

*“The Throttling of The Free Press in Cuba”:ⁱ Exploring Transnational Journalism and Sigma
Delta Chi’s Advocacy for Press Freedom in Cuba (1959-1962)*

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Abstract: Members of the largest United States-based journalism professional organization, Sigma Delta Chi (SDX), engaged in advocacy for transnational freedom of information and press freedom in Cuba between 1959 and 1962, between the Cuban Revolution and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Analysis of archival sources—including SDX member records and correspondence and declassified government reports—and content in the official SDX magazine, reveals three themes: justifying a Latin America section with a primary focus on Cuba, the throttling of the free flow of information in and from Cuba, and documenting transnational flows of propaganda from Cuba and news from United States-based Cuban exiles to Cuba. Communist threats to reporters and democratic news organizations increased and news management from the Cuban government and U.S. government influenced information flows during this period. These findings add to the histories on free press advocacy abroad, cross-border journalism, and international press-politics in the context of U.S.-Cuban relations.

ⁱ Sigma Delta Chi, *Report of the 1960 Sigma Delta Chi Advancement of Freedom of Information Committee Report*, in Virgil Miller “Red” Newton Jr. Papers, University of Florida Special Area Studies Collections.