

**Through Censors and Suspicion: Foreign
Correspondence in the Soviet Union as a Model
for Reporting in Hostile Environments**

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“If you don’t get into trouble with them to some extent, if your relationship with them is entirely placid, then it probably means you’re not doing a good job.”

- Former *Newsweek* correspondent Robert B. Cullen on reporting in Moscow, in an interview for Whitman Bassow’s book *The Moscow Correspondents*.¹

Between 1921 and 1988, approximately 300 journalists from American publications were allowed to cross the borders of the Soviet Union and work there as correspondents.² Many remained there for years at a time, gradually learning to circumvent Soviet censorship laws and making do with unpredictable, mostly off-the-record sources to report on life behind the Iron Curtain. Some were imprisoned on dubious charges; some were expelled from the country; and, despite the many obstacles which stood in the way of contacting government spokesmen or even finding sources willing to speak to American journalists, a select few were able to produce work worthy of the Pulitzer Prize.

Between the end of the Second World War and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, five journalists were awarded the Pulitzer Prize for their reporting from Moscow. They were: Edmund Stevens of *The Christian Science Monitor*; Harrison E. Salisbury of *The New York Times*; Walter Lippmann of *The New York Herald Tribune*; Hedrick Smith of *The New York Times*; and Bill Keller, also of *The New York Times*. Having won prizes at different points in U.S.-Soviet relations, these exceptional journalists each had different experiences in how they were treated by sources and by the Soviet government during their stays in Moscow. When Kim

¹ Whitman Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents* (New York, N.Y: William Morrow and Company, Inc, 1988) 345.

² Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents*, 7.

Murphy of *The Los Angeles Times* won another Pulitzer for her reporting from Moscow in 2005, the Soviet Union was gone, but Russian press freedom was in many ways more restrictive than in the Gorbachev era. Murphy went to great lengths to get the stories that Russian journalists couldn't cover³, and her work is an excellent example of what can be accomplished in a society that even today is wary of foreign reporters.

This paper seeks to design a reporting model for foreign correspondents in hostile environments based on the journalistic technique and preparation methods of the Moscow-based Pulitzer Prize winners. By assigning ratings to the varying levels of Soviet (and, later, Russian) media freedom at different points in time, the expected treatment of foreign journalists can be more easily evaluated and compared to some of the more difficult destinations journalists might report from today. Foreign correspondents are key in helping Americans to understand politics and the lives of people in other countries. If they cannot find a way to report from and build source bases in countries where people are distrustful of Americans, there will be little hope of improving the American understanding of these other cultures – a key step in improving American relations with other countries.

For the purposes of consistency, the countries used for comparison will be countries that have hostile attitudes toward American journalists today. Due to varying levels of international cooperation between these countries and other states in the West, it would be nearly impossible to gauge treatment of foreign – or Western – journalists as a whole.

³ Many Russian journalists were threatened or killed if they dared cover the Chechen conflict. Anna Politovskaya, a journalist who covered the Chechen conflict for *Novaya Gazeta* was killed in 2006, and Oksana Chelysheva of the Russian Chechen Information Agency has received threats to her life.

BASIS FOR EVALUATION

For purposes of this paper, I will be basing my comparisons on the country ratings found in the Freedom Forum's 2007 "Freedom of the Press" survey. Since 2002, the Freedom Forum, an non-governmental organization founded in 1941 to attempt to reverse the restrictive powers of totalitarian regimes around the world, has conducted the "Freedom of the Press" survey annually. The Freedom House bases its press survey results on a series of questions in three areas: legal environment, which rates constitutional press freedoms, judiciary independence, and freedom of information legislation; political environment, which rates ease of access to sources, media censorship and domestic and foreign journalists' ability to cover news freely without intimidation; and economic environment, which rates countries based on the extent of government media ownership and financial influence in the media. These questions, which appear below, will also be used to evaluate press freedom at different points in Soviet history.

Questions to Evaluate Freedom of the Press Around the World – The Freedom House ⁴		
LEGAL ENVIRONMENT	POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT	ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT
<p>1. Do the constitution or other basic laws contain provisions designed to protect freedom of the press and of expression, and are they enforced? (0–6 points)</p> <p>2. Do the penal code, security laws, or any other laws restrict reporting, and are journalists punished under these laws? (0–6 points)</p> <p>3. Are there penalties for libeling officials or the state, and are they enforced? (0–3 points)</p> <p>4. Is the judiciary independent, and do courts judge cases concerning the media impartially? (0–3 points)</p> <p>5. Is freedom of information legislation in place, and are journalists able to make use of it? (0–2 points)</p> <p>6. Can individuals or business entities legally establish and operate private media outlets without undue interference? (0–4 points)</p> <p>7. Are media regulatory bodies, such as a broadcasting authority or national press or communications council, able to operate freely and independently? (0–2 points)</p> <p>8. Is there freedom to become a journalist and to practice journalism? (0–4 points)</p>	<p>1. To what extent are media outlets' news and information content determined by the government or a particular partisan interest? (0–10 points)</p> <p>2. Is access to official or unofficial sources generally controlled? (0–2 points)</p> <p>3. Is there official censorship? (0–4 points)</p> <p>4. Do journalists practice self-censorship? (0–4 points)</p> <p>5. Is media coverage robust, and does it reflect a diversity of viewpoints? (0–4 points)</p> <p>6. Are both local and foreign journalists able to cover the news freely? (0–6 points)</p> <p>7. Are journalists or media outlets subject to extralegal intimidation or physical violence by state authorities or any other actor? (0–10 points)</p>	<p>1. To what extent are media owned or controlled by the government, and does this influence their diversity of views? (0–6 points)</p> <p>2. Is private media ownership transparent, thus allowing consumers to judge the impartiality of the news? (0–3 points)</p> <p>3. Is private media ownership highly concentrated, and does it influence diversity of content? (0–3 points)</p> <p>4. Are there restrictions on the means of journalistic production and distribution? (0–4 points)</p> <p>5. Does the state place prohibitively high costs on the establishment and operation of media outlets? (0–4 points)</p> <p>6. Do the state or other actors try to control the media through allocation of advertising or subsidies? (0–3 points)</p> <p>7. Do journalists receive payment from private or public sources whose design is to influence their journalistic content? (0–3 points)</p> <p>8. Does the economic situation in a country accentuate media dependency on the state, political parties, big business, or other influential political actors for funding? (0–4 points)</p>

The questions in each of the sections are assigned varying point ranges – in answering the questions, countries are assigned point values from 0-2; 0-3; 0-4; 0-6; or 0-10. Higher point values indicate less press freedom in the country being evaluated. The “Legal Environment” questions can potentially add up to 30 points; the “Political Environment” questions can

⁴ The Freedom House. “Freedom of the Press: Methodology.” (http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=350&ana_page=339&year=2007), 2007 Edition (accessed March 9, 2008).

potentially add up to 40 points; and the “Economic Environment” section can have a total of 30 points. Countries with scores between 0 and 30 are rated “Free”; those scoring between 31 and 60 are “Partly Free”, and those with ratings higher than 61 are rated “Not Free.”

ALTERATIONS TO THE SCALE

While the three-tiered system devised by the Freedom Forum is useful for those who want a basic idea of press freedom levels, there’s a big difference in the freedom levels of North Korea, deemed the least free country with a score of 97, and of Jordan, which has a score of 61. Both of these countries fall into the “Not Free” category, though there are obviously major differences in their media systems. Similarly, the nine countries tied in 66th place with scores of 30 (including Benin, Uruguay, Hong Kong and South Korea) must differ substantially from Finland and Iceland, which tied as the world’s most press-friendly countries with scores of 9.

In order to adequately rate the varying degrees of Russian press freedom between 1950 and 2005, press freedom levels must be further stratified. As the journalists covered in this paper encountered different levels of freedom during their times as correspondents, it is not fair to simply declare that the Soviet Union was “not free” and expect that the journalists be able to report in similar fashions. Instead, this paper will further divide the “Freedom of the Press” ratings into ten sections: countries with scores between 1 and 10 will be given a rating of 1; countries scored between 11 and 20 will be given a score of 2; and so on. Each journalist’s work from the Soviet Union (or from post-Soviet Russia, as was the case with Kim Murphy) will be evaluated based on the level of press freedom in the country.

Ratings of course would never go below 3, as Russia hasn't had a free press at any time in the past 58 years. (There was a brief period of "partly free" press in the late 1990s through the early 2000s.) Russia currently has a rating of 8, as it tied with Azerbaijan in 164th place with a score of 75 in the 2007 survey.

"Stuck with the story": The work of Edmund Stevens

When it came to tenacity, Edmund Stevens had all the other correspondents beat. A Columbia University graduate with excellent command of Russian, Stevens spent more than half a century writing from the Soviet Union. But while his work -- spanning everything from the Second World War's eastern front to U.S.-Soviet relations in the Reagan era -- proved invaluable for Americans who really wanted to know what was going on behind the Iron Curtain, Stevens' uncanny ability to push the limits of the Soviet government made him suspicious to other journalists.⁵

Stevens took a roundabout track into journalism. A graduate of Columbia University's international law program, he didn't seem to have a reporting career in mind when he left for the Soviet Union in 1934. At that point, he'd taken a job working as the Moscow agent for the Cunard Line, a British shipping company. Because he was based in Moscow and had an excellent command of Russian, Stevens attracted the attention of the Manchester, England-based Guardian and the London Daily Herald. He began writing for both British publications. After covering some of the Red Army battles early in the Second World War, Stevens left Russia to report on the war from Europe and North Africa. But after returning to Moscow in 1946 to report

⁵ Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents*, 321.

for the *Christian Science Monitor*, he wasn't away from Russia for more than a few months at a time.

Stevens won the 1950 Pulitzer Prize for a series of articles entitled "This is Russia: Uncensored," which he wrote for the *Christian Science Monitor* when he found freedom from Soviet censorship while on a brief assignment in Rome. As a fluent Russian-speaker with a Russian wife and an established circle of friends in Moscow, Stevens' work was groundbreaking in its ability to shed light on the depths of Russian society. In his collection of 47 articles, later arranged in the form of a book, Stevens almost never quotes anyone directly. Being that the articles were written mostly from notes he took and memories he had of his most recent time in Moscow, the lack of direct quotes is understandable; Stevens' articles are overviews of certain situations in and aspects of Russian society rather than hard news. He uses a casual tone and frequent references to unnamed friends and acquaintances. Among other things, Stevens' articles describe the often self-defeating system of the Soviet parliament sessions⁶, the stifling realities of living in a police state⁷, and the propagandist nature of grade-school history courses, which seemed intent on transforming students into Party loyalists before they could properly perform long division.⁸

Though Stevens' series of articles were quite critical of the Soviet Union, it seemed that he was always planning on returning, being that he and his wife still owned a cottage in Moscow. Nevertheless, he described his family's departure from Moscow in 1949 as "timely," given that "no week passed when foreign journalists weren't being pilloried as spies."⁹

⁶ Edmund Stevens, *This is Russia – Uncensored* (New York, N.Y.;: Didier, 1950), 15-23.

⁷ Stevens, *This is Russia – Uncensored*, 79-82.

⁸ Stevens, *This is Russia – Uncensored*, 127-131.

⁹ Stevens, *This is Russia – Uncensored*, 1.

Stevens would indeed return to his *dacha* in Moscow with his wife and children in 1956. After his return, Stevens served as a correspondent for various publications. His long stay without expulsion or threats, as well as the privileges he seemed to receive – including receiving a mansion from the Soviet government when his *dacha* was destroyed and his daughter's admittance to the renowned Bolshoi Ballet School.

Many other correspondents believed that Stevens was somehow pulling strings in order to remain unscathed for half a century under – and generally in the good graces of – the Soviet regime. But Stevens vehemently denied any collaboration with the Soviet government in his interview with Whitman Bassow, saying that he'd “never given them [the Soviets] reason to believe that [he] was contrary to an improvement in relations between [the Soviet Union and the United States]” and that he'd “openly criticized many aspects of Soviet foreign or internal policies.”¹⁰

During the time that Stevens was writing his Pulitzer Prize-winning series, the Soviet Union would have scored an 89 on the Freedom House scale of press freedom, therefore scoring a 9 for the purposes of this paper. Stevens began reporting in the Soviet Union just after World War II, as Joseph Stalin placed the media in full control of the state, disallowing private media voices to be heard. Compared to the media climate in later years, the environment under Stalin was particularly unfriendly for foreign journalists. As Stevens indicates a number of times in his articles, he and his family were under constant scrutiny; constantly watched by KGB agents, Stevens and his wife lost many of their long-time friends, who feared arrest for appearing sympathetic to American values.¹¹

¹⁰ Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents*, 321.

¹¹ Stevens, *This is Russia – Uncensored*, 1-6.

So what did Stevens have going for him in the post-war years preceding Stalin's death – probably the most difficult years for foreign journalists in the Soviet Union? Stevens had a number of qualities that other journalists didn't:

1. He had lived in Moscow for about 15 years by the time he left and he'd managed to establish a large group of contacts.
2. He had a Russian wife. She'd arranged to get an American passport, so there was nothing really stopping the Stevens family from coming and going.
3. He was fluent in Russian, which helped him assimilate better into Russian society.
4. He understood the Soviet system of thinking and knew he had to work with what he was given. In his interview with Whitman Bassow, Stevens said that he "didn't go around with a chip on his shoulder." The key point of being a reporter is to promote better understanding at "whatever possible levels" are available, he said.¹²

Undoubtedly the most integrated non-native Moscow correspondent of 20th century journalism, Stevens' extensive linguistic and cultural knowledge gave him an edge over other reporters in Moscow. He died in Moscow in 1992 at the age of 81, going to his grave as a man who'd "got stuck with the story."¹³

¹² Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents*, 321.

¹³ Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents*, 322

Harrison E. Salisbury's Chance Assignment

It seemed to be through a remarkable twist of fate that Harrison E. Salisbury ended up as chief of the New York Times' Moscow bureau. In 1947, the New York Times was dismayed when its correspondent, Drew Middleton, was denied the reentry he'd been promised after he took a four-month vacation in the United States. Though the Times sent visa applications for several journalists, no reply came from Moscow.

Harrison Salisbury may not have seemed the ideal man for a long-term job in one of the world's most oppressive countries. Though the Minnesota native had worked for the United Press since 1930, having served briefly in Moscow and later as the head of the foreign desk, Salisbury was in the midst of depression; the emotional aftermath of his recent divorce had forced him into treatment at the Payne-Whitney Clinic in New York.

In 1947, Salisbury began applying for a job at *The New York Times*. Though he was repeatedly told the paper wasn't hiring, Times managing editor Edwin L. James approached offered Salisbury a position as the Moscow correspondent in 1948 – but Salisbury had to get his own visa in order to get the job, James said. Based on the Times' experience with previous visa applications, it seemed that Salisbury had little chance of ending up in Moscow. But Salisbury headed to the nation's capital, applied for a visa at the Russian embassy, and continued to hope for any position he could get at the *Times*.¹⁴

While Salisbury waited with the other Moscow hopefuls, Edwin James publically pleaded with the Soviet government to let a *New York Times* correspondent return to Moscow, publishing the "Open Letter to Premier Stalin" in the paper on Christmas Eve, 1948. When Salisbury's visa

¹⁴ Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents*, 132.

came within the week, it seemed that James' last-ditch attempt to catch Soviet attention had worked – though the fact that Salisbury had been granted a visa while other would-be correspondents had waited months or years without so much as denial letters from the Soviet embassy attracted some negative attention in the newsroom.¹⁵ Though there didn't seem to be any answers as to the unpredictable Soviet visa-granting process, Salisbury was given the job and departed for Moscow early in 1949.

Upon arrival in Moscow, Salisbury found difficulty in getting his reports past Soviet censorship. According to former Moscow correspondent Michael Newman's reports in Whitman Bassow's book *The Moscow Correspondents*, the Soviet government would often use its control of communication flows to "punish" correspondents who weren't projecting a good image of the Soviet Union. Censors could kill stories on the spot, or might torture anxious journalists by holding stories for hours or days.¹⁶ Salisbury encountered similar problems when he sent "advisories" on the situations to the *Times*, as Drew Middleton had done before him. Because the *Times* editors knew that Salisbury's articles might not be able to fully explain the situation through the censors, they hired a Soviet affairs expert to give support to the articles where it was due. But because the *Times* refused (as Salisbury requested on several occasions) to precede his articles with the phrase "Passed by Soviet censorship," he was often accused of being pro-Soviet in his writing, though he needed to be in order to pass his articles by the censors.¹⁷

Salisbury received the 1955 Pulitzer Prize for international reporting for a series of fourteen articles titled "Russia Re-viewed," all of which appeared in the *Times* between September 19 and October 2, 1954 – just after Salisbury returned from his five-year stay in the

¹⁵ Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents*, 131

¹⁶ Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents*, 127

¹⁷ Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents*, 127.

Soviet Union. The articles were preceded by a short explanation: “For the first time [Mr. Salisbury] is able to write without the restrictions of censorship or the fear of it.” Salisbury’s articles covered, among other things: the struggles of the common man in a communist society;¹⁸ the Soviet system of exile by which Soviet citizens of non-Russian descent were sent to specific, concentrated areas of the country¹⁹; and, in the last article in the series, Soviet censorship.²⁰

Salisbury’s rarely used direct quotes in his articles; when he did, they were generally attributed to false names. In his September 24, 1954, article, Salisbury told his readers that “enough substitutions have been made in the details of [the article subjects’] lives so no one in Moscow is likely to identify them.”²¹

During Salisbury’s time in the Soviet Union, the government maintained strict control of both the domestic and foreign press. As evidenced by *The New York Times*’ difficulty in getting a correspondent into the country, Stalin’s regime was wary of foreign reporters who might present a bad image of the Soviet Union. When Salisbury arrived in the Soviet Union, the press freedom level was the same as in Stevens’ reporting, rating a 9 on the press freedom scale.

Like Stevens, Salisbury published his Pulitzer Prize-winning work after he left the country due to the certainty that most of the articles would have been blocked by censors. But merely the fact that he managed to get substantive stories from Moscow to New York in the restrictive press climate was notable. Salisbury’s keys to success in Moscow reporting were:

1. His constantly improving Russian language knowledge.

¹⁸ Harrison E. Salisbury, “Life of Soviet Common Man is Constant Struggle,” *The New York Times* (24 September 1954), A1.

¹⁹ Harrison E. Salisbury, “The ‘Spets’ System of Exile,” *The New York Times* (28 September, 1954), 31.

²⁰ Harrison E. Salisbury, “Violence, Drunkenness, and Communist-ruled Country,” *The New York Times* (1 October 1954), 25

²¹ Salisbury, “Life of Soviet Common Man is Constant Struggle,” *The New York Times*.

2. His connections with American diplomats, including the American ambassador.²²
3. His insistence on travelling to cities outside Moscow (though the Soviet government often tried to prevent this), which seemed to provide him with a more talkative source base.

Salisbury's ability to write articles from a country as inhospitable and, as he often describes, seemingly illogical as the Soviet Union, required tenacity and patience. In his book, *Russia Re-viewed*, which was a compilation of extended forms of his Pulitzer articles, Salisbury often noted the need to act calmly and diplomatically in the face of his main obstacles: censorship and distrust. While Salisbury had little knowledge of Russian when he arrived in the country, he often writes fondly of his Russian tutor, and seems to have learned Russian fluently within a few years.

Walter Lippmann: Dinner and Discussions with "Mr. K."

Walter Lippmann was raised to be worldly. Born to a wealthy New York family, he was sent to the top private boys' schools in the city and accompanied his parents on their summer trips to Europe from the time he was six.²³ He enrolled in Harvard University in 1906, where he studied under philosopher George Santayana and philosopher and psychologist William James, among others.²⁴ Lippmann graduated from Harvard University in 1910 and began a career as a journalist, writing mainly on social problems and political developments. By the time he was 30, he'd served both as an assistant to the United States Secretary of War in World War I, had

²² Harrison E. Salisbury. *An American in Russia*. (New York: Harpers, 1954), 52

²³ Ronald Steel. *Walter Lippmann and the American Century*. (New Brunswick: 1999), 3.

²⁴ Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American Century*, 13.

helped found *The New Republic* magazine in New York, and had assisted in drafting President Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points."

By 1922, when the time he wrote the revolutionary book *Public Opinion*, which focused mostly on media and government influence on public opinion, Lippmann had built a reputation throughout the world as a brilliant political commentator. He continued to practice journalism in New York, writing and editing for *The World* until 1931, and then moved to *The New York Herald-Tribune*, where he had a nationally syndicated political column called "Today and Tomorrow."

In 1958, Lippmann met Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev for the first time. Lippmann and his wife, Helen, went to the Soviet Union for two weeks to gain a better understanding of "Soviet foreign policy in relation to the United States."²⁵ During his time in Moscow, Lippmann requested an interview with the Soviet premier – and got it. In four columns for "Today and Tomorrow," which were reproduced in a short book called *The Communist World and Ours*, Lippmann gives a short account of his first meeting with "Mr. K":

"Somewhere and somehow Mr. K. must do a great deal of work and must see a great many people. But there was no outward sign of it. When we were shown to his office, which was on the dot of 11 a.m., he was quite relaxed, had none of the symptoms of a busy and preoccupied man, and indeed he acted as if he had all the time in the world. In the course of the interview it was evident that he wanted to talk about Soviet-American relations and nothing else. But on this subject he seemed ready to talk as long as I wanted, provided I kept asking him about broad issues and did not try to go into the details of any particular negotiation."²⁶

²⁵ Walter Lippmann, *The Communist World and Ours*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1959), 3

²⁶ Lippmann, *The Communist World and Ours*, 5

When Lippmann returned to the Soviet Union for another interview with “Mr. K.” in 1961, he seemed to have a good idea of how to approach Khrushchev about sensitive topics. From the start, the interview seemed to be largely on Lippmann’s terms. He and his wife were allowed to take down as many notes as they pleased. “It was understood that I was free to write what I liked when I had left Russia and to quote Mr. Khrushchev or not to quote him as it seemed desirable,” Lippmann wrote in his first of four columns about the 1961 interview.²⁷ When Khrushchev told Lippmann there might be a schedule conflict during Lippmann’s visit, it was the Soviet Premier, not Lippmann, who changed his plans to go ahead with the scheduled interviews.

Once again accompanied by his wife, Lippmann traveled to Khrushchev’s summer home in Sochi, on the Black Sea. Before his arrival, Lippmann said he had little knowledge of how much time he’d be spending with Khrushchev. He ended up getting more than he’d bargained for – eight hours, two meals, and a game of badminton with “Mr. K.”²⁸

Lippmann of course did not have the sourcing or censorship troubles that appeared in Stevens’ or Salisbury’s work. The hurdle for Lippmann seemed to be more in getting Khrushchev to actually speak about policy issues in between badminton games and strolls taken to admire the grounds of the summer home. Lippmann wrote in his April 17, 1961, column about the varying discussion topics during his visit with Khrushchev: “I would not like to leave the impression that all eight hours were devoted to great affairs of the world. Perhaps, all told, three-and-a-half hours were spent in serious talk... The talk was largely banter between Mr.

²⁷ Walter Lippmann, “Khrushchev to Lippmann – face to face,” *The New York Herald-Tribune* (17 April 1961), 1.

²⁸ Walter Lippmann, “Khrushchev to Lippmann – face to face,” *The New York Herald-Tribune*.

Khrushchev and [First Deputy Premier] Mikoyan...and the banter turned chiefly to Armenian food and Armenian wine and Armenian customs...”²⁹

Though they “all drank a bit more than [they] wanted,” Lippmann eventually got a chance to ask questions. In comparison to his answers in the 1958 interview, Khrushchev seemed to be much more forthcoming with information in 1961. While in 1958, Lippmann had described Khrushchev’s desire to discuss only very broad topics, this time Lippmann was able to ask him about more specific scenarios and seemed to discuss in depth Khrushchev’s views on John F. Kennedy³⁰. Perhaps it was because they were in a more comfortable environment, or perhaps it was because Lippmann and Khrushchev had met previously, but Khrushchev’s responses were quite specific. Khrushchev, whose main concern seemed to be the future of Germany, especially elaborated on how he felt about the divide in Germany, as well as on his proposed courses of action to resolve building tension between the Soviet Union and West Germany.³¹ Due to Khrushchev’s frankness on the issue of Germany, Lippmann’s columns on the interview became “required reading in foreign ministries.”³² Other topics included Iran, Vietnam and Cuba.

Lippmann won the 1962 Pulitzer Prize in international reporting for his account of the interview, which appeared in four sections in his “Today and Tomorrow” column. Lippmann’s experience in the Soviet Union obviously differed significantly from the experiences of other Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists. Firstly, he was not at any time living in the Soviet Union. He’d learned Latin, German and Italian while at Harvard, but had studied Russian. Lippmann

²⁹ Walter Lippmann, “Lippman and Khrushchev – face to face,” *The New York Herald-Tribune*.

³⁰ Khrushchev, as Lippmann described in the April 18 article, seemed to respect Kennedy but felt he was an incompetent leader. Several times throughout the series of articles, Lippmann referred to Khrushchev’s belief that Nelson Rockefeller and the DuPonts were actually heading the American government and that President Kennedy was seemingly their puppet.

³¹ Walter Lippmann, “A sobering up,” *The New York Herald-Tribune* (19 April 1961), 1.

³² Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American Century*, 527

relied on an interpreter for his interactions with Khrushchev, though his wife, Helen, had studied Russian and had learned to speak it with fluency by 1961.³³ Also unlike other journalists, Lippmann's reputation as a highly respected political writer preceded him; Khrushchev didn't seem to treat him with suspicion and there didn't seem to be any fear of him being a spy for the United States; rather, Khrushchev treated him with respect despite the drastic differences in their political views. Lippmann's status as a member of the political elite helped him to break into a level of the Soviet political system that hadn't yet been successfully reached by other Moscow journalists; while reporters for other American newspapers spent years trying to navigate Soviet bureaucracy, Lippmann was able to get an interview – and top-notch treatment -- from the Soviet premier when he pleased. Lippmann wasn't focused on speaking to common Soviet citizens.

Lippmann's reporting style differs greatly from those the styles of the other prize-winning journalists. Though there was said to have been a loosening of control on the press under Khrushchev, Lippmann's reporting isn't telling enough about press freedom in Russia to enable the formulation of a scale rating. Lippmann's column revolved around his opinions and perceptions and didn't pretend to resemble hard news. He never quoted anyone directly – not because he had fear of endangering his subjects or himself³⁴, but rather because he didn't actually take many notes. As he pointed out in the columns on both his 1958 and 1961 interviews, his accounts of the discussions with Khrushchev were written mostly from memory (though he indicated that his wife made extensive notes)³⁵. Since he had his Russian-speaking wife at his side during the 1961 interview, there was perhaps less chance of facts being distorted by an

³³ Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American Century*, 527

³⁴ He mentions in the first article on the 1958 interview Khrushchev's understanding that Lippmann would write what he saw fit.

³⁵ Lippmann, "Lippmann and Khrushchev – face to face," *The New York Herald-Tribune*.

interpreter – something which may have been a problem for some of the other reporters before they became fluent in the language.

By these standards, Lippmann seems to have had a great many advantages when compared with Stevens and Salisbury. But he was never a resident of Moscow and therefore could not report on the everyday lives of the people as the two Pulitzer Prize-winners before him did. Even so, Lippmann helped fill a void in American Moscow correspondence with his ability to access the highest tier of the Soviet government.

Hedrick Smith:

Hedrick Smith was born in 1933 in Kilmacolm, Scotland, to American parents. His family moved between France, Germany and England in before leaving on one of the last two liners to depart from the Europe for the United States once the Second World War broke out. His family settled in Greenville, South Carolina. After graduating from Williams College in Massachusetts in 1955, where he majored in American history and literature, Smith received a Fulbright grant to study political science at Oxford University.³⁶

After he finished his studies, Smith worked for three years as an Air Force intelligence officer before beginning work as a journalist in 1959. Smith first worked for United Press International in Nashville, Tennessee, before moving to Atlanta and Cape Canaveral. In 1962, Smith took a job reporting for the *New York Times*' Washington bureau before the *Times* shipped

³⁶ Heinz Dietrich Fischer, ed., *Outstanding International Press Reporting: Pulitzer Prize Winning Articles in Foreign Correspondence*. (New York: W. de Greuter, 1984), Vol. 3, p. 202

him overseas to report on the escalating war in Vietnam in until 1965. Smith was later sent to Cairo and Paris before he took a five-year-long post in the *Times*' Moscow bureau in 1971.³⁷

Heinz Dietrich Fischer's guide to Pulitzer Prize-winning international reporting articles classifies Smith's body of work as descriptive of "characteristic traits of the country and the mentality of the people."³⁸ In the foreword of *The Russians*, the first of Smith's books on Russia, Smith voiced his desire to enlighten Americans of "the human quotient, the texture and fabric of the personal lives of the Russians as people."³⁹ Similarly, in the articles he wrote for *The New York Times* in 1973, Smith often took a more human approach to writing, adding cultural commentary to articles that might otherwise have been purely political.

In his March 5 article, "Prestige of Stalin Now Reviving," Smith used quotes from Russian citizens who often had opposing views on the rising sympathy for Stalinist policies in the Soviet Union. While he left his sources unnamed (they are "a white-collar worker," "a teacher in her 20's," a "dissident" and "a writer in his 60's who spent years in a Stalinist labor camp"), Smith seems to have made a point of establishing a source base that trusted him.⁴⁰ In Smith's work, there is a notable increase in the number of direct quotes from Soviet citizens, which almost never appeared in the works of Salisbury or Stevens. In his other articles, Smith discusses the cultural differences between Moscow and other capital cities within the Soviet bloc,⁴¹ the difficulties of life under a "powerful but insecure" Brezhnev regime,⁴² and the increasing trend among Russians of going to Baltic beaches near Riga, Latvia, for vacation.⁴³

³⁷ Fischer, *Outstanding International Press Reporting: Pulitzer Prize Winning Articles in Foreign Correspondence*, Vol 3, 202.

³⁸ Fischer, *Outstanding International Press Reporting: Pulitzer Prize Winning Articles in Foreign Correspondence* Vol. 3, 201.

³⁹ Hedrick Smith, *The Russians*. (New York: Times Books, 1983), ix.

⁴⁰ Hedrick Smith, "Prestige of Stalin Now Reviving," *The New York Times* (March 5, 1973): 1.

⁴¹ Hedrick Smith, "East Bloc goes Un-Soviet Way," *The New York Times* (June 10, 1973): 1.

⁴² Hedrick Smith, "Soviet Under Brezhnev Powerful Yet Insecure," *The New York Times* (June 17, 1973): 1.

⁴³ Hedrick Smith, "Summer on the Baltic: Sun, Sulphur and Song," *The New York Times* (August 10, 1973): 33.

In the last of these articles, Smith emphasizes the cultural differences between Russia and Latvia. In Latvia, Russian tourists are amazed by better-fitting, higher-quality clothes, Western music, bikinis, and American food, among other things. His interviews with tourists from throughout the Soviet Union shed light on the appeal and the difficulties of vacationing in Latvia. One Latvian factory worker, for example, came on vacation without his wife because there was no way for them to get vacation time from their jobs at the same time. Another couple had had difficulty getting a pass for one of the highly desirable vacation cabins on the beach, for which they'd needed to apply months in advance and only acquired a few days before they were set to leave.⁴⁴

In the time Smith was reporting from Moscow, the level of press freedom in the Soviet Union was still a 9, though controls on foreign journalists had become looser since the days of Salisbury and Stevens. Censorship on correspondents' outgoing dispatches had been completely done away with under Khrushchev in 1961 (though photos were still subject to censors),⁴⁵ but the Soviet government fought unfavorable reporting in other ways. In *The Russians*, Smith said he had been excluded from an important group interview with Brezhnev due to what the Soviets deemed as objectionable reporting; he also said reporters could be denied the chance to travel outside of Moscow.⁴⁶ Less frequently, they could be beaten up or deported as a result of their writing.

Smith, like the correspondents before him, had a good grasp on the Russian language. This is particularly evidenced by his quoting of conversation snippets in his article on Latvian

⁴⁴ Smith, "Summer on the Baltic," *The New York Times*.

⁴⁵ Smith, *The Russians*, 15.

⁴⁶ Smith, *The Russians*, 15.

beach holidays.^{47 48} As evidenced in his book *The Russians*, Smith also went to great lengths to build relationships with Soviet citizens – though he mentions in the first few pages of the book that he often had a difficult time maintaining friendships due to lack of trust in Americans.⁴⁹ These two factors were Smith’s main strengths in getting powerful, direct quotes and in enabling him to write articles that were both politically and culturally poignant.

Bill Keller: Glasnost Goes for Journalists, Too

After graduating from Pomona College in 1970, Bill Keller jumped right into reporting. He moved to Portland, Oregon, where he spent seven years reporting for *The Oregonian*. He then moved to Washington, where he reported for the *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* and the *Dallas Times Herald*. When *The New York Times* took Keller on as its Washington correspondent in 1984, it was only two years until he was posted in Moscow.⁵⁰

Keller’s time in Moscow was marked by a fast-paced thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations that occurred in the late 1980s. Helped along by Gorbachev’s glasnost, or policy of “openness” which attempted to establish better relations with the West, Keller had better access to government sources and less pressure to censor his writing. Keller’s articles were far more critical of Soviet society than Smith’s were. However, his criticisms seemed to reflect more on the people themselves than on the government.

⁴⁷ Smith quotes a woman mocking her husband’s wandering eye on a beach full of scantily clad girls. This was included to add to the atmosphere of the piece and was almost certainly picked up in passing as Smith observed the scene.

⁴⁸ Smith, “Summer on the Baltic,” *The New York Times*.

⁴⁹ Smith, *The Russians*, 8.

⁵⁰ The New York Times, “Columnist Biography: Bill Keller,” The New York Times online (<http://www.nytimes.com/ref/opinion/KELLER-BIO.html>), unknown date of origin (accessed 12 March 2008)

In the first article in his set of Pulitzer Prize-winning pieces, Keller interviewed a veteran of the Soviet-Afghan war and produced a lengthy commentary on the war's negative effects on the Soviet psyche, saying that the war "contributed to drug abuse and draft evasion" and "encouraged a cynical malaise among the young, and among the intellectuals who make up one of Mikhail S. Gorbachev's core constituencies."⁵¹

On August 16, 1988, the *Times* published an article by Keller on the Soviet people's dissatisfaction with Gorbachev's perestroika ("restructuring" policies; workers were frustrated by layoffs and attempted reforms of the rationing system and people didn't seem to be afraid of speaking with Keller about their woes. But Keller commented that the Soviet people seemed unwilling to (at least briefly) make sacrifices in order to battle shortages and welcome a free market.⁵² And on December 15, Keller commented on the seemingly incomprehensible stubbornness of earthquake victims in Leninakan to follow a government-drawn evacuation plan in order to escape dangers of destroyed buildings and possible epidemic caused by rotting corpses.⁵³ In all of his articles, Keller used direct quotes and full names; people seemed to be significantly less afraid of causing trouble with the government by speaking with an American reporter.

Due to Gorbachev's glasnost policies, the media were given significantly more freedom by the time Keller began reporting in Moscow. When Keller was writing his Pulitzer Prize-winning articles, the press freedom ranked an 8 on the Freedom House scale. While the Soviet press hadn't become significantly freer, the Soviet society's attitude toward foreign reports had:

⁵¹ Bill Keller. "Russia's Divisive War: Home From Afghanistan." *The New York Times*. (14 February, 1988): SM 24

⁵² Bill Keller. "In Stalin's City of Steel, Change Confronts Inertia," *The New York Times* (August 16, 1988): A6.

⁵³ Bill Keller. "Soviets Plan Evacuation but the Survivors Seem Unwilling." *The New York Times* (Dec. 15, 1988): A1.

Keller was able to send dispatches without fear of censorship and, with the help of his Russian language skills, talked quite openly with Soviet citizens about the events of the time.

As Bassow points out⁵⁴, *The New York Times* seems to have used Moscow correspondence as a vaulting point for its reporters. Many of its Moscow correspondents, including Harrison Salisbury, went on to take higher positions at the paper. Keller wrote from Moscow until 1991 and then became chief of the Johannesburg bureau in 1992. When he returned to New York in 1992, Keller became the *Times*' foreign editor and later the managing editor. Since July 2003, Keller has been the paper's executive editor in New York.

Kim Murphy: A Reporter in the Present; A Press in the Past

Kim Murphy of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote her prize-winning articles in 2004, when Russian press freedom was noticeably shrinking. While a freer press and privatization had been encourage under Gorbachev and Yeltsin (having dropped to a 6 on the scale in 1994), Vladimir Putin's rise to power brought about a restrictions on press freedom. By 2003, Russia had reached a 7 on the media freedom scale due to heavy government influence in media ownership. In that year, the last independent national television broadcaster was closed and three journalists – Aleksei Sidorov, Yuri Shchekochikhin,⁵⁵ and Dmitry Shvets⁵⁶—were killed in what were thought to be politically motivated murders.

⁵⁴ Bassow quote

⁵⁵ The Committee to Protect Journalists, "Journalists Killed in 2003," CPJ online, (http://cpj.org/deadly/2003_list.html), unknown date of origin (accessed 19 March 2008).

⁵⁶ Claire Bigg, "Russia: Two Journalists Die in Contract Killings in One Year," Radio Free Europe Online (<http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2006/10/135abf80-8e82-4cb9-b150-af4236f3874e.html>) 10 October 2006 (accessed 22 March 2008).

By the time Murphy arrived in Moscow, she was a seasoned foreign correspondent, though she'd taken an unusual path to get into the field. While many correspondents are graduates of prestigious private schools, Murphy, an Indianapolis native, had graduated from North Dakota's Minot State University in 1977 with a B.A. in English Literature. Before attending university, she'd briefly worked as an editorial assistant in Biloxi, Miss., which seems to be where she first became interested in journalism. Murphy wrote for the *Minot Daily News* for two years after she graduated from university. She moved to California to work at the *Orange County Register* and began working at the *Los Angeles Times* in 1983. Murphy was then placed as a correspondent throughout the world, filing stories from Afghanistan, the Balkans, and the Middle East.⁵⁷

The Russian government's grip on the press had grown even tighter⁵⁸ by the time Murphy, the *Los Angeles Times* Moscow bureau chief, began writing her prize-winning articles in 2004. Since Murphy's articles focused heavily on terrorism and the Chechen conflict within Russia, she took the chance of getting on the wrong side of the Putin regime. While the government hadn't yet exercised much control over foreign journalists, some would later be deported or denied re-entry visas after they'd reported on the Chechen conflict.⁵⁹ Few Russian journalists dared to keep covering Chechnya for fear of government action.

But Murphy entered the rebel state and gave in-depth coverage of the far-reaching effects of the Chechen conflict. She wrote about the hostage crisis in September, 2004, at a school in the

⁵⁷ The Los Angeles Times, "Kim Murphy Biography," The L.A. Times online (http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-kim-murphy_pulitzer-bio,1,1695334.story), unknown date of origin (accessed 12 March 2008).

⁵⁸ The Freedom House. "Summary of Results: Survey of Press Freedom 2004," The Freedom House online (<http://freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=198&year=2004>) January 2005 (accessed 10 March 2008).

⁵⁹ In 2005, correspondents from ABC television news were banned from Russia after interviewing Chechen rebels. In January 2008, Moldovan journalist Natalya Morar was denied re-entry to Russia for unspecified reasons. This may be due to her coverage of Chechnya, which the Russian government finds to be controversial.

town of Beslan, and also covered the Russian government's reaction against the rebels' families. The quality of Murphy's interviews differs from those of previous Moscow correspondents; no other correspondent seemed to be able to get civilians to speak on controversial topics like Murphy could. Her sources were named and they spoke openly about their fears and experiences.

In Murphy's September 3, 2004 article, Zalina Dzandarova speaks of the pain of choosing between her children during the Beslan hostage crisis. Dzandarova was allowed to take one of her two children when she was released from the school and had to leave her daughter behind. Murphy used vivid description and powerful quotes to create a heart-wrenching picture of a mother who feels guilty about the only choice she had: "I didn't want to make this choice," a stunned-looking Dzandarova, 27, said in the reception room of her father-in-law's house a few miles from the school. "People say they are happy that my son and I are saved. But how can I be happy if my daughter's still inside there?"⁶⁰

In the September 19, 2004, article, Lyudmila Alexeyeva of the Moscow Helsinki Group, a human rights organization, is quoted saying that the Putin regime is a "restoration of the Soviet Union."⁶¹ And in the February 4, 2004, article, Medna Bayrakova tells Murphy about her daughter, who disappeared from their home in Grozny, the Chechen capital, only to appear as a suicide bomber a month later when rebels seized Moscow's Dubrovka Theater.⁶²

In an e-mail interview with Kim Murphy, my colleague Kim Selman asked what Murphy had done to get such powerful quotes. Murphy said she always used a translator for interviews and found her sources through various means. She found the woman who'd left her daughter in

⁶⁰ Kim Murphy, "Killers Set Terms, A Mother Chooses," Pulitzer Prize Online (<http://www.pulitzer.org>) Originally Published in the *Los Angeles Times* on 3 September 2004 (accessed on 10 March 2008).

⁶¹ Kim Murphy, "Whispered in Russia: Democracy is Finished," Pulitzer Prize Online (<http://www.pulitzer.org>) Originally Published in the *Los Angeles Times* on 19 September 2004 (accessed on 10 March 2008).

⁶² Kim Murphy, "A Cult of Reluctant Killers," Pulitzer Prize Online (<http://www.pulitzer.org>) Originally Published in the *Los Angeles Times* on 4 February 2004 (accessed on 10 March 2008).

the school at Beslan when she received a list of the names of people who had been released from the school; then she went to the woman's house to talk to her. For the story on the female suicide bombers, Murphy said she found the name of the woman who died in the theatre and tracked her family down to interview them.⁶³

After Vladimir Putin came to power in 2000, the press freedom in Russia, which during Boris Yeltsin's rule had sunk to a level 6, began to be restricted once again. By the time Murphy began reporting in 2003, press freedom was once again at a level 7 and Russian journalists were being threatened and killed. But according to Erika Niedowski, the Moscow correspondent for the *Baltimore Sun* for two years (and a friend of Murphy's), the "shrinking of 'democratic' space" was tangible during the two-and-a-half years she spent there.⁶⁴

Niedowski said the biggest problem she encountered in her time in Russia was the Russian journalists' self-censorship. When journalists (understandably) decide they aren't willing to risk their lives for their careers and avoid writing about controversial issues, it becomes "almost more dangerous than direct censorship," Niedowski said, reasoning that "the very people who are supposed to be practicing and protecting free speech are the very ones undermining it."

During Murphy's time reporting in Moscow, the Russian government also became more aggressive towards foreign journalists, according to Niedowski.

"There were definitely instances in which officials were trying to pressure or sideline the foreign press, particularly if they were covering an event involving Garry Kasparov and his

⁶³ Kim Murphy, e-mail Interview by Kim Selman, 2008.

⁶⁴ Erika Niedowski, e-mail interviews, 5 and 9 April 2008.

Drugaya Rossiya coalition,” Niedowski said. “Being detained at the airport, not being able to board planes, that kind of thing.”

Under these conditions, Kim Murphy’s coverage of the Chechen conflict was truly exceptional. Her tenacity and excellent resources in Moscow (in the form of researchers and translators) helped her to track down sources, though she often had to persuade them to speak with her, according to her e-mail. She also spent hours at a time interviewing her subjects,⁶⁵ which accounts for the moving quotes which complement her rich reporting style.

Murphy left Moscow in 2006 when she was offered a job at the *L.A. Times*’ London bureau. She is now reporting on the U.K. and the European continent. While she said she jumped at the chance to move to London, she also says she’s frustrated with covering so many countries because she can’t “get her teeth” into stories like she was able to in Russia.⁶⁶

WHAT CAN THE MOSCOW CORRESPONDENTS TEACH US?

By successfully reporting in a country where people were automatically on guard when approached by Americans, the Pulitzer Prize-winning Moscow correspondents have acted as role models for journalists wishing to write from similarly mentally hostile countries. These reporters’ strategies can help to form a journalistic behavior model for would-be correspondents in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and in Russia today (which in 2007 had press freedom scores of 9, 9, and 8, respectively)⁶⁷ – countries which are all important for American foreign policy purposes and

⁶⁵ Kim Murphy, e-mail interview.

⁶⁶ Kim Murphy, e-mail interview.

⁶⁷ The Freedom House. “Summary of Results: Survey of Press Freedom 2007,” The Freedom House online (<http://freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=389&year=2007>) January 2008 (accessed 10 March 2008).

the citizens of which act with distrust and sometimes fear when it comes to speaking with American journalists.

Of the correspondents' qualities, the following are the most important for reporting in hostile countries:

- 1) Language skills: All the reporters who lived in Moscow at length had decent Russian language skills. (Even though Murphy said she used a translator for interviews, she said her Russian was adequate for casual conversations.⁶⁸) Language is indispensable when it comes to building relationships with and gaining trust from the people in hostile countries.
- 2) Relations with diplomats: In Salisbury's case, this was indispensable in that his friendship with the American ambassador at the time helped him gain access to certain special events and also occasionally enabled him to use embassy wires to send out his dispatches.⁶⁹
- 3) Tenacity and patience: The five reporters who lived in Moscow at length had to overcome the Russian people's wariness of Americans before they could even hope to report on the lives and experiences of people in the country. While knowledge of the language was extremely important in establishing relationships and getting interviews, so was patience with the distrusting mentality.
- 4) Understanding editors: While using unnamed sources is generally frowned upon, editors need to understand that in countries where people's lives might be in danger after they talk with Americans, reporters shouldn't be expected to always have full names, or names

⁶⁸ Kim Murphy, e-mail interview.

⁶⁹ Bassow, 282.

at all. In order to build trust among people in a country like Iran (a country undeniably important to our foreign policy with a population often afraid of interaction with Americans for fear of violent reaction from its government), reporters can't make the people fear endangered by insisting on getting a name. Rather, reporters and editors will need to be satisfied with anonymous sources until the political climate cools.

Foreign correspondence, in its now-numerous forms, is incredibly important for increasing Americans' understanding of other countries' foreign policies, cultures, and opinions of American.⁷⁰ Therefore, countries with hostile views of Americans are arguably the countries we most need to focus on reporting from in order to heighten the possibility of improving our relations with the people of those countries. By taking the Moscow correspondents' behavior as a reporting model, journalists in these countries may have a better chance of reporting insightfully and effectively.

⁷⁰ Stephen Hess, "International News and Foreign Correspondents," (Washington D.C; Brookings Institution Press 1996), 4

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APPENDIX

KELLER ERA == 61/100 = LEVEL 7

A. LEGAL ENVIRONMENT (0–30 POINTS) TOTAL:19/30

1. Do the constitution or other basic laws contain provisions designed to protect freedom of the press and of expression, and are they enforced? (0–6 points)

The “freedom of the press” law of the Soviet constitution didn’t change until the fall of the Soviet Union. It doesn’t seem to have been any more “enforced” or under Brezhnev than it was under Stalin in the time Smith was reporting. (5 points)

2. Do the penal code, security laws, or any other laws restrict reporting, and are journalists punished under these laws? (0–6 points)

Journalism wasn’t necessarily restricted, but several articles in the Soviet Penal Code could restrict journalists (they could be accused of spreading anti-Soviet propaganda). However, Gorbachev’s glasnost policies led to a freer press within the Soviet Union. (3 points)

3. Are there penalties for libeling officials or the state, and are they enforced? (0–3 points)

Yes and sometimes. (2 points)

4. Is the judiciary independent, and do courts judge cases concerning the media impartially? (0–3 points)

The judiciary remained a tool of the government, but reforms had been made after Stalin's death, which led to a more democratic judicial system.⁷¹ (2)

5. Is freedom of information legislation in place, and are journalists able to make use of it? (0–2 points)

No and no (2)

6. Can individuals or business entities legally establish and operate private media outlets without undue interference? (0–4 points)

This was being attempted near the end of Gorbachev's time, though the government still interfered a great deal. (3)

7. Are media regulatory bodies, such as a broadcasting authority or national press or communications council, able to operate freely and independently? (0–2 points)

No (2)

B. POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

TOTAL: 20/40 POINTS

8. Is there freedom to become a journalist and to practice journalism? (0–4 points)

I believe one could work at the papers without issue. (0)

9. To what extent are media outlets' news and information content determined by the government or a particular partisan interest? (0–10 points)

Media outlets' news was largely determined by Party interests, though the topics had become wider-ranging with glasnost. (6)

10. Is access to official or unofficial sources generally controlled? (0–2 points)

Official and unofficial sources were far more easily accessible and there was little control over what unofficial sources said, though official sources might be a bit more guarded.

(1)

⁷¹ George Ginsburgs, "Structural and Functional Evolution of the Soviet Judiciary Since Stalin's Death: 1953-1956. *Soviet Studies*, 31, 3 (January 1962), 281

11. Is there official censorship? (0–4 points)
Censoring outgoing foreign dispatches was banned under Khrushchev, and censorship of the media under Gorbachev all but disappeared. (1)
12. Do journalists practice self-censorship? (0–4 points)
Yes, though they began pushing their limits during Gorbachev's era. (2)
13. Is media coverage robust, and does it reflect a diversity of viewpoints? (0–4 points)
Soviet press became increasingly diverse and critical. (2)
14. Are both local and foreign journalists able to cover the news freely? (0–6 points)
Local journalists still practiced some self-censorship, but foreign journalists often wrote as they pleased. (3)
15. Are journalists or media outlets subject to extralegal intimidation or physical violence by state authorities or any other actor? (0–10 points)
Yes, but to a far less extent than ever before. (5)

C. ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT (0–30 POINTS)

TOTAL: 22/30 points

16. To what extent are media owned or controlled by the government, and does this influence their diversity of views? (0–6 points)
Gorbachev began trying to privatize press; (3)
17. Is private media ownership transparent, thus allowing consumers to judge the impartiality of the news? (0–3 points)
No, not always. (2)
18. Is private media ownership highly concentrated, and does it influence diversity of content? (0–3 points)
Yes; it was highly concentrated, but there was more freedom for diversity (2)
19. Are there restrictions on the means of journalistic production and distribution? (0–4 points)
Yes; paper ink was rationed; companies limited in ability to meet distribution costs by govt. The government could deny supplies to organizations it didn't like (3)
20. Does the state place prohibitively high costs on the establishment and operation of media outlets? (0–4 points)

The media outlets were expensive to establish, but could be created freely; supplies like ink could cost a great deal of money and the government could deny subsidies to organizations. (4)

21. Do the state or other actors try to control the media through allocation of advertising or subsidies? (0–3 points)

Yes. (3)

22. Do journalists receive payment from private or public sources whose design is to influence their journalistic content? (0–3 points)

Yes, but there was pay coming from non-govt. sources, unlike before. (2)

23. Does the economic situation in a country accentuate media dependency on the state, political parties, big business, or other influential political actors for funding? (0–4 points)

Yes, but perestroika policies attempted to change this (3)

SMITH ERA == 80/100 = LEVEL 8

C. LEGAL ENVIRONMENT (0–30 POINTS)

TOTAL:22/30

1. Do the constitution or other basic laws contain provisions designed to protect freedom of the press and of expression, and are they enforced? (0–6 points)

The “freedom of the press” law of the Soviet constitution didn’t change until the fall of the Soviet Union. It doesn’t seem to have been any more “enforced” or under Brezhnev than it was under Stalin in the time Smith was reporting. (5 points)

2. Do the penal code, security laws, or any other laws restrict reporting, and are journalists punished under these laws? (0–6 points)

Journalism wasn’t necessarily restricted, but several articles in the Soviet Penal Code could restrict journalists (they could be accused of spreading anti-Soviet propaganda). 4 points

3. Are there penalties for libeling officials or the state, and are they enforced? (0–3 points)

Yes and yes. 3 points

4. Is the judiciary independent, and do courts judge cases concerning the media impartially? (0–3 points)

The judiciary remained a tool of the government, but reforms had been made after Stalin's death, which led to a more democratic judicial system.⁷² (2)

5. Is freedom of information legislation in place, and are journalists able to make use of it? (0–2 points)

No and no (2)

6. Can individuals or business entities legally establish and operate private media outlets without undue interference? (0–4 points)

No (4)

7. Are media regulatory bodies, such as a broadcasting authority or national press or communications council, able to operate freely and independently? (0–2 points)

No (2)

D. POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

TOTAL: 30/40 POINTS

8. Is there freedom to become a journalist and to practice journalism? (0–4 points)

I believe one could work at the papers without issue, but had to be printing pro-Party news at all times (3)

24. To what extent are media outlets' news and information content determined by the government or a particular partisan interest? (0–10 points)

Media outlets' news was largely determined by party interests under Brezhnev, though had become a bit freer under Khrushchev. (8)

25. Is access to official or unofficial sources generally controlled? (0–2 points)

Control to official sources was controlled, though unofficial sources wouldn't be controlled so much as self-censored. In Smith's era, it seemed that unofficial sources had started talking more freely. (1)

⁷² George Ginsburgs, "Structural and Functional Evolution of the Soviet Judiciary Since Stalin's Death: 1953-1956. *Soviet Studies*, 31, 3 (January 1962), 281

26. Is there official censorship? (0–4 points)
Censoring outgoing foreign dispatches was banned under Khrushchev, but the domestic press was officially censored. (2)
27. Do journalists practice self-censorship? (0–4 points)
Yes, though they began reporting on some more racy topics near the end of Brezhnev's rule (like his alleged affair). (2)
28. Is media coverage robust, and does it reflect a diversity of viewpoints? (0–4 points)
It wasn't incredibly diverse, but was becoming more so. (3)
29. Are both local and foreign journalists able to cover the news freely? (0–6 points)
Local journalists could still be attacked for writing against the Party line. Foreign journalists had more freedom than before. (3)
30. Are journalists or media outlets subject to extralegal intimidation or physical violence by state authorities or any other actor? (0–10 points)
Yes, but not nearly as much as under Stalin (7)

C. ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT (0–30 POINTS)

TOTAL: 29/30 points

31. To what extent are media owned or controlled by the government, and does this influence their diversity of views? (0–6 points)
Fully controlled; (6)
32. Is private media ownership transparent, thus allowing consumers to judge the impartiality of the news? (0–3 points)
No; no private ownership. (3)
33. Is private media ownership highly concentrated, and does it influence diversity of content? (0–3 points)
Yes; still little diversity, but diversity began increasing at this time (2)
34. Are there restrictions on the means of journalistic production and distribution? (0–4 points)
Yes; paper ink was rationed; companies limited in ability to meet distribution costs by govt. (4)
35. Does the state place prohibitively high costs on the establishment and operation of media outlets? (0–4 points)

The media outlets at the time were run by the state; couldn't be established without govt. approval and conforming to govt. ideals. (4)

36. Do the state or other actors try to control the media through allocation of advertising or subsidies? (0–3 points)

Yes. (3)

37. Do journalists receive payment from private or public sources whose design is to influence their journalistic content? (0–3 points)

Yes – payment from the government (3)

38. Does the economic situation in a country accentuate media dependency on the state, political parties, big business, or other influential political actors for funding? (0–4 points)

Yes (4)