

CONFIDENTIAL NEWS SOURCES AND  
THE FLORIDA NEWSPAPER REPORTER

By

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	v
ABSTRACT .....	vi
 CHAPTER	
I.    INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND .....	1
Background of the Problem .....	2
Shield Law Proposals .....	10
Florida Activity .....	13
Reason for the Study .....	15
Statement of the Problem .....	18
II.   RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES .....	22
Selection of Respondents .....	22
Distribution of Questionnaires .....	24
Pre-testing the Questionnaire .....	26
Questionnaire Design .....	27
Computing the Data .....	32
III.  PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS .....	33
General Response to Questionnaire .....	33
Demographic Data .....	33
Confidential Source Data .....	36
Cross-tabulation of Data .....	57
IV.   DISCUSSION OF DATA AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH .....	62
Discussion of Data .....	63
Suggestions for Future Research .....	76
 APPENDICES	
A.    First Amendment to the Constitution .....	79
B.    Sample of One of Ten Personal Letters Sent to Edi- tors Requesting They Distribute Questionnaire ..	80
C.    Cover Letter Accompanying Questionnaire Distri- buted to Reporters .....	81
D.    Computer Readouts of Cross-tabulations .....	82
SOURCES CONSULTED .....	92
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH .....	94

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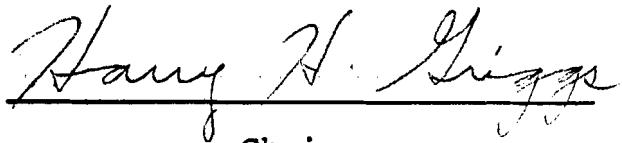
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This study was based on the results of 100 questionnaires sent to ten reporters at each of the state's ten largest daily newspapers. The questionnaire sought information about the reporter's frequency of use of, reliance upon and protection of confidential news sources. It also asked the reporter's opinions of proposed "shield laws" designed to provide him with a legal means of protecting his source's identity.

Results of the survey showed that almost all reporters, regardless of the type of news they cover, rely heavily upon confidential sources in their reporting. Twenty per cent of the respondents had at one time been asked by a judicial body to reveal the names of their sources, but only one-fourth of them had complied and named their informant. A slight majority wanted no shield legislation at all, but of those

favoring such a law, almost three-fourths wanted the privilege to be absolute.

The results are important for two reasons. They supply data on the actual day to day use of confidential news sources by a large number of reporters and they reveal the opinions of a group seldom heard from but one that would be most affected by any shield law.



Chairman

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1

Respondents' Experience as Reporters ..... 34

TABLE 2

Respondents' Reporting Experience at Present  
Newspaper ..... 34

TABLE 3

Type of News Most Often Covered by Reporter ..... 35

TABLE 4

Respondents' Uses of Confidential News Sources,  
Excluding Missing Responses ..... 37

TABLE 5

Respondents' Relationship with Editor and Publisher  
Regarding Confidential Source, Missing Responses  
Excluded ..... 41

TABLE 6

Respondents' Experience and Reactions to Judicial  
Requests for Source's Identity, Missing  
Responses Excluded ..... 44

TABLE 7

Respondents' Opinions of Shield Law and Its  
Possible Effects ..... 49

TABLE 8

Effect of Recent Court Decisions on Both Reporter  
and His Source, Missing Responses Excluded ..... 55