

2001-1 Text 3

1- Why do so many Americans distrust what they read in their newspapers?

The American Society of Newspaper Editors is trying to answer this painful question.

The organization is deep into a long self-analysis known as the journalism credibility project.

2- Sad to say, this project has turned out to be mostly low-level findings about factual errors and spelling and grammar mistakes, combined with lots of head-scratching puzzlement about what in the world those readers really want.

3- But the sources of distrust go way deeper.

Most journalists learn to see the world through a set of standard templates (patterns) into which they plug each day's events.

In other words, there is a conventional story line in the newsroom culture that provides a backbone and a ready-made narrative structure for otherwise confusing news.

4- There exists a social and cultural disconnect between journalists and their readers, which helps explain why the “standard templates” of the newsroom seem alien to many readers.

In a recent survey, questionnaires were sent to reporters in five middle-size cities around the country, plus one large metropolitan area.

Then residents in these communities were phoned at random and asked the same questions.

5- Replies show that compared with other Americans, journalists are more likely to live in upscale neighborhoods, have maids, own Mercedeses, and trade stocks, and they’re less likely to go to church, do volunteer work, or put down roots in a community.

6- Reporters tend to be part of a broadly defined social and cultural elite, so their work tends to reflect the conventional values of this elite.

The astonishing distrust of the news media isn’t rooted in inaccuracy or poor reportorial skills but in the daily clash of world views between reporters and their readers.

7- This is an explosive situation for any industry, particularly a declining one.

Here is a troubled business that keeps hiring employees whose attitudes vastly annoy the customers.

Then it sponsors lots of symposiums and a credibility project dedicated to wondering why customers are annoyed and fleeing in large numbers.

But it never seems to get around to noticing the cultural and class biases that so many former buyers are complaining about.

If it did, it would open up its diversity program, now focused narrowly on race and gender, and look for reporters who differ broadly by outlook, values, education, and class.

29. What is the passage mainly about?

- [A] needs of the readers all over the world
- [B] causes of the public disappointment about newspapers
- [C] origins of the declining newspaper industry
- [D] aims of a journalism credibility project

30. The results of the journalism credibility project turned out to be _____.

- [A] quite trustworthy
- [B] somewhat contradictory
- [C] very illuminating
- [D] rather superficial

31. The basic problem of journalists as pointed out by the writer lies in their _____.

[A] working attitude

[B] conventional lifestyle

[C] world outlook

[D] educational background

32. Despite its efforts, the newspaper industry still cannot satisfy the readers owing to its _____.

[A] failure to realize its real problem

[B] tendency to hire annoying reporters

[C] likeliness to do inaccurate reporting

[D] prejudice in matters of race and gender