

# 2005

## Survey of Editors and News Directors

By

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The Radio-Television News Directors Association Women & Minorities Survey is conducted by RTNDA and Ball State University.

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## Executive Summary

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- Approximately one in four of those hired by the daily newspaper industry in calendar year 2005 came directly from college; the ratio has varied only slightly going back to 1985.
- Just fewer than six in 10 of those hired by the newspaper industry in 2005 came from other newspapers; this ratio also has not varied fundamentally in 25 years.
- Daily newspapers in 2005 hired a relatively small percentage of their new employees from other media or from other occupations.
- Journalism and mass communication graduates made up 85% of those hired directly from college by the daily newspaper industry in 2005; that figure is up from 78% five years ago and nearly as high as it has been back through 1970.
- Television newsrooms once again hired more than nine in 10 of its college hires from journalism and mass communication programs. That figure has not varied in any significant way since 1990.
- The television news industry was less likely in 2005 to hire broadcast journalism majors than it was five years ago. It was more likely to hire graduates with less specialized journalism training.
- In the radio news industry, journalism majors also made up nine in 10 of the hires directly out of college. This ratio increased from five years ago. Broadcast journalism majors were a smaller part of the mix than five years ago, however, with more hiring being done of those who majored in journalism generally.

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## Project Background

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The Dow Jones Newspaper Fund began surveying daily newspaper editors in 1970 to learn about their hiring activities—how many people they hired, how many of them were directly from the university, and how many of them had journalism degrees. The survey was a companion to the *Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates*, which was initiated by the Fund in 1964.

The *Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates* and the *Daily Newspaper Hiring Survey* moved to the Ohio State University, beginning with the 1987 graduate survey. Both surveys moved to the University of Georgia in the autumn of 1997.

The *Daily Newspaper Hiring Survey* has been conducted in 1970, 1974, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2005. In 1990, 2000 and 2005, a select number of comparable questions on hiring by news directors in television and radio newsrooms was added to the Radio-Television News Directors Association Women & Minorities Survey. In 1995, these same questions were included in a survey of television news directors conducted at the Ohio State University as part of the SPJ Jane Pauley Taskforce on Mass Communication Education.

The data from these surveys provide the data for this report.

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## About the 2005 RTNDA Ball State University Survey

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The RTNDA Ball State University survey was conducted by mail and fax in the fourth quarter of 2005 among all 1,617 operating, non-satellite television stations and 9,013 U.S. radio stations. Valid responses were obtained from 1,120 television stations (69.3%) and 209 radio news directors and general managers, representing 613 radio stations (6.8%). The survey focuses on newsroom hiring.

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## About the 2005 Daily Newspaper Hiring Survey

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The *2005 Daily Newspaper Hiring Survey* was conducted from February through July of 2006 with editors of all 1,550 daily newspapers listed in the *Editor & Publisher International Year Book* for 2005. Persons holding the title of editor at each of the newspapers listed were sent a four-page questionnaire via the mail in February. The questionnaire asked about newsroom hiring in 2005.<sup>1</sup>

If no response was received after the initial mailing, subsequent mailings were sent in March, May, and June of 2006. In two cases, the recipient indicated that a single newsroom produced the content for papers with more than one title. In these cases, the data were filed as if for a single newspaper. The newspaper with the largest circulation was retained in the data file. This reduced the total number of newspapers in the population to 1,447.

Of the 1,447 newspaper editors to whom a questionnaire was sent, 578 or 39.9% returned a completed survey. Fifteen editors returned the instrument and indicated they refused to participate; the remainder simply did not return the instrument. An analysis of return by circulation size showed that the final sample of 578 newspapers reflected this characteristic of the population.

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<sup>1</sup>Special thanks are given to the following University of Georgia students who worked as research assistants or research clerks in the Cox Center in 2005-2006: Hariqbal Basi, Laura Cowan, Virginia Evans, Megan Guilliams, Dale Hackler, Douglas Jordan, Katie Kosciolik, Ick Lee, Tiffany Little, Yannick Morgan, Elizabeth Morison, Benandré Parham, Hyo Jung Park, Kathryn Purcell, Ali Sooudi, Amanda Swennes, Maria Tucker, Misti Turnbull, Natalie Turner, Karen Sines, Oana Vlad and Patricia Zurita.

Chart 1. Where Daily Newspapers Found Full-Time Newsroom Employees

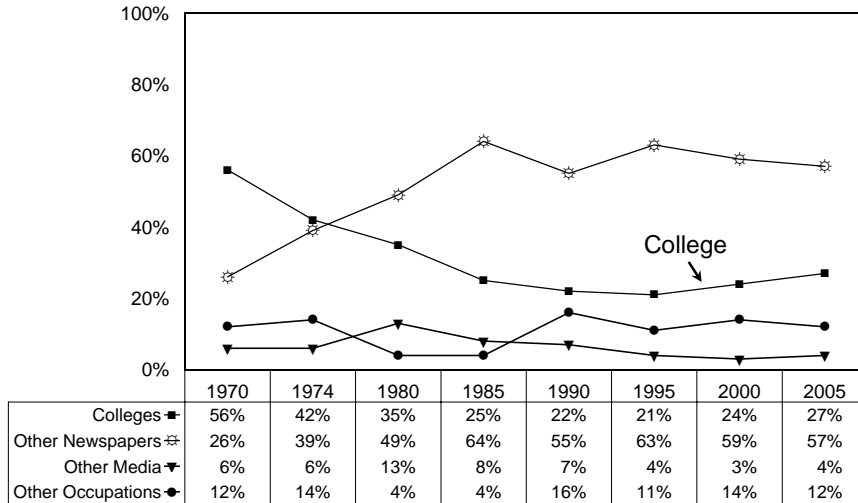


Chart 2: Percentage of Hires from College with Journalism Degrees

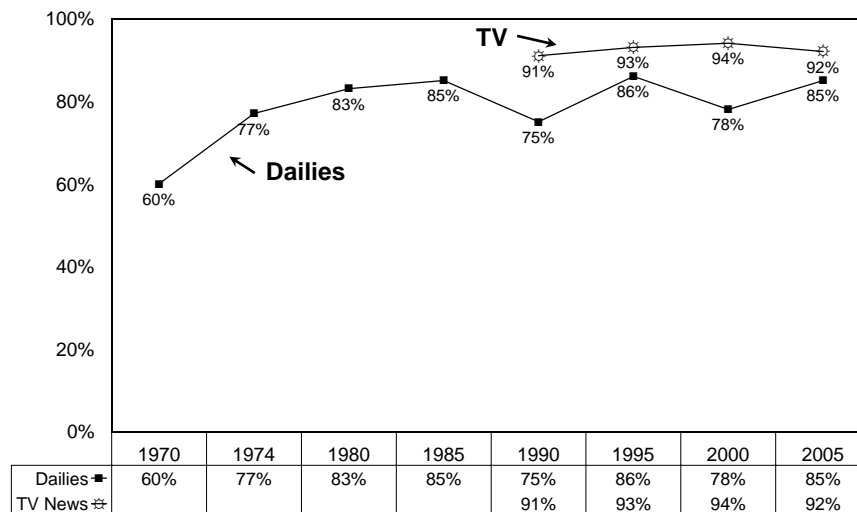


Chart 3: Percentage of Hires from College with Journalism Degrees: Radio 2000 & 2005

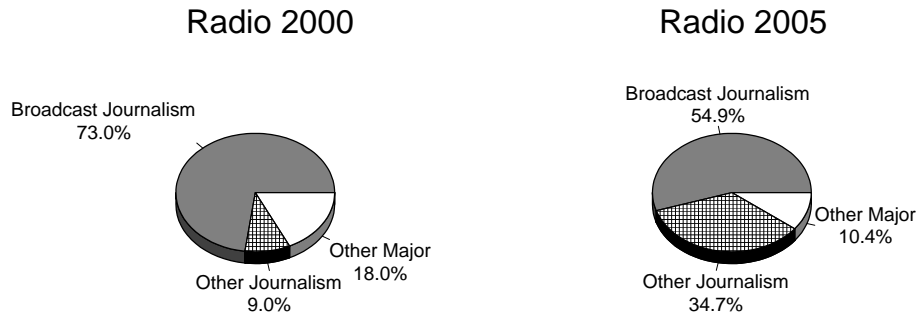


Chart 4: Percentage of Hires from College with Journalism Degrees: TV 2000 & 2005

