights, then, the best way to structure a public opinion campaign appears to be to stimulate people's thoughts about the topic. Public service announcements or editorials could keep expressive rights in people's minds. With an unattributed message, at least, messages calling for further regulation may be beneficial to such a cause, as they appear to trigger a backlash in support. Responses may be mediated by the source of the message, however. This study did not consider the effects of source credibility on priming-message response in order to increase internal validity.

For organizations that would campaign to further regulate expressive rights, the message from these findings seems clear: It is futile to attempt to decrease support for personal expressive rights. People seem to be adamant in their support for their own rights, regardless of what message they read. Support for media rights appears to be more flexible, but contrary to what might be expected, telling people that the media should be regulated does not appear to persuade them. The best way to lower support for media rights seems to be to ignore the topic.

It is unclear whether messages calling for deregulation would also have a backlash effect, thus decreasing support for expressive rights. Such a message would need to be broadly written and would therefore undoubtedly generate counterarguments among many people. However, it would be intriguing to experiment with such a message. A number of people today offer counterarguments to the U.S. Constitution (Hentoff, 1992).

Beyond priming people to think about expressive rights, the findings about what kinds of individuals are likely to support such rights are important. Engaging in cognitive activity and identifying one's self as liberal were key factors in predicting support in this study. Combined with the results of previous research, these findings suggest that people who possess a feeling of security (or perhaps a feeling of power) are more likely than others to support expressive rights. This underlying concept appears to be consistently related to the variables which predict support, although further research on it and its operationalization is needed.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Although the findings from this experiment are fairly consistent with previous research that dealt with a variety of samples, the main limitation with this study is its lack of external validity. A convenience sample from a state university helped to reduce intervening variables because the sample was somewhat homogeneous. Subjects were similar in age, education and background. Future studies using the same variables should be conducted with a more heterogeneous sample to determine whether these findings can be generalized. It would help to elucidate the as-yet undefined relationship between political orientation and need for cognition. A larger sample would also be beneficial to increase statistical power and allow for richer multivariate analyses, such as the interactions (if any) among age, education and need for cognition, for example.

A similar generalizability problem has its roots outside this study, but it could also affect these results. Need for cognition has been tested predominately, if not almost always, with samples of college students. The extrapolations about need for cognition and its relationships with the other variables in this analysis are based on the trait validity of NFC. If those traits hold true only in college samples, then the interpretations of these data would be even more limited than they are by the convenience sample. Future research on need for cognition, particularly as it relates to expressive rights, should be conducted with broader samples.

Another problem with using the convenience sample is the artificiality of the experiment. Subjects participated in the experiment for course credit during their normal class session. They may have rushed to read the essays

and complete the questionnaires to get out of class early, or they may have discussed their answers with people sitting nearby. If any of these things occurred, the priming messages might not have had their full effect.

Future studies of priming messages should be conducted with field experiments, if possible, with similar essays placed in newspapers, public service announcements or as direct mailings. Such an experiment would more nearly simulate the effects of reading pro-regulatory messages such as those put out by organizations that attempt to restrict certain expressive rights. A field experiment would reduce the error introduced by conducting the experiment in a classroom setting.

Because need for cognition seemed to have no effect on the development of counterarguments, as evidenced by the lack of interaction between NFC level and treatment, it is possible that the priming messages used in this study were too general. Previous studies had found a positive relationship between NFC and number of counterarguments (Martin, Seta, & Crelia, 1990). As discussed in Chapter II, the goal of the priming messages was to make them general enough that a specific type of expression (i.e., flag-burning, abortion protests) would not affect support levels, but specific enough that not all subjects would develop counterarguments. This was a complicated task, and despite pretesting, it was apparently not accomplished satisfactorily. It may be that trying to promote restriction of expressive rights in general is simply too broad. Future research to examine the effects of priming on support for expressive rights should perhaps focus on one specific topic and include several measures to capture attitudes about that topic in general over time.

A second problem with the priming messages is the fact that they were

unattributed. An attempt was made to make them appear generic to reduce confounding with source variables. This presumably increased internal validity in this initial study, but future studies should consider that messages such as these rarely appear in public without some form of attribution. A variety of studies could be conducted on source variables and priming effects.

Although research on expressive rights has been conducted for more than half a century, the future of this topic is rich. Relatively little is known about what underlying cognitive and personality variables predict support for expressive rights. Practically no research, if any, has attempted to link attitudinal support for expressive rights with behaviors that would protect such rights. Similarly, studies have yet to compare attitudinal support for expressive rights with exercise of those rights. The next step in building theory on expressive rights seems to be to move into these behavioral issues, which might help to elucidate the attitude underlying support for expressive rights.

Future research should build upon this and previous studies. The addition of a security or power concept, or an even more parsimonious construct underlying these two, appears to be an integral part of any model that would attempt to predict support for expressive rights.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
Validation Instrument

(Social Criticism Scale, Jessor & Jessor, 1977)

For each of the statements below, please place an X in the one box that best explains what you think about the statement. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. Instead of providing students with a truly liberal education, American universities have increasingly become training centers for business firms and the military.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

2. The government seems to be moving strongly on a program for cleaning up our air, our water, and our cities despite the cost and the opposition of vested interests.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

3. All the talk about equal opportunity for members of minority groups in the USA is just that -- talk.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

4. Increasing American military strength and maintaining overseas bases are necessary ways of safeguarding world peace.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

5. There is far too much emphasis on success and getting ahead in our society.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

6. Government policy is getting to be so exclusively determined by powerful business and professional groups that the needs of the people as a whole are not being met.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

7. Women's position in our society is about as equal as could reasonably be expected.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

8. The deterioration of our environment shows how bad things can become in a free enterprise system where profit comes before human needs.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

9. In the last couple of decades, the government has been highly effective in providing jobs and job training for the poor.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

10. In a country like ours, with its wealth and technology, the fact there are millions of families living below the poverty line means that there is something terribly wrong with our economic system.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

11. The fact that students have nothing to say about how a university is run is one reason why a college education has so little relevance to what's important today.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

12. If the people want change, they can make effective use of right to vote and to petition – that's the advantage of American democracy.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

(Independence Scale, Wrightsman, 1974)

For each of the statements below, please place an X in the one box that best explains what you think about the statement. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. Most people will change the opinion they express as a result of criticism, even though they really don't change the way they feel.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

2. Nowadays many people won't make a move until they find out what other people think.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

3. The important thing in being successful nowadays is not how hard you work, but how well you fit in with the crowd.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

4. The typical student will cheat on a test when everybody else does, even though he or she has a set of ethical standards.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

5. Most people have the courage of their convictions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

6. Most people can make their own decisions, uninfluenced by public opinion.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

7. It is achievement, rather than popularity with others, that gets you ahead nowadays.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

8. It's a rare person who will go against the crowd.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

9. The average person will stick to his or her opinion if he or she thinks it's right, even if others disagree.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

10. If a student does not believe in cheating, he or she will avoid it even if he or she sees many others doing it.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

11. Most people have to rely on someone else to make their important decisions for them.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

12. The person with novel ideas is respected in our society.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

13. Most people will speak out for what they believe in.

- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| strongly
disagree | disagree | slightly
disagree | neither agree
nor disagree | slightly
agree | agree | strongly
agree |

14. The average person will rarely express his or her opinion in a group when he or she sees that the others disagree.

- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| strongly
disagree | disagree | slightly
disagree | neither agree
nor disagree | slightly
agree | agree | strongly
agree |

For classification purposes, please fill in the information below that best describes you.

Male ☐ or Female ☐

Many people feel that their political views are too complex to describe with a single label. But if you had to choose one of the following categories, how would you describe your political orientation?

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Far left | Liberal | Moderate | Conservative | Far Right | Don't
know |

For each of the statements below, please place an X in the one box that best explains what you think about the statement. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. An individual's right to make statements that would offend people from a different racial or ethnic group should be protected by law.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

2. Under the law, the media should have the right to print or broadcast statements that would offend people of a certain gender.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

3. By law, the media should have the right to print or broadcast material that includes pictures of sexual acts between consenting adults.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

4. An individual should have the right to publicly say that a foreign government is better than the United States government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

5. There should be a law preventing an individual from criticizing the president.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

6. The media should have the right to print or broadcast false information when they believe it is true.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

7. An individual should have the right by law to make statements that would offend people of a certain gender.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

8. By law, an individual should have the right to buy or view material that includes pictures of sexual acts between consenting adults.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

9. There should be a law preventing the media from discussing the sexual habits of public figures.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

10. An individual should have the right to discuss false information about other people when he or she believes it is true.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

11. The law should allow the media the right to editorialize against military actions by the government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

12. The media should have the legal right to publicly say that a foreign government is better than the United States government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

13. By law, the media should have the right to editorialize in favor of burning the American flag to protest the actions of the government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

14. The media's right should be protected by law when they publish or broadcast statements that offend people of various religious groups.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

15. The law should allow an individual the right to protest against military actions by the government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

16. There should be a law against allowing an individual the right to buy or view material that features nude pictures.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

17. The law should protect the media's rights when they print or broadcast public statements that advocate homosexuality.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

18. By law, the media should have the right to editorialize for or against abortion.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

19. There should be a law preventing the media from criticizing the president.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

20. By law, an individual should have the right to burn the American flag to protest the actions of the government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

21. There should be a law against allowing the media the right to print or broadcast material that features nude pictures.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

22. An individual's rights under the law should be protected when he or she makes statements in public that advocate homosexuality.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

23. An individual's right should be protected by law when he or she makes statements that offend people of different religious groups.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

24. The media's right to print or broadcast statements that would offend people of various racial or ethnic groups should be protected by law.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

25. There should be a law preventing an individual from discussing the sexual habits of public figures.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

26. An individual's right to protest for or against abortion rights should be protected by law.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

APPENDIX B

Interitem Correlations for SPRS and SMRS Scales

Interitem correlations for the SPRS. (N=169)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Offend race	1.0													
2. Foreign govt.	.12	1.0												
3. Crit. president	.03	.42 ^a	1.0											
4. Protest military	.07	.54 ^a	.31 ^a	1.0										
5. Protest abortion	.03	.10	.06	.22 ^a	1.0									
6. Offend sex	.38 ^a	.45 ^a	.32 ^a	.28 ^a	.16 ^b	1.0								
7. Burn flag	.21 ^a	.43 ^a	.19 ^b	.46 ^a	.27 ^a	.29 ^a	1.0							
8. Sex -- public fig.	.24 ^a	.26 ^a	.29 ^a	.09	.20 ^a	.37 ^a	.25 ^a	1.0						
9. Offend religion	.37 ^a	.32 ^a	.29 ^a	.32 ^a	.25 ^a	.57 ^a	.28 ^a	.43 ^a	1.0					
10. View sex acts	.16 ^b	.39 ^a	.21 ^a	.20 ^a	.22 ^a	.26 ^a	.22 ^a	.38 ^a	.28 ^a	1.0				
11. False inform.	.09	.46 ^b	.24 ^a	.22 ^a	.15	.34 ^a	.19 ^b	.16 ^b	.36 ^a	.19 ^b	1.0			
12. Homosexual.	-.00	.30 ^a	.17 ^b	.38 ^a	.36 ^a	.29 ^a	.37 ^a	.30 ^a	.46 ^a	.20 ^a	.25 ^a	1.0		
13. View nude ph.	.06	.32 ^a	.25 ^a	.18 ^b	.12	.16 ^b	.20 ^b	.28 ^a	.24 ^a	.65 ^a	.16 ^b	.19 ^b	1.0	
14. SMRS	.23 ^a	.57 ^a	.44 ^a	.53 ^a	.22 ^a	.50 ^a	.57 ^a	.48 ^a	.53 ^a	.42 ^a	.42 ^a	.44 ^a	.39 ^a	1.0

^a Correlations are significant at $p < .01$.

^b Correlations are significant at $p < .05$.

Interitem correlations for the SMRS. (N=169)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Offend race	1.0													
2. Foreign govt.	.42 ^a	1.0												
3. Crit. president	.34 ^a	.49 ^a	1.0											
4. Protest military	.27 ^a	.57 ^a	.43 ^a	1.0										
5. Protest abortion	.34 ^a	.36 ^a	.31 ^a	.42 ^a	1.0									
6. Offend sex	.61 ^a	.34 ^a	.21 ^a	.23 ^a	.18 ^b	1.0								
7. Burn flag	.33 ^a	.55 ^a	.40 ^a	.57 ^a	.42 ^a	.30 ^a	1.0							
8. Sex -- public fig.	.36 ^a	.23 ^a	.29 ^a	.04	.16 ^b	.33 ^a	.25 ^a	1.0						
9. Offend religion	.76 ^a	.46 ^a	.30 ^a	.35 ^a	.37 ^a	.59 ^a	.31 ^a	.29 ^a	1.0					
10. View sex acts	.27 ^a	.36 ^a	.20 ^a	.20 ^a	.20 ^b	.40 ^a	.24 ^a	.26 ^a	.33 ^a	1.0				
11. False inform.	.15	.24 ^a	.14	.15	.03	.18 ^b	.10	.18 ^b	.16 ^b	.27 ^a	1.0			
12. Homosexual.	.38 ^a	.42 ^a	.32 ^a	.41 ^a	.48 ^a	.13	.42 ^a	.26 ^a	.36 ^a	.23 ^a	.17 ^b	1.0		
13. View nude ph.	.41 ^a	.37 ^a	.34 ^a	.26 ^a	.27 ^a	.31 ^a	.24 ^a	.31 ^a	.36 ^a	.50 ^a	.21 ^a	.27 ^a	1.0	
14. SPRS	.59 ^a	.57 ^a	.45 ^a	.52	.33 ^a	.51 ^a	.54	.38 ^a	.58 ^a	.37 ^a	.29 ^a	.51 ^a	.45 ^a	1.0

^a Correlations are significant at $p < .01$.

^b Correlations are significant at $p < .05$.

APPENDIX C

Priming Messages

Media must be regulated

Some of the material in the media is becoming more offensive, and it's time for the government to do something about them.

A good deal of the content of what the media print or broadcast should be regulated. Too often, the media try to shock their audiences with sensationalism. Violence and casual sex are frequently encouraged by the media. Such practices need to be controlled and sometimes banned.

Children must be protected from the immoral attitudes and acts they see or hear about in the media. Their young minds are too easily influenced to risk exposure to ideas that might be confusing or even frightening.

It is not enough to say that parents should be responsible for what their children see or hear. Parents cannot be expected to be able to protect children at all times, so the government must do its part to help them. We cannot trust the media to regulate themselves.

Many of the problems that threaten our society today have resulted from ideas that have been promoted by the media. The worst part of the situation is that the media do not even care whether what they publish is true. They are only concerned with making money and gaining power.

We Americans must act now to encourage our government to do what is right. We should write to our elected officials and ask them to regulate what the media can publish. It is necessary to save our nation and protect our children.

Speech must be regulated

Some things people say in public are becoming more offensive, and it's time for the government to do something about them.

A good deal of the content of what people say should be regulated. Too often, people try to shock their listeners with sensationalism. Violence and casual sex are frequently encouraged by what people say in public. Such practices need to be controlled and sometimes banned.

Children must be protected from the immoral attitudes and acts they see or hear about from people in public. Their young minds are too easily influenced to risk exposure to ideas that might be confusing or even frightening.

It is not enough to say that parents should be responsible for what their children see or hear. Parents cannot be expected to be able to protect children at all times, so the government must do its part to help them. We cannot trust people to regulate themselves.

Many of the problems that threaten our society today have resulted from ideas that have been promoted by public speech. The worst part of the situation is that the people do not even care whether what they say is true. They are only concerned with making money and gaining power.

We Americans must act now to encourage our government to do what is right. We should write to our elected officials and ask them to regulate what people can say in public. It is necessary to save our nation and protect our children.

APPENDIX D

Thoughts Generated in Priming-Message Pretest

Drafts of the priming messages were presented to 24 subjects on March 11, 1993. Subjects completed the first seven items of the Need for Cognition scale to estimate whether NFC was related to the number and content of thoughts listed (it was not). They were then instructed: "Please read the following essay, then list below all of the thoughts that occur to you as you read it."

Speech message (displayed in Appendix C)

NFC = 44

No thoughts listed.

NFC = 40

Sensationalism is what has been selling in the '90s, therefore, people obviously have different interests and opinions than in the '60s. I agree that too much is being subjected to children and proof of that is in the junior highs and high schools today. They even have daycare in high schools now.

NFC = 40

Ever heard of George Orwell?

NFC = 38

No thoughts listed.

NFC = 36

This is fanaticism at its ugliest.

It is contradictory to the first amendment and I absolutely would not want government restricting my family's right to free speech -- and free thought!!

Although it is hard to take this piece seriously, I assume there are pro-mind control advocates out there.

NFC = 35

"banned" -- this word riles me.

I agree that sensationalism and a lowering of moral standards are a trend in today's society. But regulating i.e. censoring what people are allowed to say limits the rights of individuals. That I don't agree with. This is a sugar-coated move for censorship.

"We cannot trust people to regulate themselves." -- ARGH!

Gov't intervention in people's expression? -- No way.

NFC = 26

What about the freedom of speech

Matter of point of view

Strongly disagree

NFC = 24

first paragraph -- WRONG! I want to say what I want. If it offends someone, tough!

"Violence and casual sex..." -- This is a matter of opinion. It could enlighten people on the ignorance of violence or dangers of STDS, AIDS, etc.

"Children must be protected..." -- Their parents will influence their thoughts and personality when they (kids) are young. Others will have limited influence on children because of the ammount of time spent with the child.

"Their young minds are too easily influenced..." -- Parent's job= explain these things! Why or why not are they bad?

Parent's should have the most exposure to their children to influence them.

"People... are only concerned with making money and gaining power" -- Matter of opinion! Unfair generalization

Who decided the gov't has a better judgement than we do?

NFC = 22

As I read the headline, I started thinking about crackers and chees. As I read on, I considered the article's points seriously. I do agree that some people on the "lunatic fringe" engage in dangerous rhetoric that obviously influences unstable members of society. I also agree that children are easily influenced and many people are out for power and the almighty dollar. However, I see instances of suggesting the formation of a police state with socialistic and Naziistic overtones.

I myself believe in little or no government. I border on approval of anarchy. The central government is much too large and has its hands in the pockets of everyone and its eyes in everyone's bedroom. I do believe that freedom of speech, just like free thought should be permissible wherever man holds an opinion.

Media message (displayed in Appendix C)

NFC = 45

"Children must be protected..." -- Some know more than adults.

The media is regulated and the media are also responsible for safe sex ads and discussions on STD's. Censorship would not help because some parents would never discuss things with their children, then when the children get out in the real world they are shocked because of how sheltered they have been. They cannot adapt to enough of the problems.

NFC = 41

I disagree with these ideas. Regulation, to me, means censorship which goes against our first amendment rights. I would not want the government telling what is or what is not news since they are so far removed from reality as I know it.

NFC = 41

I disagree with the article. It is some what fanatical. Government regulation could infringe on the media's 1st Amendment rights.

NFC = 40

Media is watchdog of Govt, Not vice-versa

1st Admendment, you don't like what you see, turn it off. Govt. is too big.

Parents need to take time to raise their kids and teach them values. This is not the job of the govt. or media.

We cannot trust the govt. Parents need to teach their children, so that they can protect themselves. Parents can protect their kids at all times, neither can govt. Must learn to protect yourself.

Only tabloids don't give a shit. Legit media tries to publish truth. Media is not responsible for social probs -- they only report them. Corrupt govt., racist social structure, lack of education (and govt. support thereof) are responsible.

In USA money is the bottom line.

This is an absolute attack on 1st admendment. Print whats right? What's right to who. I sure as hell don't want the govt. to tell me whats or my kids whats right. To hell with govt saying what media can do.

Be strong and protect yourself.

NFC = 40

I saw this in the paper about a month ago.

It worried me then, and it worries me now. The thing that scares me is, there's a part of me that agrees with what they're saying -- a small part. I agree these things can be problems, but I am absolutely against government censorship. The truth is, they only show what people will watch. The way to

make them change is to show them they can make more money showing something else. Censorship should not be allowed.

NFC = 36

The government should have limited "say" in what the media does.

Media do shock, but, hey, that's what is going on. I personally would rather have the facts, than sugar-coated fantasies.

Are casual sex and violence often encouraged -- It seems we hear more about cautious sex now than ever.

Children are exposed to things early -- we can't protect them, really.

Story is too biased and close-minded.

NFC = 35

This must have been written by a conservative. I wonder if the person or group who wrote this has heard of free speech. Government should and must keep out of private life as much as possible. Regulation equals censorship. This type of article angers me. I do not want someone telling me what I can and cannot read or see.

NFC = 35

Isn't America the land of the free? Screw censorship.

Yes, media does try evasive tactics to get an audience -- but who wants to be entertained by the everyday?

The government should not fulfill the role of the parents. Can't a parent lock the TV up or sell it?

Lastly, the media is in the business to make money like everyone else. Just because they make more doesn't mean you need to bitch and whine about censorship.

NFC = 34

Regulation of media would be going against the 1st amendment.

As for parents "protecting" their children, it is not about protection, it is about educating children in dealing with distasteful situations.

This literature is RIDICULOUS!

:)

NFC = 30

I agree to an extent, but I don't believe it all can be blamed on the media.

NFC = 30

Government can't regulate behavior. It's a much broader issue. Most journalists strive to present an unbiased presentation of the news; however the art of "word smithing" has reached an art form in some instances. Americans should take responsibility for their individual behaviors.

NFC = 30

1st Amend rights guarantee freedom of the press to balance out government/public officials interests and the individual citizen.

Yes, there should be a greater responsibility on the media for ethical, accurate, and competent reporting, but this argument is very near a slippery slope fallacy. Parents have the greatest responsibility over what their children watch.

NFC = 25

Parents should be able to teach their children then the children will protect themselves.

Alot of good things have come out of television.

Sensor television now means we will be sensoring everything later.

NFC = 24

Children should see the world as it is. We should teach them to cope with the way they view it, not shield them from it.

Generalization is a dangerous tool. Not everyone in the media is the same.

CENSORSHIP The First Amendment: LOOK IT UP!

NFC = 19

Yes. I feel the media should be more regulated. I see things on day TV that I would not want my child to see. I understand that late night television is an exception because hopefully youngsters are in bed.

I also feel that the media should publish the truth -- I feel our public officials should regulate the media to a point.

APPENDIX E

Need for Cognition Scale

18-item Need for Cognition Scale (Cacioppo, Petty, & Kao, 1984)

1. I would prefer complex to simple problems.
2. I like to have the responsibility of handling a situation that requires a lot of thinking.
3. *Thinking is not my idea of fun.
4. *I would rather do something that requires little thought than something that is sure to challenge my thinking abilities.
5. *I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is a likely chance I will have to think in depth about something.
6. I find satisfaction in deliberating hard and for long hours.
7. *I only think as hard as I have to.
8. *I prefer to think about small, daily projects to long-term ones.
9. *I like tasks that require little thought once I've learned them.
10. The idea of relying on thought to make my way to the top appeals to me.
11. I really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems.
12. *Learning new ways to think doesn't excite me very much.
13. I prefer my life to be filled with puzzles that I must solve.
14. The notion of thinking abstractly is appealing to me.
15. I would prefer a task that is intellectual, difficult and important to one that is somewhat important but does not require much thought.
16. *I feel relief rather than satisfaction after completing a task that required a lot of mental effort.
17. *It's enough for me that something gets the job done; I don't care how or why it works.
18. I usually end up deliberating about issues even when they do not affect me personally.

* Indicates items that are reverse-coded.

APPENDIX F

Questionnaire

(Each questionnaire contained one priming message as a manipulation. Questionnaire attached includes the control priming message. Media- and personal-priming messages are displayed in Appendix C.)

For each of the statements below, please place an X in the one box that best explains what you think about the statement. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. It is hard to figure out who you can really trust these days.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

2. There are few people in this world you can trust, when you get right down to it.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

3. Most people can be trusted.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

4. Strangers can generally be trusted.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

5. Most people are fair in their dealings with others.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

6. Most people don't really care what happens to the next person.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

7. Too many people in our society are just out for themselves.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

8. Many people are friendly only because they want something from you.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

For each of the statements below, please place an X in the one box that best explains what you think about the statement. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. I would prefer complex to simple problems.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

2. I like to have the responsibility of handling a situation that requires a lot of thinking.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

3. Thinking is not my idea of fun.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

4. I would rather do something that requires little thought than something that is sure to challenge my thinking abilities.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

5. I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is a likely chance I will have to think in depth about something.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

6. I find satisfaction in deliberating hard and for long hours.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

7. I only think as hard as I have to.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly	disagree	slightly	neither agree	slightly	agree	strongly
disagree		disagree	nor disagree	agree		agree

8. I prefer to think about small, daily projects to long-term ones.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly	disagree	slightly	neither agree	slightly	agree	strongly
disagree		disagree	nor disagree	agree		agree

9. I like tasks that require little thought once I've learned them.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly	disagree	slightly	neither agree	slightly	agree	strongly
disagree		disagree	nor disagree	agree		agree

10. The idea of relying on thought to make my way to the top appeals to me.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly	disagree	slightly	neither agree	slightly	agree	strongly
disagree		disagree	nor disagree	agree		agree

11. I really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly	disagree	slightly	neither agree	slightly	agree	strongly
disagree		disagree	nor disagree	agree		agree

12. Learning new ways to think doesn't excite me very much.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly	disagree	slightly	neither agree	slightly	agree	strongly
disagree		disagree	nor disagree	agree		agree

13. I prefer my life to be filled with puzzles that I must solve.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly	disagree	slightly	neither agree	slightly	agree	strongly
disagree		disagree	nor disagree	agree		agree

14. The notion of thinking abstractly is appealing to me.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly	disagree	slightly	neither agree	slightly	agree	strongly
disagree		disagree	nor disagree	agree		agree

15. I would prefer a task that is intellectual, difficult and important to one that is somewhat important but does not require much thought.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

16. I feel relief rather than satisfaction after completing a task that required a lot of mental effort.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

17. It's enough for me that something gets the job done; I don't care how or why it works.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

18. I usually end up deliberating about issues even when they do not affect me personally.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

For classification purposes, please fill in the information below that best describes you.

Male ☐ or Female ☐

Many people feel that their political views are too complex to describe with a single label. But if you had to choose one of the following categories, how would you describe your political orientation?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Far left	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Far right	Don't know

Please read this essay. Then turn to the next page and complete the questionnaire.

Content analysis useful

Content analysis is popular with mass media researchers because it provides an efficient way to investigate the content of the media such as the number and types of commercials or advertisements in broadcasting or in the print media. Beginning researchers will find content analysis a valuable tool in answering many mass media questions.

Modern content analysis can be traced back to World War II, when allied intelligence units painstakingly monitored the number and types of popular songs played on European radio stations.

By comparing the music played on German stations with that on other stations in occupied Europe, the allies were able to measure with some degree of success the changes in troop concentration on the continent.

In the Pacific theater, communications between Japan and various island bases were carefully tabulated; an increase in message volume usually meant that some new operation involving that particular base was planned.

After the war, content analysis was used by researchers studying propaganda in newspapers and radio. Since that time, the method has achieved wide popularity.

For each of the statements below, please place an X in the one box that best explains what you think about the statement. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. An individual's right to make statements that would offend people from a different racial or ethnic group should be protected by law.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

2. Under the law, the media should have the right to print or broadcast statements that would offend people of a certain gender.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

3. Instead of providing students with a truly liberal education, American universities have increasingly become training centers for business firms and the military.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

4. The government seems to be moving strongly on a program for cleaning up our air, our water, and our cities despite the cost and the opposition of vested interests.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

5. By law, the media should have the right to print or broadcast material that includes pictures of sexual acts between consenting adults.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

6. An individual should have the right to publicly say that a foreign government is better than the United States government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

7. There should be a law preventing an individual from criticizing the president.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

8. The media should have the right to print or broadcast false information when they believe it is true.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

9. An individual should have the right by law to make statements that would offend people of a certain gender.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

10. By law, an individual should have the right to buy or view material that includes pictures of sexual acts between consenting adults.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

11. There should be a law preventing the media from discussing the sexual habits of public figures.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

12. All that talk about equal opportunity for members of minority groups in the USA is just that -- talk.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

13. An individual should have the right to discuss false information about other people when he or she believes it is true.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

14. The law should allow the media the right to editorialize against military actions by the government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

15. The media should have the legal right to publicly say that a foreign government is better than the United States government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

16. Increasing American military strength and maintaining overseas bases are necessary ways of safeguarding world peace.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

17. There is far too much emphasis on success and getting ahead in our society.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

18. Government policy is getting to be so exclusively determined by powerful business and professional groups that the needs of the people as a whole are not being met.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

19. By law, the media should have the right to editorialize in favor of burning the American flag to protest the actions of the government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

20. The media's right should be protected by law when they publish or broadcast statements that offend people of various religious groups.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

21. The law should allow an individual the right to protest against military actions by the government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

22. There should be a law against allowing an individual the right to buy or view material that features nude pictures.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

23. The law should protect the media's rights when they print or broadcast public statements that advocate homosexuality.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

24. Women's position in our society is about as equal as could reasonably be expected.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

25. By law, the media should have the right to editorialize for or against abortion.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

26. The deterioration of our environment shows how bad things can become in a free enterprise system where profit comes before human needs.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

27. There should be a law preventing the media from criticizing the president.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

28. By law, an individual should have the right to burn the American flag to protest the actions of the government.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

29. In the last couple of decades, the government has been highly effective in providing jobs and job training for the poor.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

30. In a country like ours, with its wealth and technology, the fact there are millions of families living below the poverty line means that there is something terribly wrong with our economic system.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

31. The fact that students have nothing to say about how a university is run is one reason why a college education has so little relevance to what's important today.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

32. There should be a law against allowing the media the right to print or broadcast material that features nude pictures.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

33. An individual's rights under the law should be protected when he or she makes statements in public that advocate homosexuality.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

34. An individual's right should be protected by law when he or she makes statements that offend people of different religious groups.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

35. The media's right to print or broadcast statements that would offend people of various racial or ethnic groups should be protected by law.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

36. If the people want change, they can make effective use of right to vote and to petition -- that's the advantage of American democracy.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

37. There should be a law preventing an individual from discussing the sexual habits of public figures.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

38. An individual's right to protest for or against abortion rights should be protected by law.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

APPENDIX G

Use of Product Terms in Multiple Regression

Use of Product Terms in Multiple Regression

The general multiple regression equation is

$$y = B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3(X_1 * X_2) \quad (\text{Eq. 1})$$

where

y = dependent variable (in this case, SMRS)

X_1 = independent variable (SPRS)

X_2 = independent variable (NFC)

$X_1 * X_2$ = product term (interaction of SPRS and NFC).

Equation 1 can be rearranged algebraically, such that the sum of B coefficients for X_1 and $X_1 * X_2$ (multiplied by X_2) provide an estimate of the slope of y on X_1 .

$$y = (B_1 + B_3X_2)X_1 + B_2X_2 \quad (\text{Eq. 2})$$

In Equation 2, the sum in parentheses form the estimate of slope of the dependent variable on independent variable X_1 .

VITA

Julie Andsager was born Jan. 12, 1964, in Hutchinson, Kansas. She attended Buhler elementary and secondary schools, receiving her high school diploma in May 1982. She attended Kansas State University from August 1982 until December 1986, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and a minor in journalism. In January 1987, she became the executive assistant/editor for the Kansas Cooperative Council in Topeka, Kansas. In August 1988, she left the Council to return to Kansas State University, where she pursued a master's degree in journalism. During her stay at Kansas State, she worked as feature editor and editor of the Kansas State Collegian, a daily newspaper. She received her Master of Science degree in May 1990. Andsager entered the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in August 1990 as a doctoral student in the College of Communications. She obtained her Ph.D. in Communications in December 1993. Upon leaving the University of Tennessee in August 1993, she accepted a position as an instructor in the Department of Journalism at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.