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The Fox News Effect: Does Polarized News-Media Fill Traditional News Roles?

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The Fox News Effect
Does Polarized News-Media Fill Traditional News Roles?

A Research Project Conducted by Braden Wayne Johnson
With Special Help from Professor Richard Davis of Brigham Young University

Consumers of Polarized News:
those who describe their viewing habits of one of the following shows as frequent.

• The Sean Hannity Show
• The Rush Limbaugh Show
• The O’Reilly Factor
• The Glenn Beck Program
• Countdown with Keith Olbermann
• Hardball with Chris Matthews
• The Rachel Maddow Show
• The Daily Show with John Stewart

Non-Consumers of Polarized News:
Those who describe their viewing habits of all of the previous shows as rarely.

How do media consumers who view polarized media compare with those who don’t?

Current Events Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Current Events Index Score - 95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Few Correct Responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Average (2.62, 3.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.94, 1.97)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WINNER: Consumers of Polarized Media

Losers: Non-Consumers of Polarized Media

• Consumers of Polarized Media are the most likely to score well on a current events test, by a significant margin.
• All means are statistically different at a 95% confidence level which gives us reason to believe that the average Consumer will always score higher than the average Non-Consumer.

Newspaper Readership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Newspaper Score - 95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rarely Reads the Newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Average (2.96, 3.94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2.62, 3.90)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WINNER: Consumers of Polarized Media

Losers: Non-Consumers of Polarized Media & Survey Average

• Consumers of Polarized Media are the most likely to read a newspaper daily, by a moderate margin.
• Consumers of Polarized Media and the Survey average are not statistically different at a 95% confidence level which gives us reason to doubt that the average Consumer will always score higher than the survey average.

Voter Registration Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Voter Registration Score - 95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Registered to Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Average (3.44, 3.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3.38, 3.41)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WINNER: Consumers of Polarized Media

Losers: Non-Consumers of Polarized Media

• Consumers of Polarized Media are the most likely to be registered to vote, by a significant margin.
• All means are statistically different at a 95% confidence level which gives us reason to believe that the average Consumer will always score higher than the average Non-Consumer.