A STUDY OF THE NEWS MEDIA ACCESSING AND
ASSISTING SOURCES DURING CRISIS NEWS EVENTS

1993 LUCASVILLE PRISON RIOT

A Thesis
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by
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CHAPTER I
ACCESSING SOURCES FOR NON-ROUTINE STORIES

INTRODUCTION

The method journalists use to gather information for stories is simple. Newsworkers contact a source who might hold information that relates to the story. This information will either advance, support, or refute the hypotheses of the story. The most significant element in the function of news gathering is the flow of information from source to journalist. For journalists, "the source" is the most important component in the daily work place routine.

Sources of information are contacted by journalists on a routine basis during the regular course of the news day. A story idea will be generated, causing the reporter to seek out sources of information to build the story. Throughout the normal, routine news gathering process, contacting a source who has relevant information generally is an easy task for the reporter. For example, sources for stories concerning police matters are frequently found at the police station, where police officers are in their offices at particular times or can be reached by two-way radios or pagers. Other sources of information, such as witnesses, victims, or suspects, can be obtained from official police reports. Government officials have regular office hours where they can be reached in person or over the phone. In general, sources have normal routines. Reporters can predict where they are going to be and how they might be contacted.

Not every story journalists cover is of a routine nature; however, even non-routine news stories have standard sources and kinds of information. Non-routine events such as violent and non-violent demonstrations, marches, protests, fires,
shootings, and even annual community celebrations have unique sources of information which are readily accessible to reporters. Spokespersons for demonstrators and protesters, supervisors for emergency personnel at fires and shootings, as well as civic leaders, will be at the event and accessible to the reporter. These events may not be part of the regular routine for journalists on a day-in and day-out basis, but sources of information can be accessed without difficulty.

NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

There will be occasions when journalists are forced to cover a story where the usual sources of information are unavailable or cannot be accessed. Examples include boating accidents at sea, searches for lost hikers in the mountains, or the actions of military units in time of combat. Journalists are frequently restricted in their access to the actual rescue operations at these types of events. Authorities believe that journalists may hamper the resolution of the crisis or may even wander into harm's way. The news media will then seek out official sources at locations away from the crisis event who should have some information about resolution efforts. Unfortunately, these official sources may not be in constant communication with those at the actual crisis scene and may not have any new or updated information. During each of these events, the sources of information are either at the scene and therefore unaccessible; or, those sources journalists are able to contact have no information about events as they unfold.

For purpose of this study, prison riots pose a unique set of problems for journalists accessing sources for the story. By definition, prison uprisings occur behind the thick walls and high wire fences that surround prisons. Inmates infrequently escape. They do take prison guards hostage and have, on occasion, killed
or tortured hostages to force their demands to be met or to keep prison authorities from trying to retake the prison.

The problems for journalists covering the story are straightforward but difficult to resolve. The first major problem is that the sources representing the two sides of the story are both inside the prison. Reporters trying to cover the riot cannot access sources with firsthand information about the uprising. Inmates holding the hostages, as well as prison authorities trying to resolve the situation, are on the opposite side of the fence from journalists outside the prison. Prison authorities will emerge at different times to hold news conferences but they reveal only one side of the story and information given out by them cannot be verified. No other independent representative dealing with the inmates or observing the proceedings inside the prison is available for interviews. When prison authorities do come out for news conferences, they have their own agenda which they are trying to get the news media to report. (Burke, 94. Michael, 94. Orr, 94.)

The second major problem for journalists is how to respond when prison authorities agree to an inmates' demand to meet with the news media. In other words, what problems occur for journalists when they go inside to meet with inmates or agree to help prison authorities with technical support of some fashion? This sort of involvement changes journalists' role from that of covering the story to being participants, or even sources, for the story.

These issues are important to study because they directly challenge standards of journalists. The non-routine crisis news event creates complex issues for journalists covering the story. When newsworkers assist in the resolution of the crisis, they struggle with conflict between humanitarian goals versus journalistic needs.

The population for this study consists of six people who had direct impact on the events during the Lucasville uprising. Other people who were at Lucasville were
used as sources but, considering that during a prison uprising there are only the rioting inmates, prison authorities, and the news media, more need not be included. On April 11, 1993, the inmates of "L" Block of the Southern Ohio Correctional Institute in Lucasville, Ohio, staged an uprising and gained control of part of their prison home. At one point during the siege, selected members of the news media were called upon to assist prison authorities in televising a meeting with an inmate representative. Four members of the news media and two prison officials who were key players comprise the group of people interviewed for this study.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

How do journalists access a story where normal, routine sources of information are inaccessible and where those sources who can be contacted provide information which is either unverifiable or untrustworthy? What issues confront journalists when one of these sources requests them to assist in the resolution of the crisis?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Much academic research has been done on methods used by journalists in gathering information from sources for routine stories. Only modest attention has been directed at how journalists cover a crisis news event where sources are unavailable or cannot be verified.

This study will explore the problems when journalists are pulled into the an event as participants. When a news media outlet accepts a request by prison authorities to help meet a demand made by rioting inmates, it not only becomes a player in the event but also a information source for other news media outlets. That news media outlet is placed in a position of having to choose at different points during
the crisis either to honor its agreement to assist authorities or to report the story it was sent to cover. Pressure will also be applied to the relationship between authorities and the news media outlet by other news organizations who perceive that the assisting news operation has gained a competitive advantage in the coverage of the crisis.

This study will focus on the events surrounding how WBNS-TV of Columbus, Ohio, became involved in the negotiation process during the Lucasville prison uprising in April 1993. Studying WBNS's role during the riot will expose the difficulties journalists will encounter when covering a story where sources have powerful agendas and wish to control the news media. The involvement of WBNS with Lucasville prison authorities demonstrates clearly the problems facing both the source and the news media outlet when they are forced into a relationship of having to work together toward a mutual goal.

Why is the relationship between prison authorities and the news media important to study? Why is it important to understand the impact that the news media's need for sources of information can have on this type of relationship? State officials, law enforcement agencies, and prison authorities study and analyze these crisis events, searching for answers to precisely these questions. (Andring, 1993. Cadeaux, 1990. Kindel, 1993. Labecki, 1989. Mardon, 1992. Smith, 1993.) This research is then shared at seminars and conventions whose purpose is to educate prison authorities. (Kornegay, 1994).

The same effort, however, has not been expended by the news media to analyze the problems inherent in crisis situations from the news media's perspective. Aside from published scholarly articles which occasionally appear after a crisis event (Gambini, 1993. Kamen, 1993. Newkirk, 1993. Prato, 1993) the news media does little to examine such events in order to produce insights which may be useful when dealing with similar events in the future.
CHAPTER II
ROUTINE SOURCES AND PAST PRISON RIOTS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the two main issues for this thesis. Included in the discussion is more detail of the challenges encountered by journalists during crisis news events. A review of two distinctive classifications of literature will aid in developing the background information. One classification will be of academic research examining journalists' efforts in contacting sources of information for stories. The other classification will consist of journalistic literature detailing the events of three previous prison riots.

RESEARCH QUESTION

This thesis will examine two issues. First, it will review previous academic research examining how journalists find sources of information compared to how local television stations source stories in the high-tech 1990's. Second, it will examine the relationship between prison authorities and the news media at crisis news events.

Journalists at both the local and national level theoretically should be able to find sources of information in relatively similar manners, regardless of whether they work for the electronic or print news media. However, this is not the case. Local television journalists are confronted with a unique assortment of problems of accessing enough new sources to fill the large number of newscasts which electronic news stations produce each day. Television journalists must also resolve the problem of accessing those sources who can provide what information they have "live" during
those news broadcasts. During a crisis news event, this problem is amplified. The few official sources available are difficult to access and even more difficult to have on "live" during news broadcasts. They are frequently too occupied with the crisis to stand around waiting to be interviewed on each and every television station that requests them. The underlying assumption is that local television journalists will simply work harder to seek out new and more sources of information to fill their numerous "live" broadcasts. The interviews for this study will either support or deny this assumption.

Herbert Gans, Gaye Tuchman, Mark Fishman, and others have focused on how reporters cover routine beats. These studies produced insights into how stories end up in their published or televised forms. They answer the question, "How do journalists get information for the story they intend to write?", Herbert Gans simply states:

"Journalists obtain the news from sources they observe or interview." (Gans, p. 116)

Gans explains that, by working routine beats, newsworkers can rely upon having a regular supply of information for future stories.

No such routine exists during a crisis news event such as a prison riot. The main sources of information are inaccessible because they are locked away within the prison. The inmates staging the uprising and the prison authorities trying to end the siege are frustratingly out of journalists' reach. Both sides are facing off behind prison walls trying to reach an agreement to release hostages and return the prison to order. Neither source of information is available to the horde of journalists who have taken up residence outside the prison. Prison authorities will seek to limit the inmates' access to the news media. They will also release information to the news media only if they believe no harm will be done to negotiations. Journalists find themselves covering a major disaster story which has no regular or accountable sources of
information. This type of story contrasts sharply with the kinds of stories studied in existing research analyzing how newsworkers normally gather news. The crisis news event is considerably different from the routine of daily newsgathering.

A harmonious relationship between prison authorities and the news media ought to be possible. Journalists' responsibility to cover the story seemingly should not interfere with the ability of prison authorities to resolve the crisis. Nor should prison authorities' responsibility to resolve the crisis seemingly interfere with the news media's ability to cover the story.

However logical, these assumptions are wrong. During a crisis event, neither side is prepared to deal with the other. Sharon Kornegay, prison spokesperson during the Lucasville uprising, said:

"The attention the media required was a surprise to all levels of the department [of Corrections]. I've never seen anything like it. There is no way to train for the volume of attention." (Kornegay, 94)

Sergeant David Michael of the Dayton Police Department, the chief negotiator for the prison authorities during the Lucasville uprising, said:

"There was no plan to deal with the media. I had no plan to deal with the media. We had to learn as we went along." (Michael, 94)

Anchor-reporter Bob Orr of WBNS-TV, who covered the siege at Lucasville for eight of its 11 days, said:

"There is no rule book for this. We were writing the rules as we went." (Orr, 94)

In researching the literature about the news media's coverage of past major prison riots, it appears that little research addresses the interaction of the news media and prison authorities at crisis news events. This topic is worthy of consideration. Both prison authorities and the news media are locked into their roles at crisis news events. The motives generating the actions of the opposing sides can be hard for both
officials (Michael, 94. Kornegay, 94) and journalists (Burke, 94. Orr, 94. Stewart, 94) to understand. The purpose of this study is to examine this relationship when these parties were forced to cooperate during the uprising at Lucasville. What were the possibilities for the news outlets who were requested to help in the negotiations? Could any newsworkers be successful in this situation? Or would they fail, both as journalists and as key players in helping officials negotiate? What were the possibilities for prison authorities? Could they actually get the news media to support them? How much could they trust the news media not to damage the ongoing negotiations?

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Much of the important research that has been done about how newsworkers go about the task of news gathering (Fishman, 1980. Gans, 1979. Sigal, 1973. Tuchman, 1978) is based on the routines of covering news beats and regular information sources. In the world of journalists, the beat is a regular place to go to make contact with sources of information for stories. Which sources have information available and what issues are presently in the news are pieces of the puzzle journalists put together daily to produce stories to meet the next deadline. In the beat system, sources are readily accessible because they are located in places where they can be predictably contacted. The mayor is at City Hall, the police chief is at the main police station, the judge is in chambers. All can be easily found. Crisis situations, such as the Lucasville prison riot, do not offer routine information gathering opportunities similar to those discussed in the above-mentioned research. How do journalists begin to cover a story of this scope where the routine of news gathering is completely disrupted?

Journalists' access to sources of information has been studied in depth. Often the people conducting the studies are on the outside, looking in. That is to say, such
researchers observe one or more news operations, follow a particular story or reporter, then make comparisons about how news is made. Leon V. Sigal observed the working newsrooms of the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and the Washington bureau of the *Times*. Sigal examined closely the sources for the national and foreign news produced by these organizations:

"Of all the facilities that officials routinely provide and reporters rely on, no others compare with the handout and the press conference in their impact on the news. Nongovernmental sources employ these channels, too, but on government beats around Washington, these are the two principal routine channels through which most information passes from news sources to reporters." (Sigal, p. 104)

Throughout the regular course of news gathering, journalists can normally find a second or extrinsic source who will either confirm or deny the first, official source of information. However, crisis news events do not provide these regular routine sources of information. Bob Orr of WBNS-TV explains what a tremendous problem it is for journalists to cover a story such as the prison riot at Lucasville:

"You only had access, ever, to one side of the story, from the prison spokespeople. Obviously, from what was going on, we never had access to the other side of the story, the prisoners . . . The problem you have as a reporter there, is that you have a potentially volatile situation where you are totally dependant upon information, handout information, that you cannot verify . . . So as a reporter, you had to report everything with more than a little bit of skepticism." (Orr, 94)

To keep up with the constant demand to fill space or time, reporters cannot rely solely upon their own legwork or enterprise to find fresh stories. Reporters eventually turn to official channels for new story ideas or to complete their assignments:
"Whatever the location of their bureaus and their beats, reporters rely mainly on routine channels to get information." (Sigal, p. 125)

However, if journalists' only sources disseminate information at irregular intervals, journalists must then build their stories piece-by-piece. WCMH-TV News Director Thomas Burke describes what it was like trying to make sense of the piecemeal information handed out by Lucasville prison authorities at irregular time intervals:

"We basically pieced it together as we as we got it. Doing as much observing, I think, as actual factual reporting." (Burke, 94)

At stories where there is only one official source of information, that source has a tremendous amount of power and control over what information the news media is permitted to know. Official sources at crisis news events want to control what information is released to the news media:

"I took control and said that no information was to be released to the news media except through me. That way, I had control and we could hopefully avoid any mistakes." (Michael, 94)

The possibility of one source's controlling what information is handed out is not lost on those within the news media. In a "live" conversation aired on WBNS-TV, Paula Toti, an anchorwoman at the Columbus studios, mentioned to Bob Orr, reporting from the scene in Lucasville, that prison authorities did not appear to be giving out all that they knew about what was happening inside the prison. Orr responded that they "weren't and shouldn't" be giving out all they knew. (State VHS tape, 93) Orr believes that the news media doesn't need to know everything that is going on at this kind of crisis news event:
"Michael was right to try and take control of what was told to to the media." (Orr, 94)

The news media outside the prison walls at Lucasville were locked into covering a story with one main source which was intentionally censoring the information released. The news media was forced to report on what they observed rather than what was told to them by official sources. Pan and Kosicki discuss how reporters frame stories so the audience interprets the journalist's version of the news event as reality:

"Although all news professionals claim that their mission is to report to their audiences factually what they see, hear, and learn, persuasive elements are inevitably embedded in the news stories that they construct. When a journalist constructs a news story, he or she, by following professional practices, employs various 'cues' to maximize the survival, in the audience's minds, of the meaning of the event or issue that is covered. In other words, the journalist is motivated to present what he or she observes (and interpret, according to framing analysis) as facts." (Pan & Kosicki, p. 14)

Gaye Tuchman examines the process of how journalists seek out sources of information to create news stories to fill the daily demand to fill space (in newspapers) or time (in television newscasts). Tuchman explains the operation of a news department so that an outsider would be able to understand why reporters talk to certain sources, how the chain of command inside the newsroom is structured, and how stories get edited before being published:

"By knowing enough sources, reporters can maximize their ability to file a story every day and thus demonstrate their competence." (Tuchman, p. 68)

The phrase "Get your story and make your deadline" expresses the bottom line for every journalist. If you can't do either, you might as well sell shoes. This is why reporters need to be "well sourced." As soon as a story is assigned, reporters begin
contacting sources to start gathering facts needed to fulfill the assignment. The quicker those sources are accessed, the quicker deadlines are met. By having expeditious access to sources, reporters can aptly get information when covering late-breaking stories. This extra information may allow reporters to frame their stories differently from a competitor's and thus gain a competitive advantage. For example, all the reporters in town might call the police chief as a source for a certain story on a particular news day. But experienced reporters may be acquainted with the secretary down the hall from the chief's office who will slip them an extra piece of information which gives them the scoop on other reporters. A single extra source can give a reporter that competitive edge over rivals:

"Clearly, whom one asks for information influences what information one receives." (Tuchman, p. 81)

If all the reporters in town use the police chief as the source in this hypothetical story, all of the stories are going to look substantially alike. The experienced reporter with the secretarial source down the hall will have the only story that stands out in the crowd.

Journalists frame their stories through sources. But what happens when their sources conflict with one another? What does a journalist do when faced with sources who disagree? Sometimes the solution is easy. An undercover agent who has just caught a drug dealer for possession and trafficking will most likely give a reporter accurate information as to why he had to chase the suspect all through the neighborhood to arrest him. Logically, a reporter should be more suspicious of the dealer's story that he ran because he thought he was being robbed. But whom should a reporter believe when sources are equally credible?
"[A]ccounts which differ from one another must differ on some basis other than the differing competence of the sources, i.e., they must differ because of the positional perspectives or the interested perspectives of the sources." (Fishman, p. 130)

Fishman suggests one way to judge credibility is to evaluate the intent of the sources. What is it they might gain? What is it they may not know but want to give the impression they have information about? Fishman contends journalists do not necessarily believe a source simply because he gives a reporter some information. Journalists frame stories through a method he calls "Fact-by-Triangulation". This is basically a check-and-balance system used by reporters to keep all the information and all the sources on an equal and level playing field. When competent sources conflict with one another, reporters will try to verify the sources' claims, then use the most relevant information from all sides to build the story. Journalists must always guard against being sucked in by the plausibility of self-interested sources:

"It is no surprise, then, that routine news sources are interested in cementing their bonds with news organizations. To the extent that sources recognize what they have to gain through their relationship with journalists, and that they act on this interest...." (Fishman, p. 152)

Fishman observes why sources may be so interested in tipping reporters to possible stories. Source who routinely provide news to beat reporters can create tremendous power for themselves. When a source's name is frequently in the news, that person will be perceived by others as being a person of authority. This perception creates for the source a position of financial, political, or community power. A wise reporter should be aware of the monster that might be created. Sources frequently accessed by newsworkers can grow bigger than the story itself. Experienced beat reporters oftentimes spread out the frequency with which they tap the same sources. This allows them a wider sphere of information to source for daily use. Newsworkers
avoid giving editors and readers the impression they are too closely tied to any one particular source or are biased in favor of that source.

Even when officially sourcing stories, newworkers need to be able to figure out "Who's Who", "Who" knows what, and how to find "Whom" to get the information needed. Conrad Smith details the importance of journalists being competent explorers:

"In theory, any reporter can cover any story by consulting appropriate experts to make up for gaps in the reporter's knowledge. In practice, finding good information sources is often difficult. Reporters must know who the experts are, how to contact them, and what questions to ask." (Smith, p. 231)

Experts may appear to be most logical and productive source for the reporter, but frequently, certain occurrences detour newworkers from reaching, or even attempting to contact, the most expert source:

"Deadline pressure encourages journalists to interview the most accessible sources rather than those with the most expertise, and to tell the story the way it has always been told instead of looking for the ways in which each news event is different." (Fishman, p. 231)

There is safety in one's past. For journalists using unfamiliar information sources, the safest method is to frame the story with concepts similar to those the newworker has created in the past. Journalists take what they know from their individual pasts in covering news stories and apply that experience and knowledge to the event before them. Based on their experience in news gathering, journalists create a routine manner of constructing and framing stories. Predictable themes emerge that have preferred meanings. Pan and Kosicki realize how a theme will impact journalists' story:

"A theme of a news story may be the meaning that is most likely to emerge from the cues employed by the news makers in constructing the story . . . An intended and comprehended theme
of a story may not be identical because of the active nature of the discourse comprehension (Van Dijk, 1988). However, an intended theme does function as a cognitive 'window' through which the news story is 'seen'. In other words, an intended theme organizes materials in a news story and has its internal structure. It has the capacity of directing as well as restricting the perspectives available to audiences (Hall, 1980; Tuchman, 1978). Because of this cognitive structuring function, a theme is also called a 'frame'."
(Pan & Kosicki, p. 7)

The past experiences of the individual journalist covering a story will have a direct relationship to the framing and final outcome of that journalist's story. The viewpoint of the news gatherer will obviously be limited by the simple fact that he cannot possibly "see" everything or "know" everything about any one particular news event. However, the theme, or frame, of stories will have a direct impact on the audience. The framing of the story may leave some details out and thus restrict the audience's knowledge of the event. Framing may also allow the audience to relate to the emotions and experiences of those who are living the events of the story.

New advances in technology have greatly altered the approach journalists take when confronted with a crisis news event. This most notably holds true for coverage provided by local television stations. According to Columbus television news directors, stories in the 1990's are frequently framed around the effect the event is having on individual persons. (Burke, 94. Dughi, 94) Such individuals frequently happen to be victims, witnesses, family members of victims or witnesses, or even people who happen to live near the place where the newsworthy event occurred and are willing to share their opinions about the event. (Dughi, 94) The current trend in television news is away from interviewing official sources of information.
PRISON RIOTS -- LITERATURE

What events actually occur during a prison uprising? How do prison officials and the news media react to the riot and to each other? When inmates demand access to the news media, how does the relationship between prison authorities and the news media change? To see if there are any trends in these relationships, three other prison uprisings have been researched for this thesis.

Thirteen hundred inmates took over the Attica State Prison in western New York on September 9, 1971. When the siege ended, 29 inmates and 10 guard hostages were killed; 89 others were wounded.

Inmates at the New Mexico State Penitentiary at Santa Fe took 12 guards hostage shortly after midnight on February 2, 1980. Thirty-three inmates were murdered and mutilated by the rioters. Eight of the hostage guards were tortured. Gangs of rioting inmates raped, tortured, wounded, and terrorized the other inmates in what has been called the most savage penal riot in American history.

Inmates at the State Correctional Institution at Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, rioted twice in three days on October 25-27, 1989. The first uprising on October 25th by more than 500 inmates resulted in several guards being taken hostage and 45 injuries to staff and inmates. Statements by prison administrators at a press conference on October 26th at 6:00 p.m. incensed inmates who were watching the "live" news conference. Camp Hill Prison was catapulted into its second day of rioting. During two days of rioting, 24 staff members were taken hostage. Over 100 people were injured.

"9 HOSTAGES AND 28 PRISONERS DIE AS 1,000
STORM PRISON IN ATTICA; 28 RESCUED, SCORES
ARE INJURED"
This was the headline in the *New York Times* on September 14, 1971. After four days of talks with rioting inmates, New York Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller sent heavily armed State Police officers to the walkways above the prison yards to take the prison back by force. The first reports of the assault blamed the inmates for many of the deaths:

"Late today a deputy director of correction, Walter Dunbar, said that two of the hostages had been killed 'before today' and that one had been stabbed and emasculated. Of the remaining seven, five were killed instantly by the prison inmates and two died in hospital."

(*New York Times, 9/14/71*)

This story was based on information prison authorities gave the news media at the scene as events unfolded. Reporters outside the Attica prison walls were forced to rely on these official sources, for they were the only ones who had any idea of what was going on beyond the prison walls. Reporters would, no doubt, have jumped at the opportunity to talk to the prisoners, but prison authorities were not about to let the news media anywhere near the rioting prisoners they had just recaptured. Questions about the accuracy of prison authorities' version of what happened inside the prison during the assault would very shortly surface, and the prison authorities' cover-up would soon be disclosed. Malcolm Bell describes how official state sources tried to distort events inside the prison:

"As people are reading the throat-slashing version in their morning papers on the 14th, the true story begins to filter out. That afternoon, Dr. John Edland, the chief medical examiner, formally announces that all dead hostages died of gunshot wounds, and that none was emasculated. Since the officers had all the guns, that points the finger at the officers. They killed their own."

(*Bell, p. 60*)

Malcom Bell -- then chief assistant to the special state prosecutor, Anthony Simonetti -- used the news media to reveal the story of the prison authorities' cover-up of the assault on the Attica prison. Attica presented a clear case in which journalists
mistrust of official sources was justified. Prison authorities had related their particular viewpoint of the event, and newsworkers, at that point, had no other source of information to confirm, or deny, the official account. With deadlines rapidly approaching, journalists at the Attica uprising were forced to report the official account. The above article in the *New York Times* comes directly from those official state sources. However, even as the medical examiner's report came to light, the Corrections Department persisted in reinforcing its version of events:

"[B]ut from our point of view we note two things: (1) we have eyewitnesses that saw throats cut and (2) there were various types of arms in the possession of the inmates that could have inflicted bullet-type wounds.' These official statements, repeated even after the truth is known, suggests the intensity of the officials' will to disbelieve for themselves and to hide from the enormity of Attica." (Bell, p. 60)

Journalists covering the Attica riot now had more than one official source giving them extremely conflicting information about what transpired during the re-taking of the prison. Reporters had leverage to press prison authorities to defend their statements by confronting them with the conflicting information from the second official source.

The thorniest problem for the news media during a prison riot is gaining access to anyone who might have uncensored information about the uprising. The people who have all the information are the inmates inside the prison and the prison authorities who are trying to keep them there. Inmates at the New Mexico Penitentiary at Santa Fe took 12 guards hostage on February 2, 1980. On several occasions, the news media was able to get very close to the inmates:
"10 REPORTED KILLED AFTER INMATES SEIZE NEW MEXICO PRISON

--------------------------------------------------------
11 GUARDS HELD AS HOSTAGES

--------------------------------------------------------
200 OFFICERS SURROUND FACILITY -- REBELS VOW TO SLAY CAPTIVES UNLESS DEMANDS ARE MET"

This Page One headline in the Sunday, February 3, 1980, edition of the New York Times brings home the reality of the event. But the Associated Press photo, to the left of the headline and in the center of the top of Page One, graphically shows how much access the news media had during this New Mexico prison riot. The photo shows four men. The waist-up shot depicts two corrections guards helping a bloodied inmate walk away from the prison. Several hands are holding the prisoner up while his eyes are fixed straight ahead and his nose and mouth are covered with blood. The caption under the photo reads:

"After leaving seized prison, an injured inmate from New Mexico Penitentiary is led to a hospital by policemen."

This photo may have been cropped down to fit in the front page slot, but judging from the apparent quality of the shot, the picture does not appear to have been enlarged in any manner. The Page One New York Times photo from the Associated Press the next day again shows up-close action of the prison riot. A police officer with a riot gun in his left hand is kneeling down covering with his right hand an injured prisoner lying on the ground. Two days later, on February 6th, in the New York Times on page A12, another Associated Press photo appeared with this caption:
"National Guardsman passing sandwiches and oranges over the fence to an inmate at the New Mexico State Penitentiary."

The picture shows two men and a helmeted National Guardsman passing food through an opening in the chain-link fence to an inmate on the other side who is keeping warm with a blanket over his shoulders.

These are three good pictures, all shot at close range. The point is that the photographer, or photographers, in each of these cases must have had considerable access to the prison to get close enough to trip the shutter.

At the New Mexico riot, the news media was able to get unbelievable, and almost uncontrolled, access to the prison during and shortly after the prison's capture. At one point, as a result of a great deal of confusion and disorganization between prison authorities and the news media, an NBC News photographer was allowed to go inside the prison unescorted. Michael Shugrue did not get the word that a planned meeting with the news media and inmates had been called off. He was standing by himself just outside the gate when the prisoners yelled for him to come inside. He asked a nearby prison official if he could:

"[H]aving denied media contact with the rioters for nearly twenty-four hours, having prolonged the captivity and torture of wounded guards by their policy or lack of it, the men of the siege command now treat Shugrue's request almost casually. 'If you want to go in,' Montoya [a prison official] tells the NBC cameraman, 'go ahead'. " (Morris, p. 139)

As soon as the cameraman passed through the fence and into the prison courtyard, the prisoners released a guard hostage. The trembling Michael Shugrue stayed inside the prison for less than an hour before being released unharmed. Inmates wanted access to the news media to tell their side of the story, not to take journalists hostage as well. In fact, rioting inmates at Attica, New Mexico, and Lucasville all released hostages after finally meeting with members of the news media.
Prison authorities at these riots may have been trained to handle prison uprisings, but they did little to handle the huge crowd of news media and the families of the guards and inmates who waited outside the fences:

"Two families will hear on television of the murder of a son and brother before the state tells them. One mother hears her son is listed as dead by a TV announcer and then, hours later, after calling various state agencies, learns that he has actually survived." (Morris, p. 184)

Failing to inform next-of-kin of the fate of loved ones, giving out the name of a dead inmate to the news media before the family is officially informed, or listing someone as dead when they are actually alive, are examples of typical informational errors resulting from lack of an organized plan for dealing with the public during a riot.

The prison uprising at the State Correctional Institute in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, on October 25, 26, and 27, 1989, revealed much about the role of the news media and how the news media is perceived. The *Prison Disturbance Case Study*, prepared by Lee Ann S. Labecki, Director of the Office of Planning, Research, and Statistics at the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, reports there were actually two separate disturbances at Camp Hill during those three days in October:

"[T]hree correctional officers were moving approximately 500 inmates in the main stockyard between housing units 2 and 3. Corresponding to this movement, an inmate 'without provocation' reportedly struck an officer stationed at E-gate." (Labecki, p. 4)

The first riot began as inmates set fires and looted nearby buildings in the stockyard. The institutional administration agreed to meet with inmate representatives at 1:00 p.m. the next day if the prisoners returned to their cells. Between 9:00 and 10:00 p.m. the first day, prison authorities had regained control. The prison administration did meet with the inmate representatives the next day, October 26th.
That evening at 6:00 p.m., the institutional administrators held a press conference for the local news media:

"In the prepared statement, the administrators reported that while inmate negotiations had been held, the administration had no intention of complying with any of the demands. Inmates who watched the news conference in their cells were incensed by these comments." (Labecki, p. 9)

Within an hour of the press conference, the staff began serving dinner to the inmates of "E" and "F" cell blocks. Inmates began to throw items and chased the staff from the cell blocks. The second disturbance was under way as inmates "poured" into the main stockyard of the already damaged prison. After negotiations came to a "standstill," the institution was retaken by force. There were water cannon and shots fired during the re-taking as four inmates were wounded. On Friday, October 28th, the last inmate surrendered at around 9:00 a.m. (Camp Hill Case Study, p. 10 & 11)

The Case Study describes the demands made by inmates during each of the separate disturbances. Nowhere is there any mention of prisoners demanding to meet with the news media. But in the 18-point Emergency Response Issues identified in the report, the nature of the news media's role is addressed:

"Institutional personnel did not consider the impact of media statements regarding negotiations on the morale of the offender population who had access to televisions and radios throughout the three days of rioting." (p. 17)

"Since emergency plans failed to identify remote staging areas for the media, local television stations provided live coverage of the riot thereby revealing tactical advances as institutional and state police officer attempted to regain control of the facility." (p. 18)

The bottom line at the Camp Hill prison uprising is that the state had no idea of the tremendous impact official statements to the news media would have on the prisoners.
These three prison riots detail how prison authorities at each event failed to understand the role, or impact, of the news media waiting outside their fences. The news media was allowed to get very close in some instances, occasionally close enough to see and ask questions which prison spokespeople could not answer. Prison authorities at Attica and New Mexico dealt very poorly not only with the news media, but frequently, with the anxious families. Prison authorities at Camp Hill had a plan to deal with the news media, but the plan caused more problems than it solved. The site designated for press conferences was close enough to the prison for journalists to see events going on and ask questions which prison spokespeople could not answer. These opportunities of access gave journalists at these riots sources for stories outside the "official" information given out by prison authorities. Without an effective plan by prison authorities, the cameras and microphones of the news media were able to roam freely to find new subjects for their stories.

The inmates' demands to meet with reporters were handled differently at each of these events. At Camp Hill, it is unclear if there ever was a demand to meet with reporters. The crisis was over before that became an issue. The news media played an important role at the Attica and New Mexico riots. One of the five major demands at Attica was to meet with reporters. Not only were reporters included on the special team of observers asked to help resolve the crisis, reporters and television cameras were also allowed inside the prison to film the meetings between these observers and inmates. Cameras and lights became a regular part of negotiations at Attica. (Wicker, p. 254) At New Mexico, an NBC news photographer walked inside the prison, alone, to meet with inmates after several failed attempts by a larger group of journalists to go inside the prison. Later on, there were several occasions where the news media met with the rioting New Mexico inmates. (Morris, p. 372)
CHAPTER III
IMPORTANT PEOPLE OF LUCASVILLE
AND WHY I WAS THERE

INTRODUCTION

The process for this study is explained in this chapter. The types of literature examined are set forth in detail. The backgrounds and positions of the persons interviewed are also set forth. A general listing of the questions asked in the interviews is presented along with definitions of important terms used throughout this study.

METHODOLOGY

The literature researched for this study examines the techniques used by journalists in contacting sources for information. Also detailed is an explanation of the events of prison riots investigated for this study.

1.) Academic Literature. This literature is composed of studies about how journalists gather information for the formation of news stories. The main focus of this literature is an understanding of the academic viewpoint about how journalists contact sources to obtain information for stories.

2.) Informational Literature. This literature is composed of books and articles written by persons who had some contact or involvement with past prison riots.

3.) Departments of Rehabilitation and Corrections. This literature is composed of articles written by persons who work with, or in, the corrections industry, for magazines intended for review primarily by professionals in the corrections industry.
4.) **Newspapers and Magazines.** This literature is composed of articles and stories written about the prison riots examined in this study.

5.) **Articles about the News Media.** This literature is composed of articles critiquing the involvement and role of the news media, or particular outlets of the news media, at the prison riots examined in this study.

Four major prison riots are examined in this study. They occurred at:

1.) **Attica State Prison, New York.** September 9, 1971. Twenty-nine inmates and 10 guard hostages were killed when state police opened fire on the compounds while retaking the prison. Eighty-nine others were wounded.

2.) **New Mexico State Penitentiary, Santa Fe, New Mexico.** February 2, 1980. Inmates tortured eight of 12 guard hostages and killed 33 fellow inmates before peacefully surrendering.

3.) **State Correctional Institution at Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.** October 25-27, 1989. Twenty-four guard hostages were taken and over 100 others injured by inmates in two separate riots.

4.) **Southern Ohio Correctional Facility, Lucasville, Ohio.** April 11-22, 1993. Eight inmates and one guard hostage were killed during an 11-day standoff.

**INTERVIEWS & QUESTIONS**

The field research for this study consists of a series of interviews with persons who were directly involved at the Lucasville prison siege. The persons interviewed represent a sampling of the views of prison authorities as well as the news media. Hundreds of people actually represented both of these groups at the Lucasville siege. During the Lucasville uprising, the inmates pressured prison authorities to have WBNS-TV of Columbus, Ohio, broadcast their demands "live". Six people who had a
direct impact on the relationship between prison authorities and WBNS were interviewed for this study:

1.) Thomas Burke, News Director. WCMH-TV Columbus, Ohio. Interviewed March 3, 1994. Burke spent the duration of the siege at the station in Columbus. His responsibilities were to manage news operations throughout the siege including operations of WCMH's "live" helicopter reports, the eventual renting of a satellite truck, and the deployment of the people handling the coverage. Burke's station is currently the most direct ratings competitor of WBNS-TV. WCMH's coverage of the riot demonstrates how a news media outlet will attempt to find alternative, unofficial sources of information. Burke's actions and phone calls had a direct influence upon the relationship between the prison authorities and WBNS.

2.) Paul Dughi, News Director. WBNS-TV Columbus, Ohio. Interviewed on February 7, 1994. Dughi spent the duration of the siege at the station in Columbus. His responsibilities were to manage the news operations throughout the siege, including the operation of the satellite truck and deployment of the people handling the coverage. Dughi had many phone conversations with prison authorities, which were directly connected to prison authorities' requesting the assistance of WBNS-TV and its satellite truck to resolve the siege.

3.) Sharon Kornegay, Public Information Officer. Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections. Interviewed on February 7, 1994. Kornegay's responsibilities at the siege were to communicate information from prison authorities working to resolve the situation to the hundreds of news media representatives waiting outside the prison. Although employed by the State of Ohio, Kornegay was in a unique position to dispatch information back and forth between officials inside the prison and the news media outside. Kornegay was a former newspaper reporter in
Chicago as well as a former television reporter in the late '70's and early '80's for WBNS-TV Columbus, Ohio.

4.) David Michael, Detective-Sergeant. Dayton Police Department, Dayton, Ohio. Interviewed March 3, 1994. Michael was summoned to Lucasville after the start of the takeover. He became the chief negotiator for prison authorities. He also decided what information would be permitted to be released by prison authorities to the news media. Michael had direct contact with the staff and management of WBNS-TV during the time that the station was assisting prison authorities in trying to meet some of the inmates' demands.

5.) Bob Orr, Anchor-Reporter. WBNS-TV Columbus, Ohio. Interviewed March 6, 1994. Orr arrived at the prison the day after the uprising began. He was the only news anchor from Columbus physically present at the site of the riot. Orr filed taped and "live" reports for the noon, 5 p.m., 6 p.m., and 11 p.m. newscasts for WBNS, along with "live" news breaks which interrupted normal programming for several hours at a time during major events of the uprising. Orr was called inside the prison by prison authorities to make arrangements for WBNS to assist in meeting some of the inmates' demands.

6.) Thomas Stewart, General Manager. WBNS-TV Columbus, Ohio. Interviewed on February 7, 1994. Stewart's responsibilities during the siege were to oversee the operations of all departments within the WBNS-TV organization, including operation of the news room. The final decision regarding whether to agree to prison authorities' request for assistance rested with Stewart. Because of his job position, Stewart had direct phone conversations with prison authorities during the time period that his station was attempting to assist in resolving the stand-off.
This group of people filled roles which placed them squarely inside the developing relationship between prison authorities and the news media. These people made up that relationship. Through a series of questions posed to these people, a picture of how that relationship was played out will be composed. Although the actual questions asked of interviewees were more specific, the basic thrust of the questions can be summarized as follows:

1.) What complaints were made by the news media to the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections?

2.) What complaints were made by other news media outlets about the role WBNS-TV assumed at the siege?

3.) Why was WBNS-TV selected to participate in resolving the riot?

4.) Did prison authorities trust the news media?

5.) Did the news media trust prison authorities?

6.) What was the impact of having local television stations broadcasting "live" reports via their satellite trucks? What impact did that have on the relationship between prison authorities and the news media? What impact did it have on prison authorities' ability to resolve the crisis?

7.) What was the relationship between prison authorities and WBNS-TV when the station was first asked to give assistance, during the "live" broadcast during the negotiations, and after WBNS-TV pulled out of the negotiations?
8.) How do modern-day television news gathering operations focus their stories on the perceptions of individual people instead of on official sources of information?

9.) How does this focus affect coverage of stories?

10.) Does this style of news gathering help prepare your newsroom to broadcast "live" for extended periods of time with very little information from official sources?

11.) Why did WBNS-TV break off the assisting agreement with prison authorities? What was the reaction?

12.) Do you believe either side understood the role of the other in this relationship? Why? Why not?

By comparing the interviewees' answers to these questions, a picture of how this relationship began and then failed will emerge. Each person interviewed held a key role that made him or her a prime-time player in this relationship. Answers to these questions will reveal the framework upon which the relationship between prison authorities and the news media was built.

PERSONAL VIEWPOINT

As the author of this study, I had a unique viewpoint of events as they unfolded during the Lucasville prison uprising. On April 1, 1981, I was hired by WBNS-TV Columbus, Ohio, as a news photographer. At the time of the writing of this thesis, I am still employed at WBNS in the same capacity. Photographers at WBNS do a great deal more than take pictures. My job responsibilities include contacting sources, doing interviews, gathering information, connecting reporters to sources, tape-editing of stories, field producing, and setting up equipment for "live" television broadcasts.
On April 12, 1993, the Monday one day after the Lucasville siege began, I was assigned to go with reporter LuAnn Stoia to cover the events occurring some ninety miles south of Columbus. We arrived mid-morning and joined WBNS engineers Pat Ingram and Mike Flaharty at the station's satellite truck, "Skybeam". About two o'clock in the afternoon, anchorman Bob Orr arrived from Columbus to take over reporting duties on the "live" broadcasts we originated from outside the prison. Orr's arrival allowed Stoia and me to seek out additional stories for WBNS's coverage during the day and for reporter Marcy Fleisher and photographer Chris Kettler to investigate stories during the nights. For three days --Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday-- Stoia and I enteredprises stories in the communities and countryside surrounding the prison. On Thursday and Friday, when WBNS accepted the request of prison authorities to assist with the "live" broadcast of inmates' demands, I worked with photographers Mike Lemle and Ron Johnson and helicopter pilot Terry Ault as we assisted Ingram and Flaharty in the laborious process of setting up "Skybeam" for a "live" broadcast showing a prisoner representative reading the inmates' demands and releasing a hostage.

I am very proud that of the amount of time I spent as a member of the WBNS crew that provided coverage of the Lucasville siege. The experience gave me a unique viewpoint on the relationship between prison authorities and the news media. In conversations after the resolution of the crisis with former WBNS co-worker and now Department of Corrections spokesperson Sharon Kornegay, I began to realize that some issues involved in the coverage were worthy of further study from an academic viewpoint.

My experiences during the Lucasville uprising have provided me insight into events which occurred during the siege. Many of the descriptions in this study are my first-hand observations of those happenings. My many years of experience as a photo-
journalist have allowed me to present the information provided by those interviewed for this thesis in as fair a manner as I believe possible. Police Detective David Michael is the only interviewee I was not acquainted with prior to when inmates took over "L" Block at Lucasville. And I must say that Michael was very forthcoming with his perceptions of the siege. His opinions and observations contributed to a balanced presentation of the viewpoints held by those on both sides of the prison wall.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following operational and explanatory definitions are offered of terms which have significant meaning to this study:

"Live": The ability of a television news crew to broadcast a signal from one location back to its station to be rebroadcast simultaneously to its viewing audience. News personnel and interviewees at the broadcast's point of origin report on and become part of the event at the same moment that the audience is viewing it.


Satellite Truck: A truck used by television stations to broadcast a signal from a point on the ground to an orbiting satellite which receives the signal, then retransmit it to another distant fixed point on the ground.

Crisis News Event or Spot News Event: An event during which emergency personnel attempt to resolve a dangerous situation. These events occur spontaneously and without warning. A few examples of these types of events are fires, car accidents, shootings, airplane accidents, and prison riots.

Ordinary Person: Someone who is not an official or governmental source of information. Someone who has an opinion about an issue or event but is not in a position of authority or responsibility with regard to the issue or event.
Sources: Journalistic sources are people who can provide information for stories. Sources can be broken down into two basic groups: official and non-official. Official sources are people who, through their positions of authority, should have knowledge about a topic upon which journalists might be seeking information. Non-official sources are people who may know of, or have an opinion about, a topic upon which journalists might be seeking information, but they do not have any expert or qualified knowledge on the topic.

Information: Journalistic information is what sources know about an event, issue, or topic. Information is used to answer the journalistic questions of "Who," "What," "When," "Where," and "Why." Information can be presented in a variety of forms such as numbers, times, dates, names and so forth. Information can also occur in the form of speculation, observations, or opinions by the source.

Prison Authorities: Persons representing the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, the State of Ohio, or any law enforcement agency who had direct dealings with or a decision-making role or position of authority with respect to the news media during the Lucasville prison uprising.

Hostage Taker: Person who takes captive other persons for the purpose of having specific demands met. These people take hostages to obtain power in society. The power derives from the attention they draw to themselves and their demands from the rest of society.

Power in Society: Power in society means a role of importance. There are many different kinds of power, from financial to political. Some groups within the greater society may involve themselves in acts of civil disruption to obtain power. This power and attention is frequently short-lived. But for a short amount of time, a hostage-taking group can have its conditions and demands at the center of the attention of the greater society.
Involvement as Participants: People who are actually entangled in the happenings of an event. These people may be either willingly involved in the event or unwillingly involved, such as hostages. By virtue of showing up at the scene, journalists provide hostage-takers with the attention desired and become participants in the event.
CHAPTER IV
EVERY WORD COUNTS

INTRODUCTION

The events of the Lucasville prison riot are discussed throughout this chapter. The roles of the news media and prison authorities are examined more closely from the viewpoints of those interviewed for this study. The problems journalists are confronted with when covering a crisis news event are discussed with a more detailed investigation of the pitfalls that await the careless reporter.

During a hostage situation, the news media does not just cover the event. Their presence creates them as a participant of the event. The relationship that is formed not only with the other competitive news media outlets, but also with prison authorities, is explored.

1993 LUCASVILLE PRISON SIEGE

The Southern Ohio Correctional Facility is located just outside the small town of Lucasville in the hills of rural Scioto County not far from the Ohio River. The prison is one of the county's largest employers. A staff of 625 watch over more than 1,800 close and maximum security inmates who have been convicted of the most serious and violent crimes. The Southern Ohio Correctional Facility, commonly referred to as "Lucasville", also maintains Ohio's only "electric chair". As of 1991, 105 men were on Death Row awaiting execution. Ohio, like many states, is struggling with prison over-crowding. Over 35,000 inmates have pushed prison design to 161% of capacity state wide. (Annual Report, 1991. Intake Study, 1992)
On April 11, 1993, the inmates of "L" Block at the Southern Ohio Correctional Institute in Lucasville staged an uprising and gained control of part of their prison home. At the guard post where prisoners leave "L" Block to go outside to the baseball fields, several inmates began fighting. As guards attempted to break up the fight, the inmates turned on the Corrections officers, beat them, and began the prison take-over. They took eight guards hostage and killed several of their fellow inmates in the rioting that followed. Several guards followed Lucasville riot procedures and locked themselves inside the stairwells at the ends of the cell block. When no help arrived from prison S.W.A.T. teams, inmates used weight lifting equipment to break through the cinder block walls to capture those guards who had taken refuge there. The inmates refused to surrender for 11 days while different factions of prisoners negotiated with prison authorities. In the end, nine inmates and one guard hostage lost their lives.

One of the stalemates during negotiations was whether to allow an inmate to read grievances on WBNS-TV during a "live" television broadcast. (Kornegay, 94. Michael, 94. Orr, 94.) On the fifth day of the riot, WBNS agreed to assist prison authorities in satisfying this demand. The agreement between prison authorities and WBNS reached was that WBNS would supply the technical ability and staff to establish a "live" satellite signal. By positioning its satellite truck in a restricted area just beyond the prison fence outside of "L" Block, WBNS would provide "live" coverage for itself and any other television station who wished to pick up the satellite signal and rebroadcast it. Two microphones were passed under the razor-wire fences to heavily armed S.W.A.T. officers who pulled the connecting audio cables approximately one hundred yards to a table where the inmates would sit face-to-face with prison authorities and read their demands. When nothing was happening and prison authorities did not need the services of WBNS, Bob Orr and his crew were to
be allowed to broadcast "live" reports back to their Columbus television station. WBNS was not supposed to show pictures or angles of the prison that might give them a competitive edge on their competition, whose trucks were also positioned outside the prison fence but on the opposite side of the prison. (Orr, 94)

Chief negotiator David Michael did not agree to the inmates' demand for "live" coverage without getting something from them in return. The inmate representative was not to talk for any great length of time. He would be permitted to read the demands, and that was to be all. And most importantly for Michael, the inmates were required to release a guard hostage in exchange for the exposure on "live" television. (Michael, 94)

After the "live" broadcast and the hostage release which occurred on the sixth day of the siege, negotiations for the inmates' surrender began to drag on. Prison authorities were trying to maintain the use of WBNS' satellite truck but were not allowing it to broadcast reports for its newscasts. WBNS then pulled out of its agreement with prison authorities. An attorney from Cleveland was requested to assist prison authorities in finally resolving the riot and setting the conditions for the inmates' surrender. Another television station covering the riot was selected to provide the "live" satellite broadcast of the surrender.

After 11 cold and rainy days in Southern Ohio, the siege at Lucasville ended on April 22, 1993. The inmates walked out of "L" Block under the watchful eye of "live" television cameras provided by WLWT-TV of Cincinnati, Ohio. When "L" Block was searched after the last prisoners were out, two inmates' bodies were found inside. The rioting inmates had thrown eight bodies out of windows during the standoff, including that of the dead guard hostage, Robert Vallandingham, and left two for prison authorities to discover.
PART OF THE CRISIS

"[T]he media becomes more than just an observer, it becomes a player." (Kamen, p. 28)

Jeff Kamen briefly, and accurately, puts into perspective the role of the news media at a crisis event. Merely by showing up at a crisis event, the news media is "granting" at least one of the demands of those who staged the event. That demand is to get attention:

"[T]hose who lack power are harder to reach by journalists and are generally not sought out until their activities produce social or moral disorder news." (Gans, p. 81)

"Sources with less power can normally gain access only with an unusually dramatic story. . . " (Gans, p. 120-1)

Groups with little power in society sometimes employ violence to obtain the attention of other social groups. Threatening to kill guard hostages during a prison riot certainly attracts the attention of the rest of the society. However, this type of power has a limited shelf-life. During the period that rioting prison inmates actually hold hostages, they have the power to make demands and force prison authorities to hear those demands. Tom Wicker, of The New York Times, was called in as an outside observer to help negotiate the release of the hostages at the Attica prison riot in 1971. He wrote about his experiences, and about the power inmates held:

"The hostages gave the inmates power, and the men with the power could make themselves heard - no question of it . . . The power of the inmates actually was enough to gain them a hearing and to maintain a stalemate only while the state held the lives of the hostages dearer than it held the control of the institution . . . 'We never concerned ourselves with killing the hostages,' Roger Champen insisted [an inmate negotiator at Attica]. '[W]e felt that by having the hostages we would have the ability to more or less force them [prison authorities] to keep their word. So we wouldn't even consider harming the hostages.' " (Wicker, p. 78-9)
This type of power can only be obtained if someone else knows what the group has done. What power have inmates gained if no one outside the prison knows about the uprising? Once power has been achieved by taking hostages, inmates can begin to use their new-found power to attract the attention of the society outside the prison walls. The agent used to transmit that attention is the news media.

Being inside a prison, inmates' only real two-way communication with the outside world is through relatives or prison authorities. During a prison riot, inmates' communication with the outside world takes place only through prison authorities, the same prison authorities they are rioting against. During the three most deadly and destructive prison riots in the past three decades, Attica (1971), New Mexico (1981), and Lucasville (1993), inmates' demand to meet with reporters played major roles in the release of guard hostages and the manner in which all three prison riots ended. The very presence of the news media at a prison riot creates the news media as a player and not as an observer.

Even with the electricity turned off inside the cell block, rioting inmates at Lucasville were still able to watch some of the broadcasts of the local television stations outside their prison. Inmates had obtained the attention of the news media and were in a position of power by virtue of holding the guards hostage and having the ability to kill them at any time. The main intention of prison authorities was to get their people, the guard hostages, out safely. (Kornegay, 94) Inmates knew this and, through the power created by holding hostages, forced prison authorities to negotiate.

Prison authorities made a crucial mistake. On Wednesday, the fourth day of the uprising, inmates hung a bed sheet out a window of the riot-torn "L" Block. On it was scrawled a death threat directed at a hostage. Inmates became aware of a local newscast in which a prison spokeswoman dismissed the seriousness of the threat:
"'It's not new. They've been threatening things like this from the beginning.' She also called their demands 'self-serving and petty, as they always are in these situations.'" (Kamen, p. 30)

James Demons, the black prison guard hostage who was released after the inmates' demands were broadcast on "live" TV, explains how these statements challenged the rioting prisoners:

"[S]tate prison spokeswoman Tessa Unwin called it 'a standard threat they've been issuing.' Demons charged the comment led directly to the execution of guard Robert Valladingham. 'That man did not die until that woman made a statement like that,' he told Newsweek. Another spokesman, asked about Demons's charge, said, 'We don't have a response.'" (Newsweek, p. 53)

The question is not why the statement was ever made, but who delivered it to the inmates. The news media, especially television, is frequently criticized for reporting on stories before considering the effects of broadcasting those reports. Kamen agrees with this reprimand:

"[T]elevision wants to tell the story fast and dramatically, hoping for accolades and high ratings, but with little concern about the effect of overall coverage." (Kamen, p. 28)

The ultimate goal of television is ratings. Ratings translate into money for stations. However, Kamen's opinion is an overly simplistic view of the ethics of television journalism. Some stations chose to withhold information because they recognize the negative impact releasing the information may have on the crisis situation.

TELEVISION TECHNOLOGY AND THE NEGOTIATIONS

The technology available to the news media covering prison uprisings has changed dramatically from the days of the 1971 Attica and 1980 New Mexico riots. When the demand came to meet with reporters at Lucasville, inmates literally met
face-to-face with reporters and television cameras. (Morris, p.120. Wicker, p. 200) At previous riots, the only thing TV cameras were capable of doing was to record the event to be played back on television at a later time. There was no opportunity for inmates to get their demands onto the airwaves "live." At Attica and New Mexico, inmates were merely able to have conversations with reporters. Inmates could be asked questions and give their own answers. Prison authorities could not stop these one-on-one interviews from taking place. Journalists could then use the tapes of these interviews for putting together several stories for many different newscasts throughout the upcoming days. Those stories could be centered around the inmates and provide journalists with follow-up questions to ask prison authorities, questions they probably did not want to answer.

The new technology possessed by television stations covering the Lucasville uprising gave prison authorities an advantage for still further controlling the flow of information. The capability of local stations to broadcast "live" via their satellite trucks also permitted prison authorities to totally eliminate any direct contact between inmates and members of the news media. Chief negotiator David Michael knows exactly how important the technology was for his purposes:

"We have a policy, and the training, not to use a third party [in the negotiations]. But we will be flexible if it [technology] will save a life. We are going to use it to our advantage, to save a life. The TV coverage ['live' broadcast of inmates' demands] was a release of a pressure cooker." (Michael, 94)

The "live" broadcast of prisoners' demands was done from outside the Lucasville prison's wire fences. The television cameras were looking through the fences into the ball fields where inmates sat down with prison negotiators to have their demands broadcast "live". The only statements reporters ever heard from inmates at Lucasville were the demands read on "live" television that day:
"The prisoners wanted on 'live' to get their message out. That is what hostage takers and terrorists want, is their message out. They are aware of the media's capability. We didn't want a ton of information out. They wanted 'live' and we agreed but we weren't going to do a dissertation on it [by the inmates]. Just the facts would be on 'live'. The inmates accepted this." (Michael, 94)

Prison authorities avoided having to meet with news media who otherwise might have been loaded with questions stemming from one-on-one interviews with inmates. Prison authorities had only to answer questions about the demands aired during the "live" broadcast.

"LIVE" AND LUCASVILLE

If in a reporter's regular daily beat most of their information is obtained from official sources, that reporter would have a difficult time covering a story such as a prison riot where official sources are inaccessible for most of the duration of the uprising. It follows that reporters who frame stories around "ordinary" people affected by events should have the most success creating stories without having to quote official sources.

How do television reporters supply the large amount of information that is consumed when doing hour after hour of "live" television broadcasting? There was no way to prepare ahead of time for the hours of "live" broadcasting demanded during the Lucasville siege:

"Everybody says we do an awful lot of 'live', and you can argue whether it is justified or not, I think it is one of those things that happens because we do so much 'live', when you have something like that, people [TV reporters] are comfortable being in front of the TV [camera]." (Dughie, 1994)
The routines of present-day television reporting provide a training ground for TV reporters for appearing "live" and reporting on an event with little official information. Bob Orr of WBNS could "see" the events at Lucasville as they unfolded and discuss with viewers the ever-changing conditions, as his broadcast continued, hour after hour:

"I wanted to keep people focused on what we knew about the story. And at the same time make people understand the kind of a huge gaping hole there was on the [inmates'] side that we didn't know. There is some reporting that is reporting of the facts. And there is other reporting that takes place that says 'here are some of the things that we don't know'. That's still valuable, because it lets people draw their own conclusions. It was tricky business. It tested your resolve to keep it [the story] within the bounds." (Orr, 94)

However, keeping a story such as a prison riot within the bounds of what is known by reporters is difficult. Some pieces of information may be known by reporters, but incorrect conclusions are broadcast. WCMH-TV helicopter pilot Rob Case knew the electricity had been turned off in the riot-torn "L" Block. After flying around the prison with this knowledge for about 45 minutes, he broadcast this "live" report from his helicopter above the prison:

"It looks like they are preparing to do something down there. Let me show you one other thing. Just south of the "L" Block area, as John [the photographer] zooms in you can see the S.W.A.T. officers on top of that roof right there . . . We are pretty sure if they do anything it will be in the daylight. There is "L" [Block] and that roof right there is where they are in full riot gear and automatic weapons. I want to tell anyone who is watching there is no electricity in there, and, although they [prison authorities] told us [the news media] on Sunday night they [rioting inmates] were watching us on TV, they are not watching us now because they have no electricity in there. So, we have some flexibility there. So, it's not a problem." (State VHS tape, 93)
Prison authorities were not as convinced as Case about the inmates' supposed inability to know what was being broadcast by news media outlets. Prison authorities began restricting the air space above the prison. The next "live" report by Case was further away from the prison than his first report, which was done from directly over the prison. The third report by Case was even further away. (State VHS tape, 93) In the end, the State of Ohio set up a "No Fly" zone around the prison. No unofficial aircraft were permitted to fly to within three miles of or lower than three thousand feet above the prison.

There was never absolute confirmation that inmates were watching TV after the electricity was cut off. However, frequently inmate negotiators would repeat back to prison authorities what authorities had just told the news media in the last briefing. (Kornegay, 94. Orr, 94)

Regardless of what journalists might know in any given situation, there comes a time when it may be more prudent not to report that. The "live" broadcast of S.W.A.T. positions might have been very costly in terms of human life had prison authorities tried to retake "L" Block at that time. Case's reports could have tipped off inmates to the positions and tactics of S.W.A.T. officers had they charged the cell block.

RUMORS

When a story has a restricted or limited source, journalists will seek out other sources of information. This allows them to create stories by using facts from outside the flow of information provided by a sole source. These stories benefit the audience by bringing new perspectives to a story dominated by information from the sole source. When creating stories based upon the unofficial opinions of ordinary people, reporters must bear in mind that their story is only as good as that person's opinion.
(Dughi, 94) The problem for journalists standing in front of a "live" camera is to separate what they know and what they see from what they have heard. Dughi discusses how reporters who broadcast unconfirmed rumors end up airing erroneous information:

"Some of the problems were that you had no information coming, and rumors started to fester among themselves over and over, and all of a sudden a hundred people would be talking about something as if it were gospel, but none of them really know. And, if you are not aware of dealing with people over and over in that kind of situation, sometimes you tend to get caught up in that whole spirit, and we saw that on the air on some of the other stations."

(Dughi, 94)

However, there are serious traps for journalists who seek out additional sources for the purpose of bolstering a preconceived story idea. During a crisis news event such as a prison riot, there are many rumors floating around local communities as well as within the groups of journalists covering the event. No one is certain where the rumors began, but with limited access to official sources of information, journalists will predictably attempt to confirm or deny them. Bob Orr of WBNS-TV describes how rumors occur for journalists:

"It became very tempting at times for reporters to take rumors that seemed to be grounded in feasible scenarios and try to substantiate those. The rumors started to drive the news reports. Some of the rumors were atrocious and outrageous. But the state [prison authorities] would not give us any kind of access, or ability, to shoot those [rumors] down. (Orr, 94)

Outside the prison walls at Lucasville, the biggest rumor the news media heard was the number of possible dead bodies inside. It would be a major national story if there were a large number of dead inside the prison, according to WCMH-TV News Director Thomas Burke:
"If suddenly it's fifty [number of dead inside] and prison officials covered it up, what a hell of a story that would have been. So there was that pressure on everybody's part to get some first hand information." (Burke 94)

Burke's station, WCMH-TV, did get the kind of first hand information for which all the journalists covering the uprising had been thirsting. During the first several days of the riot, prison authorities transferred prisoners uninvolved in the riot from peaceful cell blocks at Lucasville to other penal facilities throughout the state. WCMH received a 30-second phone call from an inmate who had been transferred. The inmate claimed to have seen more than 40 dead bodies in the gymnasium in "L" Block. WCMH was able to confirm his prison identification number as that of an inmate housed at Lucasville. (Burke, 94. State VHS tape, 93) However, this still wasn't good enough verification for Burke to risk airing the story - that is, until prison spokesperson Sharon Kornegay held a press conference at which the question of the number of dead inside was put to her. Burke describes her answer:

"Sharon Kornegay said, quote-unquote, 'we will neither deny or confirm that there are any bodies in the gymnasium.' She gave the classic answer that tells the media, that tells us when we have this other component of the story, this first-hand account that of course was a lie, that they are denying it. Because that is their pat answer to say that it is true." (Burke, 94)

Burke gave his approval, and WCMH's David Summer put the "forty dead bodies" story on the air:

"Tonight I have received the first hand account from a prisoner transferred to another facility that there are 40 other prisoners dead inside the gymnasium. No longer hearsay. We got it straight from the prisoner himself. That there are at least 40 more prisoners dead, their bodies stacked inside the gymnasium. Some of them had been hanged, some had their throats slit, some were beaten to death." (State VHS tape, 93)
WCMH's anchorwoman Colleen Marshal ended the report by saying:

"And we have to emphasize that prison officials have not confirmed these reports for us." (State VHS tape, 93)

WCMH's Phil Hayes followed up the "forty dead bodies" story by interviewing in a "live" broadcast family members who said they had talked to their Lucasville inmate relative on the phone who had confirmed there were forty dead bodies in the gymnasium.

WCMH was not the only news outlet to report a large number of dead inside the prison. The *Portsmouth Daily Times*, a local newspaper, ran banner headlines about numerous deaths inside. WBNS's Bob Orr used the Portsmouth paper as a source of information during a "live" broadcast, quoting from the paper and having the paper's statements printed on the TV screen:

"Callers from inside the prison told *Daily Times* staffers that anywhere from 50 to 150 bodies were in the prison gymnasium." (State VHS tape, 93)

Orr followed the *Daily Times* quote with this on-camera tag:

"Is this right or not? We don't know." (State VHS tape, 93)

Orr also had independent sources confirming large numbers of dead bodies inside the gymnasium. Orr framed his stories around the *rumors* of dead bodies, being careful not to state that there were dead bodies inside the prison:

"We were only telling them [the audience] this [the reports of large number dead] because they had probably heard it and we had no way to verify it [number dead]." (Orr, 94)

The rumors that were reported during the siege may have created exclusive stories but did little to improve the relationship between prison authorities and the news media.
THE RELATIONSHIP

A prison riot is anything but routine. It is not routine for inmates inside the prison. It is not routine for prison authorities trying to resolve the crisis. And it is not routine for the news media trying to cover such an event. Large scale prison riots do not occur frequently. But when they do, these three parties are forced into relationships with each other unlike any they have experienced before. Hostages are being held. Lives are at risk. People have already died. The crisis is very real. Prison authorities are there to resolve the situation in as safe and timely a manner as possible. (Kornegay, 1994). The news media is there to cover the story. (Stewart, 1994). The players are focusing on tremendously different objectives. It is not an optimum time to create a working relationship between prison authorities and members of the news media.

For prison authorities and WBNS-TV, the relationship was intense, sometimes unhappy, and often filled with heated telephone conversations. To understand this relationship, how the two sides ended up together must be examined. The two sides were brought together, not over a casual lunch to discuss how to work together, but by the demands of inmates holding guards hostage during a prison riot. The siege had been going on for five days when Department of Corrections Spokesperson Sharon Kornegay first went out to bring WBNS-TV anchorman Bob Orr inside the prison to discuss with authorities how the television station might be able to help meet some of the prisoners' demands. People on both sides were tired and short-tempered from working long hours in the cold and rainy conditions outside the Southern Ohio prison. Conversations were frequently short and to the point. Orr relates the first time he met chief negotiator Dave Michael:

"He said 'Look, I don't want you here. I don't think you belong here. I don't want to make this a media circus but the inmates want you here.' And that was his invitation to me to get involved. I explained to
them that I was a reporter trying to cover the story. But when the Department of Corrections Chief, Reginald Wilkinson, looked at me and said, 'Bob, you don't understand, we really have to have your help.' I said to him, 'How important is this, really?' He looked at me and said, 'Its critical, because lives depend on it. Lives are on the line.'" (Orr, 94)

After the guard hostage had been released and the inmate representative had returned to inside "L" Block, the WBNS crew ended the satellite hook-up and was heading back to join the other news media at the front of the prison on what was dubbed "Media Hill" when it was intercepted by prison authorities. Orr describes his subsequent meeting with chief negotiator Dave Michael in a small room:

"He was livid," recalls Orr. 'He is saying - I can't believe what you did.' . . . What had infuriated Michael, Orr says, was the 12-minute ad-lib. 'I said I would have called off the broadcast in any other circumstances,' Orr says. 'And he's screaming - I didn't pick you. I didn't want you.' And I'm saying, 'I didn't asked to be picked. I believe the inmates picked me. If you want to change horses, do it.' Then, just like that, he says, 'All right, forget it.'" (Newkirk, 1993)

The relationship that had started out in guarded mistrust between prison authorities and WBNS had reached a bitter level. As the relationship worsened, the breaking point for the television station came when it perceived that prison authorities had no intention of fulfilling their end of the deal.

The focus of WBNS, and the other television stations, was to report the events of the prison riot. WBNS General Manager Thomas Stewart explains the difficult position he found his station in:

"As the negotiations broke down [between prison authorities and inmates], and I'm not sure why they did, our truck, in a sense, was then held hostage. Because they would not allow us to start to report for our own 5, 6, and 11 o'clock news that night. They wanted to maintain the truck and its availability so that they could report inside the prison, to the rioting prisoners watching inside, the actual terms or the actual surrender or release of the hostages. Then we were forced with making the discussion
of 'OK, we want to cooperate with the state authorities but do we do that at the expense of allowing our viewers at home to know what the status of the situation is?' Because, ultimately, that was our overriding reason for being there... We finally said to the state, 'You cannot expect us to be down there and not have some type of ability to report in our own newscasts, while we're pending you and the prisoners resolving this issue. So that we can start to televise the actual surrender.' So we pulled out. We pulled back out. The prison officials were very unhappy." (Stewart, 94)

When prison authorities blocked the station's ability to provide coverage of the event for its viewers, WBNS pulled out of the agreement to supply broadcast services. The state's response to WBNS's actions was most unkind, according to News Director Paul Dughi:

"When I had gotten the call the one morning [the day WBNS pulled out of its agreement with the state] from the Highway Patrol saying, 'We want your truck back in', and I said to them kind of casually, 'I don't have the staffing to do it right now, let me work on it.' The next thing I know is that I'm getting a phone call at home from a reporter from the Akron Beacon Journal saying, 'They just had a news conference and they just slammed the hell out of you guys.' So, we had just done this relationship with them and we were trying to walk that line between journalist and trying to help solve the problem. And the one time that we couldn't immediately jump at their request, they just slammed us big time. That didn't help the relationship at all." (Dughi, 94)

The relationship between the news media at the scene and prison authorities at the Lucasville prison riot was filled with tension and mistrust. Even if prison authorities attempt to create a working relationship with the news media, there can be problems if their plans are not carefully managed.

During the October, 1989, prison uprisings at the State Correctional Institute in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, prison authorities held regular press conferences to keep contact between prison officials and the media. In the December 1990 edition of Corrections Today in an article entitled "When Disaster Strikes Twice", Pennsylvania
Department of Corrections Deputy Press Secretary Sherri Cadeaux explains how prison authorities tried to set up ground rules for the media from the very beginning:

"[A prison spokesperson] asked reporters to refrain from speculating or broadcasting details of our tactical maneuvers, since inmates probably were listening to radios and watching televisions. Broadcasting some information could hamper our rescue efforts, jeopardize negotiations and endanger the lives of the hostages inside." (Cadeaux, p. 92)

If this was such a concern, why was the media allowed so close to the prison?

"[Prison authorities] set up a media briefing area on the lawn across the street from the prison's main gate. The media - including television crews and their accompanying equipment - were allowed into this area." (Cadeaux, p. 92)

By virtue of selecting this area, the unpreparedness of prison authorities to handle the media became immediately apparent:

"Reporters could see injured people being carried out and treated, security personnel entering and leaving the institution and tactical maneuvers. This prompted questions we could not answer for security reasons or because we did not have information on the conditions of the injured, and led some stations to speculate about their observations without first confirming their information. On several occasions, stations broadcast unconfirmed rumors of multiple escapes and deaths, none of which were true." (Cadeaux, p. 92)

Why was this location chosen? Probably because it was handy for prison officials to quickly step outside the gate and dispose of the duty of dealing with the media in a time of crisis. Also, the news media complained that they were too far away at the originally chosen staging location and needed to get closer. Either way, the location caused a number of public relations problems for prison authorities.

Reporters broadcasting "live" on radio or television have a real problem confirming information while they are talking about the event at a particular moment in time. If they see people being brought out of the prison on stretchers and put into
ambulances, reporters are going to talk about these observations. If they see armed personnel moving in and around the prison, reporters are going to talk about that as well. The Pennsylvania prison authorities who allowed the news media to witness these events ensured they would report on them.

There is a particular attitude, perception, and manner with which prison authorities handled the media at the Camp Hill riots. An underlying sense of blame was cast towards the media for their coverage of the events at the prison. In Cadeaux's article these bold headlines appear:

"Media Madness: Round Two"

And:

"Not only were we physically and emotionally spent, but the department's credibility was at stake." (p. 94)

How and where prison authorities dealt with the news media put the public relations office into the awkward position of not being able to answer adequately reporters' questions. According to the state's own Prison Disturbance Case Study, the cause of the second Camp Hill riot were the inadvisable statements made by prison officials at their own press conference. However, it is interesting to note that public relations spokesperson Cadeaux characterizes the cause of the second riot as "Media Madness: Round Two." The prison case study appears to condemn the news media as wrong for just being outside the fences. Yet much of the resulting inaccurate reporting was directly caused by the state's inexperienced handling of the news media. Because the newswriters reported what they saw, prison authorities developed an attitude of mistrust toward the journalists. The news media may have partly earned this mistrust, but it was also a position prison authorities created for them.
THE COMPETITIVE EDGE

Like every other privately-owned business venture, a television station competes with the other stations in the same city, or market. The idea is simple. The more people who watch your station, the more money you can ask advertisers to pay your station to advertise their products on your airwaves. The more people watching your station, the more money it will make. The more money your station is making, the less money your competitor stations are making. The less money your competitor stations are making, the less money they have to invest in their stations' shows to attract more people to watch. Competition among stations is built into the very fabric of how stations are operated and how people are chosen to work there. If you are not interested in competing and winning, you need not apply.

When television stations from around the country assembled outside the gates at Lucasville, a very competitive attitude existed between stations from each individual city, along with a competitive attitude from each station toward all the other stations combined. Each and every station wanted to break some part of the story before any of the other stations. Each station feared being beaten on some part of the story by other stations camped outside the prison, and especially by a station from its own market.

The competition to get some part of the story on the air before anyone else did was intense. This paper has already discussed how rumors about the number of dead inmates inside the prison began to drive the some stations' newscasts. WCMH News Director Thomas Burke reveals how the competitive marketplace pushed this type of story onto the air:

"I was the one who gave the permission [to air the 'forty dead bodies' story], because I was the one pushing it. I thought that would have been a hell-of-a, an angle to report first, because it was such a prevalent rumor." (Burke, 94)
Burke was also strongly committed to not allowing WBNS to gain any sort of competitive advantage over his station by virtue of its involvement with prison authorities:

"My position on what Channel 10 [WBNS] did was that they had gotten an advantage on the story by their own hard work and dumb luck. And then they tried to retain that advantage when there was no advantage to retain because it became a pool situation. Then it got into a pissing match and we said 'screw this'. Some calls were made. To the lieutenant governor, to the governor's office, the lieutenant governor [Michael DeWine] was really the one who got involved because he is the big cheese over the prisons or whatever his title is. We turned it into a Keystone Cops type affair. And that there was no way that Channel 10, and we insisted, that there was no way that Channel 10 was going to continue to screw us, and other media in the state, for even if it was only a few hours there." (Burke, 94)

WCMH was not the only station to complain to the State House about WBNS's involvement. WHIO-TV from Dayton, Ohio, convinced Lieutenant Governor Mike DeWine to put pressure on prison negotiators to include other television stations besides WBNS. (Orr, 94) The mistrust already harbored by prison authorities was only intensified by this constant bickering amongst the news media.

On Friday evening, April 16, 1993, the relationship between prison authorities and WBNS finally broke down for good. WBNS had completed its original "live" broadcast of the inmates' demands during the mid-afternoon. After its satellite truck had begun to move back to rejoin the other news media, prison authorities held WBNS's truck and crew near a bus repair garage. The inmates were discussing surrendering on "live" TV provided by WBNS. WBNS had set up a satellite signal and had begun to broadcast a report for its six o'clock newscast when prison authorities halted the broadcast and told the WBNS producer that the satellite truck needed to be ready to move again, right away. After WBNS obligingly turned off the signal, the satellite truck was held at the garage for at least another hour. WBNS was
then ordered to move its truck back to the position it had just vacated behind the prison and reestablish its satellite signal to possibly broadcast "live" the inmates' surrender. As darkness and rain moved in, the inmates' surrender was called off for that night. At 10:30 p.m., WBNS was ordered to remove its truck from the prison grounds and return to the media area on the opposite side of the prison. When Bob Orr asked permission to set the truck up at the nearby bus garage to broadcast "live" for the imminent eleven o'clock newscast, prison authorities refused to talk to Orr. The order to leave the prison grounds was enforced. (Orr, 94)

The complaints from other by news media outlets and the rising mistrust from prison authorities was now impacting the negotiations. The inmates wanted to surrender on "live" TV provided by WBNS. However, WBNS no longer trusted prison authorities to allow it to broadcast "live" reports during time periods when its services were not needed for the surrender, therefore, WBNS management also believed they could no longer rely upon prison authorities to ensure the further safety of their personal staffing the satellite truck. (Orr, 94. Stewart, 94)

Chief Negotiator Michael had this reaction to WBNS's pulling out:

"If Channel 10 doesn't want in, then we will get someone else. But they won't get the surrender. Channel 10 talked about how much money it was costing them to help out, but if it saved a life? The media has to realize the good with the bad. If they are involved, they may not get the story when they want it. But if they pull out, they may not get the bigger story when it happens."
(Michael, 94)

Michael did get someone else. On Sunday, April 18, the State Highway Patrol flew in Cleveland attorney Niki Schwartz to help diffuse the situation without further bloodshed. (OSU Law Record, 93) Over the course of the next few days, Schwartz was able to negotiate a peaceful settlement between prison authorities and inmates, but he still had one more hurdle to cross. The inmates feared prison authorities would not
keep their word and would retaliate against them when they surrendered. (*ABA Journal*, 93)

Without the availability of WBNS and its satellite truck, prison authorities had to find another television station to assist. WCMH and WHIO, two of the stations that had complained the most about WBNS's involvement, did not have satellite trucks. Oddly enough, due to a mechanical breakdown, one station covering the riot was in an ideal situation to step in and assist. WLWT of Cincinnati owned a satellite truck. During the first week of the stand-off, its truck developed a mechanical problem that caused WLWT to pull it away from Lucasville to make repairs. To fill in the time gap, WLWT rented another satellite truck. Its own truck was quickly repaired and returned to the prison. When prison authorities asked for another station to help out, WLWT actually had *two* satellite trucks available. It kept its own truck on "Media Hill" with the rest of the news media to broadcast "live" reports for its own newscasts. It outfitted the rented with a reporter and photographers to set up and broadcast the final surrender "live". The rented truck sat for three days at different sites around the prison as dictated by prison authorities. Prison authorities did not allow the truck to move anywhere or broadcast anything without their permission. The rented truck finally set up and broadcast "live" the inmates' surrender on the eleventh day of the stand-off while WLWT's own truck provided "live" coverage for their newscasts.

The competitive nature of journalists is deeply rooted. Bob Orr wonders at what point the competitive drive needs to take a back seat to other, more pressing concerns:

"Some of the carping by other members of the press, and other stations, during and after the fact, about this perceived competitive advantage we gained. Those complaints were so misplaced, so shallow, they were hurtful. I heard it suggested later that we had done this for some kind of promotional thing. And I just think that
is terribly unfortunate. I don't think we need to fight ourselves when faced with an extraordinary circumstance. The people who complained, the people who whined and moaned, were so small minded, that it made me feel kind of bad about the institution of what we do. The thing that still bugs me is that this competitive need still wins out over common sense and compassion." (Orr, 94)

Michael advises the news media to take a closer look at how they might staff such a crisis news event in the future:

"TV should realize who to send to these kinds of events. Someone may not match the story or be able to handle the event. They may have too little experience." (Michael, 94)

There are no guidelines for the news media when covering an event like this. There are no rules as to whom to send or what they should do when they get there. Television stations tend to send out the troops and equipment and figure out how to deal with the situation as they go along. (Burke, 94)
CHAPTER V

"LIVE" AND INVOLVED

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is designed to give completion to this study and also open new avenues of research. Television's new technologies have impacted the news gathering abilities of the TV journalist. Demands for more "live" coverage of events have limited the reporter's availability to leave the news scene and contact sources of information. This creates the "live" reporter as the focal point for the story.

When authorities and journalists come together at the scene of a crisis news events, the relationships can become very strained. Not only is there competition amongst the newsworkers present, there is also a mistrust that filters through all sides of these relationships.

OBSERVATIONS

Two major conclusions may be drawn from this research. The first is there appears to be limited academic research about journalism at crisis news events. The second is the relationship between official sources or authorities and the news media appears to also have merited limited academic research.

Discussing these two issues should provide future researchers a paradigm for expanded studies. This study is not intended to be the journalistic equivalent of Hoyle's Rules as to procedures reporters should follow when called upon to assist during crisis news events. The intent of this study is to focus on issues facing journalists which have received limited attention from academic scholars.
DISCUSSION

The function of journalists is to report to others what someone else has told them. Without oversimplifying news gathering, this describes the fundamental function of journalism. Research done by Fishman, Gans, Tuchman, and others have provided insight into the process of news gathering. Journalists contact sources who might have relevant information for their stories:

"More news emanates from officials than any other source." (Sigal, p. 131)

"Clearly, whom one asks for information influences what information one receives." (Tuchman, p. 81)

"Sources recognize what they have to gain through their relationship with journalists, and they act on this interest." (Fishman, p. 152)

Sources are so well aware of the importance of getting their viewpoints and their information into the news media that the public relations profession was created to meet that need. (Lippmann, p. 339)

The research detailing journalists' daily, regular, routines of news gathering is complete from both journalists' and sources' perspectives. A variety of influences effect the appearance of journalists' final product. Color pictures for newspapers and magazines, changing writing styles for different publications or areas of the country, formats for presenting stories in the electronic news media of radio or television, "live" remote and "live" satellite television broadcasts, all have an effect on journalists' stories. However, these influences make themselves felt only after the information that comprises the meat of the story is already gathered. The number one function of journalists is to contact sources for information for stories.

Journalists are tremendously dependent upon official sources to be forthright and truthful. During a prison riot, the information prison authorities dispense to the news media cannot be verified by another independent knowledgeable source.
Journalists are forced to rely on a single source that might intentionally give out not only disinformation but misinformation in order to publicize its viewpoint of the event. (Burke, 94. Orr, 94)

PERSONALITY THEORY

Of the many journalists who covered the uprising at Lucasville prison, each created their own kind of story selection. Several theories of story selection have been advanced. (Gans p. 78-79) One theory is journalist-centered, i.e., that the professional news judgment of a given journalist shapes the story. A second theory is based in the "routinization from organizational" requirements. Story selection is framed depending on the structures and division of labor within the particular news organization. A third theory is event-centered, or the "mirror" theory, i.e., that as events occur, those events determine story selection. Other theories suggest that influences from outside news organizations determine story selection; for example, influences might include such things as the economy or, more importantly to this discussion, advances in technology. (Gans, p.78-79)

However, a theory that Gans and other authors do not discuss should also be examined regarding the modern-day news media; that is, local television news operations build stories, as well as entire news shows, around the personalities of their news anchors, reporters, or interviewees. Sources of information are questioned in order to set up and support the personalities of the professional talent featured in the news show. This "personality" theory creates a new structure upon which television journalists can frame stories. Official sources will normally still be contacted, and might even be interviewed, but will most frequently not appear in the final story line. Official sources' information will be used by the reporter for the on-camera segment of
the story. Or, official information will be used to provide context for the opinions of "ordinary" people who are motivated to speak about the issue or event.

The "personality" theory features the ordinary person, the witness, the victim, or the television reporter as the focal point of the story. Official sources who have information and expertise will frequently not even be included. Television journalists will perform the broadcast using official information to demonstrate, on-camera, what may have happened, followed by the opinions of an ordinary person who does not possess knowledge, background, or hard facts about the event in question. The reporter or the ordinary person becomes the ultimate authority in the story instead of the informed source.

Reporters who are broadcasting in front of "live" television cameras can be especially hooked into presenting what they see as facts. They piece together what they see and guess about the meaning. "Live" television broadcasting is used by reporters to show the audience events that are occurring at that moment in time. (Burke, 94) For modern day television stations, "live" broadcasting is a major strength:

"You have to be a master B'S'er to get through 'live' television sometimes. While you're not making stuff up, you are keeping your mouth moving and words coming out. And, although there may be a minute or two where you don't say a whole lot, by the time you hit that second-and-a-half minute, by that time something will have happened, someone will have told you something, you will have noticed something." (Burke, 94)

Reporters are motivated to maintain the audience's interest by maintaining the meaning of the event or issue of the story. If reporters lose the ability to give the story meaning for the audience, they will lose the audience, period. Reporters can create what they see as facts. This way, reporters maintain their credibility and the credibility
of their story. Newsworkers can maintain the story as meaningful for their audiences by presenting the events of the crisis instantly as they unfold.

COMPETITION

With the competitive nature of newsworkers, there is a strong desire to get stories on the airwaves as quickly as possible at crisis news events. The idea is either to beat the competition onto the air with a story or to not get beaten by failing to have a particular piece of information when the competition airs it. When there is only one official source of information, journalists seek out alternative sources. There can be a great danger for journalists who believe too deeply in these new and untested sources. In the confusion of the crisis, the new source may appear to have been rigorously double-checked by newsworkers. However, inaccessible official sources are still the only persons able to confirm any information given out by the unconfirmable new source. This leaves journalists with a new source who inherently has a credibility problem. How much can journalists believe this new source of information at a crisis news event? Is it possible for this new source to even have the information it purports to have? Do the events of the crisis limit the number of people who could truly know inside details of events as they are unfolding?

During the Lucasville prison uprising, WCMH-TV and The Portsmouth Daily Times both reported that there were numerous dead inmates inside the gymnasium of riot-torn "L" Block. Both news media outlets received phone calls describing the deaths inside. In fact, the single phone line out of the cell block went straight to prison authorities. The only people who really knew what was in the pitch-black gymnasium were inmates holding "L" Block, and they did not have a phone to the outside world. WCMH and The Portsmouth Daily Times believed their unofficial sources about the numerous dead inmates. As it turned out, they were wrong.
Journalists need to be aware that all their sources are questionable. Prison authorities know they have to give up some information, but they intend to have some control over what makes it onto the airwaves. (Michael, 94) WCMH should have explored how the transferred inmate had acquired personal knowledge about what was going on inside "L" Block. The inmate who called WCMH was transferred from Lucasville, but the inmates transferred from Lucasville were not from "L" Block and had logically not been inside the "L" Block gymnasium before being put on a bus and transported across the state to another prison. The remaining Lucasville cell blocks were under a lock-down for the duration of the uprising. A lock-down is when all inmates are locked in their cells. There is no way for any inmate locked in his cell to observe whether there are any dead bodies in another cell block in the prison or to even get to a phone to call a relative on the outside.

An event with only one source of information can lead to frustration and to misinformation being transmitted by the news media. Journalists at crisis news events need to be very guarded when framing stories. The agendas of regular daily sources usually do not involve people whose lives are hanging in the balance. Official sources at crisis events sometimes do. (Michael, 94) Rumors can be very tempting for the news media waiting long hours in-between infrequent official briefings with little to do. Prison authorities should take a more pro-active response to the news media:

"There should have been a more constant flow of information from us to the media. There should have been more constant and regular briefing, even if there was nothing new to say. 'No comment' just doesn't work. There would have been less misinformation in the media if there had been a more consistent flow of information to the media." (Michael, 94)
When faced with tempting rumors that circulate at these crisis news events, journalists can easily fall into the trap of relaying bad information.

CREDIBILITY

The competitive edge gained by a news media outlet which helps out during an emergency is considerable. Being selected to assist creates a favorable audience perception of that station in the competitive marketplace. (Burke, 94. Dugh, 94. Michael, 94. Stewart, 94.)

"I don't think there is any question about it. If it doesn't give you a competitive advantage, it certainly gives you immediate credibility. I mean the viewer at home watching television, when they know the Department of Corrections is in charge of the crisis if the Department of Corrections says we're going to use Bob Orr, for whatever reason, whether it be that Sharon Kornegay and Bob Orr were friends when Sharon used to work at WBNS, I mean who knows what the reason was, the fact of the matter is that it gives the station immediate credibility if not a competitive advantage." (Stewart, 94)

The credibility mentioned by Stewart can take on many facets. Viewers turn to different stations and news organizations because of their perception of that station's credibility. For the viewer, the station becomes the credible source of information about the wider world. The viewer cannot reach the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections spokesperson, so the station acts as the viewers' access to those official sources of information.

When Bob Orr returned from his first meeting inside the prison with prison authorities, he became a source of information not only for WBNS viewers but also for viewers of the other news media outlets. Here was a new source of information about the uprising, someone who was not a state official but who had been inside the prison walls. However, from the perspectives of WBNS's Columbus rivals, WCMH and WSYX, this new source of information presented an insoluble problem. In the
competitive marketplace, a television station avoids putting the call letters, or the air
talent, of its rivals into its own broadcasts. What is the perception of WCMH and
WSYX's viewers when they see Bob Orr on their airwaves with his name and "WBNS-
TV" under his picture?

However, a news organization cannot ignore a new source of information
when doing crisis news coverage. WCMH and WSYX were, in a sense, helping to
build immediate credibility for their rival, as WBNS's Thomas Stewart discussed.
When the new source of information turned out to be the anchorman for their rival
station, their news operations were placed into an awkward position, and they felt
justified about complaining to prison and state authorities. Stewart understands why
his rivals were unhappy:

"The media that were unhappy, the other people that were
unhappy about Bob going in, were primarily other Columbus
television stations, the rest of the state didn't really care. They
would have been glad to have their own guy in there, or gal.
The fact of the matter was it was normal media grousing."
(Stewart, 94)

From the state's point of view, it was considerably more than "normal media
grousing". Department of Corrections Spokesperson Sharon Kornegay said the
complaints from competing television stations were intense and went straight to the
Ohio Governor's office:

"Oh, they went crazy! There were accusations that I was on
the payroll for Channel 10 [WBNS] and that I was playing
favorites since I had worked there. But that was the station
the prisoners asked for." (Kornegay, 94)

This strong reaction reveals how much importance stations place on being the
operation that is asked to help authorities out during an emergency. Having your
competitors talk about your involvement during their broadcasts and being able to tell
your own audience about your involvement gets the entire community talking about
your TV station. In Columbus, all three TV stations were talking about WBNS's involvement and, thus, all three TV stations were building the public's perception of WBNS-TV as "immediate credibility". In the competitive marketplace, where public perception can turn into money, this is the last thing WCMH and WSYX wished to do.

The problem for WCMH and WSYX was that they had to either ignore this major development in the breaking story or mention the competition, WBNS, on their own newscasts:

"The problem, as WCMH saw it, was that Orr and WBNS either misunderstood or deliberately reinterpreted their role there. To WCMH, WBNS should have been allowed inside as a pool alone - without Orr's smiling face, without his voice-over chatter to WBNS anchors. Without, in other words, competitive advantage." (Newkirk, 93)

State officials were bombarded with complaints from competing news media outlets. Many believed that WBNS had gained an unfair advantage. The problem for Kornegay was the perceived connection of her former employment at WBNS-TV to WBNS's involvement in the event. Her job at the Lucasville standoff was to present the viewpoint of the prison authorities:

"[T]he picture the publicity man makes for the reporter is the one he [she] wishes the public to see. He [she] is censor and propagandist, responsible only to his [her] employers, and to the whole truth responsible only as it accords with the employers' conception of his [her] own interest." (Lippmann, p. 345)

In the end, the complaints by news media outlets directly affected WBNS's relationship with prison authorities as well as the negotiation process with the inmates.
RELATIONSHIP WITHOUT RULES

"Lucasville was a bad experience for everyone." (Orr, 94)

Like a bad marriage, this kind of relationship has little hope of working. Each side expects the other to bend enough to make the relationship work. Neither side is willing to abandon its viewpoints and opinions long enough for the relationship to have a chance.

Both prison authorities and WBNS understood their own roles at the riot but did not have a clear picture of the other side's role. Department of Corrections Spokesperson Sharon Kornegay explains the differences:

"What it boiled down to was that our focus was different. The media had to fill the news hole. Our priority was to get our people out and to resolve the situation and return the prison to as normal a situation as possible in a peaceful manner, in a reasonable period of time. Different focuses." (Kornegay, 1994)

This might appear as a simple and clear definition of the roles of prison authorities and the news media. However, during the tension and pressure of a prison riot, this clear definition becomes clouded. Each side was so locked into its own objectives that it did not recognize the focus and objectives of the other side. Kornegay describes some of the viewpoints by prison authorities held regarding WBNS:

"I think our people are constantly amazed by the technology that, we're talking about 'live', didn't happen with the snap of a finger. You need quit a bit of lead time to set up a 'live' shot. So that when Orr was asked to move the truck [WBNS's satellite truck], I had to explain to people [prison authorities] that it was no easy feat and that they were risking, the station was risking, a lot financially by having to move. There were people who were basically in a 'we don't care' posture. And thought it was odd of me to be defending leaving the truck [behind the prison instead of making WBNS move its truck back with the rest of the media when they were not needed]. I felt bad that when it got near the time of the newscast, that it was only fair to leave them in. [WBNS
behind the prison] Otherwise, there would not be a signal from Lucasville [for the WBNS newscast]. (Kornegay, 94)

Prison authorities were focused on ending the uprising. This viewpoint was so entrenched that prison authorities thought it was "odd" that Kornegay would even consider what might or might not be fair to WBNS. Their thinking was that since WBNS had agreed to help, then WBNS should accept being controlled by the prison authorities, even if that meant not getting its story on the air. After all, the prison authorities' main focus was to resolve the prison riot. From their point of view, there was no other reason for WBNS to be there.

When the focuses of prison authorities and WBNS came into conflict, the relationship started to break down from the strain. WBNS General Manager Thomas Stewart explains the responsibilities of his station during the crisis:

"The overwhelming responsibility of the television station, any television station as licensed by the FCC, is to serve the public interest as a public trustee. It says that right on our license. It was important to me, and the station, that we not become the story. The story was the prison riot in Lucasville. And our primary reason for being there was to report what was going on." (Stewart, 1994)

The relationship continued to break down because of things as simple as assumptions about the meaning of certain technical terms and assumptions about what each side could provide for the other. WBNS News Director Paul Dughi reviews how simple misunderstandings over terms used by both sides of the relationship caused problems:

"We wasted an awful lot of time, my mistake as much as anybody's, they would ask for things, or ask us can you do this, technically? And we'd say 'sure'. But neither of us bothered to ask, 'Is that what you mean?' For example, they were asking us the one day 'can you do a clean feed of this?' And we said 'sure'. My feeling was clean feed means no supers [station logo over picture], no identifying marks. Theirs was, no reporter speaking. We lost a lot of that. We got into a major argument, that was a very difficult thing,
where we were trying to broadcast the release of the hostages. I had repeatedly said to them 'under no circumstances, we'll do it - we'll be the pool [whereby one station provides pictures for all the television station that want the pictures] - we'll broadcast this, but under no circumstances will we give up editorial control of our airwaves.' Because I feel very strongly about that. Without me taking the time to explain what I meant by editorial control, because what they took about it, they thought of it as editorials like in the newspaper. They thought what we were going to do was to go on TV and say 'Oh, they're criticizing, they're doing this wrong. They shouldn't be doing this.' And what I meant was I wasn't willing to give up our ability to factually comment and report on the events we were seeing unfold before us. I could kick myself for not thinking at the time, 'Gee, I wonder if they understand that?" Because they accepted it as if they understood it. Just like the clean feed. I accepted they knew what they were asking for. Because, when someone uses a technical broadcast term, you assume they know what they mean." (Dughis, 94)

Prison authorities were unhappy when what they asked for was not what ended up on the airwaves. They expected WBNS to broadcast a picture for all the stations to use and for no reporter to talk over those pictures. Had Orr not kept on talking while waiting for the inmate representative and the guard hostage to appear from the cell block, the silence during the "live" broadcast would have appeared to viewers as some sort of technical problem. The already mistrusting inmates would most certainly have blamed prison authorities for breaking the arrangement. When the prisoner representative sat down in front of the microphones, he waited for the yells from the inmates inside of "L" Block to confirm he actually was on "live" television before he began speaking their demands. What WBNS provided for prison authorities was a normal appearing "live" television broadcast from the scene of a crisis news event. Although this may not have been what prison authorities believed they wanted, it was what they actually needed to successfully complete the "live" reading of the inmates' demands and the release of a guard hostage. Any "live" broadcast that would have appeared out of the ordinary would have considered suspect by the inmates holding
the guard hostages. The prison authorities' chief negotiator explains what they had hoped for:

"We wanted the prisoners to talk to us over the phone and not be listening to the radio or TV. The TV [WBNS] was not as cooperative as the radio [WPAY, Portsmouth, Ohio]. We wanted Orr to stop talking so the prisoners would not be watching themselves on TV and would instead be talking to us over the phone. Orr was guided by his bosses and they didn't like being told what to do." (Michael, 94)

Newsworkers need to be granted the ability to cover crisis events even while assisting authorities in some capacity. If authorities block journalists' ability to maintain their coverage of an event, authorities should expect newsworkers object and possibly pull out of any prearranged agreement to help. Otherwise, journalists might be unwilling to assist, even when their assistance is desperately needed to resolve the situation.

SUMMARY

This study was intended to raise awareness as to new and important issues that confront modern day journalists. Academics have in the past focused their attention on reporter's methods of obtaining information for stories on a daily, or routine basis. Past research is limited as to news gathering procedures during crises, when journalists' inability to contact official sources of information creates major problems. During a crisis news event, sources can not only be difficult to access, they can actually be unwilling to be contacted at all by journalists.

At some crisis events, sources may be unavailable for a short period of time. Officials are more likely to meet with journalists when the crisis is brought under control. During prison riots, such as those discussed in this paper, authorities will be more selective when they address the news media and with what information they
release. The prison authorities at a uprising have become the main source of information for journalists. The inmates, the other side of the crisis, are holed up inside the prison. The only access that journalists will have to hostage-holding inmates is controlled by prison authorities. For the inmates to gain access to the news media, they will have to surrender something. At the Lucasville riot, the inmates turned over to prison authorities a guard hostage in return for having their demands read on "live" television. (Michael, 94)

For journalists covering a prison uprising, they are faced with a dilemma. The story has only one accessible official source of information. Journalists must now depend on the prison authorities to be honest and forthcoming with any information they release. (Orr, 94) The prison authorities are supplying the only official information to the waiting news media. Journalists covering the event will act independently of each other in the coverage of the crisis. This non-uniformity amongst the news media is also its vulnerability. If official sources of information are aware of this vulnerability within the ranks of the news media, they can exploit it. Official sources remain a major source of information for the news media. If officials are consistent and regular in supplying information to the news media, they can control, for the most part, what will be reported. By constantly supplying information, officials can satisfy the huge need journalists have for more and new pieces of information about an event. A continuous supply of information from officials will lessen the newsworkers' desire, and need, to seek out new and untested sources. At Lucasville, prison authorities came out to meet with the news media at irregular intervals. (State VHS Tape, 93) Journalists had little opportunity to confirm or deny rumors or new sources against the official information released by prison authorities. Newsworkers were more likely to air a story about rumors with new and untested sources because
deadlines were approaching and journalistic competition was everywhere outside the Lucasville prison.

Even if officials have nothing new to report, just making themselves accessible to the news media at regular intervals throughout the duration of a crisis will go a long way toward satisfying journalists' need to ask questions. Providing a constant supply of information does not mean that officials need give detailed accounts of events as they unfold throughout the crisis. Quite the opposite. Spokespersons supplying a continuous flow of information to the news media will have the ability to avoid answering undesired questions altogether. They might do so simply by telling newsworkers they will try to obtain the information for a later briefing. Regular availability of officials will help ease the frustration newsworkers feel and lessen the mistrust between the two parties.

Even so, journalists will inevitably continue to seek out alternative sources for their stories. Some of these sources will make it into stories regardless of any efforts by official sources. However, if officials consistently make themselves available to the news media, journalists will at least have an opportunity to verify or discredit these new and untested sources.

There is only limited discussion in previous research analyzing the impact on news gathering of new technologies. Local television stations will turn what were formerly edited broadcast news stories into "live" spontaneous news reporting events.

The assumption that local television journalists standing in front of "live" cameras need a variety of sources to fill "live" air time is not true. Instead, "live" television reporters improvise during the time they are on the air. "Live" broadcasts are framed around the presence and the personality of the journalist, who, in reporting "facts" as he or she observes and interprets them, will attribute little to official sources. According to the television news directors and reporters interviewed for this study,
facts imparted by official sources will be utilized in the broadcast only as a point of discussion for the journalist. Official sources will receive little or no attribution for having disseminated the information. (Burke, 94. Dughi, 94. Orr, 94)

"Live" television journalists construct their stories around the events they can see unfolding around them. The traditional theory that journalists contact sources for information before presenting stories does not hold true during "live" televised broadcasts. "Live" television journalists rely upon what they see about the event they are covering as much as what they know about the event. The ability of "live" air personalities to explain their perceptions and interpretations of the actions happening at the event will maintain their audiences' attention. (Burke, 94. Dughi, 94. Orr, 94)

Although television journalists still report stories which are based on and attributed to sources whom they have contacted, many traditional journalistic principles are rendered obsolete by this "personality" style of reporting. The "Fact-by-Triangulation" theory (Fishman, p.152) is frequently abandoned during a "live" TV report. Television reporters set up the "live" broadcast to show the events of the community as they are occurring at that time.

The theory that the event determines the story selection (Gans, p. 78-9) also does not bear up to close examination during "live" broadcasting. Television news operations often use "live" reporting to cover events as they occur in their communities. Stations also use their "live" capability to allow reporters to establish their presence by being "live" at the location of the story they are covering. (Burke, 94. Dughi, 94)

Television embraces "live" reporting because it allows viewers to actually see events in the community as they are happening. The "live" reporter is the connection between the event and the audience. This style of reporting establishes the journalist
as the authority at the scene and frequently bypasses the need for official sources to be interviewed during "live" reports. (Burke, 94. Dughi, 94)

Official sources are not only being left out of "live" television reporting, they are being left out more and more throughout television reporting. For example, presently in Columbus, Ohio, there is not one regular television or radio beat reporter who is routinely assigned to cover state government, city government, county government, or the court system. When reportable issues arise in these governmental bodies, a general assignment reporter is sent to cover the story. Their assignment is frequently to seek out ordinary persons who might be affected by the actions of government rather than those sources within government who caused the action.

When journalists are drawn into assisting authorities in the resolution of crisis events, they become participants, not observers. This alters the traditional relationship between reporter and source. Authorities may not really want the help of journalists but at some point have little choice. To end the siege at Lucasville, the news media became a major player. A select few journalists, who a moment ago were covering the riot, now become part of the story being covered by other journalists still outside the prison. Journalists chosen to assist prison authorities are then pressed into a difficult arrangement. They have agreed to be a part of the possible resolution of the crisis. In so doing, they have given up or compromised their ability to cover the event.

When WBNS began assisting prison authorities at Lucasville, it gave up numerous opportunities to broadcast "live" reports via its satellite truck back to its audience in central Ohio. The other journalists at the uprising, including those from the rival stations WCMH and WSYX, reported "live" on the activities of WBNS as they, hampered by being players in the drama, set up their satellite trucks and broadcast the inmates' demands. Occasionally, WBNS's Bob Orr or LuAnn Stoia would call back to their station and give telephone updates of unfolding events.
However, WBNS's viewing audience was limited to watching WBNS's news anchors sit in their Columbus studios listening to these telephone reports without the benefit of seeing fresh "live" pictures broadcast from the scene at Lucasville.

Bob Orr and LuAnn Stoia also had to withhold information from the audience on the story. The WBNS crew at the siege could have broadcast exclusive reports by using sensitive information obtained by virtue of being the station selected to assist in resolving the crisis. However tempting, broadcasting sensitive information would have jeopardized the negotiations with the inmates. WBNS was faced with the dilemma of trying to assist prison authorities without revealing too much of what it knew of the negotiation plans. While assisting officials at the scene of a crisis news event might appear to be a competitive coup for a television station, journalistically speaking, such a "privileged" station risks a great deal. WBNS-TV not only withheld information of the event, it also could not broadcast "live" reports of the ever changing crisis news event.

A prison system with over 35,000 inmates, pushing prison occupancy to 161% of design capacity (Annual Report, 1991. Intake Study, 1992) ought to have plans and strategies in place for every event from escapes to inmates' deaths to major riots. There were no plans or designs established by prison authorities for confronting and dealing with the demands and attention of the news media. (Kornegay, 94. Michael, 94)

Prison authorities at Lucasville were also unprepared for their responsibilities towards the families of the inmates and guard hostages that were inside the riot-torn cell block. Regardless of the number of times that prison authorities are interviewed during hostage situations, journalists will inevitably seek out for comment family members of those trapped inside the prison. Several journalists from every television station, every radio station, every newspaper, every magazine, and every other news
media outlet covering the uprising will want to talk with any family members who can be accessed. Prison authorities responded slowly in dealing with guard hostage and inmate families nervously waiting outside. Prison authorities established lines of communication and places for both groups to gather and wait out the uprising.

This study is intended as a pilot study on two issues: (1) evaluating journalists' ability to contact official sources of information during crisis news events; and, (2), discussing the roles appropriate for journalists and officials forced by circumstances to work as teammates to resolve crisis news events. This study also highlights the need for research to update the academic literature concerning how journalists go about the business of news gathering. Although national publications and television network news operations still utilize the routines of daily beat reporting, local television news organizations do not obtain information for their newscasts in this fashion in the 1980's and 1990's.

This study is limited to one specific type of crisis news event, the prison riot. This non-routine news event is not unique, however. Reporters will face many different types of assignments that pose problems and restrictions similar to those at prison riots. This study will hopefully encourage others to research the many unknowns that face journalists in such situations.
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