

Editor

Yorgo Pasadeos

Associate Editors

S. Shyam Sundar
Suzanne Campbell

Address

College of Communication
P.O. Box 870172
University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487, U.S.A.

Telephone

(205) 348-7158

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From the Editor

This issue carries three case studies of press coverage. Each has an international angle and should be of interest to ICD members. By definition, case studies have extremely limited generalizability and may not always receive high priority for placement in the major journals in our field. *ICB*, on the other hand, welcomes such contributions, especially since a number of readers have told me they like to use such items from *ICB* as classroom examples. So, if you have information on any aspect of mass communication that has an international angle, think of *ICB*.

We are always eager to receive your contributions in the following areas:

ARTICLES: We welcome all methodological approaches to subject matter dealing with international mass communication. ICD members will blind-review submissions. Commentary pieces and short notes on preliminary findings or research in progress also are most welcome. To make your editor's task easier, and facilitate prompt action on your manuscript, please follow these guidelines:

- (1) Limit manuscripts to 22 double-spaced pages (including cites and tables).
- (2) Submit manuscripts in triplicate.
- (3) Follow APA (American Psychological Association) style.
- (4) *ICB* is produced using a Macintosh microcomputer, Apple Laserwriter printer and ReadySetGo! desktop publishing software. If you can, send Mac (Macwrite, Word) text files (separate files for text, notes and tables) on disk, along with two hard copies. We can also convert *some ASCII files* produced on IBM or compatible PC's.

NEWS: Is your organization involved in newsworthy activities? Have you professional news of interest to our readership? Keep your colleagues informed! Particularly welcome are **country or regional reports** on mass communication related activities, policies, etc., in various locales around the world. We also publish tips on teaching international aspects of the mass communication curriculum.

BOOK REVIEWS: Please keep book reviews at 600-800 words (2-3 double-spaced pages). A brief advance note on your review plans will avoid duplications. We are particularly interested in (1) reviews of communication books published outside the USA and (2) English reviews of communication books written in languages other than English.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES: ICD members are very interested in bibliographies/reading lists pertaining to communication practices and issues around the world. If you have compilations of publications similar to the ones we have published so far, *ICB* would be happy to publish them.

Please keep your news, submissions and ideas coming.

Yorgo Pasadeos

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U.S. Daily Newspapers and the Role of the Associated Press in First-Day Coverage of the 1989 Invasion of Panama

By John Bare

When American soldiers secretly invade a Central American country around midnight EST, how do U.S. newspaper readers find out about it? That scenario unfolded in the early morning hours of Dec. 20, 1989, when President Bush ordered troops to invade Panama. This case study examines the role the Associated Press played in first-day newspaper coverage of the invasion; it is an attempt to answer, at least partially, the question of how newspaper readers first learned of the military action.

Newspaper editors faced two primary obstacles in trying to carry first-day invasion news. One, news of the invasion came after most east coast papers had already started or completed final press runs. Two, reporters in Panama were slow in filing stories because the military restricted access to the invasion scene.

The first information Washington reporters received came from Presidential Spokesman Marlin Fitzwater who held a 1:30 a.m. press conference to announce Operation Just Cause. This news conference came too late for some papers to include in their Dec. 20 editions. Even for newspapers that were able to carry the story, Fitzwater's announcement provided only a second-hand account of the ongoing invasion.

In addition to the time constraint, reporters in Panama initially had little access to the invasion scene. The military reporting pool, to which media representatives are assigned on a rotating basis, consisted of the *Houston Post*, the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Dallas Morning News*, AP, United Press International, *Time* magazine, Reuters, ABC and CBS.¹

Initial restrictions hindered first-day battle coverage. Thus it was difficult to obtain news from the scene. Most news services were so handcuffed by restrictions that complete reports from Panama were delayed nearly 24 hours.²

With the time and access limitations, AP emerged as one of the primary providers of first-day invasion news from Panama. Initially, television updates were the only alternatives to AP coverage. "Certainly, we relied on AP for nearly all our breaking coverage out of Panama. They were our main guns in the early going," said Keith Moyer, then executive editor of the *Fort Myers News-Press*.³

The Associated Press has a long record of serving the majority of daily newspapers in the country. Singletary showed that 1,550 dailies subscribed to AP alone or in combination with other wires in 1973; only 1,178 dailies to UPI alone or in combination that year. In 1960, 1,622 dailies subscribed to AP; 1,353 subscribed to UPI.⁴

Results of a VU/TEXT search reveal that AP was able to file its first invasion story from Panama on Dec. 20 at 1:32 a.m. (Eastern), which means that AP provided newspapers with first-

hand news of the invasion before Fitzwater could finish his news conference in Washington. On Dec. 20, 1989, AP filed 104 more invasion-related stories categorized as domestic, Washington, international or financial news.⁵

AP's ability to distribute information on a broad basis was evident in the number of newspapers that included information from AP's first Panama story. The article described "mortar, machine-gun fire and cannon fire" and "24 tanks" rolling through Panama City.⁶ Similar information appeared in many newspapers, and was not always credited to AP. For example, the top invasion story in the *Dallas Morning News* was credited to "wire reports" and had a Washington dateline. It did not cite AP, but it included a reference to the sighting of 24 U.S. tanks, and the passage, "mortar and machine gun fire was heard throughout Panama City," appeared in the lead.⁷

The combination of tradition and technology ensures AP copy widespread use. AP may even be the sole provider of international breaking news for some newspapers. For example, even though UPI, AP's historical wire service rival, was included in the reporting pool, none of the 62 first-day invasion articles collected for this study were credited to UPI.

In considering AP's role in first-day newspaper coverage of the invasion, this case study examines how circulation size was related to the use of AP-related stories. Newspapers with large circulations, and larger resources, should have the opportunity to include stories from staff reporters or correspondents, supplemental services or a compilation of several wire services. Larger papers should have more news providers from which to choose.

Method

Thirty-six morning dailies from Dec. 20, 1989, were content analyzed. Each item that was credited wholly, or in part, to AP was considered an AP story in the analysis. All other items, including those with no provider indicated, were considered non-AP stories. In addition, each story's dateline was recorded.⁸

Circulation sizes of the sampled newspapers ranged from 46,000 to 1.1 million. When possible, the study used each newspaper's final morning edition. The 36 newspapers were divided into three groups of 12, representing larger (over 360,000 circulation), mid-size (220,000 to 360,000) and smaller (under 220) circulation levels.

Bare is a graduate student in journalism at the University of North Carolina.

Table 1
Story Source by Newspaper Circulation

<i>Story Type</i>	<i>Smaller newspapers (under 220,000)</i>	<i>Mid-sized newspapers (220,000-360,000)</i>	<i>Larger newspapers (above 360,000)</i>	<i>All Newspapers</i>
AP-credit	50.0%	47.1%	6.9%	29.0%
non-AP	50.0	52.9	93.1	71.0
<i>Totals</i>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=62; Chi-square=12.992 (p<0.01); Cramer's V=.4578

Results and Discussion

The Associated Press alone was found to have accounted for 29 percent of the first-day invasion articles in the sampled newspapers.

Forty percent of the stories had a Panama dateline. Almost as many articles, 38 percent, had a Washington dateline.⁹ More than 21 percent had no dateline. This demonstrates that a great amount of invasion news originated in places other than the scene of the invasion.

Table 1 shows that half of the articles appearing in the smaller papers were credited to AP. Slightly fewer articles in mid-size papers were credited to AP. Fewer than 7 percent of the first-day invasion stories in larger papers were credited to AP (15). The findings indicate a statistically significant relationship between AP-credited stories and circulation size.

Table 2 shows that one-half the stories that appeared with a Panama dateline were credited to AP. Furthermore, AP might actually have played a larger role in providing news from the invasion scene because some of the non-AP items could have included AP information and no attribution. The results are statistically significant. There is a moderate association between dateline and AP-credited stories.

Table 2 also shows that 87 percent of the articles with a Washington dateline were non-AP stories. This indicates that most news items coming from President Bush and other government officials were provided by staff correspondents, supplemental services or a compilation of wires.

Several items that carried no dateline were chronological listings of facts or events. Other stories with no dateline were staff articles written at the newspaper's foreign or national desk, not in the field. Results show few of these were credited to AP.

Conclusions

First, the military reporting pool does not grant news agencies the access needed to report breaking news from the scene of battle.

The newspapers in the reporting pool ran a combined total of five first-day invasion articles in the editions collected for this study. None of the five were credited to the reporting pool in Panama. Also, there were no staff stories with a Panama dateline. Only one of the five items had a Panama dateline; it appeared in the *Houston Post* and was credited to "Post news services." The article cited AP within the text, which again demonstrates the broad impact AP had in providing breaking news from the scene.¹⁰

It may be that the pool is the best alternative among many

Table 2
Story Source by Dateline

<i>Story Type</i>	<i>No dateline</i>	<i>Panama dateline</i>	<i>Washington dateline</i>	<i>All stories</i>
AP-credit	15.4%	50.0%	13.0%	28.3%
non-AP	84.6	50.0	87.0	71.7
<i>Totals</i>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=60; Chi-square=9.270 (p<0.01); Cramer's V=.3931

unsatisfactory options. But if the goal of the reporting pool is to allow designated journalists to collect and distribute news on developing military actions, then it failed in Panama.

Second, AP-credited stories were rarely used by the nation's largest dailies in first-day coverage of the invasion, indicating that the larger papers may have more news options or may be reluctant to run AP-credited items. Further study is needed to determine if this pattern holds for other breaking international news stories and to determine if this pattern changes as a story emerges over several days. Additional study could also attempt to document how often newspapers include AP information without crediting the wire service. AP is sometimes cited within the text of news stories, but this sample was not large enough to achieve significant results regarding the effect of circulation size on the crediting of AP within the body of the article.

Third, mid-size and smaller papers relied heavily on AP for first-day invasion news, which indicates that supplemental news services have not overtaken AP as the primary provider of breaking international news.¹¹ Littlewood and DeLong cite sources that claim many newspapers no longer have to rely on AP or UPI for breaking news. Dailies use supplementals for more of the "big" stories and wire services for "cat and dog" stories," the researchers write.¹² However, this is apparently not the case with breaking international news, as witnessed by the heavy use of AP-credited copy in first-day coverage of the Panama invasion.

Littlewood and DeLong note that one appealing aspect of a supplemental service is that it can save a newspaper from financing a Washington bureau.¹³ Indeed, coverage of Washington may be the primary role of supplemental services, for there were few AP-credited items out of Washington among the first-day stories.

Notes

¹ "Pool of Reporters Covering Invasion," *The Houston Chronicle*, Dec. 21, 1989, p. 10A. It was only a coincidence that three Texas newspapers were all in the reporting pool at the time of the invasion, the article said.

² Keith Moyer, telephone interview by author, Chapel Hill,

North Carolina, April 16, 1990. Moyer has since become editor of *The Arkansas Gazette*.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Michael W. Singletary, "Newspaper Use of Supplemental Services: 1960-73," *Journalism Quarterly*, Winter 1975, 52:748-51.

⁵ AP File, VU/TEXT. Retrieval path: Publication date=December 20, 1989; Search Word=Panama.

⁶ Document No. 156846, AP File, VU/TEXT. Fighting in Panama: U.S. Troops Move Toward Military Headquarters, December 20, 1989.

⁷ U.S. Troops Move Against Noriega, from wire reports, *The Dallas Morning News*, Dec. 20, 1989, p. 1.

⁸ The study considered only those newspapers that were able to include news of the invasion on Dec. 20, 1989. Afternoon dailies were excluded. An effort was made to obtain newspapers from all four U.S. time zones and across circulation levels. In all, articles from 36 newspapers were collected. This yielded 62 stories. The data were collected through VU/TEXT and Datatimes data bases, as well as through microfilm and hard copies of newspapers. The sample size was limited because not all dailies included first-day invasion coverage and because many smaller newspapers were not available. Each article was considered a single case for the purpose of analysis. Such market articles, editorials and columns that mentioned Panama were excluded from the study. Also, news articles that mentioned Panama were only included if they were related to the invasion.

⁹ Note that the number of articles in the dateline variable does not total 62 because an article from California and an article from New Mexico were coded as "other" datelines and treated as missing data for purposes of analysis.

¹⁰ U.S. attack in Panama, Post News Services, *The Houston Post*, Dec. 20, 1989, p. 1.

¹¹ Mid-size and smaller dailies did not vary greatly in the use of AP-credited first-day invasion copy, and this is likely due to the fact that papers in the two groups were relatively similar in circulation size. Considering that several of the nation's largest dailies were included in the study, it would have been better to include newspapers from the smallest circulation levels. This would have provided the greatest variance.

¹² Thomas B. Littlewood and Raymond DeLong, Supplemental News Services," *Newspaper Research Journal*, July 1981, 2:(4):9-14.

¹³ *Ibid.*