

SOURCE CREDIBILITY OF PUBLIC FIGURES  
AS DETERMINED BY THREE LEVELS  
OF IDENTIFICATION

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## PREFACE

Source credibility studies over the past three decades have dealt primarily with the effect of the speaker upon the message. However, with new sources in the form of persons and organizations appearing almost daily on broadcasts and in print, the use of identification for source credibility has become increasingly valuable.

It would appear that virtually anyone in this democratic nation can project himself or herself in the public's eye as an expert, particularly in the area of political issues. But just which type of identification gives the greatest credence to the speaker or source? Is it possible that with such a constant barrage of faces and names the public has become more selective and more critical of the types of identification used to describe sources?

Today's mass-media journalists generally use a person's name and organizational affiliation as a basic identification; however, a few decades ago, the more education a person had, the greater credibility he had with an audience, perhaps because he was considered to be more competent and more expert. What does this shift in identification emphasis mean in terms of audience perceptions?

This study sought to learn more about this and other questions. It compared three variations of identification--

Biographical with name, education, professional achievements, and personal data; Socio-cultural with name, title or rank, and organization or group affiliation; and Occupational with name and occupation only--in order to determine which of the three held the greatest credibility for an audience. The effect upon the variables of respondent sex, age, and education was measured.

Spokespersons from the women's rights issues were selected as the sources tested, because these particular political issues created considerable public discussion in the recent past. The issues were, according to the spokespersons, going to have a direct effect upon every male and female in the country. Sources representing metropolitan and suburban areas, religious, feminist, and political activist groups as well as political, government and business officials all purported to be credible speakers on the issues involved in women's rights. The public's acceptance of that supposed credibility and the levels involved had not been studied. Therefore, this study will seek to enlighten those interested in the credibility of public figures.

The study was intended to reflect those specific segments of the population which are most receptive to each type of identification--Biographical, Socio-cultural, or Occupational. Sex, age, and education levels were the independent variables used for the research.

Even the general topic of women's rights, in certain instances was provocation enough to bring forth irate reactions

directed at the researcher. The study was, if not significant in the research data presented, at least interesting as a study in human emotions.

The author wishes to express her sincere gratitude to all the mass communication faculty and staff at Oklahoma State University. Their friendliness and concern have been greatly appreciated.

On a more personal note, I would like especially to remember Dr. Walter Ward, the graduate studies coordinator and adviser, who guided us all through the intricacies of semantics and research. His special methods of teaching will be remembered by the many graduate students in mass communication at Oklahoma State University. He was special.

I am especially indebted to Dr. Harry Heath who took over as my adviser in Dr. Ward's absence. In addition, I would like to thank the other members of my committee--Dr. Marlan Nelson and Dr. William Steng.

My special thanks go to the citizens of Enid who participated in the study and to Prof. Charles Fleming for allowing his public relations students to be used as respondents.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION. . . . .	1
Background of the Problem. . . . .	1
Need for the Study . . . . .	4
Purpose of the Study . . . . .	5
The Research Focus . . . . .	7
Definition of Terms. . . . .	7
Limitations. . . . .	8
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE. . . . .	12
1950-1960 Studies. . . . .	12
1961-1970 Studies. . . . .	14
1971 to Present. . . . .	27
Trends in Credibility Research . . . . .	34
III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES. . . . .	42
The Research Instrument. . . . .	43
Selection and Instruction of Subjects. . . . .	44
Public Figures Tested. . . . .	44
Levels of Identification . . . . .	46
The Testing Procedure. . . . .	47
Basis for Hypotheses . . . . .	48
Hypotheses . . . . .	49
IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION. . . . .	52
Opponent Source Data, Sex and Age. . . . .	54
Proponent Source Data, Sex and Age . . . . .	62
Opponent Source Data, Sex and Education. . . . .	72
Proponent Source Data, Sex and Education . . . . .	79
Summary. . . . .	86
V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	88
Introduction . . . . .	88
Conclusions. . . . .	89
Summary. . . . .	95
Recommendations. . . . .	97
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	100

Chapter	Page
APPENDICES . . . . .	104
APPENDIX A - TEST INSTRUMENT USED IN "BLIND" STUDY . . . . .	105
APPENDIX B - TEST INSTRUMENT USED IN FOUR PUBLIC FIGURES SOURCE CREDI- BILITY STUDY. . . . .	112



LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Mean Perceived Source Credibility Scores on High, Middle, and Low Identification Treatments of Public Figures by Sex and Age Variables . . . . .	52
II. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of High and Low Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Opponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Age Variables. .	55
III. Paradigms of Opponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the High and Low Level Identifications with Sex and Age Variables . . . . .	57
IV. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of High and Middle Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Opponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Age Variables. .	58
V. Paradigms of Opponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the High and Middle Level Identifications with Sex and Age Variables . . . . .	59
VI. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of Middle and Low Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Opponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Age Variables . . . . .	60
VII. Paradigms of Opponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the Middle and Low Level Identifications with Sex and Age Variables . . . . .	62
VIII. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of High and Low Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Proponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Age Variables . . . . .	63
IX. Paradigms of Proponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the High and Low Level Identification with Sex and Age Variables . . . . .	64

Table	Page
X. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of High and Middle Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Proponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Age Variables .	65
XI. Paradigms of Proponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the High and Middle Level Identifications with Sex and Age Variables. . . . .	67
XII. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of Middle and Low Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Proponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Age Variables. . . . .	68
XIII. Paradigms of Proponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the Middle and Low Level Identifications with Sex and Age Variables. . . . .	69
XIV. Mean Perceived Source Credibility Scores on High, Middle, and Low Identification Treatments of Public Figures by Sex and Education Variables. . . . .	70
XV. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of High and Low Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Opponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Education Variables. .	73
XVI. Paradigms of Opponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the High and Low Level Identification with Sex and Education Variables. . . . .	74
XVII. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of High and Middle Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Opponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Education Variables. . . . .	75
XVIII. Paradigms of Opponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the High and Middle Level Identifications with Sex and Education Variables. . . . .	76
XIX. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of Middle and Low Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Opponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Education Variables. .	78

Table	Page
XX. Paradigms of Opponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the Middle and Low Level Identifications with Sex and Education Variables. . . . .	79
XXI. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of High and Low Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Proponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Education Variables. .	80
XXII. Paradigms of Proponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the High and Low Level Identification with Sex and Education Variables. . . . .	81
XXIII. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of High and Middle Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Proponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Education Variables. . . . .	82
XXIV. Paradigms of Proponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the High and Middle Level Identifications with Sex and Education Variables. . . . .	84
XXV. Analysis of Variance Anova Table of Middle and Low Identification Treatments of Source Credibility for Proponent Sources of Women's Rights Issues Based on Sex and Education Variables. .	85
XXVI. Paradigms of Proponent Sources on Women's Rights Issues Mean Credibility Opinion Scores on the Middle and Low Level Identifications with Sex and Education Variables. . . . .	86
XXVII. Mean Perceived Opinion Scores for All Sources on the Middle-level (Socio-Cultural) Identification Treatment for Sex and Age Variables . . .	91
XXVIII. Mean Perceived Opinion Scores of Opponent Sources for Three Identification Treatments for Men 18-35, Women 18-35, and Men 36-65. . . . .	93
XXIX. Mean Perceived Opinion Scores of Proponent Sources for Three Identification Treatments for Men 18-35, Women 18-35, and Men 36-65. . .	93

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

For the past three decades source credibility studies have used variation of identification as a primary means of determining levels of credibility. But a study of the actual words chosen for identification apparently has not been carried out.

The dimensions of credibility--trustworthiness, expertise, and dynamism--have been studied since they were first set forth. Studies as early as 1934 and especially throughout the past 30 years have found these three basic dimensions to be the prime factors in credibility.<sup>1</sup> The choice of descriptive words to use in semantic-differential testing has been studied, as have the scales to determine the adjective pairs most likely to extract the most accurate level of credibility.<sup>2</sup>

The present research focused upon the type of identification most effective in producing a high level of credibility. The semantic differential was the basic research tool used to elicit these data.

#### Background of the Problem

Before the advent of high-tech mass media, the American

public relied on word of mouth and the printed word to form a "picture" of the world. A few valued persons--church, business, social, political, or family leaders--shaped in large measure attitudes the public held about persons, issues, events, and organizations.<sup>3</sup>

Then, in the most influential days of radio, Franklin Delano Roosevelt in his "Fireside Chats" brought the dimension of dynamism to that unseeing audience. His easy manner of seemingly to speak directly to each listener won him the support of the radio public, not only for himself but for his programs of economic and social reform.<sup>4</sup>

The televised debates between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon in the presidential campaign of 1960 brought new factors into credibility considerations. Physical appearances and mannerisms of these sources had a definite and direct effect upon the audience. No longer were members of the public dependent upon someone else for an evaluation of a person's credibility. The barnstorming campaign train of yesteryear, reaching only a small part of the electorate, had become the television tube of today, reaching vastly larger audiences with a dimension the "Fireside Chats" could not use--sight. People could see and hear for themselves. Their own evaluations of what they observed and heard could now form a basis for their opinions.<sup>5</sup>

Nixon's campaign strategists, alarmed by his pale face and beard shadow compared to Jack Kennedy's clean-cut, youthful appearance on television, turned to attitude and opinion

research for ways to correct this nationally observed negative effect on Nixon's credibility. Using what was considered by many to be the most accurate measuring instrument for the dimensions of source credibility--the semantic differential--Nixon's advisers worked to discover those areas of strength and weakness in his overall credibility.<sup>6</sup>

The work of consulting experts enabled Nixon to use television later to the best advantage in creating credibility with his audience. Nixon was packaged or, as the title of Joe McGinness' book The Selling of the President suggests, merchandised in the same manner as a product pushed by a skillful advertising agency.<sup>7</sup>

The concept of "image building" was not slow to be followed by others. Now many business leaders who must face the public or the media are trained and groomed in order to present the most credible total "package" to the public. Religious, government, and political spokespersons are presented in the same manner. Each segment of the public is polled to determine just which dimensions of credibility are the most effective for that particular segment. Then those criteria are met as nearly as possible in order to gain the greatest possible advantage for that source, and, therefore, his message.<sup>8</sup>

Using this background for perspective, the writer of this thesis sought to determine the most favorable method of identification for each audience, whether male or female, young or old. The public's education level also has an

effect on the perceived credibility of each source, so that too was studied.

### Need for the Study

The American public--by virtue of its easy access to immediate, on-the-scene news from around the world--has developed a skeptical attitude toward the sources of government, business, and other areas of public concern.<sup>9</sup> World events come directly to the public via satellite as they occur. The public has access to many sources, both by choice and by chance. The judgment of source credibility now includes imagery and charisma as well as the three basic dimensions set forth by Berlo and Lemert (1961) and others--trustworthiness, expertise, and dynamism.<sup>10</sup>

Despite the technological advances alludes to above, the public still is greatly affected by its initial reaction to the original words used in the identification or description of the source when an opinion is formed concerning a source's trustworthiness, competence, dynamism, or even imagery. As Hovland, Janis, and Kelley wrote, "The effect of a communication is commonly assumed to depend to a considerable extent upon who delivers it."<sup>11</sup> Therefore, to have his message accepted or to effect desired changes, the source seeks to be regarded as highly credible in all dimensions,

Some writers trace the public's overall skepticism regarding public sources to the Watergate scandal that shook the nation. Then the Vietnam issue brought feelings of

betrayal and a general wariness of "experts" and other news sources.

Skepticism may well be one of the outstanding characteristics of post-Vietnam America. Bowden, Caldwell, and West showed a general decline in the credibility of authority types, many of which were considered virtually inviolate only a few years ago.<sup>12</sup> Whether a growing skepticism bodes well or ill for a government founded upon the will of the people is an important unanswered question. At what point does skepticism become widespread enough to make orderly government impossible?

Such theoretical concerns were important in the selection of source credibility as the focal point of this study.

#### Purpose of the Study

The general public of the 1980s is not as source oriented as it was in the days when public officials were more highly regarded, before the disillusionment of the past three decades. Highly-ranked government, business, and even religious figures have tumbled from their pedestals of prestige and have lost much of their credibility with the public.<sup>13</sup>

Public personalities come and go in the public eye; the very fact of their brief reign also affects their credibility. The initial choice of identification factors, then, has a dramatic effect upon a communicator's credibility.

In addition, the criteria men and women use in their



evaluations are different.<sup>14</sup> Men, because they tend to be more goal-oriented, base their evaluations on the Socio-cultural identification of title or rank and organization or affiliation. Women are more likely to base their evaluative judgments on those values and ethics they perceive as existing in Biographical identification of education, professional achievements, and personal background data.<sup>15</sup>

That, then, is the purpose of this research study--to determine which identification factors have the greatest effect on on source credibility as it applies to specific public figures in today's political arena, particularly those involved in the women's rights argument. As Liska (1973) demonstrated, most of the criteria for believability change from one topic or situation to another, from one day to the next. Therefore, research should continue to test the opinions and attitudes of the public.<sup>16</sup>

This study sought to determine the effectiveness of three methods of source identification: (1) Biographical with education, professional achievements, and personal background data; (2) Socio-cultural with title or rank and organization or affiliation; and (3) Occupation only. These three methods have been ranked as High-level, Middle-level, and Low-level of identification. The effect of these three levels of identification was tested for any interaction with specific segments of the population by sex, age, and education. The variance between treatments, between sexes, and between the age groups of the respondents also was studied.

## The Research Focus

In order to learn more of the dynamics involved in source credibility, the author sought to isolate certain public figures who had emerged in the past few years as important spokespersons on a widely-known public issue. After consideration of a number of possibilities, women's rights issues were selected along with those spokespersons whose views on these issues most frequently appeared in press reports. Chapter III will expand upon the use of these spokespersons.

Equal rights and comparable worth became the focal point for women's issues in the 1980s. The intensely bitter confrontation of opposing special-interest groups has made the names of several persons and organizations well known, but just how highly regarded these sources are remains unclear.

## Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this research, opinion was defined as an expression of an attitude toward a controversial person or issue, favorable or unfavorable, while attitude was defined as a predisposition to respond in a given way to a given issue or situation. Other frequently used terms in this study follow:

Source: A person who has a favorable or unfavorable connotation for the message recipient.

**Credibility:** Refers to the source's expertise on the subject, his trustworthiness as a communicator, and his dynamism.

**Expertise:** The extent to which a source is perceived as being capable of making correct assumptions and being qualified to speak on a specific subject.

**Trustworthiness:** Those traits by which a source is perceived to be conscientious and reliable.

**Dynamism:** The observable behavior and characteristics (either favorable or unfavorable) that give credibility to the source.

**Identification:** The controlling feature setting forth specific evaluative factors of each source by which the test respondents will form their opinions.

**High-level identification:** A Biographical outline of a source's educational background, professional achievements, and other personal data.

**Middle-level identification:** An outline of a source's rank or title and organization or affiliation, subtitled Socio-cultural.

**Low-level identification:** A listing of a source's occupation only.

#### Limitations

It should be stressed that the women's rights movement in its broader aspects, whatever its merits, should not be confused with the purpose of this study. Learning more about

sources and their credibility as related to source identification is the research objective.

While the research goal was valid semantic-differential data from 300 test subjects, certain problems inherent in the study reduced this number to 167 usable returns. Business men and women, for example, were tested at noon civic club meetings. The research was carried out between lunch and the business portion of the meetings. This meant that, in many cases, respondents submitted incomplete and unusable opinionnaires or left without returning the forms.

Another limitation was the large number of students used as respondents. While all returned the research forms at the end of the test period, many responses were invalidated because of the students' apparent inability to differentiate between High and Low credibility. This may have been related, in part at least, to their basic weakness in following current events.

Finally, some respondents were so emotionally involved in the broader issue of women's rights that they may have missed some of the careful instructions given prior to each test session. There was some evidence that, in a few cases, the focus of the problem was not clearly understood.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup>James C. McCroskey, "Scales for the Measurement of Ethos," Speech Monographs 33 (1966), p. 66.
- <sup>2</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup>Carl I. Hovland, I. L. Janis, and H. H. Kelley, Communications and Persuasion, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 56.
- <sup>4</sup>Harvey Wish, Society and Thought in Modern America, (New York: Longmaus, Green and Co., 1957), p. 455, pp. 490-492.
- <sup>5</sup>Joe McGinness, The Selling of the President, (New York: Trident Press, 1969), pp. 84-90.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 88
- <sup>7</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup>Jacob J. Washlog and Nadyne G. Edison, "Attraction, Credibility, Perceived Similarity, and the Image of Public Figures," Communication Quarterly 27 (February, 1979), pp. 27-34.
- <sup>9</sup>Encyclopedia Americana Yearbook 1974, s.v. "United States," by Robert Shogan, pp. 618-626.
- <sup>10</sup>David K. Berlo, James B. Lemert, and Robert J. Mertz, "Dimensions for Evaluating the Acceptability of Message Sources," Public Opinion Quarterly 33 (1969-1970), p. 563.
- <sup>11</sup>Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, p. 19.
- <sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 22.
- <sup>13</sup>Encyclopedia Americana 1974, p. 619.
- <sup>14</sup>Rusty Brown, "Women In The 80s," Enid Daily Eagle, December 6, 1986, p. A-6.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Michael Roloff and Gerald R. Miller, Eds., Persuasion: New Directions in Theory and Research, Vol. 8, (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1980), p. 120.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Of those names cited in source credibility research none are repeated more frequently than those of Osgood, Hovland, Berlo, and McCroskey. Their research on the credibility dimensions most frequently found to be significant established a modus operandi for the following three decades.

Hovland and Weiss ( 1952)<sup>1</sup> and Hovland, Janis, and Kelley (1953)<sup>2</sup> set out two factors as being the most significant in their studies of source credibility--expertise and trustworthiness. Their studies involved the effects of source credibility on the message, and which of the two dimensions was the most significant, citing previous studies by Kulp (1934), Saadi and Farnsworth (1934), and Asch (1940) that supported their findings. Hovland and his associates discussed the effect of emotional-appeal messages and of messages presented without supporting facts.

#### 1950-1960 Studies

Their wide-ranging work in the early 1950s appears to have set the tone of credibility research for those who followed. Hovland, Janis, and Kelley combined their own research and the research of others in the 1957 book,

Communication and Persuasion, which virtually became a handbook in the field.<sup>3</sup>

Percy Tannenbaum's doctoral dissertation at the University of Illinois in 1954 and his subsequent article in Public Opinion Quarterly noted the use of what he termed a "novel approach" as a testing instrument.<sup>4</sup> His was one of the first of many studies to use Osgood's semantic differential as a method of measuring opinions. Tannenbaum hypothesized that the amount of attitude change toward the concept in the direction of the assertion is directly proportional to the degree of favorableness of the original attitude toward the source. This hypothesis was upheld by a significant difference (.01) between the favorable and unfavorable versions.

The semantic-differential scales composed of the adjectives most frequently used to describe credibility were developed by Osgood in his research and were presented for public use in the 1957 book by Osgood, Tannenbaum, and Suci, The Measurement of Meaning.<sup>5</sup>

Osgood, Tannenbaum, and Suci (1956) in earlier research noted that differences could be predicted on the basis of knowledge of the political attitudes of test subjects.<sup>6</sup> That work involved the testing of three specific groups-- Eisenhower Republicans, Taft Republicans, and Stevenson Democrats. The study revealed that these groups of specific political preferences produced markedly different semantic-differential profiles for two key concepts: McCarthy and religion.<sup>7</sup>



## 1961-1970 Studies

Anderson and Clevenger (1963) defined ethos as the "image held of a communicator at a given time by a receiver, either one person or a group."<sup>8</sup> These researchers used six types of measuring devices in their study: ranking, Cole's sociograms, Kulp's prestige index, Walter's linear rating scales, Thurstone-type attitude scales, and Osgood and Stagner's device similar to Likert scaling technique including the semantic differential. These devices were used to study the effect of ethos on communication, the technique for generating or changing ethos, the measurement of one or more aspects of ethos, and the measurement level of individual or group ethos. Their work set forth two major dimensions: evaluative and dynamism in image. Their findings were too detailed to catalogue here, but their method was useful in the shaping of this thesis.<sup>9</sup>

Hewgill and Miller (1965) studied the effects of fear-arousing communications using competence, trustworthiness, and dynamism as their credibility dimensions.<sup>10</sup> Their study was based on the hypothesis that the level of the source's credibility would interact with the level of fear appeal. They used a seven-point linear scale for concern for family; four seven-interval scales for competence, trustworthiness, and dynamism; and five seven-interval scales to record the subjects' attitudes toward the basic concepts. The results supported the authors' hypothesis that high-credibility sources and high-fear messages produced greater attitude

change than low-fear messages. Finally, the group exposed to high credibility and high fear held a significantly more favorable attitude toward the message topic than any of the subjects in any of the other experimental groups.<sup>11</sup>

Fredric Powell (1965) conducted research on the relative effectiveness of appeals posing threats to the listener, his family, and nation and the interaction between the levels of threat and the person against whom it is directed.<sup>12</sup> Powell's hypothesis that a strong anxiety appeal threatening the listener's family would produce a greater change in attitude than a mild anxiety message was confirmed.<sup>13</sup>

Miller and Hewgill (1966) worked together in a second study on the interaction of the levels of fear arousal in message appeals and the credibility of the message source.<sup>14</sup> Using an identical design and procedure from their previous study, they changed only their message. Credibility was measured by 12 seven-interval semantic-differential scales chosen on the basis of prior factor analytic research by Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz. The dimensions of competence and trustworthiness were used to determine credibility of sources. The factor of dynamism was omitted in their study.<sup>15</sup>

The test for interaction of high credibility of source and a strong fear-arousing message yielded a significant relationship. However, their hypothesis of a low-credibility source and a low-fear arousal message interaction was not upheld. In a comparison of these two areas of credibility, the interaction of a strong fear-arousal message with the

competence factor yielded the highest level of significance. Again the high-credibility source delivering a strong fear-arousing message had the greatest effect on attitude change of the listeners when compared to the group exposed to the high-credibility, low-fear combination.<sup>16</sup>

The authors concluded that a high fear-arousing message delivered by a low-credibility source may be discredited because of that source's lack of credibility with the listener.<sup>17</sup>

The above research was one of the series of studies by various researchers on cognitive dissonance, credibility of source, and the level of anxiety produced by messages. Included in that number were Kraus, El-Assal, and DeFleur (1966) who studied the use of fear-threat appeals in mass communications.<sup>18</sup> The subjects were classified by age, education, and by occupation; the sources by medium, whether newspaper, television, interpersonal, radio, or some other method.<sup>19</sup>

During this period, several studies were conducted on cognitive dissonance created by the level of source credibility and the level of fear or anxiety arousal in the message. However, as in the research by Kraus, El-Assal, and DeFleur cited above, more emphasis was brought to bear on the medium used as a primary source rather than the high or low credibility of the source.

James C. McCroskey (1966) described his scales for the measurement of ethos in Speech Monographs.<sup>29</sup> Levels of ethos,

he stated, have been measured by rankings, sociograms, prestige indexes, linear ratings, scales, Thurstone-type attitude scales, and devices similar to Likert scaling techniques including the semantic differential.<sup>21</sup> These methods were similar to those of Andersen and Clevenger (1963), previously mentioned.

Factor analysis of the data produced authoritativeness and character as the most significant factors. The authoritativeness factor, McCroskey reported, accounted for 47 percent of the variance, while the character factor accounted for 29 percent of the variance.<sup>22</sup>

McCroskey then developed two separate Likert-type scales and a 12-item, semantic-differential scale to measure each of these factors. In a series of seven experiments, McCroskey used the Likert-type scales in all experiments while using the semantic differential in the last experiment only. The amount of variance accounted for by authoritativeness for the Likert-type scale was 62 percent, for the semantic-differential test group 70 percent. The variance accounted for by character for the Likert-type scale was 63 percent and for the semantic differential 64 percent. McCroskey concluded that, on the basis of his experiments, the two semantic-differential scales for measuring authoritativeness and character and the Likert-type scales were valid measures of these dimensions. The high correlation between the Likert and the semantic-differential scales was an indication of their concurrent validity, he said.<sup>23</sup>

Greenberg and Miller (1966) published their research study on the effects of low-credibility sources on message acceptance.<sup>24</sup> These researchers were particularly interested in the relationship of timing in revealing a low-credibility source in connection with the message. They compared low-credibility sources and unidentified sources and studied the interaction between the level of source credibility and the timing of the message attribution to the audience.<sup>25</sup>

In a series of four experiments, Greenberg and Miller based credibility on the dimensions of expertise and trustworthiness. They used Likert scales for measuring and the Mann-Whitney U-test for the analysis of the attitude score data. The researchers found that subjects in the unidentified source treatment expressed significantly more favorable attitudes toward the message topic than the subjects did under the low-credibility treatment. The absence of source attribution produced more favorable scores than did credibility accompanied by attribution.<sup>26</sup>

In their second experiment, Greenberg and Miller tested the effect of immediate versus delayed identification\* of a low-credibility source. Again, using the Mann-Whitney U-test their analysis indicated that significantly more favorable attitudes toward the message topic were expressed by the

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\*Immediate identification refers to the writer's by-line immediately after the headline; delayed identification refers to the by-line placed at the end of the story.

group receiving the information about the source after reading the message.<sup>27</sup>

In the third experiment, the effect of immediate versus delayed identification of a low-credibility source was tested on individuals who had some professional training in communication, as opposed to the subjects in the first experiment, who were untrained.

As in the prior experiments, Likert scales were used as the method of determining the test subjects' attitudes toward the message topic and the credibility of the source. Results indicated a higher mean attitude score for the subjects in the delayed-identification group. However, the difference in the results of the two groups was not found to be significant. Nevertheless, Greenberg and Miller reported that the direction and extent of the differences provided additional support for their hypothesis.<sup>28</sup>

In their fourth experiment, Greenberg and Miller tested the effects of immediate versus delayed identification of high- and low-credibility sources. This research was conducted in an attempt to test the finding of the separate experiments. Greenberg and Miller concluded that, if the source is perceived as highly credible, immediate identification results in more favorable audience attitudes toward the topic, while more favorable attitudes are expressed for sources of relatively low credibility when identification of the source is delayed until after exposure to the message.<sup>29</sup>

Greenberg and Miller considered their key finding to be

that individuals hearing source attribution before the message were less receptive to the message; these individuals had been forewarned and "placed on guard" against any further persuading. On the other hand, delayed identification of the source gave the audience an opportunity to respond to the message and evaluate it without any prejudicial knowledge that the information came from a source whose competence and trustworthiness might be considered unreliable. The researchers qualified that conclusion by stating:

Given a message of relatively high quality, delayed attribution of the message to a low-credible source will result in more favorable attitudes toward the message topic than will immediate attribution.<sup>30</sup>

A second factor affecting the experiments was the failure of 60 percent of the respondents to rate the source's credibility low in any absolute sense.<sup>31</sup>

Greenberg and Miller concluded that no simple generalization can be made regarding optimum source-identification strategies. The success or failure of such strategies is dependent upon having a relevant source and a message of high quality and relevance as variables. Those factors still remain uninvestigated, they stated.<sup>32</sup>

Bowers and Phillips (1967) developed a study on the generality of source credibility scales, using Likert scales and factor analysis.<sup>33</sup> Their two basic factors of trustworthiness and competence were labeled character and authoritativeness. They also tested general evaluation and ingenuity. Character and authoritativeness were the only

factors found to be significant. Bowers and Phillips concluded that apparently trustworthiness, competence, character, and authoritativeness are appropriate perceptual dimensions for semantic-differential tests of source-concept constructs as well as for tests of source separated from their concept.<sup>34</sup>

Siegel, Elliott, Miller, and Wotring (1968) studied the relationship of source credibility and the credibility perceptions of self by test subjects.<sup>35</sup> The subjects in this research were grouped by their level of assumed similarity to the sources.

Using a two-factor analysis of variance to determine attitude change, the researchers found that their data yielded a significant difference at the .05 level of confidence for those subjects with low-assumed similarities with the source. Subjects with low-assumed similarities perceived a greater difference between high- and low-credibility sources than did subjects with high-assumed similarities. Their t-tests indicated that low-assumed similarities/high credibility tests subjects exhibited significantly more change than did the high-assumed similarities/high credibility group. The researchers notes that the low-assumed similarities/high credibility subjects exhibited more change than the low-assumed similarities/low-credibility group.<sup>36</sup>

In another phase of their study the researchers rated 10 well-known personalities on six seven-point, bi-polar adjective scales loaded highly on three dimensions of source



credibility: competence, trustworthiness, and dynamism.<sup>37</sup> Their findings supported the notion that the persuasive effectiveness of a message can be predicted more precisely if the receiver's sensitivity toward the source is known.<sup>38</sup>

Ego-involvement, high-source credibility, and response to belief-discrepant communication was the subject of Kenneth K. Sereno (1968)<sup>39</sup> Basing his research on Sherif's (1965) ego-involvement approach in predicting attitude change toward both the issue and source of a message, Sereno acknowledged the fundamental assumption of ego-involvement in the message content. In other words, the more involved the individual is in the topic, the more difficult it is to persuade him to change his position on the substance of that topic.<sup>40</sup>

In his research results, Sereno discovered that both high- and low-involved subjects displayed statistically significant attitude change after the experimental treatment. Highly involved respondents who held an unfavorable attitude toward the subject significantly lowered their evaluation of the source after the experimental treatment. Low-involved respondents did not significantly lower their mean evaluation of the subject. In fact, Sereno stated, the low-involved respondents who initially held a favorable attitude toward the subject made more positive evaluations of the source after the experiment.<sup>41</sup>

Taken as a whole, Sereno's results indicated that the concepts of ego-involvement when combined with the variables

of high-source credibility can be used to predict the type of attitude response toward the topic of the message and toward a source.

In Sereno's second experiment, semantic-differential, bi-polar scales were used to measure ego-involvement interaction with attitude change toward the message and source. Using a source consistently judged in pre-test procedures as highly credible, but with a discrepant message, Sereno found that highly involved subjects changed their attitude less on the message in the direction advocated than the lowly involved subjects (.05). However, the highly involved subjects' change in attitude toward the source was only moderately strong. Their attitude toward the source was not lowered significantly.<sup>42</sup>

Jack L. Whitehead, Jr. (1968) included new scales and separate analysis of high- and low-credibility sources in an attempt to verify dimensions of source credibility previously identified and the scales for measuring those dimensions.<sup>43</sup> He cited the previous methods used by Lemert (semantic differential), McCroskey (both semantic differential and Likert-type scales), and Schweitzer and Ginsburg (factor-analyzed semantic-differential scales) as being limited because the researchers could never be sure of including all pertinent characteristics for describing communicators. The significant difference between mean scores for the overall response to the treatment, Whitehead said, indicated that the subjects

perceived the high-credibility speaker in significantly more favorable terms than the low-credibility speaker.<sup>44</sup>

The first factor to emerge in the high-credibility analysis was trustworthiness, accounting for 30.3 percent of the total variance. The second factor was competence (7.1 percent), and the third was dynamism (3.8 percent). The fourth factor was an objectivity factor indicating open-mindedness and impartiality of the source (3.2 percent).<sup>45</sup>

In the low-credibility treatment, the first factor to emerge was again trustworthiness, accounting for 28.7 percent of the variance. The second factor was dynamism (9.4 percent), while the third factor was competence (4.5 percent). The fourth factor was the low-credibility source's objectivity or lack of objectivity.<sup>46</sup>

Whitehead concluded the trustworthiness factor is best measured by right-wrong, honest-dishonest, trustworthy-untrustworthy, and just-unjust adjective pairs. The professionalism or competence factor was best indexed, he said, by experienced-inexperienced and professional manner-lack of professional manner. For dynamism, the best scales were aggressive-meeek and active-passive, while for the objectivity factor Whitehead determined the best scales were open mindedness-closed mindedness and objective-subjective. Whitehead suggested that his research be followed up in an effort to support or contradict his view that testing by adjective scales is too limiting.<sup>47</sup>

Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz (1969) set out to expand the

work of Hovland, Janis, and Kelley (1953) on source credibility by investigating the criteria used by receivers in evaluating message sources.<sup>48</sup> The four dimensions isolated were safety, qualification, dynamism, and sociability. These four factors accounted for 62 percent of total variance in the 830 scales used in the research testing. Safety accounted for 34 percent of the total variance, with qualification accounting for 16 percent and dynamism accounting for 10 percent. Combined, these three factors accounted for 60 percent of the variance. The sociability factor accounted for the remaining 2.6 percent of total variance.<sup>49</sup>

Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz had reservations about their findings. They attributed these reservations to the highly atypical sample with respect to age and education and to the fact that some scales were included solely on the basis of the frequency with which pre-test subjects had used them to describe sources.<sup>50</sup>

In a second study, using the dimensions of safety, qualification, and dynamism, they found these dimensions of source credibility accounted for 59.93 percent of the total variance.<sup>51</sup>

R. Barry Fulton (1970) used five dimensions of personality to measure speaker credibility.<sup>52</sup> Those dimensions were agreeableness, conscientiousness, culture, extroversion, and emotional stability. Fulton compared Norman's credibility factors with those of the Berlo-Lemert-Mertz study and with those of Whitehead. For each of the

dimensions except agreeableness, the two groups differed significantly in their responses. Fulton also found the subjects judged the speakers to be significantly different on the measure of attraction. Fulton labeled attraction as agreeableness plus culture and conscientiousness, or in Berlo-Lemert-Mertz's terms, competence and trustworthiness.<sup>53</sup>

Fulton ran a multiple correlation analysis using attraction as the dependent variable and the five credibility dimensions as independent variables. He stated the following relationship was found to be significant at the .01 level with a multiple correlation coefficient of .65: "Attraction = .29 Agreeableness = .10 Conscientiousness = .20 Culture - 1.68."<sup>54</sup> Fulton described this as a single, linear relationship.

Running a second multiple correlation, Fulton used the five dimensions of credibility, their inverse, their natural logs, and all pair multiples as independent variables. The relationship was found to be significant at the .01 level with a multiple correlation of .65. Fulton declared the second resulting equation (Attraction = .01 Agreeableness  $\sqrt{\text{Culture} = \frac{1}{2} \text{Conscientiousness}}$  + 3.46) "more interesting," as agreeableness appeared as a multiplication of the two factors most frequently cited in credibility literature and research--competence and trustworthiness.<sup>55</sup>

In an effort to validate his previous findings, Fulton, in a second experiment, examined the credibility of the seven leading presidential candidates as of November 1967 in terms

of the three dimensions of agreeableness, culture, and conscientiousness. A comparison of the rank order of the credibility scores and the presidential preference scores yielded a significant Spearman correlation of .38 at an .05 level. Fulton stated that the empirical data partially validated his methodology, and that the attraction factor helped explain the charismatic appeal of some speakers.<sup>56</sup>

#### 1971 to Present

Whitehead (1971) was not able to fully confirm his original concept in his research on authority-based assertions from sources.<sup>57</sup> His original concept that persons low in critical thinking ability would be less able to separate ideas from their sources and, therefore, would be more influenced by authority-based assertions than persons high in critical thinking ability was not strongly supported by his data. He found sources were perceived as more trustworthy and more objective when using authority-based assertions. However, the effects of professionalism and dynamism were far below significant levels.<sup>58</sup>

Mehrley and McCroskey (1970) found a discrepant message containing non-opinionated statements resulted in greater favorable attitude change than a discrepant message containing opinionated statements previously rejected with intensity by the test subjects.<sup>59</sup> In addition, discrepant messages containing non-opinionated statements resulted in higher post-test credibility ratings than a message that contained

earlier rejected opinion statements (if the subject initially held an intense attitude toward messages of similar content). Also confirmed was the notion that a rejected-opinion message results in greater favorable attitude change than a non-opinionated message with an individual whose attitude is neutral.<sup>60</sup>

Basehart and Bostrom (1972) dealt with the question of the message recipient's perception of his own credibility on a topic in relation to his perception of a message source's credibility.<sup>61</sup> They studied the subsequent influence of these perceptions as a process of attitude and modification.

These researchers found little change in message acceptance when the receiver perceived both himself and the source to be equally qualified. Similarly, when the receiver perceived both the source and himself to be low in qualification, there also was minimal change. However, when the receiver perceived himself as low in credibility and perceived the source as highly credible, there was a greater change of attitude.<sup>62</sup>

Milbourn and Stone (1972) were concerned with the manipulation of source variables in order to produce a source-message-recipient paradigm.<sup>63</sup> Their main objective was to test the relationship between source-message orientation and the credibility factors of expertness and trustworthiness.

Opinions, most researchers said, are based on those similarities the individual perceives to exist between himself

and the source, whether these similarities are in ideals, achievements, education, or background. Such persons, as defined by Milbourn and Stone, are source-oriented persons--more concerned with the source than the message of the communication.<sup>64</sup>

They found the factor of trustworthiness yielded the most significant difference between the subjects of high and low source orientation (.001). Increasing the factor of trustworthiness for the source did increase attitude change for highly source-oriented persons but made little difference for those who were low in source-orientation. The expertness manipulation results were weaker but still significant (.05). While the expertness of the source interacted with the message orientation of the recipients, a significant difference was not found. The researchers stated that their results suggested a need for modification of the concept of source-message orientation in terms of a source-message-recipient paradigm of communication.<sup>65</sup>

Appelbaum and Anatol (1973) set forth a reproducible test on the dimensions of source credibility.<sup>66</sup> They had taken exception to the tendency of researchers to use identical semantic-differential scales from study to study. They stated that a set of scales can be expected to exhibit variations as a feature of specific concepts, subjects, cultures, experiments, and time. Situationality, they said, forces different grammars from one event to another.<sup>67</sup>

Their purpose, then, was to investigate the variability



of scales representing the four factors of source credibility. As they hypothesised that the scales and factors necessarily change from time to time, they wanted to explore the overall factor structure of the subjects' perceptions of and attributions to a source. Using 12 scales from McCroskey's study, 15 from Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz, and six from Whitehead's study, they set the factors as trustworthiness, expertise, dynamism, and objectivity.

The research results confirmed their hypothesis that scales representing factors of credibility would change over time. In other words, the scales did not correlate highly on the same evaluative factors from the first testing to the second testing. They also confirmed that the factor structure, including the number of significant factors and the amount of variance, does change over time.<sup>68</sup>

Their results, they said, confirmed that communication is an ongoing, dynamic process and that those variables that affect our perceptions can be expected to change; therefore, the scales used to measure credibility should reflect that change.<sup>69</sup>

Stone and Hoyt (1974) studied the effect of likability and the relevance of expertness, citing McGuire's (1968) statement that source attractiveness includes such non-message related source characteristics as likability, familiarity, and similarity between source and recipient of the message.<sup>70</sup> No manipulation of likability was successful at the .001 level, while the expertness manipulation registered

differences significant at the .001 level, Likability also made a difference in the perceived expertness (.01 level). Perceptions of trustworthiness were affected by likability but not by the relevance of the source's expertness. Competence ratings were affected by relevance of expertness at the .05 level but not by the likability of the source.<sup>71</sup>

Christopher Tuppen (1974) wrote in Speech Monographs that most researchers use semantic differential or Likert-type scales to measure data.<sup>72</sup> Therefore, he proposed to use a simplex structure rather than an orthogonal factor structure. He said he believed the simplex could be interpreted as showing that appropriate words in the English language can express many shades of meaning between the two extremes of safety\* and qualification.<sup>73</sup>

Using his own scales and those from previous studies, Tuppen developed a cluster analysis that yielded four clusters. However, the fourth cluster was not readily interpreted. It was not highly colinear, so he divided it into two clusters for meaning and spatial configuration of the variables. The clusters then formed were: charisma\*\* with 66 percent of communiality, trustworthiness with 64 percent, co-orientation with 59 percent, expertise with 49 percent, and dynamism with 16 percent. Tuppen's research results

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\*Safety in the context of the Tuppen study is similar to trustworthiness in other reported studies.

\*\*Tuppen defined charisma as "grace, extraordinary merit, genius or power in a leader which brings about a direct personal allegiance in his followers."

generally concurred with the dimensions of safety, qualification, and dynamism cited by Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz (1969).<sup>74</sup>

Cluster No. 1 of trustworthiness was comparable to Berlo's safety and McCroskey's character.

Cluster No. 2 of expertise was comparable to Berlo's qualification and McCroskey's authoritativeness.

Cluster No. 3 of dynamism was the same as Berlo's dynamism.

Cluster No. 4 of co-orientation had no counterpart in any previous work.

Cluster No. 5 of charisma again had no counterpart in any previous work. Tuppen used scales of convincing, reasonable, logical, believable, intelligent, respected, and background to form the basis for the charisma dimension.<sup>75</sup>

L. R. Wheelless (1974) used a regression approach in his research on attitudes and credibility in the prediction of attitude change.<sup>76</sup> His research questioned how much variance in attitude intensity could be accounted for by prior attitude and credibility. Using independent variables of source competence, sociability, composure, extroversion, and character along with prior intensity, importance, and involvement and the dependent variable of post-attitude intensity, he found a significant effect on his four-variable regression model. Pre-attitude intensity accounted for 61 percent of the variance along with predictor importance, source competence, and source credibility. These four variables were the

only significant individual predictors. Pre-attitude intensity accounted for 51 percent of the total variance in both testings.<sup>77</sup>

Wakshlog and Edison (1979) investigated the relationship between the communication source variables of attraction, credibility, and perceived similarities with the overall image of public figures.<sup>78</sup> Based on respondents' pair comparisons among a large number of public figures, the researchers arrived at 15 public-figure pairs in a multidimensional space and compared that to the subjects' arrangement on measures of attraction, credibility, and similarity. The pair comparisons were based on a measurement technique used by Torgerson (1958). This method allowed respondents to compare public figures to each other by ratio using any criteria they chose. The researchers' prime concern was whether the locations of public figures in a multidimensional space were predictable from source valence concepts.<sup>79</sup>

The results of their regression equations indicated that similarity, physical attraction, competence, character, sociability, composure, and extroversion were significantly predicted by the dimensions of the metric multidimensional space (.05 level). Another set of regression equations was designed to assess the amount of variance in the multidimensional space that could be explained by the theoretical concepts. They found the source valence concepts accounted for little variance or distance in the multidimensional space. Wakshlog and Edison stated that this study clearly supported the

need for further research to determine the attributes employed by the public in their perception of public figures.<sup>80</sup>

While they will not be presented in detail, four additional source credibility studies should be noted. The first two are the cross-cultural studies of Whittaker and Meade (1967)<sup>81</sup> and James B. Lemert (1969).<sup>82</sup> The latter two by Miller and McReynold (1973)<sup>83</sup> and Tau, Randy, Hugg, and Miles (1980)<sup>84</sup> focused upon the sex of the source and the effect this had upon those individuals tested.

The cross-cultural studies indicated the validity of Lemert's statement:

More than four decades of research indicates that the greater the credibility or prestige of the source, the greater the immediate acceptance by the audience of what he said."<sup>85</sup>

Miller and McReynold's study concerned adult subjects, while the Tau research group employed children as their study subjects. But whether child or adult, the subjects did exhibit a significantly different perception of sources by sex.<sup>86</sup>

#### Trends in Credibility Research

As may be seen in this chronological review of the source-credibility studies over the past 35 years, ideas for research seem suddenly to achieve widespread interest, linking the researchers across the nation.

The basic research in credibility from the early 1950s to the present still sets forth essentially the same

dimensions as the most significant: competence, trustworthiness, and dynamism. Whether the researchers labeled their dimensions in precisely the same manner, the results were the same. Therefore, those same dimensions with occasional additions such as charisma will continue to be studied.

The message studies clustered in the early 1970s stressed authority-based assertions, anxiety-arousing messages, and fear-arousing messages. Opinionated messages and belief-discrepant messages were studied as to their effect on source credibility.

Then in the mid-'70s, a series of studies on the types of instruments for measuring credibility were conducted. Semantic-differential scales, easy to construct and use, became a major part of communication research. The need for further research into situationality necessitating changes of adjective scales was set forth. As time passed and situations and meanings changed, so did the words used in the semantic-differential scales. Although criticized as limiting in scope, the semantic differential as an instrument of measuring meaning still stands as a primary contribution to research.

An influx of studies on attitude intensity directed toward the source and toward the message developed in the 1970s. Several studies concerned whether the subject or receiver was message-oriented or source-oriented. The degree to which the subject perceived himself as similar to the source in credibility also was found to be a contributing

fact in the overall picture of source credibility and message acceptance.

Charisma, likability, and attraction came under scrutiny in the 1970s. But no matter how it was labeled, charisma was found to have an effect on credibility. However, this effect was not as significant as those dimensions of competence and trustworthiness.

Cross-cultural studies on source credibility involving several countries were made. This area of research remains underdeveloped.

Then, in that era of feminism, equal rights, and charges of male chauvinism, studies were made on the effect of the sex of the speaker on message acceptance and the credibility of the speaker. Studies with children and with adults were made in which significant differences were found to exist in perceptions of credibility as determined by the sources' sex and the respondents' sex.

The use of actual public figures as test sources instead of "public figures" depicted by actors in role-playing situations developed in this period. The need for further research to more clearly determine the attributes crucial to the public in their perception of public figures was established.

As society or culture evolves and changes, so the research studies on source credibility and message acceptance have changed and will continue to change.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Carl I. Hovland and Walter Weiss, "The Influence of Source Credibility and Communication Effectiveness," Public Opinion Quarterly 15 (1951), pp. 635-650.

<sup>2</sup>Carl I. Hovland, I. L. Janis, and H. H. Kelley, Communication and Persuasion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), pp. 20-21.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Percy H. Tannenbaum, "Initial Attitude Toward Source and Concept as Factors in Attitude Change Through Communications," Public Opinion Quarterly 20 (1956), pp. 413-425.

<sup>5</sup>Charles E. Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, The Measurement of Meaning (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1957).

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Kenneth Andersen and Theodore Clevenger, Jr., "A Summary of Experimental Research in Ethos," Speech Monographs 30 (1963), pp. 59-78.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Murray A. Hewgill and Gerald Miller, "Source Credibility and Response to Fear-Arousing Communications." Speech Monographs 32 (1965), pp. 95-102.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Fredric Powell, "The Effect of Anxiety-Arousing Messages When Related to Personal, Familial, and Interpersonal Referents," Speech Monographs 32 (1965), pp. 103-106.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>14</sup>Gerald Miller and Murray A. Hewgill, "Some Recent Research on Fear-Arousing Message Appeals," Speech Monographs 33 (1966), pp. 377-391.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 380.



<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 389.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 391.

<sup>18</sup>Sidney Kraus, Elaine El-Assal, and Melvin L. DeFleur, "Fear-Threat Appeals in Mass Communications: An Apparent Contradiction," Speech Monographs 33 (1966), pp. 23-29.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>James C. McCroskey, "Scales for the Measurement of Ethos." Speech Monographs 33 (1966). pp. 65-72.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>24</sup>Bradley Greenberg and Gerald R. Miller, "The Effects of Low-Credibility Sources on Message Acceptance," Speech Monographs 33 (1966), pp. 127-136.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 130.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>J. W. Bowers and W. A. Phillips, "A Note on the Generality of Source Credibility Scales," Speech Monographs 34 (1967), pp. 185-186.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>35</sup>Elliott Siegel, Gerald R. Miller, and Edward Wotring, "Source Credibility Proneness: A New Relationship," Speech Monographs 36 (1969), pp. 118-125.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., pp. 124-125.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 122.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Kenneth K. Serano, "Ego-Involvement, High Source Credibility, and Response to a Belief Discrepant Communication," Speech Monographs 36 (1968), pp. 476-481.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 477.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 478.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 479.

<sup>43</sup>Jack L. Whitehead, Jr., "Factors of Source Credibility," Quarterly Journal of Speech 54 (February 1968), pp. 59-63.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 60

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>48</sup>David K. Berlo, James B. Lemert, and Robert J. Mertz, "Dimensions for Evaluating the Acceptability of Message Sources," Public Opinion Quarterly 33 (Winter 1969-1970), pp. 563-576.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 567.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 572.

<sup>52</sup>P. Barry Fulton, "The Measurement of Speaker Credibility," Journal of Communication 20 (September 1970), pp. 270-279.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 274.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 275.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 277.

<sup>57</sup>Jack L. Whitehead, Jr., "Effects of Authority-Based Assertions on Attitude and Credibility," Speech Monographs 38 (1971), pp. 311-315.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 314.

<sup>59</sup>Sam Mehrley and James C. McCroskey, "Opinionated Statements and Attitude Intensity as Predictors of Attitude Change and Source Credibility," Speech Monographs 37 (1970), pp. 47-52.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>61</sup>John R. Basehart and Robert N. Bostrom, "Credibility of Source and Self in Attitude Changes," Journalism Quarterly 49 (1972), pp. 742-745.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., pp. 744-745.

<sup>63</sup>M. Thomas Milbourn and Vernon Stone, "Source-Message Orientations and Components of Source Credibility," Journalism Quarterly 49 (1972), pp. 663-668

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 668.

<sup>66</sup>Ronald L. Applbaum and Earl W. E. Anatol, "Dimensions of Source Credibility: A Test for Reproducibility," Speech Monographs 40 (1973), pp. 231-237.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 237.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.,

<sup>70</sup>Vernon A. Stone and James L. Hoyt, "Effect of Likability and Relevance of Expertness," Journalism Quarterly 51 (1974) pp. 314-317.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 316.

<sup>72</sup>Christopher Tuppen, "Dimensions of Communicator Credibility: An Oblique Solution," Speech Monographs 41 (1974), pp. 253-260.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 253.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

<sup>76</sup>L. R. Wheelless, "Attitudes and Credibility in the Prediction of Attitude Change: A Regression Approach," Speech Monographs 41 (1974), pp. 277-281.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 280

<sup>78</sup>Jacob J. Wakshlog and Nadyne G. Edison, "Attraction, Credibility, Perceived Similarity, and the Image of Public Figures," Communication Quarterly 27 (February 1979), pp. 27-34.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., pp. 31-33.

<sup>81</sup>James O. Whittaker and Robert D. Meade. "Sex of Communicator as a Variable in Source Credibility." Journal of Social Psychology 72 (June 1967), pp. 27-34.

<sup>82</sup>James B. Lemert, "Components of Source," Journalism Quarterly 46 (1969), pp. 306-313.

<sup>83</sup>Gerald R. Miller and Michael McReynold, "Male Chauvinism and Source Competence: A Research Note," Speech Monographs 40 (1973), pp. 154-155.

<sup>84</sup>Alexis Tau, et. al., "Children's Reactions to Male and Female Newscasters: Effectiveness and Believability," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 66 (1980), pp. 201-215.

<sup>85</sup>Lemert, p. 312.

<sup>86</sup>Miller and McReynolds, p. 153.

<sup>87</sup>Tau, et. al., p. 214.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The public is barraged daily by appeals designed to arouse certain reactions sought by persuasive mass communicators. In addition, the public experiences attempts of others to effect opinion change in everyday living. Many major groups have for the past few decades attempted to influence public opinion in desired directions. These include industry, labor, agriculture, government, education, social welfare agencies, political parties, pressure, professional and interest groups, propagandists for partisan causes, and churches.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, all of these groups have been represented by spokespersons who have addressed various women's rights issues. In some cases, emotional, opinionated appeals, including threats of physical harm or unfavorable consequences, have been used to bring people "into line" with the communicator's conclusions. Arousal of anxiety became a fairly common tactic.<sup>2</sup>

But studies have illustrated the predictability of a highly credible source being able to alleviate this emotional arousal of tensions. In Fishback's research (1951), a widely accepted hypothesis was confirmed.<sup>3</sup> When a communicator

arouses anger or resentment by making statements which are regarded as offensive, the audience tends to develop unfavorable attitudes not only toward the communicator but toward the groups, enterprises, and goals with which he is identified.<sup>4</sup>

If the source, on the other hand, is perceived to be highly credible, according to Heider's balance theory (1958), the listener or audience will be more likely to change his attitude to match that of the highly regarded source.<sup>5</sup>

#### The Research Instrument

The testing and evaluation instruments used in this research were semantic-differential scales and a three-factor analysis of variance with repeats on one measure.

Fifteen adjective scales were chosen from scales developed by Berlo-Lemert (1969), Whitehead (1968), and Norman (1966) to evaluate the study's sources on the dimensions of trustworthiness, competence, and dynamism. The scales were randomly ordered, and polarity was randomly reversed to reduce the chance of order bias. The seven-interval responses ranged from the figure one for a negative response to a seven for a positive response.

Adjective scales used were honest-dishonest, admirable-contemptible; responsible-undependable, just-unjust, cooperative-uncooperative, expert-inexpert, qualified-unqualified, informed-uninformed, reliable-unreliable, experienced-

inexperienced, composed-excitable, calm-tense, aggressive-passive, poised-nervous, and frank and open-secretive.

#### Selection and Instruction of Subjects

Subjects were public relations students at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater and adult members of organizations in Enid, Oklahoma. The combined group of 167 persons represented an age range from 18 to 65 with both high school- and college-educated persons represented.

Oral and written instructions were given as to the purpose of the test and how to execute it. Subjects were told the speakers being tested had spoken on major topics involved in women's rights issues. Those topics included Equal Rights and Comparable Worth, among others.

#### Public Figures Tested

The initial experiment contained the names of eight public figures connected with women's rights issues, both pro and con. Four of those sources served as a "blind" for the four primary sources for this study. The primary sources were Phyllis Schlafly, Jerry Falwell, Eleanor Smeal, and Gloria Steinem. The "blind" sources were Jane Fonda, Geraldine Ferraro, Barry Goldwater, and Clarence Pendleton, all nationally known and all outspoken on women's rights issues-- the first two of pro persuasion and the last two con.

The sources were selected in such a way as to introduce balance. Two of the female sources were principal

spokespersons for the leading organizations on women's rights. Phyllis Schlafly is the leader of Eagle Forum, opponent of the issues; Eleanor Smeal is national president of the National Organization of Women (NOW), main support of the issues. Both of these women have been featured as sources in nationwide media coverage. Their viewpoints are consistent across the many dimensions of the issues and are widely acknowledged; however, personal data relating to achievements, education, and professional background are not as well known.

For example, the actual educational credits of two of the four sources in this study are similar, yet the education factor in mass media identification is given little, if any, emphasis.

Eleanor Smeal graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Duke University and then received a Master of Science degree in political science from the University of Florida.<sup>6</sup>

Phyllis Schlafly graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Washington University, St. Louis, then received a Master of Science degree in government from the same institution.<sup>7</sup>

The remaining sources also represented opposing sides of the issues. Their public stances and the media coverage of those stances ensure widespread public recognition. Gloria Steinem (pro) and Jerry Falwell (con) were the two final sources used.

Each of the four selected spokespersons has received awards and commendations for his or her work on behalf of



the particular group represented. All have been quoted in newspapers and magazines on the issues. Their statements have been featured on radio and television news programs within the past six months. But the usual method of identification has been a simple name, title or rank, and organization represented. The biographical type of identification listing education and achievements is rarely used.

The initial perception of the source is a primary factor in all dimensions of credibility, and that initial perception is formed, in most cases, by the words chosen to represent that source as a means of identification. Considering the foregoing, identification methods would clearly seem to be crucial.

#### Levels of Identification

The identification levels used in this study were (1) Biographical, including education, professional achievements, and personal background, (2) Socio-cultural, including title or rank and organization or affiliation, and (3) Occupational, occupation only.

Biographical was considered a high-level identification in the three-level analysis of variance. Socio-cultural was the middle level, while occupation only was the low-level identification.

## The Testing Procedure

The initial text used all eight women's rights spokespersons and the middle-level of identification (Socio-cultural).

After a three-week interval, the second phase of the experiment was begun. The subjects were randomly assigned to two groups in which the high-level of identification (Biographical) was compared with the low-level of identification (Occupation).

Again the 15 semantic-differential scales were used to measure the perceived credibility of the sources on the dimensions of trustworthiness, competence, and dynamism. Only the primary sources--Schlafly, Falwell, Smeal, and Steinem--were used in this experiment.

The resulting data were evaluated by a three-factor analysis of variance with repeats on the variables of respondent sex and age and of sex and education. Age was divided into two groups, 18 through 35 and 36 and older. The educational levels were high school and college for each sex,

To minimize bias, the analyses were based on the opponents of the issues in one group and the proponents in another group. In other words, 12 analyses for each group were run based on High-Low, Sex-Age; High-Middle, Sex-Age; Middle-Low, Sex-Age; High-Low, Sex-Education; High-Middle, Sex-Education; and Middle-Low, Sex-Education.

Because of the uneven number of persons in each respondent group, gap tests were run using harmonic means.

### Basis for Hypotheses

The initial perception of the source is affected by the sex, age group, and educational level of the audience. For instance, men, by virtue of socio-cultural conditioning, will tend to judge others by their rank or title.<sup>8</sup>

Women have regarded education and achievements, whether personal or professional, as the greatest indicator of credibility in years past. This attitude is still prevalent in the majority of women over 35.

The younger men and women of college age and even up to the age of 35 are demonstrating more similarities in opinion as the old stereotypes of judging others falls into disuse. However, the men in the older age brackets do not appear to have changed their basic concepts in forming opinions.<sup>9</sup>

A prior study by this author on attitudes and opinions about women in the work place demonstrated a significant correlation between the mean attitude scores of men and women in the younger age bracket of 18 to 35.<sup>10</sup>

The fact that a person has attained a high rank in any organization today is not proof of his expertise or competence, as each evening's news programs illustrate. The charisma and general likability of a communicator in any situation has the potential of topping or out-ranking another person of lesser charm but with more expertise and competence.

## Hypotheses

The following were the hypotheses developed regarding perceptions of identification and their effect upon overall credibility:

1. A High-level (Biographical) identification of a source will elicit a higher perceived mean credibility opinion score than either a Middle-level (Socio-cultural) or Low-level (Occupational) identification.
2. Women will have a higher perceived mean opinion score for all sources in the High-level (Biographical) identification method of testing than in the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) treatment.
3. Men in both age groups will hold more similar mean opinion scores for overall perceived credibility for the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification treatment than women.
4. Men aged 18 to 35 will have a higher degree of similarity with women of the same age group than with any other group.
5. Respondents with a high-school level of education will exhibit a higher perceived mean credibility score for the High-level (Biographical) identification treatment than the college-level subjects.

The identification levels chosen were based largely upon well established credibility research and other recent publications. The hypotheses were an outgrowth of the

author's careful study of the theories developed in this field over the past 35 years.

ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center, Effective Public Relations, Fourth Edition, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1971), p. 151.

<sup>2</sup>Anastasia Toufexis, "What Killed Equal Rights?" Time Magazine, July 12, 1982, p. 33.

<sup>3</sup>Carl I. Hovland, I. L. Janis, and H. H. Kelley, Communication and Persuasion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 19.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>R. E. Petty, T. M. Ostrom, and T. C. Brock, eds., Cognitive Response in Persuasion (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1981), p. 146.

<sup>6</sup>Encyclopedia Americana Yearbook 1983, 61st Edition, "Biography," p. 138.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>8</sup>David K. Berlo, The Process of Communication (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1960), p. 41.

<sup>9</sup>Linda Hughes, "Women in the Work Place: Attitudes and Opinions," unpublished paper, December 1984)

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the elimination of four sources following preliminary "blind" testing, the data from the research yielded the mean perceived source credibility opinion scores shown in Table I below. The purpose of the table is to provide an overall view of the data.

TABLE I  
MEAN PERCEIVED SOURCE CREDIBILITY SCORES ON HIGH,  
MIDDLE, AND LOW IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF  
PUBLIC FIGURES BY SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

<u>Subjects</u>	<u>Sources</u>	<u>High*</u>	<u>Middle*</u>	<u>Low*</u>
Women 18-35 (N=68)	Falwell	4.22	3.94	3.76
	Schlafly	5.15	4.18	4.91
	Smeal	5.28	4.49	4.90
	Steinem	5.44	4.79	5.48
Women 36-65 (N=36)	Falwell	4.39	4.22	3.65
	Schlafly	4.79	4.20	4.59
	Smeal	5.28	4.35	5.04
	Steinem	5.11	4.41	4.97
Men 18-35 (N=35)	Falwell	3.66	4.90	2.17
	Schlafly	5.09	4.27	2.29
	Smeal	4.96	4.32	4.80
	Steinem	3.02	4.48	4.32
Men 36-65 (N=28)	Falwell	4.73	4.50	4.13
	Schlafly	4.33	4.11	4.60
	Smeal	4.82	4.16	4.64
	Steinem	4.55	4.20	4.82

\*High=Biographical, Middle=Socio-cultural, Low=Occupational.

As may be seen, the variance in mean scores was slight. The respondents perceived very little difference in either sources or treatments, although in five cases there was a directional trend from high to low in levels of treatment.

The mean opinion scores for women in both age groups were highest for all four sources in the High (Biographical) level identification, except in one case in which the Low-level (Occupational) was ranked the highest (Steinem).

Both age groups of women respondents had mean opinion scores descending from High to Middle to Low for only one source (Falwell).

Women were more consistent in their judgments of credibility by the level of identification than the men. In three instances the men's judgment level of the highest mean opinion score ran in a descending pattern from High-level to Low-level identification. Only one source elicited a higher mean opinion score for the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification by men in the 18 to 35 age category (Falwell). The possibility exists that the use of the organization with which he is affiliated (Moral Majority) may have elicited this response; the organization may hold greater significance for those male respondents 18 to 35 years of age in the "Bible Belt" of the country.

In two instances (Schlafaly and Steinem) the Low-level (Occupational) was given the highest rating by men 36 to 64.

Smeal was the only source ranked by all four respondent groups as highest in the Biographical (High-level)



identification. The possibility exists that her presidency of the National Organization for Women (NOW) held more significance for the respondents because that organization is recognized by a larger percentage of the general public than the Eagle Forum, for example, which is the organization associated with Phyllis Schlafly.

In only one instance was there more than two full points of difference in mean opinion scores: Schlafly for the men 18 to 35 between the High-level and the Low-level identifications. The credibility judgments between "housewife" and "political activist, author of books, and holder of constitutional law credentials" were more highly defined. However, the differences in the High and Low levels of identification for the other sources were dramatic also, as may be seen by the testing instruments in Appendix A.

All the data yielded by this research was analyzed by a three-factor analysis of variance, which had repeats on the variables of sex and age or sex and education of the respondents. This analysis measures the variance in the perceived credibility of the sources by two levels of identification treatments--for example, High and Low--and any interaction of the treatment with the repeat variables.

#### Opponent Source Data, Sex and Age

It should be noted that women's rights issues opponent sources were analyzed as one group, while proponent sources were analyzed as a separate group to avoid bias in the

the analysis results. In the following set of tables, the opponent sources of women's rights issues were the focal point.

TABLE II  
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF HIGH AND LOW  
IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY  
FOR OPPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES  
BASED ON SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ms	F	p
Total	333	1,168,898.80	3,510.21	0.50	--
Between Subjects	166	1,155,833.53	6,921.16	0.98	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	138.77	138.77	0.02	n.s.
Between Ages	1	27.11	27.11	0.004	n.s.
Interaction:					
Sexes x Ages	1	131.59	131.59	0.02	n.s.
Between Subjects					
Error	163	1,155,536.06	7,089.18		
Within Subjects	167	13,065.27	78.91	1.01	--
Between High-Low	1	174.69	174.69	2.24	n.s.
Interaction:					
High-Low x Sex	1	50.48	50.48	0.65	n.s.
Interaction:					
High-Low x Age	1	102.54	102.54	1.32	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Low x Sex x Age	1	29.50	29.50	0.38	n.s.
Within Subjects					
Error	163	12,708.06	77.96		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

With an F-ratio of 0.02, there was no significant difference exhibited between the sexes in their mean opinion

perception scores of the credibility of the opponent sources\* in the two treatments of High and Low Identification.

An F-ratio of 0.004 demonstrated no significant difference in the perception of the respondents of the credibility of the sources on the age variable.

The F-ratio of 0.02 exhibited no significant interaction of the sex and age of the subjects and the treatments upon the credibility of the opponent sources.

With an F-ratio of 2.24, the respondents indicated no significant difference between the High and Low levels of identification treatments.

The F-ratio of 0.65 indicated no significant interaction occurred between the High-level (Biographical) and Low-level (Occupational) levels of identification treatment and the sex of the respondents.

The F-ratio of 1.32 indicated no significant interaction of treatments and the sex and ages of the respondents was indicated by the F-ratio 0.38.

Overall, there were no significant differences in the perceived credibility of the sources by treatments, nor was there any significant interaction of any of the variables with the treatment of identification.

As illustrated by the paradigms of mean perceived credibility opinion scores in Table III and by the F-ratios in Table II, differences were so small as to occur by chance

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\*Opponent sources (anti-women's rights issues) were Jerry Falwell and Phyllis Schlafly.

more than five times out of 100, which exceeded the criterion for significance. The F-ratios would need to be at least 3.87 in order to be considered significant at the .05 level of confidence.

TABLE III

PARADIGMS OF OPPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE HIGH AND LOW LEVEL IDENTIFICATIONS WITH SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Age	High	Low	Sex	High	Low	Age	Women	Men
18-35	4.53	3.29	W	4.64	4.23	18-35	4.51	3.30
36-65	4.56	4.24	M	4.45	3.31	36-65	4.35	4.45

As seen in Table IV, the F-ratio of 0.0002 did not illustrate a significant difference between the women and men respondents in their perceptions of the credibility of the opponent sources in the two treatments of High-level (Biographical) and Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification. The F-ratio of 0.0003 for Between Ages demonstrated no significant differences were perceived by the respondents on this variable. This held true for the interaction between sex and age ( $F = 0.0003$ ); no significant differences were created by interaction of these variables.

With an F-ratio of 2.45 the respondents indicated no significant difference was perceived between the effect of

High-level (Biographical) and Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification treatments on source credibility.

TABLE IV  
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF HIGH AND MIDDLE  
IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY  
FOR OPPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES  
BASED ON SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ms	F	p
Total	333	1,106,630.37	3,557.45	0.45	--
Between Subjects	166	1,180,358.16	7,110.59	0.98	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	1.48	1.48	0.0002	n.s.
Between Ages	1	2.21	2.21	0.0003	n.s.
Interaction:					
Sexes x Ages	1	2.13	2.13	0.0003	n.s.
Between Subjects					
Error	163	1,180,352.16	7,241.42		
Within Subjects	167	4,272.20	25.58	0.98	--
Between High-					
Middle	1	63.18	63.18	2.45	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Middle x Sex	1	6.11	6.11	0.24	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Middle x Age	1	3.12	3.12	0.12	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Middle x Sex x Age	1	-0-	-0-	-0-	n.s.
Within Subjects					
Error	163	4,199.79	25.77		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

The F-ratio of 0.24 indicated no significant interaction occurred between the treatment levels and the sex of the respondents.

The F-ratio of 0.12 indicated no significant interaction

occurred between the treatment levels and the ages of the respondents.

There was no interaction of treatment levels--High and Middle--with sex and age as was indicated by the 0 F-ratio in Table IV.

Overall, there were no significant differences in the perceived credibility of the opponent sources by treatments, nor was there any significant interaction between any of the variables and the levels of identification.

F-ratios as small as those occurring in Table IV would occur by chance more than five times out of 100, which exceeded the criterion for significance.

TABLE V

PARADIGMS OF OPPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE HIGH AND MIDDLE LEVEL IDENTIFICATIONS WITH SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Age	High	Middle	Sex	High	Middle	Age	Women	Men
18-35	4.53	4.07	W	4.98	4.14	18-35	4.37	4.23
36-65	4.56	4.25	M	4.65	4.20	36-65	4.40	4.42

As illustrated by the paradigms of mean perceived credibility opinion scores in Table V, the variance in scores was slight and did not meet the critical difference required to

indicate any significant difference in any of the variables compared.

TABLE VI  
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF MIDDLE AND LOW  
IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY  
FOR OPPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES  
BASED ON SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ms	F	p
Total	333	1,034,599.81	3,106.91	0.50	--
Between Subjects	166	1,025,438.36	6,177.34	1.00	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	79.63	79.63	0.01	n.s.
Between Ages	1	48.64	48.64	0.008	n.s.
Interaction					
Sexes x Ages	1	124.17	124.17	0.02	n.s.
Between Subjects					
Error	163	1,017,302.55	6,241.12		
Within Subjects	167	9,161.45	54.86	1.00	--
Between Middle-					
Low	1	27.76	27.76	0.51	n.s.
Interaction:					
Middle-Low x Sex	1	103.61	103.61	1.90	n.s.
Interaction:					
Middle-Low x Age	1	13.84	13.84	0.25	n.s.
Interaction:					
Middle-Low x Sex					
x Age	1	107.02	107.02	1.96	n.s.
Within Subjects					
Error	163	8,909.22	54.66		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

With an F-ratio of 0.01, the respondents indicated no significant difference was perceived between the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) and Low-level (Occupational) identification treatments' effect on source credibility based on sex.

An F-ratio of 0.008 demonstrated no significant difference in respondent perception of the credibility of sources based on age.

The F-ratio of 0.02 exhibited no significant differences due to interaction of the sex and ages of the respondents with the treatments upon the credibility of the opponent sources.

With an F-ratio of 0.51, the respondents indicated no significant difference between the Middle-level and Low-level identifications and their effect on source credibility.

The 1.90 F-ratio indicated no significant interaction occurred between the treatment levels and the sex of the respondents.

The F-ratio of 0.25 indicated no significant interaction occurred between the treatments and the ages of the respondents.

For interaction of Middle-level and Low-level treatments with sex and age, the F-ratio was 1.96, which indicated no significant interaction.

Overall, there were no significant differences in the perceived credibility of the sources by treatments, nor were there any significant differences in mean scores caused by interaction of any of the variables with the treatment of identification.

F-ratios as small as those occurring in Table VI would occur by chance more than five times out of 100, which exceeded the criterion for significance.



TABLE VII

PARADIGMS OF OPPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE MIDDLE AND LOW LEVEL IDENTIFICATIONS WITH SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Age	Middle	Low	Sex	Middle	Low	Age	Women	Men
18-35	4.07	3.29	W	4.14	4.66	18-35	4.20	3.16
36-65	4.25	4.24	M	4.20	3.97	36-65	4.16	4.34

The paradigms of mean credibility opinion scores in Table VII show only slight variance. These scores did not meet the critical difference required to be significant in any of the comparison areas.

#### Proponent Source Data, Sex and Age

In the next set of tables, the proponent sources of women's rights issues were the focal point.

For the High-level (Biographical) and Low-level (Socio-cultural) identification treatments, the women and men respondents exhibited no significant differences in their mean opinion perception scores as illustrated by the mean sum of 69.17 ( $F = 0.007$ ).

The F-ratio of 0.001 demonstrated no significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents of the credibility of the sources on the age variables.

TABLE VIII  
 ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF HIGH AND LOW  
 IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY  
 FOR PROPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES  
 BASED ON SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ms	F	p
Total	333	1,628,350.69	4,889.94	0.49	--
Between Subjects	166	1,627,533.68	9,804.42	0.98	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	69.17	69.17	0.007	n.s.
Between Ages	1	9.87	9.87	0.001	n.s.
Interaction:					
Sexes and Ages	1	2.17	2.17	0.0002	n.s.
Between Subjects					
Error	163	1,627,452.45	9,984.37		
Within Subjects	167	817.01	4.89	0.99	--
Between High-Low	1	12.41	12.41	2.52	n.s.
Interaction:					
High-Low x Sex	1	0.13	0.13	0.03	n.s.
Interaction:					
High-Low x Age	1	2.32	2.32	0.45	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Low x Sex x Age	1	-0-	-0-	-0-	n.s.
Within Subjects					
Error	163	802.15	4.92		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

No significant interaction of sex and age was indicated by the F-ratio of 0.0002.

The F-ratio of 2.52 illustrated no significant difference between the High-level and Low-level treatments and their effect on source credibility.

No significant interaction of the treatments with the sex of the respondents existed, as indicated by the F-ratio of 0.03.

The F-ratio of 0.47 for interaction of the High and Low treatments with age indicated there was no significant difference.

The lack of any significant interaction between the treatments and the sex and ages of the respondents was indicated by the 0 F-ratio.

Overall, no significant differences were exhibited in the perceived credibility opinion scores for the proponent sources by treatments, nor was there any significant interaction of variables with the treatment of the identification.

F-ratios as small as those occurring in Table VIII would occur by chance more than five times out of 100, exceeding the criterion for significance.

TABLE IX

PARADIGMS OF PROPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE HIGH AND LOW LEVEL IDENTIFICATIONS WITH SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Age	High	Low	Sex	High	Low	Age	Women	Men
18-35	5.18	4.88	W	5.28	5.10	18-35	5.28	4.78
36-65	4.94	4.87	M	4.84	4.65	36-65	5.10	4.71

The paradigms of mean credibility opinion scores for proponent sources in Table IX illustrate slight variances.

These scores did not meet the critical difference required to be significant in any of the areas of comparison.

The next sequence of tables set forth the High-level (Biographical) and Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification treatment comparison analysis results.

TABLE X

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF HIGH AND MIDDLE IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY FOR PROPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES BASED ON SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ms	F	p
Total	333	1,478,733.84	4,440.64	0.49	--
Between Subjects	166	1,470,965.28	8,861.24	0.98	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	38.03	38.03	0.004	n.s.
Between Ages	1	6.47	6.47	0.0007	n.s.
Interaction:					
Sexes x Ages	1	10.61	10.61	0.001	n.s.
Between Subjects					
Error	163	1,370,910.17	9,023.99		
Within Subjects	167	7,768.56	46.52	0.998	--
Between High-					
Middle	1	153.17	153.17	3.28	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Middle x Sex	1	3.16	3.16	0.07	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Middle x Age	1	15.56	15.56	0.33	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Middle x Sex x Age	1	-0-	-0-	-0-	n.s.
Within Subjects					
Error	163	7,596.67	46.61		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

No significant difference was exhibited between women and men respondents (F-ratio of 0.004) in their mean opinion perception scores on proponent source credibility insofar as High-level and Middle-level treatments of identification were concerned.

Likewise, the Between Ages F-ratio of 0.0007 demonstrated that no significant difference existed in the perception of respondents concerning source credibility on the age variable.

The interaction F-ratio of 0.001 exhibited no significant interaction between respondents' sex and age with the treatments upon proponent source credibility.

With an F-ratio of 3.28, the respondents indicated no significant difference between the High-level and Middle-level treatments. However, it was a strong indication of the differences perceived.

The F-ratio of 0.07 meant that no significant interaction had occurred between the two treatments--High and Middle--and the sex of the respondents.

The interaction of treatments and age (F-ratio of 0.33) revealed no significant interaction present between identification treatments and respondent ages.

Finally, there was no interaction of treatment levels with the sex and age of the respondents. The F-ratio was 0.

Overall, there was no significant differences in the perceived credibility of proponent sources of women's rights issues by identification levels, nor was there any

significant interaction of any of the variables with the treatment levels on the credibility of those sources. However, there was one strong trend indicated between the High- and Low-level treatments.

No F-ratio in Table X was significant at the .05 level.

TABLE XI

PARADIGMS OF PROPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE HIGH AND MIDDLE LEVEL IDENTIFICATIONS WITH SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Age	High	Middle	Sex	High	Middle	Age	Women	Men
18-35	5.18	4.52	W	5.28	4.51	18-35	5.00	5.08
36-65	4.94	4.28	M	4.84	4.29	36-65	4.79	4.43

The paradigms of mean credibility opinion scores in Table XI illustrated the slight variance perceived between the High-level (Biographical) and Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification treatments, between age groups, between sexes, and the lack of significant difference caused by any interaction of the variables.

The Middle-level (Socio-cultural) and Low-level (Occupational) identification treatments for proponent sources were analyzed in Table XII.

The Between Sexes F-ratio of 0.005 indicated no significant differences existed between women and men respondents

in their perceptions of the credibility of the proponent sources. Also, the Between Ages F-ratio of 0.001 revealed no significant difference between the age groups.

TABLE XII

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF MIDDLE AND LOW IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY FOR PROPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES BASED ON SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ms	F	p
Total	333	1,417,943.90	4,258.09	0.49	--
Between Subjects	166	1,413,596.84	8,515.64	0.98	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	42.76	42.76	0.005	n.s.
Between Ages	1	10.07	10.07	0.001	n.s.
Interaction:					
Sexes x Ages	1	0.67	0.67	0.00008	n.s.
Between Subjects Error	163	1,413,543.34	8,672.05		
Within Subjects	167	4,347.06	26.03	1.00	
Between Middle-Low	1	70.38	70.38	3.00	n.s.
Interaction:					
Middle-Low x Sex	1	4.62	4.62	0.18	n.s.
Interaction:					
Middle-Low x Age	1	2.41	2.41	0.09	n.s.
Interaction:					
Middle-low x Sex x Age	1	7.41	7.41	0.28	n.s.
Within Subjects Error	163	4,254.24	26.10		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

The 0.00008 R-ratio for Interaction of Sexes and Ages indicated no significant difference due to that possible interaction.

The between treatments F-ratio of 3.00 revealed no significant difference due to interaction of these variables; however, it was considered to be a strong indicator that a difference was perceived.

The Middle-Low x Sex F-ratio of 0.18 failed to illustrate a significant difference created by interaction of treatments and sex. In addition, this was true of the interaction of treatments and ages, where the F-ratio was 0.09, and of the interaction of treatments, sex, and ages, where the F-ratio was 0.28.

TABLE XIII

PARADIGMS OF PROPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE MIDDLE AND LOW LEVEL IDENTIFICATIONS WITH SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Age	Middle	Low	Sex	Middle	Low	Age	Women	Men
18-35	4.52	4.88	W	4.52	5.10	18-35	4.92	4.48
36-65	4.28	4.87	M	4.29	4.65	36-65	4.70	4.46

Mean credibility opinion scores in the Table XIII paradigms exhibited only slight differences, failing to meet any critical statistical criteria.

#### Combined Source Data, Sex and Education

The next six analyses of variance are for the sex and



education variables with the three treatment levels of identification for both source groups--opponents and proponents.

Each group was analyzed separately to eliminate any neutralization of scores by opposing sides of the women's rights issues.

TABLE XIV

MEAN PERCEIVED SOURCE CREDIBILITY SCORES ON HIGH, MIDDLE,  
AND LOW IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF PUBLIC FIGURES  
BY SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

<u>Subjects</u>	<u>Sources</u>	<u>High*</u>	<u>Middle*</u>	<u>Low*</u>
Women High School (N=82)	Falwell	4.47	4.07	3.88
	Schlafly	5.05	4.23	5.11
	Smeal	5.34	4.41	4.82
	Steinem	5.40	4.63	5.25
Women College (N=22)	Falwell	4.12	3.85	3.61
	Schlafly	5.01	3.78	4.57
	Smeal	5.14	4.74	5.16
	Steinem	5.19	4.95	5.30
Men High School (N=40)	Falwell	3.94	3.95	4.35
	Schlafly	5.17	4.35	4.87
	Smeal	5.48	4.26	4.78
	Steinem	4.48	4.50	4.50
Men High School (N=23)	Falwell	4.17	4.39	3.92
	Schlafly	4.29	3.99	3.73
	Smeal	4.47	4.28	4.72
	Steinem	5.61	4.19	4.46

\*High = Biographical, Middle = Socio-cultural, Low = Occupational.

As stated previously, the opponent sources were Schlafly

and Falwell. The proponents were represented by Smeal and Steinem. The respondents evaluated these sources for credibility on the dimensions of competence, trustworthiness, and dynamism under the three identification treatments: High-level (Biographical), Middle-level (Socio-cultural), and Low-level (Occupational). The data yielded the mean perceived credibility opinion scores shown in Table XIV.

Again, as may be seen, the variance in mean perceived opinion scores was slight. The respondents in this test group perceived very little difference in either sources or treatment levels of identification.

In only three instances did the mean opinion scores descend from High-level (Biographical) to Middle-level (Socio-cultural) to Low-level (Occupational) as predicted by the rankings originally created for this research. However, in 10 of the 16 possible instances, the High-level identification received the highest mean opinion score.

In five of eight possible instances the male and female college-educated respondents rated the High-level identification (Biographical) as the highest, most credible means of identification. Likewise, in five of eight possible instances the respondents in the high school-educated categories rated the High-level the most credible means of identification of the three presented.

In three of eight possible instances, women respondents in both educational categories rated the Low-level (Occupational) identification highest. In none of the eight

possible instances did women respondents rate the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification highest, and in only one instance was the Middle-level rated highest by male respondents.

In only one instance--Steinem rated by male, high school-educated respondents--was there a tie in mean opinion scores; the 4.50 registered for the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) and the Low-level (Occupational) indicated these respondents perceived no difference in these two identification treatments.

#### Opponent Source Data, Sex and Education

As indicated on page 54, the data now will be presented separately for respondent perceptions of opponents of women's rights issues. The next series of tables will be for respondent perceptions of sources representing opposition to women's rights issues.

As may be seen in Table XV, the Between Sexes F-ratio of 0.001 indicated no significant difference between the sexes in their perception of the credibility of the opponent sources.

The Between Education 0.005 F-ratio illustrated no significant difference between the perceptions of the educational groupings. Also, the Interaction of Sexes with Education F-ratio of 0 indicated no interaction of these variables. In addition, no significant differences were perceived by the respondents between the identification treatments of High-

level (Biographical) and Low-level (Occupational) as indicated by the F-ratio of 2.29. However, this ratio does suggest evidence of a trend in respondent perceptions.

TABLE XV  
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF HIGH AND LOW  
IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY  
FOR OPPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES  
BASED ON SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ms	F	p
Total	333	1,536,195.39	4,613.20	0.49	--
Between Subjects	166	1,534,849.35	9,246.08	0.93	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	10.64	10.64	0.001	n.s.
Between Education	1	50.59	50.59	0.005	n.s.
Interaction: Sex x Education	1	-0-	-0-	-0-	n.s.
Between Subjects Error	163	1,534,788.12	9,415.88		
Within Subjects	167	1,346.04	8.06	1.00	n.s.
Between High-Low	1	18.49	18.49	2.29	n.s.
Interaction: High- Low x Sex	1	3.04	3.04	0.38	n.s.
Interaction: High- Low x Education	1	5.12	5.12	0.63	n.s.
Interaction: High-Low x Sex x Education	1	0.47	0.47	0.06	n.s.
Within Subjects Error	163	1,318.92	8.09		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

The F-ratio of 0.38 for interaction of treatments with sex indicated that no significant difference was created by interaction.

The F-ratio of 0.63 for interaction of treatments and respondent education displayed no significant difference.

The interaction F-ratio for all the variables of sex, education, and treatment levels of identification was 0.06, indicating no significant difference due to that interaction.

Overall, there were no significant differences in any of the scores, whether by treatment, by sex, by education, or by interaction of any of these variables.

TABLE XVI

PARADIGMS OF OPPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE HIGH AND LOW LEVEL IDENTIFICATION WITH SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES.

Educa- tion	High		Sex	High		Educa- ion	High	
	Low	Low		Women	Men			
High						High		
School	4.66	4.55	W	4.66	4.29	School	3.48	4.58
College	4.40	3.96	M	4.39	4.22	College	4.33	4.03

The mean credibility opinion scores in the paradigms in Table XVI illustrate the slight differences in scores for all the variables, differences which did not meet any critical difference required to be significant.

As may be seen in Table XVII, the Between Sexes F-ratio of 0.0003 indicated no significant difference between male and female respondents in their perceptions of the credibility of the opponent sources.

TABLE XVII

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF HIGH AND MIDDLE  
IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY  
FOR OPPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES  
BASED ON SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ms	F	p
Total	333	1,433,740.58	4,305.53	0.49	--
Between Subjects	166	1,427.665.50	8,600.39	0.98	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	3.04	3.04	0.0003	n.s.
Between Education	1	12.86	12.86	0.001	n.s.
Interaction: Sex x Education	1	-0-	-0-	-0-	n.s.
Between Subjects Error	163	1,427,649.60	8,758.59		
Within Subjects	167	6,075.08	36.38	0.99	--
Between High- Middle	1	83.78	83.78	2.30	--
Interaction: High- Middle x Sex	1	10.62	10.62	0.29	n.s.
Interaction: High- Middle x Education	1	1.60	1.60	0.04	n.s.
Interaction: High- Middle x Sex x Education	1	2.23	2.23	0.06	n.s.
Within Subjects Error	163	5 976.85	36.67		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

The F-ratio of 0.001 for Between Education illustrated no significant difference was exhibited between the age groups.

The Interaction of Sexes and Education F-ratio of 0 indicated no interaction of significance.

The Between High and Middle F-ratio of 2.30 indicated a difference was perceived by the respondents between the

identification treatments, but the difference was not significant.

The F-ratio of 0.29 for interaction of the treatments with the sex of the respondents indicated no significant difference due to interaction of these variables. The same results were true for the interaction of the treatments with the education of the respondents (F-ratio of 0.04).

The F-ratio for interaction of all the variables of treatment, sex, and education was 0.06, again not significant.

Overall, the only indication of a trend was found in the difference in mean perceived opinion scores between the High-level (Biographical) and Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification treatments for the opponent sources. However, that difference did not exceed the necessary 3.87 to be considered significant. F-ratios as small as those occurring in Table XVII would occur by chance more than five times out of 100.

TABLE XVIII

PARADIGMS OF OPPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE HIGH AND MIDDLE LEVEL IDENTIFICATIONS WITH SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

Education	High Middle		Sex	High Middle		Education	Women Men	
	High	Middle		High	Middle		Women	Men
High School	4.66	4.15	W	4.66	3.98	High School	4.46	4.35
College	4.40	4.00	M	4.39	4.17	College	4.19	4.21

As may be observed in the paradigms of the mean opinion scores for the High-level and Middle-level treatments based on the variables of sex and education in Table XVIII, the variance in mean perceived opinion scores was slight in all instances.

None of the variances in mean perceived credibility scores for the opponent sources of women's rights issues in the Biographical and Socio-cultural identification treatments was found to be significantly different.

In Table XIX, the analyzed data for the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) and Low-level (Occupational) identification treatments were based on the repeat variables of sex and education.

The Between Sexes F-ratio was 0, indicating no difference of any significance in the mean perceived credibility scores of the men and women responding to the Middle and Low treatments. Also, no significant difference was indicated by the F-ratio of 0.004 for Between Education; the high school-educated respondents did not differ significantly from the college-educated respondents in their mean opinion scores for these two levels of identification treatment.

The F-ratio of 0 for interaction of sex with education indicated lack of interaction between these two variables.

The Between Middle and Low treatments F-ratio of 1.57 indicated no significant differences were perceived by the respondents between the Socio-cultural and Occupational identifications of the opponent sources.



TABLE XIX

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF MIDDLE AND LOW  
IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY  
FOR OPPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES  
BASED ON SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ms	F	p
Total	333	1,357,492.77	4,076.55	0.49	--
Between Subjects	166	1,355,000.84	8,162.66	0.98	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	-0-	-0-	-0-	n.s.
Between Education	1	35.2	35.2	0.004	n.s.
Interaction: Sex x Education	1	-0-	-0-	-0-	n.s.
Between Subjects Error	163	1,354,965.64	8,312.67		
Within Subjects	167	2,491.93	14.92	0.99	--
Between Middle-Low	1	23.55	23.55	1.57	n.s.
Interaction: Middle-Low x Sex	1	2.30	2.30	0.15	n.s.
Interaction: Middle-Low x Education	1	11.45	11.45	0.76	n.s.
Interaction: Middle-Low x Sex x Education	1	8.60	8.60	0.57	n.s.
Within Subjects Error	163	2,446.03	15.01		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

The F-ratio of 0.15 indicated that interaction of the treatments with the sex of the respondents caused no significant difference in the mean opinion scores.

The 0.76 F-ratio meant that respondents' interaction on treatments and education had not created a significant difference in their perceptions.

The F-ratio of 0.57 for all the variables of treatments,

sex, and education indicated no significant difference was created by the interaction of these variables.

Overall, F-ratios as small as those in Table XIX would occur by chance more than five times out of 100 and, therefore, should be viewed as statistically insignificant. The following paradigms illustrate the slight difference in mean opinion scores.

TABLE XX

PARADIGMS OF OPPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE MIDDLE AND LOW LEVEL IDENTIFICATIONS WITH SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

<u>Educa-</u> <u>tion</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Educa-</u> <u>tion</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
High School	4.15	4.55	W	3.98	4.29	High School	4.32	4.38
College	4.00	3.96	M	4.17	4.22	College	3.96	4.01

None of the mean perceived credibility opinion scores contained enough variance for any of the variables of sex, education, or identification treatments to be considered significant.

#### Proponent Source Data, Sex and Education

This section will present the data for proponent sources of women's rights issues based on sex and education variables.

TABLE XXI

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF HIGH AND LOW  
IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY  
FOR PROPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES  
BASED ON SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ss	F	p
Total	333	1,936,937.78	5,816.63	0.49	--
Between Subjects	166	1,934,197.13	11,651.79	0.98	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	29.75	29.75	0.003	n.s.
Between Education	1	1.18	1.18	0.0001	n.s.
Interaction:					
Sex x Education	1	-0-	-0-	-0-	n.s.
Between Subjects					
Error	1	1,934,166.10	11,866.05		
Within Subjects	167	2,740.65	16.41	0.995	--
Between High-Low	1	43.54	43.54	2.64	n.s.
Interaction:					
High-Low x Sex	1	6.75	6.75	0.41	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Low x Education	1	1.08	1.08	0.07	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Low x Sex x					
Education	1	3.45	3.45	0.21	n.s.
Within Subjects					
Error	173	2,685.83	16.48		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

The F-ratio of 0.003 indicated no significant difference based upon sex between respondents in their reaction to identification levels. The 0.0001 F-ratio showed no significant difference existed in the mean perceived credibility opinion scores as a result of the educational level achieved by the respondents.

The 0 F-ratio indicated no interaction occurred between the sex of the respondents and their educational level.

The F-ratio of 2.64 showed a difference was perceived between the High-level (Biographical) and Low-level (Occupational) identifications, but it was not considered to be significant.

None of the interaction F-ratios for the variables of High and Low treatments, sex of the respondents, and education of the respondents was considered to be significant. All were below 1.00, which indicated any interaction was minimal.

Overall the only difference perceived in mean credibility opinion scores was between the Biographical and Occupational identification treatments. This non-significant difference indicated only a trend for the proponent sources of women's rights issues by identification levels.

TABLE XXII

PARADIGMS OF PROPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE HIGH AND LOW LEVEL IDENTIFICATION WITH SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

Educa- tion			Sex			Educa- tion		
	High	Low		High	Low		Women	Men
High School	5.27	4.84	W	5.27	5.13	High School	5.20	4.90
College	5.17	4.97	M	5.17	4.62	College	5.20	4.88

The mean perceived credibility scores shown in Table

XXII indicated the slight differences between the variables in the testing.

In Table XXIII the analysis of High-level (Biographical) and Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification treatments for proponent sources have been presented.

TABLE XXIII

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF HIGH AND MIDDLE IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY FOR PROPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES BASED ON SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ss	F	p
Total	333	1,778,199.74	5,339.94	0.49	--
Between Subjects	166	1,765,502.74	10,635.56	0.98	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	14.03	14.03	0.001	n.s.
Between Education	1	0.34	0.34	0.00003	n.s.
Interaction:					
Sex x Education	1	0.68	0.68	0.00006	n.s.
Between Subjects					
Error	163	1,765,487.69	10,831.21		
Within Subjects	167	12,670.00	75.87	0.99	--
Between High-					
Middle	1	201.20	201.20	2.62	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Middle x Sex	1	0.8	0.8	0.01	n.s.
Interaction: High-					
Middle x Education	1	2.38	2.38	0.03	n.s.
Interaction:					
High-Middle x					
Sex x Education	1	8.08	8.08	0.11	n.s.
Within Subjects					
Error	163	12,484.72	72.59		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

The F-ratio of 0,001 indicated no significant difference in mean credibility opinion scores for men and women.

Also, the 0.00003 F-ratio indicated the same lack of significant difference in mean opinion scores between those with a high school education and those who attended college. The interaction of these two variables also indicated no significant difference in mean opinion scores by the F-ratio of 0.00006.

The Between High and Middle F-ratio of 2,62 suggested a difference in the mean perceived opinion scores between the Biographical and Socio-cultural identification treatments by respondents; however, that difference was not significant at the .05 level of predictability.

None of the interaction of variables for within subjects categories was found to be significant; all were below 1.00 and  $F = 3.87$  at the .05 level.

Overall, the only distinction occurred between the identification levels of High and Middle for the proponent sources on women's rights issues. The difference in mean perceived credibility opinion scores, while not significant, indicated a trend which supported the original hypotheses.

The mean credibility opinion scores in the paradigms in Table XIV illustrate the difference in scores for all the variables. As may be seen the greatest variance occurred between the High-level (Biographical) and Middle level (Socio-cultural) identification treatments. In all cases the

difference in mean opinion scores was less than 1.00, which did not meet the critical difference required for significance.

TABLE XIV

PARADIGMS OF PROPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE HIGH AND MIDDLE LEVEL IDENTIFICATION WITH SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

Educa- tion	High	Middle	Sex	High	Middle	Educa- tion	Women	Men
High School	5.27	4.45	W	5.27	4.68	High School	4.95	4.95
College	5.17	4.54	M	5.17	4.31	College	5.01	4.71

The next set of tables presents data for proponent sources on Middle-level (Socio-cultural) and Low-level (Occupational) identification treatments.

The Between Sexes F-ratio in Table XXV at 0.004 was so small it would occur by chance more than five times out of 100, as were the F-ratios for between education levels and for the interaction of the two variables. None of these F-ratios was considered significant and, therefore, did not explain the variance in mean perceived credibility opinion scores for these two treatments of levels of identification.

The 2.34 F-ratio for Between Middle-Low indicated a difference was created in the mean opinion scores by the levels

of identification. However, the difference was not significant as it did not meet the required 3.87 for the .05 level.

TABLE XXV

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ANOVA TABLE OF MIDDLE AND LOW IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY FOR PROPONENT SOURCES OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES BASED ON SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

Source	df	ss	ms	F	p
Total	333	1,643,364.43	4,935.03	0.49	--
Between Subjects	166	1,639,304.53	9,875.33	0.93	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	40.25	40.25	0.004	n.s.
Between Education	1	0.22	0.22	0.00002	n.s.
Interaction:					
Sex x Education	1	10.27	10.27	0.001	n.s.
Between Subjects					
Error	163	1,639,253.79	10,056.77		
Within Subjects	167	4,059.90	24.31	0.99	--
Between Middle-Low	1	57.46	57.46	2.34	n.s.
Interaction:					
Middle-Low x Sex	1	2.92	2.92	0.12	n.s.
Interaction:					
Middle-Low x Education	1	0.24	0.24	0.009	n.s.
Interaction:					
Middle-Low x Sex x Education	1	0.61	0.61	0.02	n.s.
Within Subjects					
Error	163	3,998.67	24.53		

(F = 3.87, df 333 at .05)

Again, none of the interaction of the variables explained the variance in mean opinion scores; each F-ratio was below 1.00. Therefore interaction between the treatments and



sex, between treatments and education, and between treatments and sex and education was found to be minimal.

To better visualize the research data involved in Table XXV, the mean perceived credibility opinion scores were placed in paradigms in Table XVI.

TABLE XXVI

PARADIGMS OF PROPONENT SOURCES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES MEAN CREDIBILITY OPINION SCORES ON THE MIDDLE AND LOW LEVEL IDENTIFICATIONS WITH SEX AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

<u>Educa-</u> <u>tion</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Educa-</u> <u>tion</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
High School	4.45	4.83	W	4.68	5.13	High School	4.78	4.51
College	4.54	4.91	M	4.31	4.62	College	5.04	4.42

These mean opinion scores for the treatment levels of Middle-level (Socio-cultural) and Low-level (Occupational) were less than 1.00 in difference, which did not meet the critical difference required to be considered significant. The variance found in the mean perceived credibility opinion scores would occur by chance more than five times out of 100.

#### Summary

Three-factor analysis of variance was used to analyze the research data yielded by the semantic-differential

source-credibility test of four public figures prominent in women's rights issues. Two of the sources represented the opponents, and two represented the proponents of the issues.

The data yielded by this research did not indicate any set pattern that would allow prediction of perceptions by sexes, by ages, or by educational level achieved. The factor of chance was present at all testing levels.

However, the High-level (Biographical) identification was given the highest mean opinion score in 22 of the 32 possible instances, as set forth by the sex and age variables in Table I on page 52 and by the sex and education variables in Table XIV on page 71.

In only two instances did the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification treatment have the highest ranking of mean opinion scores, and in one instance the Middle and Low (Occupational) identification scores were identical.

The Low-level identification was given the highest mean opinion scores in only seven of the 32 possible instances.

No significant interaction occurred among the sex, age, or education of the respondents and the three levels of identification treatment.

## CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Introduction

This research developed from the author's idea that men and women use different criteria to judge the credibility of a speaker when confronted with the identification of that speaker. That basic assumption--added to the general public distrust of "expert" sources of business, religious, political, and government groups--leaves a gap that research on source credibility of public figures should seek to fill.

At the outset, drawing upon her own earlier studies, this researcher believed that older men based their evaluative judgments of credibility on the Socio-cultural type of identification. i.e., the title or rank of the person and the organization or group with whom he or she is affiliated.

Women 36 years old and older were believed to use as their criteria for evaluation the values they perceive to be indicated by the speaker's Biographical identification--education, professional achievements, and personal background. The Low-level identification was occupation only.

Younger men and women (18 to 35) were believed to hold similar criteria for judging source credibility.

In addition to age and sex, education was considered to be a contributing factor. The higher the respondent's educational level, it would be posited, the more likely the respondent, whether male or female, would value the Socio-cultural identification in judgments of source credibility. In contrast, it was thought that respondents whose level of education was high school or less would perceive the Biographical level of identification with education, professional achievements, and personal background as the most valued.

### Conclusions

Five hypotheses were formed from the foregoing concepts. These hypotheses and relevant data are presented in this section.

#### Hypothesis No. 1

High-level (Biographical) identification of a source will elicit a higher perceived mean credibility opinion score than either a Middle-level (Socio-cultural) or Low-level (Occupational) identification.

Relevant data. The mean opinion score on opponent sources based on the High-level (Biographical) identification treatment was 4.55, while the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification treatment had a mean opinion score of 4.17. The Low-level (Occupational) identification treatment yielded a mean perceived opinion score of 3.77. However, the difference was not significant in the sex and age variable analysis.

Although the difference was not significant, there was an indication that the High-level identification provided the greatest credibility.

The mean perceived opinion score of the respondents toward the proponents of the women's rights issues based on the High-level (Biographical) identification treatment was 5,06, while the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification treatment mean opinion score was 4,40. The Low-level identification (Occupational) mean score was 4,88. With this group of proponent sources, the respondents tested perceived a greater credibility in the Low-level identification treatment as compared with the Middle-level treatment. The High-level (Biographical) was perceived to be the identification with the highest credibility. However, the difference in mean scores, in analysis, was not found to be significant. Again, these analyses used sex and age as variables.

While the third level median score was higher than that of the second level, the hypothesis predicted only the ranking of the first level (Biographical). The data tend to support the hypothesis, but there was no significant difference in the findings.

### Hypothesis No. 2

Women will have a higher perceived mean opinion score for all sources on the High-level (Biographical) identification than on the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification.

Relevant Data. Women rated the High-level identification for the opponents at a 4.98 mean opinion score, while the Middle-level treatment was given a mean score of 4.14. The High-level (Biographical) for proponents of the women's rights issues was given a 5.28 mean opinion score, as compared to the 4.51 given to the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification.

Although statistically there were no significant findings, the mean scores did correspond with the expected ranking in Hypothesis No. 2

Hypothesis No. 3

More similarity on mean opinion scores for overall perceived credibility on the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification will be found for all men than for all women.

Relevant Data. A paradigm based on the research data necessary for developing Hypothesis No. 3 was placed in Table XXVII.

TABLE XXVII

MEAN PERCEIVED OPINION SCORES FOR ALL SOURCES ON THE  
MIDDLE-LEVEL (SOCIO-CULTURAL) IDENTIFICATION  
TREATMENT FOR SEX AND AGE VARIABLES

<u>Age</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
18-35	4.28	4.35
36-65	4.28	4.26

The mean perceived opinion score for Men 18-35 for all sources on the Socio-cultural identification was identical to that score of men 36-65. The women respondents 18-35 had a mean perceived opinion score on the Middle-level identification of 4.35, while those women in the older age bracket of 36-65 had a mean opinion score of 4.26.

The men's mean perceived opinion scores were exactly the same for both age groups, but there were no significant differences found between the scores of the men and women respondent groups. Even so, the basis assumption of the hypothesis appeared to be supported by the data.

#### Hypothesis No. 4

Men aged 18 to 35 will have a higher similarity in mean opinion scores with women 18 to 35 than with men 36 and older.

Relevant Data. The research data for opponent sources of women's rights issues for the three levels of identification were placed in the paradigm seen in Table XXVIII.

The mean opinion scores for men and women in the 18-35 age categories were similar only in the Middle-level (Socio-cultural) identification for the opponent sources. In the High-level (Biographical) treatment the two age groups for men were more similar. On the Low-level (Occupational) identification the men 18-35 were not similar in their perceptions to either group's mean opinion score.

TABLE XXVIII

MEAN PERCEIVED OPINION SCORES OF OPPONENT SOURCES  
FOR THREE IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS FOR  
MEN 18-35, WOMEN 18-35, AND MEN 36-65

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Low</u>
M	18-35	4.38	4.09	2.23
W	18-35	4.69	4.06	4.34
M	36-65	4.53	4.31	4.37

The research data for proponent sources on the three levels of identification may be found in the Table XXIX paradigm.

TABLE XXIX

MEAN PERCEIVED OPINION SCORES OF PROPONENT SOURCES  
FOR THREE IDENTIFICATION TREATMENTS FOR  
MEN 18-35, WOMEN 18-35, AND MEN 36-65

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Low</u>
M	18-35	4.99	4.40	4.56
W	18-35	5.36	4.64	5.19
M	36-65	4.69	4.18	4.73



As may be seen, the Men 18-35 had mean opinion scores more similar to those of men 36-65 on two levels of source identification than to the women's 18-35 scores. The research data did not yield any significant differences and, therefore, did not support the hypothesis.

#### Hypothesis No. 5

Respondents with a high-school level education will exhibit a higher perceived mean credibility opinion score for the High-level (Biographical) identification than the respondents with a college-level education.

Relevant Data. Respondents in the high-school education category had a mean perception opinion score of 4.66 for opponent sources tested on the High-level (Biographical) identification. The college-education level respondents had a mean opinion score of 4.40. For the proponent sources, the high-school educated respondents had a mean opinion score of 5.27, while respondents in the college category yielded a mean opinion score of 5.17. For both proponent and opponent sources, respondents in the high-school education category had a higher mean opinion score than did the college-level respondents for the Biographical identification.

Although the difference was not significant, Hypothesis No. 5 was tentatively supported.

## Summary

None of the five hypotheses was supported by a significant difference in the research data when analyzed by a three-factor analysis of variance. However, there was a trend favoring mean opinion scores for the High-level identification as the most credible means of identification. That is to say, the Biographical source treatment was given the highest mean opinion scores by the respondents, both male and female, regardless of age or education.

Women rated the Biographical identification with a higher mean opinion score than the Socio-cultural identification although the difference in scores was not considered to be significant at the .05 level of confidence.

Although not supported statistically, the validity of the hypothesis that men of both age groups would have more similar scores than women for Socio-cultural identification was supported. Those respondents with a high-school level education held a higher mean perceived opinion score for the Biographical identification, containing educational achievements of the sources, than did the respondents with college-level education. Although the variance in scores was not considered significant at the .05 level of confidence, the basis for the hypothesis that the education of a source will influence source credibility--was supported.

Women rated the Biographical identification with a higher mean opinion score than the Socio-cultural identification,

although the difference in scores was not considered significant at the .05 level. While it was not supported statistically, the hypothesis that men of both age groups would show more agreement on the Socio-cultural identification level than would women subjects was reflected in the findings.

The author's basic conclusion drawn from this research was similar to one reached by Greenberg and Miller. They concluded that approximately 60 percent of their research respondents failed to discriminate differences in the credibility of the sources between treatment levels.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, the respondents in the present research failed to perceive any significant difference in the credibility of the sources between the treatment levels.

The factor of message-orientation also may have affected the research results. In issues that elicit strong reactions as this issue did, respondents might tend to react more to the perceived intent of the message than to the source, whatever the identification level or treatment. However, the fact that all the mean opinion scores for all the sources, opponent and proponent alike, were very similar would tend to discredit this conclusion.

Another somewhat painful conclusion (at least insofar as mass-media communicators are concerned) is that most of the research subjects may have had little information upon and little interest in the issues and the proponent and opponent sources as well. To journalists, this may seem inconceivable

but there is ample evidence that people read and listen selectively, and that they react for a relatively short time to the agenda that mass communicators place before them. Any journalism teacher who has consistently given weekly current events quizzes is all too aware of the paucity of knowledge most students have about even the most dramatic and far-reaching events of the week. In a similar way, the glut of information available in an electronic, high-technology society may simply provide non-students with an unmanageable overload of data.

Despite these and other possible reasons for the outcome of the project, the author concluded that chance played a greater role than did any of the selected variables.

#### Recommendations

Based upon her experience in collecting and evaluating the data in this research, the author offers these recommendations to future scholars doing similar credibility studies.

1. Future studies should include a larger number of respondents from a wider range of the population in order to obtain more substantial results.

2. The testing should be carried out in a more relaxed atmosphere. The respondents in this study were tested at noon-time meetings, which resulted in an undesirable "rush, rush" atmosphere.

3. Future studies with variables of source-orientation or message-orientation of the respondents would be useful.

Pre-testing for the respondents' orientation plus the level of their involvement with that source or message could serve as the "control" that could eliminate indecision about the treatment levels and the effect of the variables on source credibility.

4. Types of messages, particularly anxiety-arousing messages of women's rights issues, should be studied further to determine their interaction with source credibility variables of sex, age, and education.

5. The degree of threat, another variable encountered in these anxiety-arousing messages, might well be studied. The implied threat of the messages, whether directed toward the receiver of the message, the family, or the overall "way of life" could be the deciding factor in source credibility for these particular sources.

6. The effectiveness of the above variables in a cross-cultural situation deserves further study. As the field of international public relations grows, such studies could be invaluable to professionals in several fields.

The basic idea of the research is still viable. The ever-changing criteria for evaluation of the credibility of public figures should be studied further, as stated by Wakslog and Edison (1974) in their work, and as suggested by the findings in this thesis.<sup>2</sup>

ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Bradley Greenberg and Gerald R. Miller, "The Effects of Low-Credibility Sources on Message Acceptance," Speech Monographs 33 (1966), p. 136.

<sup>2</sup>Jacob J. Wakshlog and Nadyne G. Edison, "Attraction, Credibility, Perceived Similarity, and the Image of Public Figures," Communications Quarterly 27 (February 1979), p. 33.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TEST INSTRUMENT USED IN "BLIND" STUDY

PERSONAL DATA

This information is strictly for interpretation purposes,  
but it is an essential part of the study.

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: M \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_

Education level completed: High School \_\_\_\_\_

2-Year College \_\_\_\_\_

4-Year College \_\_\_\_\_

Post-Graduate \_\_\_\_\_

Work Experience: Total years worked: \_\_\_\_\_

Currently employed: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_ Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this study is to measure the credibility of the persons and messages represented to various people by having them rate these items on a series of descriptive scales. In taking this test, please make your judgments on the basis of what these items mean to you. On each of the following pages you will find a different concept to be judged and beneath it a set of scales. Please rate the concept on each of these scales.

For example, if on a "good/bad" scale you believed the concept being judged is very closely related to "good," you should place your check mark as follows:

Good X \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ Bad

If the concept seems slightly more related to "good" than to "bad," you should check as follows:

Good \_ X \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ Bad

If the concept was no more related to "good" than to "bad," then mark the middle or neutral space.

Good \_ \_ \_ X \_ \_ \_ Bad

The direction toward which one checks, of course, depends upon which of the two ends of the scale seems most characteristic of the item you are judging.

SPECIAL NOTE: If you consider the concept to be neutral on the scale (both sides of the scale equally associated with the concept) or if the scale is completely irrelevant, unrelated to the concept, then check the middle space.

Do not look back and forth through the items. Make each item a separate and independent judgment. Work at fairly high speed. It's your first impressions we want.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY  
EAGLE FORUM

Responsible	Undependable	Inexperienced	Experienced
Expert	Inexpert	Aggressive	Passive
Excitable	Composed	Unjust	Just
Honest	Dishonest	Informed	Uninformed
Unqualified	Qualified	Poised	Nervous
Calm	Tense	Uncooperative	Cooperative
Admirable	Contemptible	Reliable	Unreliable
	Secretive	Frank, open	

CLARENCE M. PENDLETON, JR.  
CHAIRMAN  
COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Responsible	Undependable	Inexperienced	Experienced
Expert	Inexpert	Aggressive	Passive
Excitable	Composed	Unjust	Just
Honest	Dishonest	Informed	Uninformed
Unqualified	Qualified	Poised	Nervous
Calm	Tense	Uncooperative	Cooperative
Admirable	Contemptible	Reliable	Unreliable
	Secretive	Frank, open	

JANE FONDA  
ACTRESS/POLITICAL ACTIVIST

Responsible	_____	Undependable	_____	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced	_____
Expert	_____	Inexpert	_____	Aggressive	_____	Passive	_____
Excitable	_____	Composed	_____	Unjust	_____	Just	_____
Honest	_____	Dishonest	_____	Informed	_____	Uninformed	_____
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	_____	Poised	_____	Nervous	_____
Calm	_____	Tense	_____	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative	_____
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	_____	Reliable	_____	Unreliable	_____
		Secretive	_____	Frank, open	_____		

GLORIA STEINEM  
FEMINIST

Responsible	_____	Undependable	_____	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced	_____
Expert	_____	Inexpert	_____	Aggressive	_____	Passive	_____
Excitable	_____	Composed	_____	Unjust	_____	Just	_____
Honest	_____	Dishonest	_____	Informed	_____	Uninformed	_____
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	_____	Poised	_____	Nervous	_____
Calm	_____	Tense	_____	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative	_____
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	_____	Reliable	_____	Unreliable	_____
		Secretive	_____	Frank, open	_____		



ELEANOR SMEAL  
 NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF WOMEN

Responsible	_____	Undependable	_____	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced	_____
Expert	_____	Inexpert	_____	Aggressive	_____	Passive	_____
Excitable	_____	Composed	_____	Unjust	_____	Just	_____
Honest	_____	Dishonest	_____	Informed	_____	Uninformed	_____
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	_____	Poised	_____	Nervous	_____
Calm	_____	Tense	_____	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative	_____
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	_____	Reliable	_____	Unreliable	_____
		Secretive	_____	Frank, open	_____		

GERALDINE FERRARO  
 former  
 VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

Responsible	_____	Undependable	_____	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced	_____
Expert	_____	Inexpert	_____	Aggressive	_____	Passive	_____
Excitable	_____	Composed	_____	Unjust	_____	Just	_____
Honest	_____	Dishonest	_____	Informed	_____	Uninformed	_____
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	_____	Poised	_____	Nervous	_____
Calm	_____	Tense	_____	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative	_____
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	_____	Reliable	_____	Unreliable	_____
		Secretive	_____	Frank, open	_____		

REV. JERRY FALWELL  
MORAL MAJORITY

Responsible	_____	Undependable	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced
Expert	_____	Inexpert	Aggressive	_____	Passive
Excitable	_____	Composed	Unjust	_____	Just
Honest	_____	Dishonest	Informed	_____	Uninformed
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	Poised	_____	Nervous
Calm	_____	Tense	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	Reliable	_____	Unreliable
		Secretive	_____	_____	Frank, open

SEN. BARRY GOLDWATER  
R-ARIZONA

Responsible	_____	Undependable	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced
Expert	_____	Inexpert	Aggressive	_____	Passive
Excitable	_____	Composed	Unjust	_____	Just
Honest	_____	Dishonest	Informed	_____	Uninformed
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	Poised	_____	Nervous
Calm	_____	Tense	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	Reliable	_____	Unreliable
		Secretive	_____	_____	Frank, open

APPENDIX B

TEST INSTRUMENT USED IN FOUR PUBLIC  
FIGURES SOURCE CREDIBILITY STUDY

Thank you for your time and willingness to help in this research project. Please fill in the following personal data. This information is essential for the interpretation of this study.

AGE: 18-35 \_\_\_\_\_ SEX: Male \_\_\_\_\_  
 35+ \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

EDUCATION: (Level completed)  
 High School \_\_\_\_\_ 2 years college \_\_\_\_\_ College \_\_\_\_\_ Post Graduate \_\_\_\_\_

\* \* \* \* \*

The first portion of this study was a pre-test for the general or basic attitude toward certain people. Recognition of the names or titles and attitudes were the basis for this portion of the study.

This is again an opinionnaire regarding the credibility of certain persons speaking on the subject of women's political issues in the '80s.

The hypothetical situation is this: You have just read a newspaper report about a nationally-televised debate between the following persons on currently "hot" topics on the political scene regarding women's issues. These persons have discussed such issues as reinstatement of the Equal Rights Amendment, abortion, Comparable Worth legislation, and discrimination against women by salary rates and job status.

Based on the description given for each person, please give your opinion on that person's credibility as he or she speaks on the subject of women's issues by ranking each of them on the adjective scales listed.

INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this study is to measure the credibility of the persons and messages represented to various people by having them rate these items on a series of descriptive scales. In taking this test, please make your judgments on the basis of what these items mean to you. On each of the following pages you will find a different concept to be judged and beneath it a set of scales. Please rate the concept on each of these scales.

For example, if on a "good/bad" scale you believed the concept being judged is very closely related to "good," you should place your check mark as follows:

Good X \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ Bad

If the concept seems slightly more related to "good" than to "bad," you should check as follows:

Good \_ X \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ Bad

If the concept was no more related to "good" than to "bad," then mark the middle or neutral space.

Good \_ \_ \_ X \_ \_ \_ Bad

The direction toward which one checks, of course, depends upon which of the two ends of the scale seems most characteristic of the item you are judging.

SPECIAL NOTE: If you consider the concept to be neutral on the scale (both sides of the scale equally associated with the concept) or if the scale is completely irrelevant, unrelated to the concept, then check the middle space.

Do not look back and forth through the items. Make each item a separate and independent judgment. Work at fairly high speed. It's your first impressions we want.

ELEANOR SMEAL

Education: Duke University, graduated Phi Beta Kappa; University of Florida, M.S. in political science. President of National Organization for women (NOW) for second time. Reputed to be a no-nonsense leader who works 20-hour days.

Responsible	_____	Undependable	_____	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced	_____
Expert	_____	Inexpert	_____	Aggressive	_____	Passive	_____
Excitable	_____	Composed	_____	Unjust	_____	Just	_____
Honest	_____	Dishonest	_____	Informed	_____	Uninformed	_____
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	_____	Poised	_____	Nervous	_____
Calm	_____	Tense	_____	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative	_____
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	_____	Reliable	_____	Unreliable	_____
		Secretive	_____	Frank, open	_____		

GLORIA STEINEM

Education: B.A. in government at Smith College, graduating magna cum laude. Post graduate work at universities of Delhi and of Calcutta in India. Politically active. Has written for numerous publications including Esquire, Glamour, Life, Harper's, Ladies' Home Journal, McCall's, and the New York Times. Contributing editor of New York magazine since 1968.

Responsible	_____	Undependable	_____	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced	_____
Expert	_____	Inexpert	_____	Aggressive	_____	Passive	_____
Excitable	_____	Composed	_____	Unjust	_____	Just	_____
Honest	_____	Dishonest	_____	Informed	_____	Uninformed	_____
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	_____	Poised	_____	Nervous	_____
Calm	_____	Tense	_____	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative	_____
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	_____	Reliable	_____	Unreliable	_____
		Secretive	_____	Frank, open	_____		

JERRY FALWELL

Ordained Baptist minister. Established Liberty Baptist College and Liberty Baptist Seminary. Well-known radio-television evangelist. Moralistic focusing attention on personal lifestyle and family life. Active in political issues through Moral Majority.

Responsible	_____	Undependable	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced
Expert	_____	Inexpert	Aggressive	_____	Passive
Excitable	_____	Composed	Unjust	_____	Just
Honest	_____	Dishonest	Informed	_____	Uninformed
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	Poised	_____	Nervous
Calm	_____	Tense	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	Reliable	_____	Unreliable
		Secretive	_____	Frank, open	

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Education: Washington University, graduated Phi Beta Kappa; Radcliffe, M.S. in government; Washington University, Constitutional Law credentials.  
 Author of several books including A Choice, Not An Echo.  
 Television-radio commentator and public speaker. Noted for her adeptness in political debates. Longtime political activist. Established Eagle Forum.

Responsible	_____	Undependable	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced
Expert	_____	Inexpert	Aggressive	_____	Passive
Excitable	_____	Composed	Unjust	_____	Just
Honest	_____	Dishonest	Informed	_____	Uninformed
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	Poised	_____	Nervous
Calm	_____	Tense	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	Reliable	_____	Unreliable
		Secretive	_____	Frank, open	

ELEANOR SMEAL  
 Married. Works.  
 Mother of two teenage children.

Responsible _____	Undependable _____	Inexperienced _____	Experienced _____
Expert _____	Inexpert _____	Aggressive _____	Passive _____
Excitable _____	Composed _____	Unjust _____	Just _____
Honest _____	Dishonest _____	Informed _____	Uninformed _____
Unqualified _____	Qualified _____	Poised _____	Nervous _____
Calm _____	Tense _____	Uncooperative _____	Cooperative _____
Admirable _____	Contemptible _____	Reliable _____	Unreliable _____
	Secretive _____		Frank, open _____

GLORIA STEINEM  
 Journalist

Responsible _____	Undependable _____	Inexperienced _____	Experienced _____
Expert _____	Inexpert _____	Aggressive _____	Passive _____
Excitable _____	Composed _____	Unjust _____	Just _____
Honest _____	Dishonest _____	Informed _____	Uninformed _____
Unqualified _____	Qualified _____	Poised _____	Nervous _____
Calm _____	Tense _____	Uncooperative _____	Cooperative _____
Admirable _____	Contemptible _____	Reliable _____	Unreliable _____
	Secretive _____		Frank, open _____



PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Housewife.  
Mother of six grown children

Responsible	_____	Undependable	_____	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced	_____
Expert	_____	Inexpert	_____	Aggressive	_____	Passive	_____
Excitable	_____	Composed	_____	Unjust	_____	Just	_____
Honest	_____	Dishonest	_____	Informed	_____	Uninformed	_____
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	_____	Poised	_____	Nervous	_____
Calm	_____	Tense	_____	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative	_____
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	_____	Reliable	_____	Unreliable	_____
		Secretive	_____	Frank, open	_____		

JERRY FALWELL

Evangelist

Responsible	_____	Undependable	_____	Inexperienced	_____	Experienced	_____
Expert	_____	Inexpert	_____	Aggressive	_____	Passive	_____
Excitable	_____	Composed	_____	Unjust	_____	Just	_____
Honest	_____	Dishonest	_____	Informed	_____	Uninformed	_____
Unqualified	_____	Qualified	_____	Poised	_____	Nervous	_____
Calm	_____	Tense	_____	Uncooperative	_____	Cooperative	_____
Admirable	_____	Contemptible	_____	Reliable	_____	Unreliable	_____
		Secretive	_____	Frank, open	_____		

VITA

Linda Lea Hughes

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: SOURCE CREDIBILITY OF PUBLIC FIGURES AS DETERMINED  
BY THREE LEVELS OF IDENTIFICATION

Major Field: Mass Communication

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Ames, Oklahoma, February 14,  
1939, the daughter of Harry and Ruth Rosengrants

Education: Graduated from Stillwater High School,  
Stillwater, Oklahoma, in May, 1956; received Bachelor  
of Science Degree in Business Administration  
from Oklahoma State University in May, 1960; completed  
requirements for the Master of Science Degree in Mass  
Communication at Oklahoma State University in December,  
1986.

Professional Experience: Secretary and Bookkeeper,  
Student Union, Oklahoma State University, 1956 to  
1959; Legal Secretary, Swank, Swank & Swank, Still-  
water, 1959 to 1960; Legal Secretary, Sun Oil Com-  
pany, Tulsa, Oklahoma, February, 1960 to August,  
1960; Legal Secretary, free lance, Jones, Givens,  
and Gocher, Tulsa, 1965 to 1970; Legal Secretary  
and bookkeeper, Johnston, Franklin and Hladik,  
Enid, Oklahoma, 1972 to 1976; Printing, graphics,  
secretarial, bookkeeping, Copy Shop, Enid, 1979 to  
1980; Graduate Teaching Assistant, School of Jour-  
nalism and Broadcasting, Oklahoma State University,  
1984 to 1986; Substitute Teaching, K-12, Enid  
Public Schools, Fall 1986; Instructor, School of  
Continuing Education, Enid, Fall 1986.

Honors: Oklahoma State University President's Honor  
Roll, Dean's Honor Roll, Golden Key National Honor  
Society.

Other Credentials: Public relations, advertising, organizing programs, and newswriting, Tau Gamma, social sorority, Oklahoma State University; Organized and chaired major projects of Fall Festival, Regional AMBUC convention, women's activities, edited yearbook for two years, president in 1972; Treasurer, chaired major committee for yearly fundraising project, edited yearbook and newsletter for two years, chaired Puppet Show committee, wrote original script with music for children's play which was produced in area elementary school and hospitals for two years, created overall theme and logos for major yearly project Follies, chaired Program committee, edited 60-page program booklet, wrote radio commercials, Junior Welfare League, 1972-1979; Created themes, designed costumes and scenery for three dance recitals, created and printed programs for two years, Elizabeth Shelley Williams Dance Studio; Created theme and organized style show for American Business Club, selecting models, contacting retailers, writing script, obtaining staging, creating and printing programs, and narrating the show "Christmas Wish 1980"; Freelance public relations and advertising work, creating logos and slogans for various businesses and organizations, Enid, Oklahoma, 1970-1986.