

# Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly

<http://jmq.sagepub.com/>

---

## **Mass Media Use by Sub-Elites in 11 Latin American Countries**

Paul J. Deutschmann, John T. McNelly and Huber Ellinssworth

*Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 1961 38: 460

DOI: 10.1177/107769906103800403

The online version of this article can be found at:

<http://jmq.sagepub.com/content/38/4/460>

---

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

On behalf of:



[Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication](#)

**Additional services and information for *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* can be found at:**

**Email Alerts:** <http://jmq.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

**Subscriptions:** <http://jmq.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

**Reprints:** <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

**Permissions:** <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

>> [Version of Record](#) - Dec 1, 1961

[What is This?](#)

Downloaded from [jmq.sagepub.com](http://jmq.sagepub.com) by guest on January 28, 2013

# Mass Media Use by Sub-Elites in 11 Latin American Countries

BY PAUL J. DEUTSCHMANN, JOHN T. MCNELLY AND HUBER ELLINGSWORTH\*

*Interviewers find the daily mass communication intake of Latin American professional and technical people roughly on a par with, and in some ways broader than, that of comparable North Americans. Domestic and foreign media consumption patterns are analyzed in terms of education and U.S. exposure.*

❖ TO WHAT EXTENT ARE THE MASS media used in Latin America? We get some notion from UNESCO publications which show, for example, that there are 7.4 copies of daily newspapers per 100 persons in the Latin American region.<sup>1</sup> Another kind of information is that which has been provided in survey data. For example, Hamuy found that in Santiago, Chile, radio and newspapers were the principal sources of the news of the first Russian Sputnik in 1958, a result consistent with a fairly high daily use of these media.<sup>2</sup> But information about use of mass media in Latin America is lacking.

\*This study was made possible by a grant from Ford Foundation-Michigan State University International Programs. Drs. Deutschmann and McNelly are currently on leave from the Communications Research Center, M.S.U., serving as director and assistant director, respectively, of the mass communications research project, of Programa Interamericano de Información Popular, American International Association, San José, Costa Rica, a Rockefeller brothers organization. Dr. Ellingsworth is director, ICA Communications Seminars, Michigan State University. The authors are indebted to Drs. Hideya Kumata, Malcolm MacLean Jr. and David Berlo for aid in study design, anticipation of cross-cultural problems and thoughtful criticism.

<sup>1</sup> UNESCO, *Meeting of Experts on Development of Information Media in Latin America* (Paris: Unesco, May 1961).

<sup>2</sup> Eduardo Hamuy, Danilo Salcedo and Orlando Sepúlveda, *El Primer Satélite Artificial: sus Efectos en la opinión Pública* (Santiago, Chile: Prentice-Hall de la Editorial Universitaria, S.A., 1958).

In the spring and summer of 1961 the authors obtained data, by means of direct personal interviews with Latin Americans in their own countries, on a wide range of questions including use of the mass media. This report is based on results from six Central American and five South American nations.

## THE STUDY GROUP

The study group is not representative of the total population in Latin America but is made up of professional and technical persons. Their media habits can be considered of some significance in themselves, particularly in view of the general lack of data in this region. Further, analytical exploration may show the nature of relationships between various characteristics and media use, which—at minimum—will provide hypotheses for future studies.

These findings are based upon 214 interviews; 54% of the respondents were individuals who had come to the United States from one to two years earlier on International Cooperation Administration fellowships providing for study in various technical fields, while the remaining 46% were a group of "counterpart" persons, who had not been to the United States on such a fellowship. Only a few of them had visited the United States at all.

Counterparts were obtained by asking each former ICA participant to nominate "one or more persons who do similar work to your own, but who have not been to the United States." In most instances, this produced the names of colleagues in their own offices. Occasionally, we found it impossible to locate suitable counterparts. *For example, in some U.S.-supported agencies very few people of similar job level had not been to the United States on ICA fellowships.* In other instances, a man had a relatively rare specialty and could not be matched. Given the nature of social relationships, it was usually easier for the participant to recommend an individual of "lower" level than of "higher" level. Accordingly, we had some imbalance on this point, with 9% of counterparts at higher levels than ICA persons, 58% same, and 33% lower. This imbalance was more marked for Central American countries than for South American.

All of the individuals, ICA and counterpart, worked and most lived in the capital city of their countries. This atypical group might be characterized as a "sub-elite" in Latin America, although not, by and large, the highly privileged of their countries. But these persons are, in contrast to the total population, highly educated, have above average socio-economic positions, and are participating—in various ways—in efforts to introduce technical changes into their societies. They represent scores of different professional and technical specializations, from public health to education, aircraft control, mining, cartography, industrial engineering, business, agriculture, police, finance, etc.

In the main, they are government employees, with about 90% directly employed by bureaus or agencies of their national governments or in related government activities such as schools or universities. About 5% work for private industry and another 5% are self-employed or unemployed. Some 15%

of them are employed in the various cooperative U.S. government organizations which exist in Latin America as the result of past and current technical aid programs.

The bulk of the interviewing was done in Spanish. Most of the ICA participants spoke English, however, and about a fourth of the interviews were conducted in that language. We had the aid of local interpreters in Chile, Argentina, Peru and Costa Rica, who questioned about half of these respondents.

The group is predominantly male (82%), married (71%) and below 40 years old. The distribution by educational level included 30% with secondary education or less; 24% with some university; 32% university graduates; and 14% with advanced university degrees. The distribution by countries is shown in Table 1.

This descriptive material should make clear that this is, as was suggested, a relatively "elite" Latin American group. Further, it is heavily weighted with individuals who have passed through the complex selection procedure of the ICA and who have been exposed for from three months to two years to U.S. culture, educational institutions, government agencies and private businesses.

We propose to examine this group, to compare it with samples of U.S. residents from whom similar data has been obtained, and to examine the mass media uses in terms of such variables as education, travel to the United States and possession of television in the home country. Through these analyses, we hope to throw some light on the nature of this specialized group and advance some hypotheses about mass media use in Latin America in general.

#### MEDIA USE INDICES

The exact question to be asked to determine use of the mass media is always a problem in communications research. For some time, the senior author has been utilizing the simple ques-

TABLE 1  
Distribution of Respondents by Country and Class

Country	ICA	Counterparts	Total for Country
Nicaragua .....	8	3	11
Mexico .....	5	7	12
Guatemala .....	7	5	12
El Salvador .....	7	5	12
Honduras .....	7	4	11
Costa Rica .....	18	19	37
Ecuador .....	6	4	10
Chile .....	19	18	37
Argentina .....	21	20	41
Peru .....	10	7	17
Paraguay .....	7	7	14
	115	99	214

tion: "Did you happen to use — (newspapers, books, radio, etc.) yesterday?" This has the virtue of minimizing error introduced by imperfections in recall.<sup>3</sup> It also simplifies comparisons across media and countries. The more traditional indices, such as are involved in asking about "regular use" of a medium, the number of units exposed to in certain time periods, and the amount

of time spent were also used and will be mentioned where appropriate.

In our Latin American study we asked about use of radio, television, newspapers, magazines and books—paralleling studies done by the Michigan State University Communications Research Center, the Inland Daily Newspaper Association, Sindlinger Research, Inc., and Gedalecia.<sup>4</sup> In addition, we ob-

<sup>3</sup> See Paul J. Deutschmann and Wayne A. Danielson, "Diffusion of Knowledge of the Major News Story," *JOURNALISM QUARTERLY*, 37:345-55 (Summer 1960), for a discussion of recall factors in mass media use.

<sup>4</sup> P. J. Deutschmann, "Use of Mass Media 'Yesterday' in Lansing, Michigan," Communications Research Center, Michigan State University, September, 1960, mimeo; Inland Daily Press-Midwest Universities Research Committee, "The X,

TABLE 2  
Use of Five Mass Media "Yesterday" in U.S.\* and Latin America

Number of Media Used	Four Midwest U.S. Cities 1960	Midwest Metropolis 1957	Latin America Sub-Elite 1961
Five .....	4%	3%	7%
Four .....	19%	15%	35%
Three .....	43%	38%	36%
Two .....	23%	31%	18%
One .....	9%	11%	4%
None .....	2%	3%	—
Number .....	(511)	(2,678)	(214)

\*The data for the four Midwest cities are based on Inland Daily Press newspaper image studies; mimeographed copies of the individual reports are available at the Communications Research Center, Michigan State University. Midwest metropolitan figures are from Gedalecia, *op. cit.*

tained data on use of "movies" yesterday, and use of technical publications.

Table 2 shows the distribution of media uses for two U.S. studies and for this Latin American sub-elite group. The North American studies are based upon cross-section samples of cities, and thus include individuals from all walks of life. It is immediately apparent that the Latin American group makes considerably more use of the mass media than do samples of the general Midwest urban population. The difference is all the more striking when it is considered that four of the 11 Latin American countries from which data were gathered did not have television at the time of the study, while all of the U.S. cities had very high TV "saturation" levels.

We have already noted the high educational and occupational level of the Latin American group. A "fairer" comparison is made in Table 3, utilizing

Y. Z. Papers," Communications Research Center, Michigan State University, November, 1960, mimeo; Sindlinger reports on media use carried in Broadcasting-Telecasting in 1957 and 1958 on a twice-a-month basis; Ben Gedalecia, *The Communicators: An All-Media Study* (New York: Advertising Research Foundation, 1957).

**TABLE 3**  
Comparison of Midwest Professional and Managerial Persons\* with Latin American Group on Use of Mass Media

<i>Number of Media Used "Yesterday"</i>	<i>Midwest Professional &amp; Managerial</i>	<i>Latin American Sub-Elite</i>
Five .....	8%	7%
Four .....	32%	35%
Three .....	34%	36%
Two .....	20%	18%
One .....	5%	4%
None .....	1%	—
Number ....	(123)	(214)

\*Midwest professional and managerial figures taken from four Midwest cities data cited in Table 2.

just the professional and managerial occupational levels which were included in the samples from four Midwest communities.

As Table 3 indicates, the two groups are strikingly similar. However, some differences in the components of total mass media use are brought out when we examine the individual media. These data are shown in Table 4.

**TABLE 4**  
Use of Individual Media "Yesterday" in U.S.\* and Latin America

	<i>U.S. National Study '57</i>	<i>Lansing Michigan 1959</i>	<i>Four Mid-West Cities 1960</i>	<i>Prof. &amp; Mgr. in Midwest</i>	<i>Latin American Sub-Elite</i>
Newspaper .....	79%	86%	92%	93%	95%
Television .....	62%	67%	72%	72%	51% **
Radio .....	55%	50%	57%	64%	76%
Magazines .....	27%	34%	39%	57%	45%
Books .....	(***)	12%	18%	29%	71%
Number .....	(10,000)	(111)	(511)	(123)	(214)

\*U.S. national data from Sindlinger research report, *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, May, 1957. Lansing 1959 data gathered by Communications Research Center, Michigan State University. The Sindlinger and Lansing data are based on telephone interviews. Midwest data, cited in previous tables, were gathered in door-to-door interviewing.

\*\*Based on the seven countries which had television: Argentina, Peru, Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico and El Salvador. The over-all percentage of TV use, including countries without television, is 34%.

\*\*\*Not obtained.

The most obvious difference in Table 4 is in the use of books, with Latin Americans far in the lead. In part, this is explained by the fact that many of these professional and technical people are using books—often North American ones—for information relating to their daily work. However, their reading also ranged broadly through fiction and non-fiction from *Dr. Zhivago* to *Como Ganar Amigos e Influir las Personas* (*How to Win Friends and Influence People*). About 40% of titles furnished by the Latins were of work-related books, 40% general interest, and 20% fiction.

Radio use also was higher for the Latins. This is not surprising since television was lacking in four countries; in addition, even where TV is available both channels and programming hours are limited, leaving radio a clear field during much of the day.

Newspaper exposure on the "yesterday" basis was just about the same as among the comparable U.S. group. This readership was actually made up of exposures to somewhat more newspapers in Latin America than is normal in the United States. Our respondents told us that they read regularly, on the average, 1.96 newspapers. In comparison, figures compiled from a large survey in a Midwest three-newspaper city in 1957 indicated an average of 1.56 newspapers per household in the high socioeconomic group.<sup>5</sup> The high average for our respondents is at least partly due to the fact that they have more newspapers available to them in their Latin American capitals than are available in most U.S. cities. (The importance of availability is stressed when we note that South Americans, who live in larger cities with more dailies, read 2.14 papers regularly, while Central Americans read 1.81.) But a somewhat

higher level of readership also is involved.

For example, we asked the Latin Americans whether or not they read international news in their papers regularly, occasionally, seldom or never. Among our respondents, 85% said they read such news regularly. This percentage is reached in our U.S. data only for persons with advanced college degrees. For the over-all Midwest cities sample, 62% read international news regularly. A factor presumably contributing to this difference is the higher proportion of international news carried in Latin American metropolitan newspapers, which was recently pointed out by Markham.<sup>6</sup> MacLean and Pinna, who in rural Italy found media use related to interest in distant places, have suggested that the editorial display of foreign news may "force" readers to concern themselves with such news.<sup>7</sup>

#### TELEVISION IN LATIN AMERICA

Television has only recently come to Latin America, but already its importance in mass communication is apparent. As Table 4 shows, "use yesterday" in countries with TV averaged slightly over 50%. The high was 65% for Peru and the low 30% for Costa Rica.

Actually, the use was significantly heavier among ICA participants than among their counterparts, with 61% of the ICA group reporting a TV "use yesterday" and only 39% of counterparts. The difference in "use yesterday" was also reflected in the item which inquired into hours spent with TV in a normal week. Here, 80% of the ICA group indicated they spent some time with TV while 70% of counterparts did so. Among those who indicated watching TV at all, the average time per day for the ICA group was 1 hour and 14 minutes, while for counterparts it was

<sup>5</sup> Paul J. Deutschmann and Malcolm S. MacLean Jr. (eds.), *Monthly Review of Mass Media Research 1959* (Cincinnati: Scripps-Howard Research, January 1960), No. 10.

<sup>6</sup> James W. Markham, "Foreign News in the United States and South American Press," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 25:249-62 (Summer 1961).

<sup>7</sup> Malcolm S. MacLean Jr. and Luca Pinna, "Distance and News Interest: Scarperia, Italy," *JOURNALISM QUARTERLY*, 35:36-48 (Winter 1958).

**TABLE 5**  
**Use of Media "Yesterday" in Television and Non-Television Countries**

	(n)	Movies	Magazines	TV	Tech./Pubs.	Books	Newspaper	Radio
TV Countries ... (142)		11%	42%	51%	58%	70%	70%	96%
Non-Television .. (72)		13%	51%	—	57%	72%	87%	96%

44 minutes. Thus it is clear that the difference between the two groups in "use yesterday" is a function both of availability of TV and of amount of time spent with TV.

Examination of the data suggests two speculations upon this difference:

1) That the somewhat higher job level of ICA participants over their counterparts might reflect economic circumstances sufficiently higher to account for possession of a TV set.

2) That the stay in the United States, with exposure to TV highly likely, helped "prepare" the participants for television and made them more likely to be innovators in the use of this new communication medium.

The fact that a part of our respondents were in non-TV situations gave us an opportunity to compare the uses of the various media "with and without" television. These data are in Table 5.

This comparison suggests smaller percentages of "use yesterday" of movies, magazines, books and radio in the TV countries, but several of these differences are so small as to be unreliable. We have confidence, however, that the radio difference is beyond chance levels.

The over-all pattern of differences in the two situations is clarified when we score each case on the number of the five media used yesterday other than television and technical publications. This provides two distributions of media use. For non-television countries, the mean use is 3.21 while for TV countries it is 2.89. The difference of .32 "of a media use" is larger than we would expect by chance ( $t = 2.22$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

The result suggests that even though we are dealing with countries which are

"underdeveloped" in a media sense, we may be seeing among these respondents evidence of the kinds of shifts which probably occurred in the United States as television moved into the mass media field. Even though some reduction in use of non-TV media is demonstrated, the data also suggest that the presence of television "steps up" total media contacts. When we include TV for the seven countries which have it available, the average number of media contacts increases from 2.89 to 3.39, slightly larger than the average for non-TV countries.

#### ICA PARTICIPANTS VERSUS COUNTERPARTS

We have already noted that ICA participants used television to a greater extent than did counterparts. This raises the question of other possible differences in media use between the two groups.

They were compared in a number of ways. For example, mean number of uses yesterday among five media (radio, television, books, magazines and newspapers, for comparability with U.S. data) showed ICA people using 3.34 media and counterparts using 3.06. The over-all mean is 3.21, comparing with the 3.15 of the Midwest professional and managerial group. When the media use scores are increased by adding data on movies and technical publications, almost exactly the same margin remains, with the ICA group at 4.06 and counterparts at 3.71.

Since we have a somewhat larger ICA group than counterpart, these comparisons include some individuals who were not "matched." Accordingly, we did a special analysis limiting the com-



parisons to matched pairs. There were 90 of these and for each pair a "difference score" in terms of number of media out of seven used yesterday was computed. A positive value indicated that the ICA person used more media; a negative value, the counterpart more. The mean of these differences was +0.45 and a test indicated it was larger than we would expect by chance ( $t = 3.00$ ,  $p < .01$ ) if the true difference were zero.

A more detailed analysis, utilizing data on comparative job and educational level for each of these pairs, suggested that the major contribution to this difference came from the somewhat lower job and educational level of the counterparts. For example, the mean difference in media use between ICA and counterparts who had a lower job level was +0.90, while that between pairs of the same level (or higher level for counterpart) was +0.30.

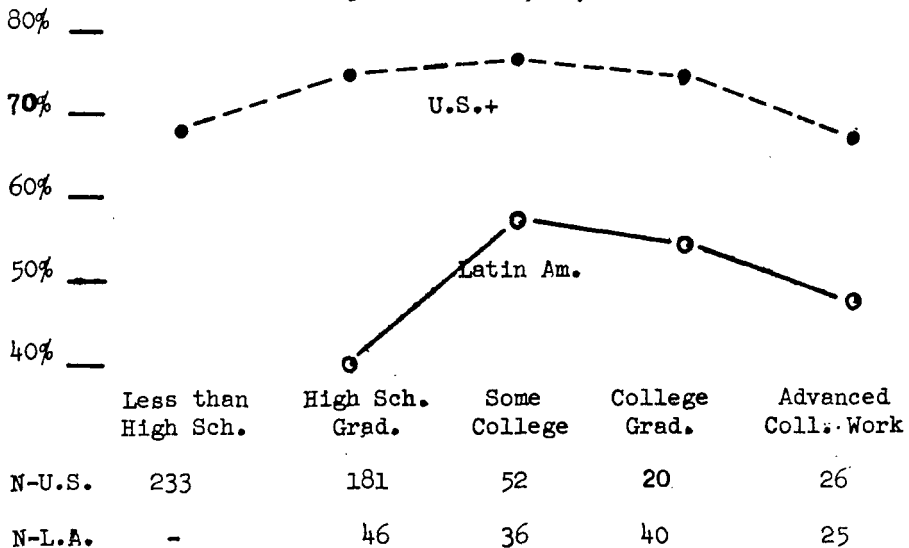
In any event, this analysis supports

the notion that the observed differences between ICA persons and counterparts in media use are a function of educational and job level differences as well as of any possible tendency of the experience in the United States to sensitize ICA participants to mass media. This result tends to support our first interpretation of the television difference more than the second.

#### EDUCATION AND MEDIA USE

In the United States there are several fairly stable relationships between educational level and use of the mass media. For example, use of magazines in North America is highly correlated with education. This has been demonstrated for many years in studies by the Magazine Advertising Bureau, in the studies of individual publications such as *Reader's Digest* and *Life*, as well as in studies of media use "yesterday." Use of books shows the same sharp relationship. Radio use in times past and television today, to some extent, show a

FIGURE I  
Percent Using TV "Yesterday" by Education



+Based on the four Midwest cities data from Inland Daily Press newspaper; image studies.



rather curvilinear relationship to education, rising from low figures for the least educated, up to a peak in the middle educational brackets (currently high school graduates) and sloping down again for those with various degrees of college education. We examined the Latin American data to see whether or not the curves for the various media follow the same or different trends as have been noted in the United States.

Figure 1 shows that the shape of the television curve for the Latin American respondents is rather similar to that for the four Midwest U.S. communities. Both are curvilinear, the biggest difference being at the left where the Latin American curve drops down more sharply. Though we lack a point for the "less than high school graduate" group for Latin America, we would have high confidence that it would drop to a very low percentage, accentuating this difference. The right hand side of the television tabulations suggests that both in Latin America and the United States there may be some "avoidance" of TV on the part of the better-educated—even though we can be reasonably sure that they have the economic means to be in the TV audience in view of the high relationship between education, occupation, and income.

For newspapers the differences between various educational groups are very slight both in the United States and Latin America, but they do follow a somewhat similar curvilinear relationship, peaking at the "some college" level and dropping off as education rises or declines.

Comparing book use in Figure 2, we can see that the positively accelerating trend of U.S. data is not repeated for the Latin Americans. Rather, they show a slight down-turn for the highest educational group; notably, this group is still above the figure for U.S. highly educated. For comparison, we have also plotted on this figure the use of technical publications. This matches the curve for books.

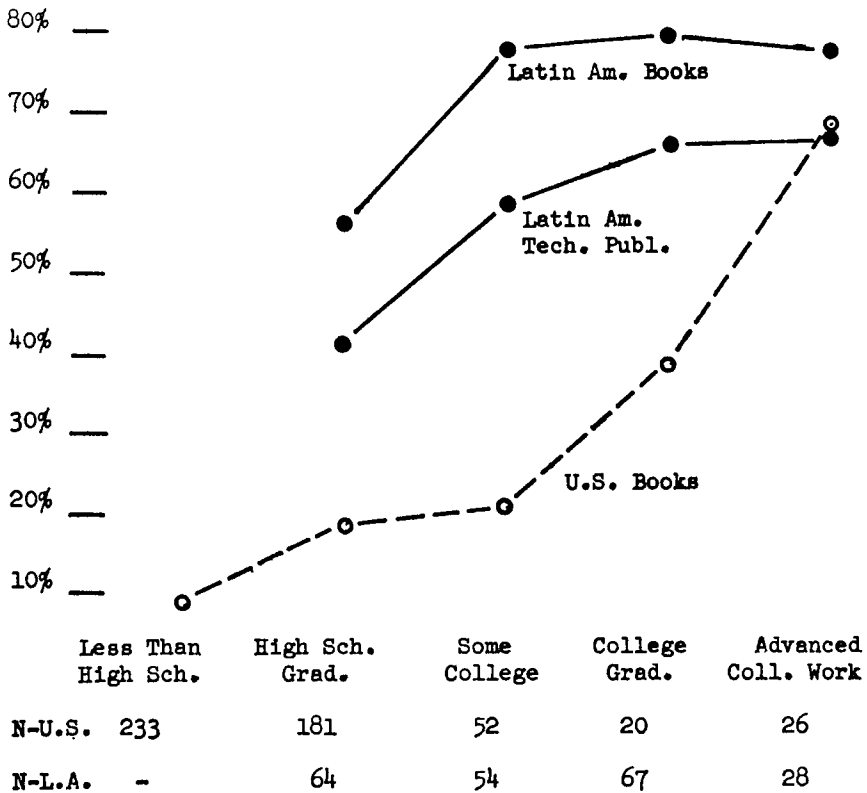
The Latin Americans also depart from the North Americans on use of magazines as related to education. While the percentages using magazines yesterday are virtually the same for both groups for high school graduates and those with some college, the Latin American percentages drop downward at the higher educational levels. This would suggest that the differentiation in educational appeal which has been accomplished by U.S. magazines might be undertaken in Latin America to win the attention of the "class" audience.

The radio curves for the United States and Latin America are different, too. The U.S. data show a marked increase in use from lower educational levels to college graduates, then a dropping down for the advanced degree group. It is possible that this reflects the special effects of FM radio, the use of radio as a news medium and other factors which have arisen since the days of TV. The Latin American curve shows only a slight "hump" (at the "some college" level) and gives more suggestion of a decline in use at the higher educational levels. In general, it would appear that this radio use curve is similar to that which existed in pre-TV days for radio in the United States.

The Latin American curve for movies, made up of much lower percentages, has its "hump" at the same educational level as for radio, with considerably lesser movie attendance at the lower and higher levels. Use of movies yesterday figures for U.S. samples were not obtained, since use by adults is now so low as to be barely perceptible on this basis.

When we examine average number of media "in contact with yesterday" for the U.S. and Latin American groups, the consistencies in the Latin American patterns produce the familiar humped curve, while the counterbalancing forces in the U.S. data provide one which accelerates, then levels off without a decline. The data are in Figure 3.

FIGURE 2  
Percent Using Books and Technical Publications by Education



These data suggest there may be some degree of "aversion" for the mass media among higher educated individuals in Latin America. This possible "aversion" is more apparent for the popular media than for books and technical publications. This might suggest that individuals with college degrees tend to eschew the more popular media and pay more attention to "scholarly" technical publications and books, to prefer utilitarian media rather than entertainment media. However, this interpretation is not fully supported, since the advanced degree group shows lower levels of consumption for utilitarian media, too. It is possible that such persons actually seek relatively

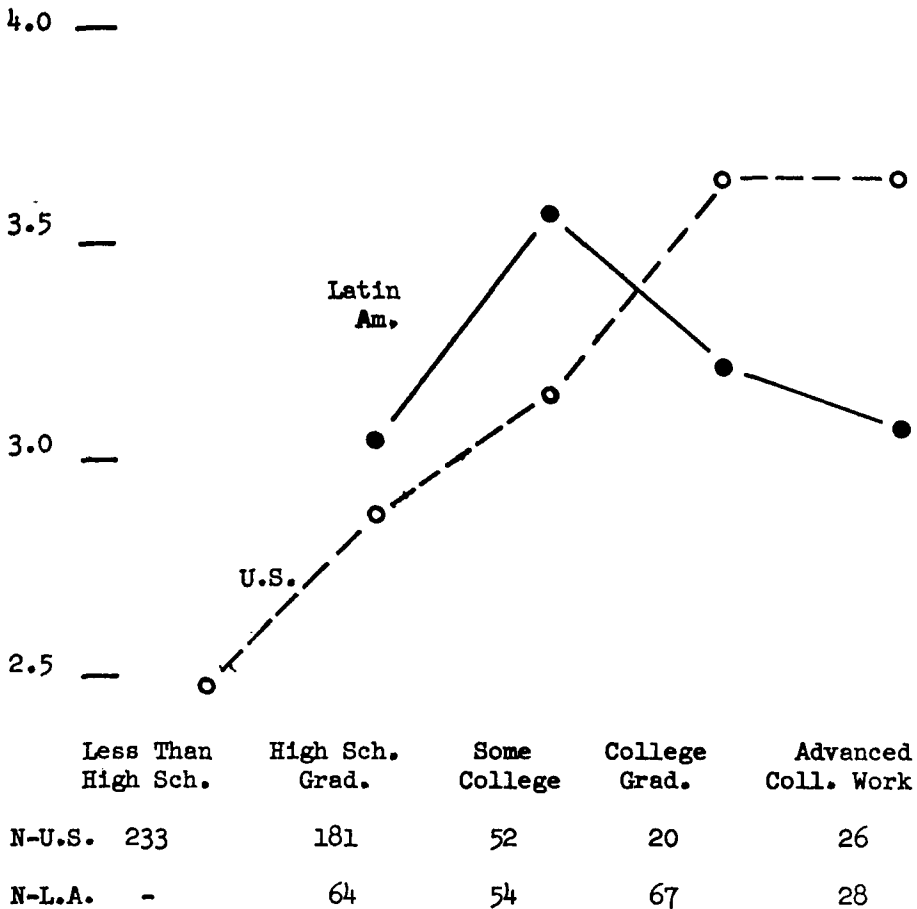
less information or entertainment and are spending relatively more of their time as "encoders" rather than as "decoders" in comparison with the U.S. groups of similar education.

A further possible interpretation of these data is that professionals and intellectuals in Latin America, to a greater extent than in the United States, accept criticism of mass media as mostly low entertainment for the uneducated—not only attitudinally but behaviorally as well.

#### USE OF FOREIGN MASS COMMUNICATIONS

One of the key aspects of this investigation was an analysis of the use of foreign mass communications. We at-

FIGURE 3  
Mean Number of Media Used "Yesterday" (Radio, TV, Magazines,  
Newspapers, Books) by Education



tacked this question in several different ways. For example, on radio, we asked: "Do you tune in any foreign radio stations?" Answers were given in terms of stations and countries, and analysis was made in terms of countries mentioned. This figure was taken as a gross indicator of the breadth of foreign radio listening.

To a considerable extent, the answers reflected large geographical size or isolation, as well as the opposites—small size and nearness to other coun-

tries' broadcasting. The average number of countries mentioned ranged from Honduras ICA participants at 4.6 to Chilean ICA participants at 0.4. But in 8 of 11 national groups, counterparts mentioned more countries than did ICA participants.

We constructed an index attempting to reflect the degree of relative "receptivity" to the United States as a source of foreign radio programs. Highest receptivity for U.S. radio was given to the case when only stations from the

United States were mentioned, and lowest to the case when nine countries (the limit of our coding) were mentioned as radio sources without a mention of the United States.<sup>8</sup> Analysis of foreign radio listening in this fashion showed clearly that ICA participants had much greater relative receptivity scores. Actually, in every country but Costa Rica and Chile, ICA participants had higher mean scores. The highest receptivity was recorded for Ecuador, with an average for participants of 7.2, while counterparts average 0.8. In Honduras and Nicaragua, counterparts actually averaged out to "minus" scores, indicating that they tended "not to mention" listening to any U.S. stations. Over-all relative receptivity scores were 3.5 for ICA persons, 2.4 for counterparts (indicating mention of U.S. among five to seven other countries).

In many cases, participants explained that their listening to U.S. stations was primarily to help them with their English. The comment is interesting, since most of them had been back in their own cultures for from six months to a year. On the other hand, quite a few of them did work in situations where English was used at least part of the time on their jobs.

We also asked of moviegoers "from which countries are most of the movies you see?" Whereas counterparts clearly mentioned more countries as sources of radio, there was no clear difference between the two groups on movies. In five countries counterparts mentioned more different countries and in six ICA persons mentioned more. A relative "receptivity" index similar to that for radio was made. The results again suggested greater relative receptivity to the United States as a source of movies for ICA than for counterparts, but the margin was much smaller. The relative "recep-

tivity" level was appreciably higher than for radio for both groups. The average score for ICA persons was 6.5 and for counterparts was 5.8 (indicating mention of U.S. as "a source of movies" along with two or three other countries).

While their movie fare was multinational, about three-fourths of the respondents, ICA and counterparts, gave the United States first mention in answering the movie question—and this was in line with what appeared to be available in their downtown theaters.

We also inquired into foreign magazines and newspapers read (not necessarily read regularly). Here again, there appeared to be no clear difference between ICA persons and counterparts on total numbers mentioned. In six countries ICA persons mentioned more, in five, counterparts more. Despite these inconsistencies in trends, the over-all average number of publications mentioned by ICA persons was 2.48; for counterparts it was 2.16. Table 6 records the frequency of mention of one or more magazines or newspapers from a variety of sources. We have also pinpointed the mentions of *Life*, *Reader's Digest*, and *Time*, since these were so prominent. The table shows the rather consistently greater tendencies to mention U.S. publications in Central America, a result undoubtedly reflecting pure physical availability. Availability again, plus cultural differences, are indicated in the mention of European publications in South America, with Argentina and Chile contributing most of the entries.

We developed another relative "receptivity" index for U.S. publications, this time simply obtaining the difference between the number of U.S. and "other foreign" mentioned. The mean of these differences was positive, indicating a general tendency to mention U.S. publications rather than those of Latin American or European nations. ICA participants had a mean difference

<sup>8</sup> Scores on the relative receptivity index could range from +9 (mentions only U.S. as a source of foreign radio) to -9 (mentions 9 countries without mention of U.S.). A score of 0 indicates no foreign listening.

TABLE 6  
Readership of Foreign Magazines and Newspapers\*

	Central America ICA	Central America Counterpart	South America ICA	South America Counterpart
<i>Life</i> .....	56%	58%	48%	45%
<i>Reader's Digest</i> .....	42%	49%	30%	30%
<i>Time</i> .....	35%	9%	27%	11%
Other U.S. Magazines.....	25%	21%	22%	7%
U.S. Newspapers .....	23%	2%	8%	2%
Latin American Magazines.....	38%	72%	40%	30%
European Magazines .....	2%	2%	19%	16%
(n) .....	(52)	(43)	(63)	(56)

\*Spanish language editions of *Life*, (*Life en Español*) and *Reader's Digest* (*Selecciones*) are available in Latin America; some scattered cases of readership of the English-language editions of these magazines are included in the above frequencies. *Time* is available only in English.

For other foreign publications, the percentages indicate proportions of respondents who read one or more. For example, 25% of Central American ICA participants read one or more of the "other U.S. magazines."

of +0.88, while counterparts had a mean of +0.22, again suggesting a greater relative receptivity for North American mass media for the ICA group. Actually, the most dramatic difference was brought out when we broke the groups down by region. The means were:

ICA Central America.....	1.44
ICA South America .....	.42
Counterparts Central .....	.23
Counterparts South .....	.18

They indicate that Central American ICA participants mentioned using nearly one and a half more U.S. publications than those of other countries, while South American counterparts mentioned almost the same in each of these categories.

The data suggest to us the important interaction of availability and interest in publications. Certainly, U.S. publications are much more available in Central America than in South America; but it appears that an important interest factor—such as that provided by the ICA trip to the United States—is necessary to produce high use. Indeed, the Central American counterparts are imperceptibly different from the South American counterparts.

One factor contributing to higher use of U.S. publications by ICA participants is their English language ability and their desire in many cases to maintain it. This was reflected in the far greater readership of *Time* by the ICA group in both Central and South America, and in readership of U.S. newspapers—notably the *New York Times* and, in Central America, the *Miami Herald*. It is reflected to a lesser extent among "other U.S. magazines," all in English—including several mentions of *Newsweek*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Look*, plus a sprinkling of others ranging from *Fortune* to *Playboy*. The English language factor did not operate, of course, with *Life* and *Reader's Digest*, which are available in Spanish.

The fact that a higher proportion of Central American counterparts read magazines from other Latin American countries, as shown in Table 6, may be explained in terms of both language and geographic factors. These persons are less attracted to English-language publications and nearly all are from countries which offer little in the way of national magazines.

A final approach summarized receptivity to U.S. mass communications across four media—radio, movies, technical publications and general magazines or newspapers, simply scoring each person on whether he mentioned the United States in any or all of these classifications. The results showed that on the average ICA persons indicated exposure to 3.12 out of the possible 4, while counterparts had an average of 2.55.

In general, it appears clear that ICA participants and their counterparts have their channels rather "open" to foreign communications, as evidenced by the numbers of different countries mentioned as sources of radio, movies, magazines, technical publications and newspapers. Aside from radio, the results suggest that there are no differences in "breadth" of foreign media exposure. On the other hand, for the ICA participants, the United States apparently plays a greater part in foreign media exposure. A part of this is the fact that their English-speaking or reading ability opens up more of North American communications to them. But beyond this, there may be some continued "focusing" upon the United States which is related to their visits.

#### SUMMARY

This investigation of mass media use in Latin America has demonstrated that the study group, a professional and technical "sub-elite," uses the mass media each day to about the same extent as do professional and managerial persons in Midwest U.S. cities. On the other hand, the composition of Latin America use patterns gets a much larger contribution from books and radio than does the North American.

Although television is lacking in 4 of the 11 countries studied, its regular use

is already a habit for a large portion of this sub-elite. And further, there are indications that the presence of television augments total mass media use, but displaces a part of the use of pre-existing media, particularly radio and magazines.

Individuals who had been to the United States on ICA fellowships were more likely to use television than were their counterparts. However, total patterns of media use were not significantly different between the two groups when education and job level were taken into consideration.

Analysis of educational levels and media use showed patterns generally consistent with those which have been observed in the past for the United States. The analysis suggests that radio is especially a middle-class medium, not attended to as much by higher educational levels as by middle levels. Books and technical publications have patterns more or less opposite to those of radio. There are some indications that individuals with post-graduate college training actually avoid to some extent the media which they could have available from an economic and educational point of view.

As to foreign mass communications, they appear to be an integral part of the Latin American diet. Here, we found that individuals who had been to the United States on ICA fellowships were considerably more likely to have their foreign media diet dominated by materials from the United States.

In total, we can conclude that these upper middle-class persons in Latin American capitals are very slightly if at all underprivileged in mass communications—even though the over-all situation in most of the countries is one of underdeveloped media.

---

*"An enormous amount can be done by the seriousness and integrity and the force with which people go at their jobs of communicating the facts."*—

LADY BARBARA WARD JACKSON at University of Iowa, April 1961.