



*Many ethnic Germans in the Sudetenland cheered Adolf Hitler when Germany annexed it in 1938. But less than two percent of the Sudeten Germans had opted before then to join the Nazi Party.*

enced Nazis,” who were driven not simply by anti-Semitism but by “broader currents of embittered nationalism.”

Even in Police Battalion 101, which Browning and Goldhagen closely studied, Mann finds signs “that things might actually have been a little out of the ordinary.” Thirty-eight percent of the policemen were

Nazi Party members—twice the level of all German men at the time, he points out. Of the 13 battalion members convicted of war crimes, 10 were Nazi Party members. Even in this “ordinary men” battalion, “the hierarchy and the experienced core were mostly Nazis or initiates in violence, ordering and guiding the rawer recruits into genocide.”

#### PRESS & MEDIA

### *The Giveaway Scoop*

“Giving It Away” by John Morton, in *American Journalism Review* (Jan.–Feb. 2001), Univ. of Maryland, 1117 Journalism Bldg., College Park, Md. 20742–7111.

In New York, the *Daily News* has been giving away an afternoon edition, the *Express*, at subway stations, bus stops, and commuter train depots; in Philadelphia, commuters in the transit system have been getting a free daily called the *Metro*. This trend—if it is one—flies in the face of conventional wisdom, observes newspaper analyst Morton.

Only a handful of the 1,483 daily newspapers in the United States are given away to readers, even though many of the 8,138 weekly newspapers in the country are. “There

seems to be a dichotomy in the attitude of advertisers toward paid and free newspapers,” Morton explains. “Paid dailies are attractive, but not free ones, and free weeklies, he says, are attractive, but not paid ones (at least for major advertisers).” The free weeklies do well mainly in the suburbs, where they can offer advertisers blanket “coverage” of generally affluent households.

Why the difference? In a word, *tradition*, says Morton. Dailies “have always charged, and advertisers have always used them on the log-

ical grounds that anybody who pays money for a newspaper is going to read it.” During the past few decades, however, dailies failed to expand their paid circulation to keep pace with growing population, especially in the suburbs. Free weeklies sprang up, offering low advertising rates. Though the weeklies, with no circulation revenue, “tend to be only half as profitable as paid dailies . . . they do make money,” Morton notes.

He suspects that the *Daily News* decided to give away the boiled-down *Express* edition in the hope that once exposed to it, commuters would start putting down 50 cents for “the real thing.” (If the rival *New York Post*’s swift response of cutting its 50-cent price in half

lures readers away from the *Daily News*, observes Morton, the *Express* move “could turn out to be a huge tactical mistake.”)

Meanwhile, the *Metro* in Philadelphia claims a daily distribution of 125,000, but advertising sales—especially to the all-important big local retailers—have been “disappointing,” says Morton.

The most likely places for free dailies to prosper, in his view, are not large metropolitan areas but affluent small towns that do not have a paid daily. The resort town of Aspen, Colorado, full of wealthy residents and visitors, has had two free dailies—the *Aspen Daily News* (distribution 12,100) and the *Aspen Times* (13,865)—for years.

## *Wonk If You Love Policy*

“Think Tanks in the U.S. Media” by Andrew Rich and R. Kent Weaver, in *Press/Politics* (Fall 2000), Kennedy School of Government, Harvard Univ., Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

Policy wonkery is manifestly a growth industry. In just three decades, the number of “think tanks” devoted to public policy research has soared from fewer than 70 to more than 300. Yet despite their often frantic efforts at self-promotion, most of these organizations remain largely hidden from public view. Rich and Weaver, political scientists at Wake Forest University, looked into what makes some think tanks more visible in the news media than others.

Taking a sample of 51 think tanks of various resources, outlooks, and locations, they examined how the organizations and their “experts” fared in news coverage and op-ed pieces in six national newspapers—the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, *USA Today*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Washington Times*.

The papers “tend to rely on the same think tanks as sources,” they found. The centrist Brookings Institution was the most commonly cited think tank—except in the conservative *Washington Times*, where it ranked fifth. In each of the other five newspapers, Brookings, the conservative Heritage Foundation, and the conservative American Enterprise Institute (all located in Washington) were the three most-cited

think tanks, accounting for a third or more of the mentions.

Washington-based institutions got the lion’s share of the coverage, from almost 69 percent of the mentions (*New York Times*) to more than 86 percent (*USA Today*). Nationally oriented institutes headquartered elsewhere, such as the conservative Hudson Institute in Indianapolis, got only between 12 percent (*USA Today*) and 24 percent (*New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*).

Though state-oriented think tanks are the fastest-growing type, say Rich and Weaver, they “are almost invisible” in the national newspapers, getting less than two percent of the mentions in five of the papers.

The organizations’ financial resources vary widely. The conservative Heritage Foundation’s 1996 budget was \$24.2 million, 11 times that of the liberal Worldwatch Institute. Washington-based, nonliberal think tanks “have major advantages,” Rich and Weaver say, in attracting money from foundations, corporations, and governments—and this translates into more media visibility. The conservative outfits received from 29 percent (*New York Times*) to 62 percent (*Washington Times*) of the think tank mentions. Liberal ones got only between four percent (*Washington Times*) and 13 percent (*Christian Science Monitor*).