

Minorities in Local Broadcast News: A Content Analysis of Four Ohio and Pennsylvania
Television Markets

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This thesis titled
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ABSTRACT

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The lack of representation of minorities in local broadcast news has been an issue in the broadcast industry for the past five decades. This content analysis looks at the portrayal of minorities as on-air talent and in story content in four Ohio and Pennsylvania mid-size television markets in 2001 and 2009. An overview of minorities in national and local television news as well as the role the media play in increasing and implementing diversity is included. The results show that the media have not kept up with the growing demographics of minorities in the representation and portrayal of minorities in local television news. Future suggestions include implementing and increasing diversity in the newsroom and in journalism schools.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAJA	Asian American Journalists Association
DMA	Designated Market Area
EEO.....	Equal Employment Opportunity
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
NABJ.....	National Association of Black Journalists
NAHJ	National Association of Hispanic Journalists
RTNDA.....	Radio and Television News Directors Association

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Minorities made up slightly more than one third of the United States population in 2007 at 34 percent, a more than 10 percent increase since 2000. Latinos are currently the largest ethnic minority in the United States, making up 15 percent of the population in 2007. Blacks come in at a close second with 13.5 percent of the total population, followed by Asians at five percent (U.S. Census, 2007). But research shows that minorities are largely underrepresented on television news compared with the demographics of the United States population (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005). Historically, scholars have studied the lack of diversity first through national news; however, local television still remains the primary source of news for most Americans (Pew Research Center, 2009). Because of local news' popularity as a source, it may also be a dominant force in influencing perceptions of race and ethnicity across the United States (Poindexter, Smith, & Heider, 2003). Still, researchers have found that minority groups are often ignored and underrepresented in this medium (Owens, 2008).

This thesis seeks to analyze and compare the growing demographics of minorities with their representation on local television news at the beginning and near the end of the first decade of the 21st century. This study will examine how minorities are portrayed and whether the coverage reflects the demographic reality. It will also explore how local news reflects and serves the communities that it proposes to cover, with emphasis on the media's journalistic responsibility to portray all groups within society.

History

In 1947, a group of academics urged U.S. journalists to accept responsibility to society in order to participate in a free press, and the Hutchins Commission was born. In

addition to other guidelines, the Hutchins Commission recommended that the media portray a representative picture of societal groups, because journalists should be held to a social responsibility of the press (Hutchins Report: A Twenty Year Review). More recently, scholars have shown that featuring diversity of racial and ethnic groups is a critical journalistic responsibility (Smith, 2008).

Nearly twenty-plus years after the Hutchins Commission, The Kerner Commission's 1969 report accused the media of portraying an all-white society and insisted on reforming hiring practices of minorities, specifically blacks, in the media (Report of the National Advisory Committee on Civil Disorders, 1969). The Kerner Report determined that the news media had "too long basked in a white world, looking out of it, if at all, with white men's eyes and a white perspective" (p.389). The report argued that it was necessary to ensure that minority populations were accurately represented in the media. Following this report, many affirmative action programs were put into place and more minorities were hired in the newsroom. In 1971, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) required all broadcast stations to file annual employment reports listing the race of all employees for the next two decades. In the 1990's, FCC deregulation led to a decrease in affirmative action programs and thus to the decrease of minorities in the newsroom (Brooks, Daniels, & Hollifield, 2003). Another government study, *Window Dressing on the Set*, showed that minorities working in network television news were still lagging behind the growing demographics (US Commission on Civil Rights, 1977). However, research since the time of the Kerner Report shows that the dramatic changes that were called for by the government have been slow to be implemented (Campbell, 1995).

The goal of this study is to examine the presence and coverage of minorities in local television news across different newscasts and markets within the Midwest region. With one third to one half minority population in the chosen markets within this region, minorities are a major part of the television news markets as well as a significant economic force. However, 2007 Radio and Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) data showed that that news stations in the Midwest were the least diverse of United States regions with 11.2 percent minorities in the newsroom (Papper, 2007).

The cultivation theory has been applied to other studies on race and ethnicity. This theory states that a society's perceptions of reality are cultivated by what we see on television. Dixon and Linz (2000) used cultivation theory and their findings posited that over time, exposure to television messages leads viewers to look at television as reality. According to the study, television viewers would learn that Latinos and blacks are more likely than whites to be criminal perpetrators. Klein and Naccarato (2003) also collected data from Pittsburgh residents and analyzed local television news to find that for many viewers, the television world has become the real world. From their study, the researchers suggest that perhaps these citizens' attitudes towards blacks have been formed and influenced by the negative stereotyping of blacks in local television news.

Notably, no known study has applied the cultivation theory to minorities in local broadcast news across a specific region. Most studies on diversity and cultivation in local television news have focused on one market or a variety of markets across the United States (Dixon & Linz, 2000; Klein & Naccarato, 2003). This thesis does not intend to be a generalized picture of all U.S. markets.

Recent studies have shown that coverage of people of color has still been minimal, even in larger markets in diverse communities (Pease, Smith, & Subervi, 2001). By examining the on-air presence and coverage of minorities in local television news, it may be possible to identify how this medium may be influencing how minorities are portrayed. Also analyzed will be the media's ability to represent the reality of diversity in local television news.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Much research on minorities in television broadcast news has focused on Blacks (Dixon, 2008; Entman & Rojecki, 2000; Klein & Naccarato, 2008; Owens, 2008). As the Latino population in the United States has increased by more than 40 percent from 1990 to 2000, mass communication research has shown that Latinos have been nearly invisible in local television news coverage (U.S. Census, 2000; Poindexter et al., 2003; Ziegler & White, 1990). Studies have also shown that on-air minority talent has been minimal, as the black broadcast television news workforce was 10.1 percent, Latino workforce 8.7 percent, and Asian workforce 2.3 percent in 2007 (Papper, 2007). The unequal portrayal of people of color on local television news has been considered a topic of importance in the United States for the past several decades.

Diversity in the Newsroom

Concerns over the lack of racial diversity in broadcasting led Brooks, Daniels, and Hollifield (2003) to look at the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) Annual Broadcast Employment reports from United States television stations to examine the changes in the minority workforce during 26 years of federal monitoring. These results were also compared to minority representation in other United States job industries and found that the local television news industry under-performed in the representation of minorities in its workforce. Between 1971 and 1997, the study showed that the greatest growth in minority representation occurred during the first decade of FCC regulation. At the end of the FCC regulation period, whites in the local television news industry were still much more likely to be in managerial positions than minorities. Blacks, Latinos, and

Asians still had lower representation in the local television industry than in the United States job industries overall.

Other studies have reinforced the lack of diversity in the newsroom. Campbell (1995) focused on the presence of minority talent in local newscasts from 29 cities across the United States, with market sizes ranging from number one to 200. Two of the markets, Dayton and Columbus, are included in this study. An overwhelming majority of journalists on camera were white, with 88 percent, or 56 white anchors. The percentage of Latino anchors was two percent, or one anchor, while black anchors consisted of 10 percent, or seven anchors. There were zero Asian anchors represented. White reporters weighed in at 85 percent, or 201 reporters, and Latinos reporters consisted of three percent, or two reporters. Black reporters made up 11 percent, or 27 of the reporters in the sample, while Asians made up one percent, or two reporters, in the sample.

Heider (2000) qualitatively analyzed why news coverage is predominantly white. Heider looked at stations in Honolulu, Hawaii and Albuquerque, New Mexico, as both are medium-sized markets and have large populations of people of color. Heider also noted the sameness of newscasts, relating a newscast in Hawaii to that of Toledo, Ohio, or Syracuse, New York. He referred to previous studies suggesting that the predominance of white males as news managers may possibly explain why people of color are not portrayed in local broadcast news. In Albuquerque, New Mexico, although there is a substantial minority population, whites hold the spending power, so stations will try to appeal to this audience.

In the Brooks, Daniels, and Hollifield (2003) study, blacks were the largest minority group represented, making up 10.9 percent of the local television news

workforce in 1997. Latinos made up the second largest group of minority employees in local television stations at 7.4 percent of the workforce, but this is perhaps due to the fact that there were dozens of Spanish-language stations included in their data. Asians, although another fast-growing minority group, represented only 2.1 percent of the total workforce. Their findings show that the FCC requirement of local stations to report their employees' racial make-up did have a positive impact on diversifying the local television news workforce.

The Radio and Television News Directors Foundation (RTNDF) implemented the Newsroom Diversity Project in 1991 aimed at increasing the number of people of color and women in television news (Newsroom Diversity Project, 1991). Yearly Radio and Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) data show relatively small changes in minority hiring in local television since the elimination of the EEO rules in 1998 (Papper, 2007). The 2007 RTNDA/Ball State University survey collected responses from 974 local television stations (50.9 percent of stations) on the ethnic makeup of their newsrooms. The RTNDA data found that minority employment in local television news dropped from 22.2 percent in 2006 to 21.5 percent in 2007, as evident in Table 1 (Papper, 2007).

Table 1

Minority Population v. Minority Broadcast Workforce (Papper, 2007)

Populations	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995	1990
Minority Population in the U.S.	34.5%	33.6%	33.2%	30.9%	27.9%	25.9%
Minority TV Workforce	21.5%	22.2%	21.2%	21.0%	17.1%	17.8%

More specifically, the RTNDA data from 2007 broke down the percentages of different minority groups in local television newsrooms from 1995-2007. Table 2 shows that blacks were the only minority group that showed an increase in numbers from 2006 to 2007, rising more than half a percent, while other minority groups showed a decrease (Papper, 2007).

Table 2

Local Broadcast News Workforce (Papper, 2007)

Race	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995
White	78.5%	77.8%	78.8%	79.0%	82.9%
Black	10.1%	9.5%	10.3%	11.0%	10.1%
Latino	8.7%	9.6%	8.7%	7.0%	4.2%
Asian	2.3%	2.7%	1.9%	3.0%	2.2%
Native American	0.4%	0.5%	0.3%	<1.0%	0.6%

The RTNDA/Ball State University survey also looked at percentages of minorities in different station types and market sizes, concluding that independent stations are the least diverse with 13.2 percent minority workers. Markets sized 10-25 have the highest percentage minorities in their news staff with 23.3 percent. As the Designated Market Area (DMA) gets smaller, the average number of minorities on staff also decreases, as Table 3 shows (Papper, 2007).

Table 3

Minorities in Local News (Papper, 2007)

Television	News Staffs with Minorities	Minorities as Percentage of Work Force	Average Number of Minorities on Staff
Network Affiliates	92.2%	19.6%	7.4
Independents	100%	13.2%	2.3
DMA 10-25	94.4%	23.3%	15.0
DMA 26-50	92.5%	8.7%	11.7
DMA 51-150	91.3%	11.3%	7.9
DMA 101-150	86.7%	9.5%	4.7
DMA 151+	91.3%	4.1%	2.9

Also evident in the 2007 RTNDA data are the differences in United States regions and their ability to represent minorities in the newsroom. The data showed that stations in the South (28.2 percent minority) and the West (25.9 percent) are more diverse than

those stations in the Northeast (16.8 percent) or the Midwest (11.2 percent) (Papper, 2007).

For several years, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) has called upon major television networks to annually report the racial and ethnic makeup of their newsrooms, but so far their requests have been denied. In response to the media failing to recruit and retain minorities in the newsroom, NAHJ implemented The Parity Project, a five-year plan encouraging Anglo news organizations to hire Latino journalists (The Parity Project, 2005).

On a positive note, research suggests that as the U.S. population of Latinos increases, Anglo news operations are actively looking to hire Latino on-air talent. However, some Latino journalists express disappointment if talent is hired solely on the basis of having a Latino last name or if a Latino immigration story is considered sufficient news coverage of the community (Weil, 1999).

The National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) conducted a 2008 study on the racial makeup of news managers at the 61 network-owned television stations. Their findings show that 17 percent of managers were minorities at stations operated by ABC, CBS, Fox, and NBC. The breakdown of managers included 12 percent black, four percent Latino, and one percent Asian. The survey found no Native Americans in managerial positions at any of these stations, and 23 of the stations had no people of color at all on managerial staff. At the general manager level, the highest-ranking position at a television news station, 5.2 percent were black. There were no Latino or Asian general managers (NABJ Special Report, 2008).

The Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA) 2007 Annual Report shows that Asians and Pacific Islanders are underrepresented in local television news management (2.3 percent). In a separate 2007 study in conjunction with the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, 'Asian Americans in Newsroom Management', results showed that Asians are underrepresented in the highest-ranking television news management position, comprising only 1.3 percent of local television news directors. Also provided are suggestions to improve the situation through recruitment at the AAJA Convention and journalism schools with larger Asian populations (AAJA Annual Report, 2007).

Diversity in Network News Content

Much research has been done on race in national network news, including Ziegler and White's (1990) study on race and sex in national news. The researchers found that whites were more likely to be used in story content than minorities, and showed up as newsmakers more than members of minority groups. Their results also showed that 94 percent of the network television news stories sampled were covered by white on-air talent.

Entman (1994) looked at the representation of blacks compared to whites on network television news. Entman's study found that the portrayals of whites in story content are more positive than that of blacks. Blacks were depicted most frequently in more threatening crime stories, which constituted 27.6 percent of the stories sampled. This minority group was mentioned most often in discrimination and poor living condition stories, with 57 and 30 stories out of the total sample, respectively. Entman concluded that because network news is a different genre than local television news,

networks do not show negative stereotyping that is as overt as local television news. These findings are also applicable to the depiction of other minority groups in story content.

Similarly, Entman and Rojecki (2000) found that whites dominated national news content and talent in their content analysis of ABC, CBS, and NBC news programs. Seventy-five percent of the stories were focused on whites. Six percent of stories (blacks 2.9 percent, Asians 2.1 percent, and Latinos 1.3 percent) focused on minority activities. More than three-quarters of stories from the three networks in their study did not have any clearly identifiable non-white faces in anything but background video. Blacks appeared three or four times more often than whites in crime stories, and the word 'Latino' appeared in just two stories out of a three-month sample of the network news. Minority experts represented few of the total experts in story content. On-air talent was also predominately white, as non-white reporters covered only 14 percent of the stories sampled.

Owens' (2008) content analysis of national network news programs also showed that whites dominated network news coverage. Minorities made up 21 percent of sources in story content, with blacks appearing most often at 8.6 percent, Latinos at 4.2 percent, and Asians at 2.6 percent. Unlike other minority groups, Asians appeared in story content most often as experts, although experts were still overwhelmingly white. All story topics and coverage were dominated by whites, and almost 90 percent of network news reporters were white in Owens' sample.

Research done by Larson (2005) analyzed how American mainstream media content reinforces the racial status quo in which minority groups are subordinate to

whites. Larson looked at how the size of a minority community affects how they are portrayed in local news. Her study found that news exclusion of minorities is not just prevalent in communities where the minority population is small, but that it is also prevalent in cities with large minority populations.

Larson's (2005) study also showed that the exclusion of Latinos is worse than that of other ethnic minorities, as the lack of coverage presents a more exaggerated perception of criminality. Larson's study concluded that Latinos do not receive coverage that matches their growing demographics. Their presence in local broadcast news excludes them as experts or officials, and unlike blacks, they are even left out of stories about race. Also documented in Larson's study is the fact that little research has been done on the presence of Asian Americans in the news, although they receive less news coverage than blacks, and are often stereotyped as suspects, gang members, and dangerous foreigners. Blacks in Larson's research are shown to be portrayed in story content as criminals or in stories about poverty, and while blacks receive more news coverage than other minorities, much of this coverage is negative.

The NAHJ Network Brownout Report of 2006 looked at the portrayal of Latinos in network television news content, and provided some significant information. The study analyzed 12,600 stories from ABC, CBS, CNN, and NBC in 2005. Latino-related stories continue to make up less than one percent (0.72 percent) of all stories that appeared on network newscasts. The report found that the coverage that does depict Latinos portrays them as a problem people who contribute to societal ills. NAHJ is concerned about the impact these stories will have on the public's perception and stereotypes of the Latino community. This organization believes that the increase of

Latino journalists will lead to the improvement of the Latino community news coverage (NAHJ Network Brownout Report, 2006). These findings and conclusions are also useful for the advancement of other minority groups in network television news, as well.

Diversity in Local News Content

Studies that have looked at different markets in local broadcast news have produced similar results. Campbell (1995) found that regardless of how diverse a community may be, minority groups are still either underrepresented or stereotyped negatively. Campbell used an example from Los Angeles newscasts, which has a large and substantial minority, especially Latino, population (U.S. Census, 2000). Of the 11 journalists who appeared on camera during two days' worth of evening news coverage, one reporter was Latino. The only other images of Latinos included a police officer and a police sketch of a subject. For Campbell (1995, p.131), the shocking part of watching these newscasts was the sameness of the programs. "The local evening news in Fargo, ND, is very much like that in Dayton, OH, or in Lafayette, LA, or in Phoenix, AZ, or in New York, NY."

Dixon and Linz (2000) analyzed local television news in Los Angeles and Orange counties to look at blacks, Latinos, and whites as lawbreakers. Their study showed that blacks and Latinos are significantly more likely than whites to be portrayed as lawbreakers on local television news. Blacks were the only minority group that was overrepresented as lawbreakers in comparison with actual crime rates. Their findings revealed that blacks receive negative media attention, while Latinos simply do not receive much media attention at all.

In 2003, Poindexter, Smith, and Heider also examined race and ethnicity in local television news. Their content analysis of local newscasts found Latinos and Asian Americans were virtually invisible as anchors, reporters, and sources in the news. Seventy-three percent of reporters were white, 16 percent were black, and 3 percent were Latino. There were no Asian reporters found in their sample. Seventy-nine percent of anchors who spoke first were white, while blacks represented 11 percent and Latinos and Asians each represented two percent of first anchors to speak. The researchers found that whites were framed one way, and other minorities, if at all covered, were framed in a negative way. Blacks were used as news sources more than other minorities. Their data showed that minorities were often missing from local newscasts, and when they were covered, these groups were overrepresented in crime stories. The results from their research showed that local television news still reports from a mostly white perspective in this decade, and little progress has been made in employing people of color in the newsroom, or using them as sources in story content, with the exception of crime stories.

Portrayal of Minorities in Relation to Crime

Race and ethnicity in association with crime on local television news is often a focus in content analysis for researchers. Entman (1992) studied local television news in Chicago and found that there were far more white victims than black victims in crime news coverage. The study also found that blacks are depicted in crime stories as more physically threatening. Entman also found blacks to be covered in ways that are consistent with negative stereotypes, contributing to the perpetuation of “modern racism.”

A study surveying local news in Philadelphia looked at whites and persons of color in the context of crime. The researchers found that people of color were

represented heavily in crime stories, more often as criminals rather than victims. Whites were found to be overrepresented as victims rather than criminal perpetrators (Romer, Jamieson, & deCoteau, 1998).

Gilliam and Iyengar (2000) assessed the impact of Los Angeles local television crime news on the public in relation to how minorities are portrayed. Their results showed that minorities are more likely to be portrayed in the role of a suspect, as minorities accounted for 56 percent of all suspects, compared to 44 percent of white suspects. These findings suggested that blacks made up largest group of minority suspects at 29 percent, Latino perpetrators at 22 percent, and Asians comprising eight percent of perpetrators. The researchers concluded that local news will continue to cultivate misperceptions and prejudice, especially pertaining to minorities and crime.

Chiricos and Escholz (2002) reviewed Orlando, Florida, local newscasts from 1998, looking at racial story content in relation to crime. They found that Latinos were the most overrepresented minority as violent crime suspects in comparison to actual demographics in the Orlando population. The study showed that blacks are actually not overrepresented among local television news criminals in proportion to their population in Orlando. In their study, blacks and Latinos, who appear in story content as criminals are portrayed in more threatening contexts than whites. The data showed that Latinos are the minority group most likely to appear as criminals rather than victims or positive role models. Their results suggest that local television news may help contribute to the socially constructed threat in relation to Latinos and blacks.

Klein and Naccarato (2003) studied three weeks of local newscasts in Pittsburgh, and found 80 percent of the references to blacks, the largest minority group in the area, to

be negative. Only 22 percent of news stories about blacks were found to be positive. The study concluded that minorities are portrayed as criminals more frequently than whites. Their findings show that this misrepresentation of minorities does not match the actual crime statistics.

Hypotheses and Research Question

Although there were many areas of interest and variables to analyze, this study concentrates on the presence and presentation context of minorities compared to the demographics in their respective markets. The hypotheses and research question for this study are as follows:

H1- The smaller the population demographic of a given race in a U.S. Midwest media market, the less that minority group will be represented on local television news as on-air talent or sources in story content.

H2- The smaller the Latino population among the minority groups in a U.S. Midwest media market, the less they will be represented as on-air talent or sources in story content on local television news.

H3- The larger the African American population among the minority groups in a U.S. Midwest media market, the more they will be represented as on-air talent or sources in story content in local television news.

H4- Minorities will be more represented in the negative story content categories of criminals and victims than in the more positive official/experts and real people story content categories.

H5- As the minority groups with a history of negative representation, blacks and Latinos will be the most negatively portrayed minority groups in story content as criminals or suspects.

R1- Given that there is little variation in minority populations for each of the four markets between 2001 and 2009, what kind of change in minority representation has been cultivated in local television newscasts in Columbus, Dayton, Pittsburgh, and Youngstown from 2001 to 2009?

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Minorities made up 34 percent of the Midwest population in 2007, where the markets are located (U.S. Census, 2007). This study will analyze three days worth of 2001 and 2009 coverage from four mid-size markets in Ohio and Pennsylvania, which were selected as a sample of typical weekday coverage. These markets include Columbus, Dayton, Pittsburgh, and Youngstown. The cities are medium-sized metropolitan areas that are also home to industrial-based corporations, which are representative of the Midwest (Ohio Department of Development, 2008). The Nielsen-determined market sizes range from 23 to 109, with Columbus as 32, Dayton as 64, Pittsburgh as 23, and Youngstown as 109 (Nielsen Market Ratings, 2008). Minorities in Ohio in 2000 consisted of 14.6 percent of the population, and grew to 16.1 percent of the population in 2007. Minorities in Pennsylvania accounted for 15 percent of the population in 2000, and 17.7 percent in 2007 (U.S. Census, 2007).

Minority populations for all markets were calculated using 2000 Census data. The results presented in Table 4 showed that in all of the markets analyzed, minorities make up at least 30 percent of the total demographic (U.S. Census, 2000).

Table 4

Minority Populations by Market, 2000

Race	Columbus	Dayton	Pittsburgh	Youngstown
Black	24.5%	43.1%	27.1%	43.8%
Latino	2.5%	1.6%	1.3%	5.2%
Asian	3.4%	.6%	2.7%	.3%
Total	30.4%	45.3%	31.1%	49.3%

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated minority populations by market during 2005-2007, and the results as seen in Table 5 showed in all of the markets analyzed, minorities still remained at least 30 percent of the total demographic (U.S. Census, 2007). Although the minority populations have remained one third to one half of the total market population, minorities still consist of just over 10 percent of staffing in the Midwest (Papper, 2007).

Table 5

Minority Populations by Market, 2005-2007 Estimate

Race	Columbus	Dayton	Pittsburgh	Youngstown
Black	25.5%	41.6%	25.3%	43.3%
Latino	3.9%	1.7%	1.8%	6.3%
Asian	3.9%	.6%	3.5%	.3%
Total	33.3%	43.9%	30.6%	49.9%

In order to measure the frequencies of minorities on local broadcast news, a content analysis was conducted using previously videotaped local newscasts obtained from Columbus, Dayton, Pittsburgh, and Youngstown markets. The sample consisted of all evening and/or primetime and nightly newscasts from the top three stations in the four markets from January 29, 2001 through January 31, 2001. The 2001 sample contained a total of 105 half-hour newscasts. The same method was implemented for the Columbus, Dayton, Pittsburgh, and Youngstown newscasts taped in 2009. The 2009 sample will still consist of all evening and/or primetime and nightly newscasts from the same three stations in the four markets from January 28, 2009 through January 30, 2009. These dates were selected in order to remain consistent with weekday coverage at the end of January, as weekend coverage would not accurately represent average coverage.

The specific news stations used in this study are as follows: Columbus WSYX, Columbus WBNS, Columbus WCMH, Dayton WHIO, Dayton WDTN, Dayton WKEF, Pittsburgh WPXI, Pittsburgh WTAE, Pittsburgh KDKA, Youngstown WKBN, Youngstown WYTV, and Youngstown WFMJ. These stations were initially selected for the taping of the 2001 newscasts as the top three stations per market; therefore, the same news stations were used in the 2009 sample for consistency purposes.

The primary unit of analysis is a news story. Sports and weather stories were not coded. The definition of a news story as used for this study is as follows:

News story: Any single story on new or current events which is presented by an anchor or reporter sometimes with the use of video, and usually lasting anywhere from 12 seconds to three minutes.

Definitions of race for both the talent and story content were loosely based on U.S. Census Bureau definitions (U.S. Census, 2000). In all cases, race was coded as white, black, Latino, or Asian. If the race of an on-air talent or source could not be determined or was not seen or given, the individual was coded as “indeterminable”. The definitions of race as used for this study are as follows:

White: A person of Caucasian or European descent

Black: A person of African-American or African descent

Latino: A person of Latin-American descent

Asian: A person of Asian-American or Asian descent

Indeterminable: A person whose race is indeterminable to the coder

On-air talent was coded when an anchor or reporter appears on screen. It should be noted that no matter how many times or for how long the reporter or anchor were seen during the story, they were coded as a single on-air talent appearance for that story. The definitions for an anchor and reporter as used for this study are as follows:

Anchor: Main on-air talent who presents information prepared for a television news program; appears as the prominent talent in the newscast, often at a news desk.

Reporter: On-air talent who researches and reports information for a television news story, often appearing when investigating or reporting a television news story.

For the purposes of this study, story content was coded when a person was interviewed for a news story, or a news story contains background video with a person as the prominent subject. Video of crowd shots was not coded. The categories for story

content were expert/official, “real person”, victim, and criminal. These four story content groups were chosen because of their prominence in most newscasts. The definitions of story content as used for this study are as follows:

Expert/official: a person who is interviewed with an official occupation or expertise for the story.

“Real person”: a person who is interviewed as a “man on the street” for their opinion; an average citizen who may be affected by the story.

Victim/family: a person who is the victim of a crime/murder /etc., or the family of the victim.

Criminal: a person who commits or is accused of committing a crime.

Complete information regarding coding can be found in the Codebook (Appendix A).

The Codesheet (Appendix B) also allots room for the coders to denote Market and Station, Record Date, and Record Time. These denotations are used solely for the researcher’s purpose in determining the results from the respective stations. The Codesheet allowed coders to denote a Story Name, which is not accounted for as a variable, but rather used as a reference should the researcher need to refer back to a story.

Coding for race and ethnicity is not fool-proof, as outlined in Owens’ study (Owens, 2008). Appearance and names can be deceiving in some cases. However, for the purposes of this study, race was coded based on surface evidence alone, because this is most representative of how a viewer would likely determine the race of on-air talent or story sources. For example, it is possible that reporter Leslie Rodriguez looks Latina and has a Hispanic last name, but is not Latina. Nevertheless, she would be coded as Latino, because it is reasonable to assume that viewers would identify her as Latina.

The researcher coded all of the news stories from 2001. The 105 newscasts examined in the 2001 sample yielded a total of 1080 stories. Two people were trained as reliability coders to analyze a sample of the newscasts. The coders analyzed 14 systematically randomized newscasts, resulting in 221 stories, or 13 percent of the total newscasts sampled. The overall inter-coder reliability, found by calculating Cohen's Kappa, was 94.8 percent. Inter-coder reliability for talent and story content variables was 95.5 percent and 94.1 percent, respectively.

The researcher also coded all of the news stories from 2009. The 92 newscasts examined in 2009 yielded a total number of 662 stories. The same two people were re-trained as reliability coders to analyze this sample of the newscasts. The coders analyzed 12 systematically randomized newscasts, resulting in 115 stories, or 13 percent of the total sample. The overall inter-coder reliability, found by calculating Cohen's Kappa, was 95.2 percent. Inter-coder reliability for the talent and story content variables was 96.5 percent and 94.0 percent, respectively.

It should be noted that during the newscast dates for the 2009 sample, an extreme winter storm took precedence over much of the newscasts, and as stated above, weather stories were not coded. Also during these dates, the Super Bowl was approaching; therefore, sports stories dominated much of the newscasts in Pittsburgh, as the city's team played in this national sporting event. Likewise, as stated above, sports stories were also not coded. It is the researcher's belief that the lower number of news stories for the 2009 sample may be due in part to these two circumstances.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

*Talk about why Columbus has so much on-air talent...because of Black anchors.

Talk about anchors vs. reporters* The hypotheses were confirmed in part through the results, which demonstrated the disproportionate relationship between minorities represented in news coverage and actual minority populations. However, the results in representation varied by minority group. The findings did not show an overwhelming increase or decrease of minorities in local television news between the years 2001 and 2009, which was also the case for the actual minority populations in all of the markets.

It should be noted that the data was combined and compared to average population demographics that were averaged from 2000 and 2005-2007 Census Bureau data due to the little variation in average population demographics of minorities.

H1: The smaller the population demographic of a given race in a U.S. Midwest media market, the less that minority group will be represented on local television news as on-air talent or sources in story content.

Overall, minorities were underrepresented in the U.S. Midwest media television markets surveyed for this study. However, H1 was confirmed in that the smaller the population demographic of a minority group within a market, the less that minority group was represented on local television news as either on-air talent or in story content. Figures 1, 2, and 3 illustrate how black, Latino, and Asian minority groups were represented as on-air talent or in story content, with Latinos and Asians having the smallest population demographics.

Beginning with the minority group with the smallest population demographic in all four markets, Asians were underrepresented in both on-air talent and story content

categories in comparison with their average population numbers. Figure 1 shows the representation of this minority group across all four markets.

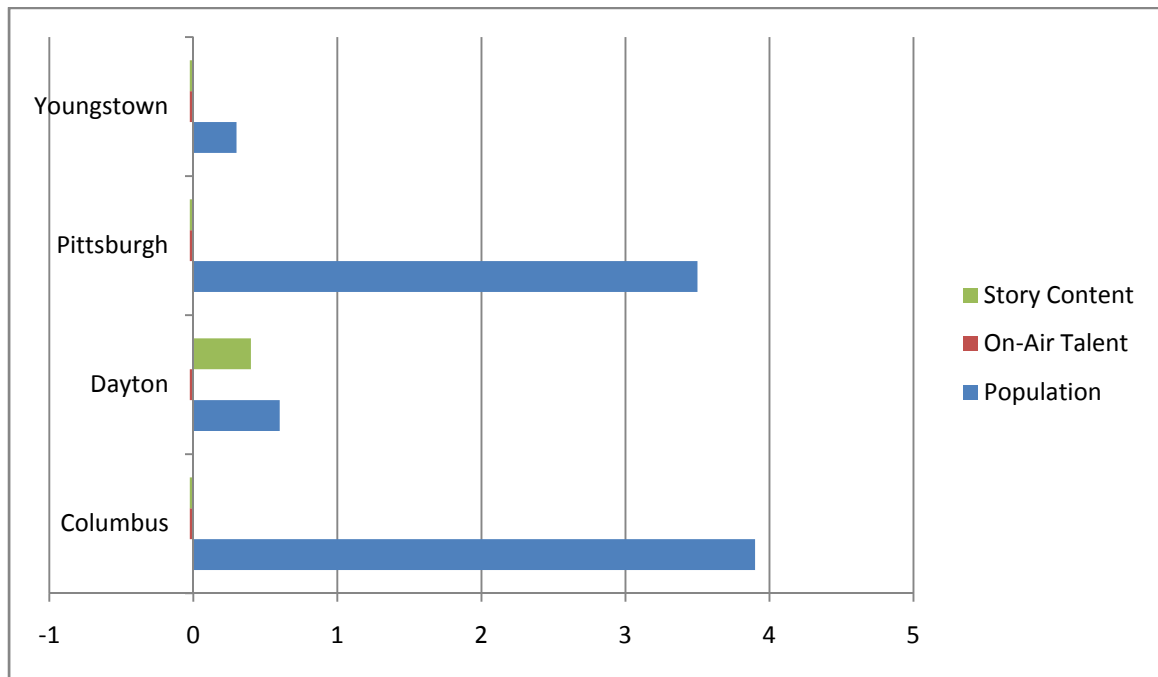


Figure 1. Percent of Asian Representation as On-Air Talent and in Story Content in Relation to Average Market Population Demographics, 2001 and 2009.

As evident in Figure 1, Asians were not present in on-air talent across all four markets, and almost invisible in story content with the exception of the Dayton market. Asians appeared less than one percent of the time in story content within this market, more specifically as expert/officials.

Thus, the Columbus market did not match the average population demographic with either on-air talent or story content, with the actual Asian population at 3.4 percent, and the story content and on-air talent categories at zero.

Dayton was the only market that almost matched the average population demographic with the story content category. The actual Asian population for this market was .6 percent, and Asians were presented in story content in this market .4 percent of the time.

The Pittsburgh market did not match the actual Asian population demographic, either, with the Asian population percentage at 3.5 percent most recently, and Asians as on-air talent or presented in story content both at zero.

Similarly, the Youngstown market was not able to match their Asian population demographic, either. The Asian population percentage for this market comes in at .3 percent, while Asians as on-air talent or story content represented zero.

H1 was confirmed in this case for the Asian minority group, because as this group has the smallest population demographic across all markets, Asians also represented the least or not at all on local television news as on-air talent or in story content.

The minority group with the next smallest population demographic in the four markets analyzed is Latinos. This study found Latinos to be underrepresented in on-air talent, and in some cases in story content. Figure 2 illustrates the population demographic of this minority group in each market in comparison to their representation on-air and in story content.

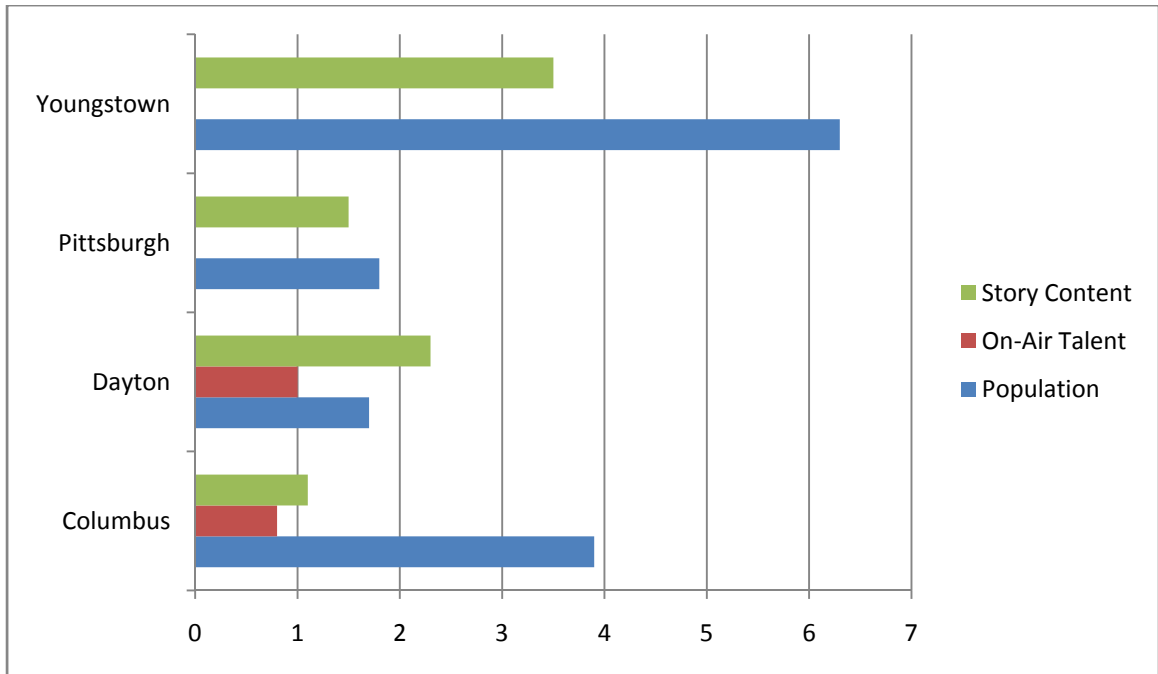


Figure 2. Percent of Latino Representation as On-Air Talent and in Story Content in Relation to Average Market Population Demographics, 2001 and 2009.

Figure 2 shows the presence of Latinos in on-air talent and story content within all four of the markets analyzed. Latinos were not visible as on-air talent in two of the markets, but were presented in story content in all four markets.

Beginning with Columbus, this market was one of two markets to utilize Latinos as on-air talent. Columbus also has the second highest actual percentage of Latinos. However, the findings show that it failed to match the population demographic in both on-air talent and story content. The population of Latinos in Columbus is 3.9 percent, while the on-air talent category included less than one percent of Latinos. Latinos were present in story content just over one percent of the time within the Columbus market; again, not matching up to the Latino population demographics of 3.9 percent.

The next market, Dayton, was the second market to portray Latinos as on-air talent. Dayton has a 1.7 population percentage of Latinos, which is the lowest percentage across the four markets analyzed. Findings show that the percentage of Latinos as on-air talent within this market is lower than the average population demographic, at one percent. However, this market succeeded in presenting Latinos in story content above the population demographic, at 2.3 percent.

The Pittsburgh market has a 1.8 percent population demographic of Latinos. The study found that this market did not include any Latino on-air talent, thus failing to portray a demographic reality in this category. Pittsburgh came close in almost representing average demographics of Latinos in story content, presenting this minority group 1.5 percent of the time.

The final market, Youngstown, held the highest population of Latinos across the four markets surveyed at 6.3 percent. However, this market did not match their Latino population demographics in either story content, at 3.5 percent, or on-air talent, at zero.

Thus, H1 is only partly confirmed within the case of the Latino minority group, because some markets, such as Dayton, were able to meet and go beyond the average population demographic in the story content category. For the rest of the markets, H1 is confirmed in that the less prevalent the population of the minority group within the market, the less they were presented as on-air talent and story content.

The largest population demographic within the region analyzed is the black minority group. Figure 3 illustrates the representation of blacks in on-air talent and story content across all four of the markets analyzed.

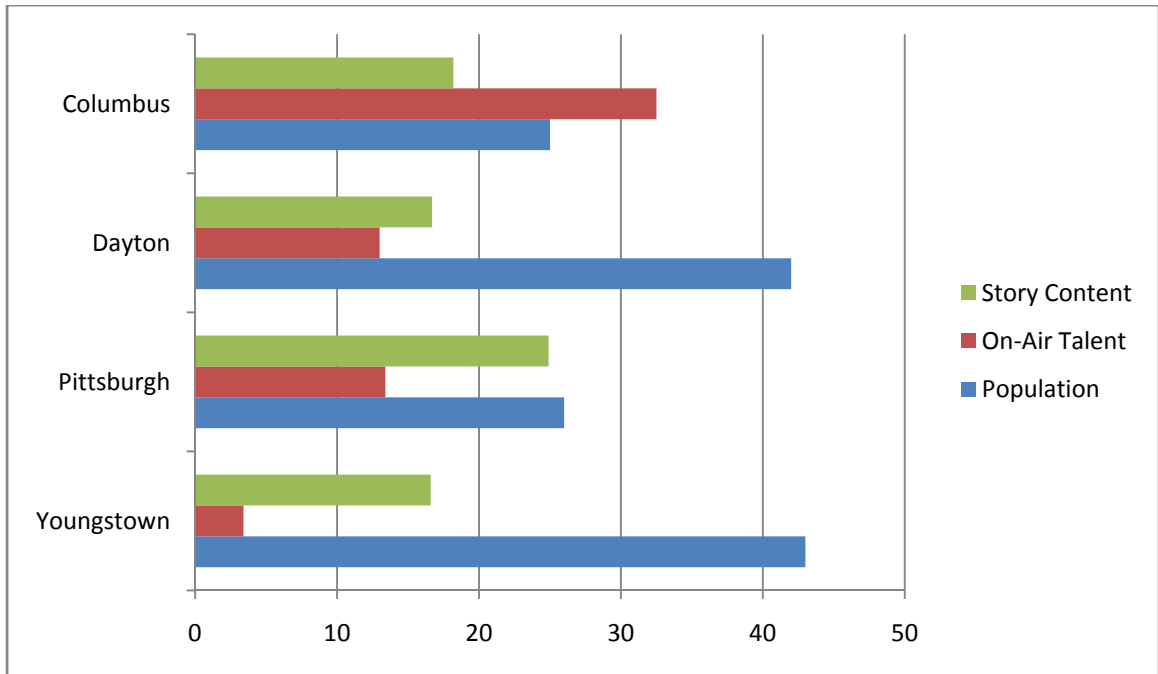


Figure3 . Percent of Black Representation as On-Air Talent and in Story Content in Relation to Average Market Population Demographics, 2001 and 2009.

Figure 3 shows that blacks were present in both on-air talent and story content in every one of the markets analyzed. But how did these representations compare to the actual demographic percentages of blacks within each market?

The Columbus market has on average a 25 percent actual black population. This study found that the Columbus market went above the average population demographics of blacks in their on-air talent representation, at 32.5 percent. However, the story content representation of blacks in the Columbus market did not match average population demographics, at 18.2 percent.

The fact that Columbus went above the average population in representing blacks as on-air talent lead the researcher to take a closer look at the findings specifically from this market. Columbus held the highest number of black anchors across all four markets,

although the Dayton market also featured a black anchor, and a black anchor appeared five times on a Pittsburgh station. The results showed that the high percentage of black on-air talent in Columbus is due to the fact that this market regularly features a black anchor. Because anchors are a more fixed presence throughout the newscast than reporters, they will appear more frequently and thus account for more on-air talent time.

The Dayton market has the second highest population of blacks with 42 percent. However, this market did not match population demographics of blacks in either on-air talent or story content, with 13 percent of on-air talent as blacks and 16.7 percent of story content faces as blacks.

In the Pittsburgh market, blacks make up 26 percent of the total population. This market did not match a demographic reality in on-air talent, with blacks presented 13.4 percent of the time in this category. Pittsburgh did come close in matching the average population demographic in the story content category, with 24.9 percent.

The final market, Youngstown, has the highest population of blacks with 43 percent. Interestingly, the Youngstown market failed the most out of all markets analyzed in portraying blacks in proportion to their large demographic in that area. This market was not able to even come close to matching the black population demographic in either the on-air talent or story content categories, with 3.4 percent and 16.6 percent, respectively.

H1 was thus confirmed in the case of the black population, because as the largest minority group out of all minority groups analyzed, blacks were represented in on-air talent and in story content most frequently. This is not to say, however, that blacks were

represented proportionately to their population demographics within all markets in the on-air talent and story content categories.

As a whole, H1 was only partly confirmed when considering all of the cases of black, Latino, and Asian minority groups.

H2- The smaller the Latino population among the minority groups in a U.S. Midwest media market, the less they will be represented as on-air talent or sources in story content on local television news.

As one of the smallest minority groups within the Midwest market areas, Latinos were underrepresented both as on-air talent as well as sources in story content on the local television news surveyed. However, H2 is not confirmed. Table 6 illustrates the frequency and percentages that Latinos as on-air talent or story content across the entire 2001 and 2009 sample.

Table 6

Percent of Latino Representation as On-Air Talent and in Story Content in Relation to Average Market Population Demographics, 2001 and 2009

Market	Population Demographic	On-Air Talent	Story Content
Columbus	3.2%	.8% (7)	1.1% (9)
Dayton	1.6%	1.0% (7)	2.3% (14)
Pittsburgh	1.5%	0	1.5% (12)
Youngstown	5.7%	0	3.5% (25)

As shown in Table 6, Latinos appeared as on-air talent a total of 14 times across the entire 2001 and 2009 sample, totaling seven times each in the Columbus and Dayton

markets. This minority group also appeared in story content within all four markets, totaling 60 times.

The Columbus market had one of the lowest levels of Latino representation in story content (1.1 percent), although the Columbus market holds the second highest population demographic of Latinos (up to 3.9 percent).

Latinos made up the smallest percentage of population demographic in Dayton at on average 1.7 percent in 2007. However, Dayton was one of the markets that did portray Latinos as on-air talent, and held the second highest percentage of Latinos in story content, at 2.3 percent.

The Pittsburgh market holds the lowest population of Latinos among all four of the markets analyzed. This market did not include any Latinos as on-air talent, and had the second-lowest portrayal of Latinos in story content (1.5 percent).

The Latino population was the largest in Youngstown, totaling an estimated 6.3 percent of the population in 2007. But as Table 7 shows, Latinos were not represented at all as on-air talent. This market did, however, hold the highest percentage of Latino representation in story content at 3.5 percent.

Thus, H2 is not confirmed; although the Dayton market had one of the smallest populations of Latinos, they were represented in story content the second highest percent of the time. While the Youngstown market had the highest population of Latinos out of the markets surveyed, it did not portray any Latinos as on-air talent.

H3- The larger the African American population among the minority groups in a U.S. Midwest media market, the more they will be represented as on-air talent or sources in story content in local television news.

As the largest minority group in the Midwest media markets, blacks were the most represented minority in local television news in both 2001 and 2009. Across the four markets, blacks made up between 25 and 43 percent of the population. However, H2 is not confirmed in this study. Although blacks represent the highest population demographic in Youngstown, the percentage of blacks as on-air talent is the lowest in this sample. And while Columbus holds the lowest population demographic of blacks among the markets, the on-air talent representation is by far the highest across all four markets. Table 7 illustrates the number of times that blacks appeared as on-air talent and in story content for the entire 2001 and 2009 samples.

Table 7

Percent of Black Representation as On-Air Talent and in Story Content in Relation to Average Market Population Demographics, 2001 and 2009.

Market	Population Demographic	On-Air Talent	Story Content
Columbus	25.0%	32.5% (284)	16.6% (127)
Dayton	42.3%	13.0% (92)	24.9% (151)
Pittsburgh	26.2%	13.4% (105)	16.7% (126)
Youngstown	43.5%	3.4% (21)	18.2% (129)

As evident in Table 7, blacks are portrayed as on-air talent anywhere from 21 times throughout the entire sample (Youngstown), to 284 times (Columbus). The percentage of blacks in story content kept a steady range of 125-150 appearances, or 15 to 25 percent of story content.

More specifically, Columbus held the lowest population percentage of blacks from the four markets analyzed. This market went above the demographic reality and portrayed blacks as on-air talent 32.5 percent of the time. However, the Columbus market did not match population demographics in story content, at 16.6 percent.

Dayton has the second-highest population demographic of blacks. The Dayton market did not represent a demographic reality for blacks in either on-air talent or story content categories, with 13 and 24.9 percent, respectively. It is worth noting that Dayton showed the highest percentage of blacks in story content (24.9 percent).

Blacks in Pittsburgh make up on average 26% of the population. The Pittsburgh market did not match these demographic population percentages in either on-air talent or story content, with blacks making up 13.4 and 16.7 percent of these categories.

The Youngstown market has the highest population percentage of blacks at 43 percent. However, Youngstown failed to match, or even come close to matching, average population demographics in on-air talent, which showed blacks 3.4 percent of the time, or story content, which portrayed blacks 18.2 percent of the time. With the population of blacks at almost half of Youngstown's population, this market did not do an adequate job in attempting to portray blacks sufficiently or satisfactorily.

Thus, H3 is not confirmed. The higher the population of blacks within a market does not necessarily equate to a higher portrayal of blacks in on-air talent or story content, and this is especially evident in the extremely dismal Youngstown data.

H4- Minorities will be more represented in the negative story content categories of criminals and victims than in the more positive expert/official and real people story content categories.

Previous studies and literature (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002; Dixon & Linz, 2000; Gilliam & Iyengar, 2000) revealed that historically, minorities in general have been portrayed negatively in local television news. However, H4 is not confirmed. Figure 4 illustrates the percent of all minority groups as portrayed in story content across all four markets.

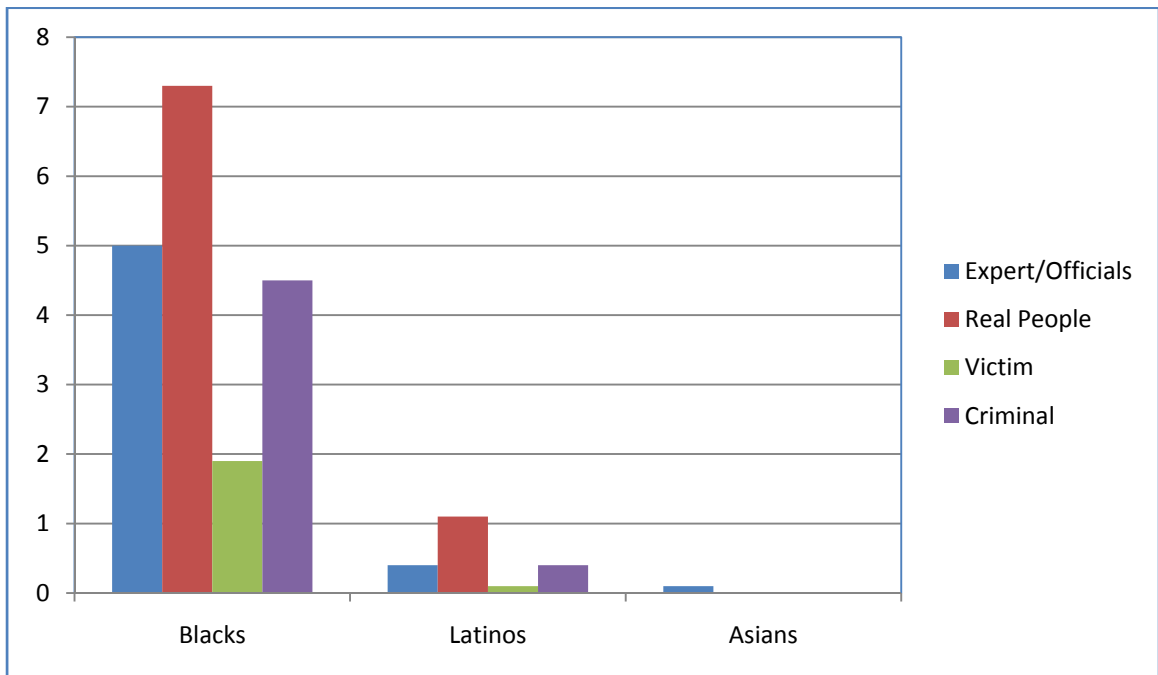


Figure 4: Percent of Minorities in Story Content across All Markets, 2001 and 2009.

The above figure shows that contrary to H4, minorities are actually portrayed in negative story content categories such as victims and criminals less than in positive story content categories such as expert/officials and real people. This is true for all three minority groups analyzed, providing a more positive representation than the researcher

initially hypothesized, based on previous studies (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002; Dixon & Linz, 2000; Dixon, 2008; Klein & Naccarato, 2003).

Blacks were represented as real people 7.3 percent of the time, and as expert/officials five percent of the time. Blacks as represented in more negative story content categories, such as criminals and victims, were depicted 4.5 and 1.9 percent of the time, respectively.

Like blacks, Latinos were also portrayed the most as real people 1.1 percent of the time. Latinos were depicted .4 percent of the time as both expert/officials and criminals, and as victims .1 percent of the time.

As previously discussed, Asians were only seen as expert/officials in story content, .1 percent of the time. In this sample, Asians were not evident as real people, victims, or criminals.

Thus, H4 was not confirmed. Minorities were not represented in more negative story content categories such as criminals and victims than the more positive story content categories of expert/officials and real people. These results also differ from results found in previous studies showing that minorities are portrayed more negatively than positively in story content (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002; Dixon & Linz, 2000).

H5- As the minority groups with a history of negative representation, blacks and Latinos will be the most negatively portrayed minority groups in story content as criminals or suspects.

Previous studies and literature have also suggested that the specific minority groups most negatively portrayed as criminals or suspects have historically been blacks and Latinos (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002; Dixon & Linz, 2000). However, H5 is not

confirmed. Figure 4 above represents the percent of minorities in story content, and illustrates the role that blacks and Latinos play in story content across all four markets.

The above figure shows that blacks were most frequently portrayed as real people, followed by expert/officials, criminals, and finally, victims. Latinos were also most frequently portrayed as real people, then criminals and expert/officials the same amount, followed by victims. Thus, H5 is not confirmed; blacks and Latinos are not portrayed the most in more negative story content categories of criminals and victims.

Overall, blacks represented the largest portion of story content for minority groups in the entire sample. However, blacks were most commonly portrayed as real people in the 2001 sample, and as experts in the 2009 sample. In neither year were blacks most commonly portrayed in the negative story content categories such as criminals or victims.

It is the researcher's understanding that the increase in black experts in 2009 is mostly due to the election of President Obama, who was the most prominent African American expert in all news stories across all markets. There was a total of ten stories in 2009 focused on President Obama alone, and he also appeared as a black expert in many other stories related to the government and/or politics across all four markets.

Another reason for the increase of black experts in 2009 is in part due to Mayor Michael Coleman of Columbus, a prominent African American figure in news stories within this market. Many of the stories featuring a black expert in the Columbus market involved political and economical issues and Mayor Coleman.

Other stories involving black experts remained in the economic/political arena. Some examples include stories on job cuts, job fairs, unemployment rates, the stimulus package, and education reform.

Overall, Latinos represented a very small portion of total story content at 1.8 percent and 2.8 percent of the time in 2001 and 2009, respectively. In 2001, Latinos were portrayed as real people, then experts, most frequently. Latino victims and criminals each weighed in during this year at .1 percent. These numbers changed slightly in 2009, bringing Latino real people to 1.3 percent, Latino experts to .1 percent, victims to zero, and criminals to one percent. Although Latino criminals increased from 2001 to 2009, this was not the story content category that Latinos were most portrayed in.

Because the number of Latinos represented in story content categories were too small to be considered significant, the researcher found no explanation for the types of stories that Latinos were represented in.

H5 was not confirmed in the case of blacks and Latinos being portrayed more negatively than positively in story content; in fact, this study shows opposite findings.

R1: Given that there is little variation in minority populations for each of the four markets between 2001 and 2009, what kind of change in minority representation has been cultivated in local television newscasts in Columbus, Dayton, Pittsburgh, and Youngstown from 2001 to 2009?

All minority populations within the markets analyzed remained relatively stable from 2001 to 2009. The Columbus minority population went up three percent, while the Dayton minority population decreased almost one and a half percent. The Pittsburgh minority population decreased one percent between 2001 and 2007. The Youngstown minority population increased, but the change was less than one percent. Figure 4

illustrates the minority community population from 2001 to 2007, the most recent Census information available.

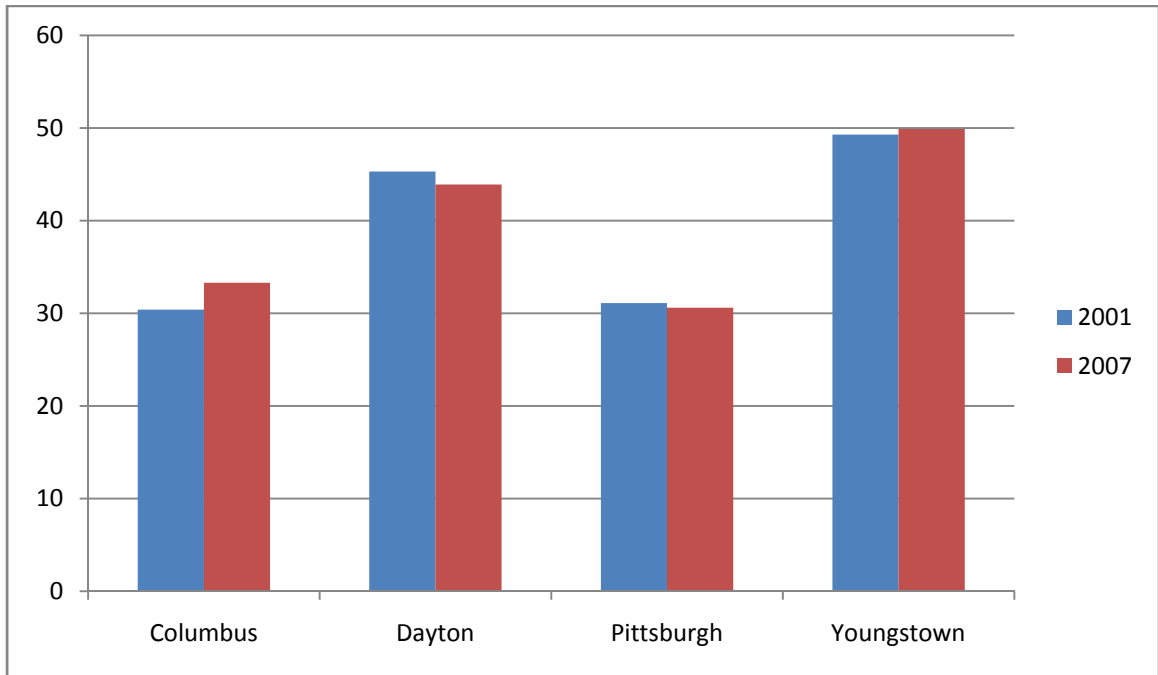


Figure 5. Percentage of Minorities in all Markets, 2001 and 2007.

All minority populations still maintain between 30 and 50 percent in each market. Table 8 illustrates the percentages of minorities that appeared in local broadcast news as on-air talent and story content in 2001 as compared to 2009.

Table 8

Minority On-Air Talent and Story Content Representation, 2001 and 2009

Race	2001	2009
Black On-Air Talent	13.9%	21.4%
Black Story Content	18.8%	18.3%
Latino On-Air Talent	0.3%	0.6%
Latino Story Content	1.8%	2.8%
Asian On-Air Talent	0%	0%
Asian Story Content	0%	.4%

As evident in Table 8, blacks in on-air talent have increased almost eight percent from 2001 to 2009. Interestingly, black representation in story content overall from 2001 to 2009 did not increase, but rather stayed steady at 18.8 percent in 2001 then went down slightly to 18.3 percent in 2009.

Latinos in both the on-air talent and story content categories have also increased. Latinos doubled in on-air talent from 2001 to 2009, although total representation across all markets is less than one percent. This minority group was also up by more than a third in story content in the latter year to 2.8 percent.

Although Asian population demographics have increased in some markets from 2001 to 2009, the on-air talent category remained at zero, while the story content category increased to less than half a percent.

In answering R1, the results showed that there was growth for some minorities; most substantially, blacks as on-air talent. Latinos made some minor progress, but

because they do not represent a large part of the population, this progress may still be viewed as insignificant. The growth of minority groups' population within the markets did, in some cases, lead to better representation in on-air talent and story content in the latter year of 2009, but it did not lead to proportional demographic representation in either category.

Indeterminable On-Air Talent and Story Content

Another category in this study for race of on-air talent and story content that should be noted was "indeterminable," meaning that the coder could not identify the race of the subject. The results show that indeterminable reporters account for .4 percent of the total sample. In other words, indeterminable reporters appeared on-air a total of 11 times across the sample, with seven times in Youngstown, three times in Dayton, and one time in Pittsburgh. The breakdown of indeterminable story content sources include: one indeterminable criminal, five indeterminable victims, 25 indeterminable real people, and 11 indeterminable experts across the sample.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This study focused on the ability of Midwest media markets to match proportionate on-air representation with their respective population demographics. Newscasts from four markets in the Ohio and Pennsylvania region were viewed in order to analyze the representation of minorities as on-air talent and in story content. The results showed that the media have not kept up with the growing demographics of minorities in the representation and portrayal of minorities in local television news.

It was not surprising to find that the larger minority groups within the market were most represented on-air and in story content. As expected, whites dominated news coverage across the four Midwest media markets analyzed, although minorities as a whole make up 30 to 50 percent of the population in the markets surveyed.

The results imply that the minimal coverage of minorities in story content and in talent is consistent in part with previous findings. Owens' 2008 study showed that nearly 90 percent of network news reporters were white, and experts were also overwhelmingly white. In Ziegler and White's (1990) study, 94 percent of the network news stories were covered by white talent. Poindexter, Smith, and Heider (2003) found that minorities, especially Latinos and Asians, were virtually invisible as local broadcast anchors, reporters and sources. Similarly, the findings showed that Latinos and Asians were, in fact, invisible as on-air anchors and nearly invisible as reporters.

Beginning with the largest minority group in all markets surveyed, blacks represented 35.3 percent of on-air talent across all markets. On a positive note, all of the stations analyzed featured at least two black reporters; however, not all stations featured black anchors. Between 2001 and 2009, there was a positive growth in representations of

blacks as on-air talent. The news markets that featured blacks most as on-air talent were Columbus and Dayton. More specifically, Columbus WBNS had the highest percentage of black anchors across the entire sample. The news markets that featured blacks the least as on-air talent were Pittsburgh and Youngstown. Most notably, none of the Youngstown news stations analyzed featured a black anchor, although Youngstown had the highest black population at over 40 percent. This especially stark finding shows that while blacks are at minimum portrayed in on-air talent as reporters, some of the markets and stations surveyed have not taken the initiative to portray blacks as a prominent, stable on-air figure such as an anchor. The fact that Columbus stations feature a black anchor most accounts for their higher percentage of black on-air talent.

In this study, blacks were most commonly portrayed as real people in the 2001 sample, and as experts in the 2009 sample. This was a particularly surprisingly positive finding, as previous studies have found blacks to be most represented as criminals or suspects in crime stories. The fact that blacks are commonly and even frequently included in story content as real people is a progressive trend that will hopefully continue as the black population grows within these markets.

As the results show, the increase in black experts from 2001 and 2009 were in part due to the election of African American President Barack Obama, as well as other prominent political figures, such as Mayor Michael Coleman in Columbus. Both of these officials added a significant number of black experts to the news stories analyzed in the 2009 sample. Another positive finding of interest is that almost half of the stories involving black experts had to do with politics or government issues.

After reviewing the types of stories that blacks were portrayed in, it is the researcher's findings that this minority group was commonly portrayed in "man-on-the-street" or MOS interviews as real people. There were no specific types of stories that blacks were involved in; they ranged from stories about icy streets to a story about the negative effects of cigarette smoking.

It is important to note that black reporters, or anchors, did not typically or necessarily cover stories representing the black community. Black reporters covered many different stories, ranging from news packages about car accidents or a house fire to a pending trial at the local courthouse. Also notable was that there were no specific stories focused on African-American culture, community, or religious practices.

Despite previous studies' findings (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002; Dixon & Linz, 2000) that blacks are commonly portrayed as criminals, blacks were portrayed as criminals five percent or less across the entire sample. This was both a positive and surprising result that blacks were not prevalent as criminals within markets that have been unsuccessful in even portraying blacks proportionately at all. Across many newscasts, however, it is the researcher's findings that when blacks were portrayed in crime stories, they were often depicted as suspect or "wanted" criminals with a picture or sketch.

At first glance, it may seem positive that blacks are sometimes portrayed as victims rather than criminals in some stories. However, blacks as victims appeared most often in crime stories that involved the victim somehow in illegal or criminal activity. This still depicts a negative portrayal of blacks within the community.

Although the largest minority group within the United States, Latinos were virtually invisible within the markets surveyed. Due to the population percentages of Latinos within these markets remaining under 10 percent, the researcher did not expect to find overwhelming numbers of Latinos portrayed as on-air talent and in story content. However, the representation was not even close to proportionate to the small population demographics within each market.

Latinos were not portrayed as on-air anchors in any of the markets, and there was no growth in the seven times that Latinos were portrayed as on-air reporters in both 2001 and 2009. This finding does not leave a positive impression for the Latino communities within these markets. There is no prominent or positive Latino on-air anchor figure in any of the hundreds of newscasts across all four markets analyzed. The only markets that even featured Latinos (although rarely) as on-air talent reporters were Columbus and Dayton, with the specific news stations Columbus WSYX, Dayton WHIO, and Dayton WDTN.

Interestingly, Latino reporters seemed to cover stories that were more related to crime or stories with a negative tone. For example, one Latino reporter covered a story that involved the case of a Latino baby whose parents abandoned him. The same reporter also covered a story that involved the murder-suicide of a local family. Additionally, there was also a Latino reporter's story that was used from an affiliate station that covered a regional crime story.

The types of stories that Latinos were featured in ranged from immigration-based story in 2001 to a job fair story in 2009. It is the researcher's findings that Latinos were not prevalent in any one type of story. There were some more positive or neutral stories

in which Latinos were depicted in story content, such as a story about a job fair and the issues of teen texting. In these stories, a Latino real person was attending a local job fair in hopes of acquiring employment, while in the other, a Latino dad and daughter were interviewed along with other families regarding the safety of teens' texting. There were also some negative stories in which Latinos were portrayed as being laid-off from a job, participating in a drug ring, or as a suspect in a national crime story.

The only times that Latinos were portrayed as experts were in a peanut butter recall story and a story about GM layoffs. As in any market, these news stories were sometimes repeated across newscasts and news stations, so the frequencies of Latinos in story content as experts is due in part to this repeat in news.

Despite previous studies' findings (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002; Dixon & Linz, 2000) that Latinos are portrayed commonly as criminals, this study did not find a significant number of Latino criminals portrayed within the markets analyzed. However, Latinos represented as criminals in 2009 made up the second highest category of story content for this minority group. More specifically, some of these stories included eight Latino criminals wanted for participation in running a drug ring in Youngstown, as well as the national story involving a Latino criminal accused of killing a pregnant Marine.

Overall, there were no particularly "positive" depictions of Latinos in story content, when they were depicted at all, aside from the two Latino experts used in stories across newscasts. Also not evident were specific stories that focused on portraying Latino culture, community, or religion.

As the smallest minority group within all markets, Asians were almost completely invisible. Because the populations for Asians within all four markets ranged from .3-3.9

percent, the researcher did not expect to find many Asians across newscasts. As expected, Asians as portrayed in the news did not reflect a demographic reality for the markets analyzed.

There were no Asian anchors or reporters in either 2001 or 2009. This finding is especially stark, as not one market or news station portrayed Asians at all as on-air talent, even as recent as in 2009.

Asians were almost as invisible in story content, as well. The only Asians evident in story content were five Asian experts. Contrary to Latinos or blacks, there were somewhat of specific types of stories that Asians were prevalent in. These types of stories included health or business news stories where people of this minority group were portrayed as doctors or other experts. For example, the stories included an Asian expert in a news package about tumors, as well as an Asian expert in a story about Wall Street.

This study found that Asians in the markets analyzed were portrayed in a positive light, as experts, when they were portrayed at all. This is the only positive note that the researcher could take away from the fact that Asians were barely represented within the sample.

Impact of Results

One might ask, why is the portrayal of minority groups within markets that do not necessarily have very diverse populations important? One of the reasons that equal and proportionate representation of minority groups is important involves the cultivation theory, which states that a society's perceptions of reality are cultivated by what we see on television. The media influences public attitudes, and some regular television viewers believe that the real world is based on the "television world" (Signorielli & Morgan,

1990). For example, whites who have not personally encountered minorities may think that the stereotypes perpetuated by the media are true. In this case, negative or invisible coverage of minorities influences white attitudes and perceptions toward minorities. If society's perceptions of reality are cultivated by what we see on the television news, then viewers within the Columbus, Dayton, Pittsburgh, and Youngstown markets would not believe that minorities actually represent a third to nearly half of the markets' actual demographic population.

However, although Dixon and Linz's (2000) cultivation study on perceptions of blacks and Latinos as criminals found that these minority groups are more likely than whites to be portrayed as perpetrators, this study did not find a significant number of minority criminals. But what is more alarming is that some viewers within these markets, according to the cultivation theory, may believe that the television world is equivalent to reality. This could mean that in some viewers' perceptions, minorities do not exist, or rarely exist, in the real world within their community.

An earlier study done by Klein and Naccarato emphasized this concern, as between 70 and 97 percent of survey respondents in Pittsburgh, a market used within this study, agreed with the statement, "Local TV news shows me the way the world really is" (Klein & Naccarato, 2003). It is perceptions such as these that often time lead to stereotyping or ignoring of certain minority groups within a community.

What is particularly interesting is that minorities make up 30 to 50 percent of the market populations; however, none of these markets portrayed a demographic reality for any of the minority groups in on-air talent and story content. In order to portray the

world in a realistic way for viewers, perhaps the media are responsible to emphasize the minority population.

Limitations of Research

One of the limitations for this study may include that these four markets have not been compared to other regions of the U.S., perhaps with higher minority populations. Additionally, assessing the Latino and Asian representation was a limitation, since the populations of these minority groups were so small in comparison to other groups. More specifically, future researchers may want to examine larger samples within the Midwest or compare this to other regions within the United States. Also, there are more than four markets within the Ohio and Pennsylvania or the Midwest region, so perhaps the findings would be different had these other markets been included in this study.

With regards to qualitative research, other scholars may be interested in also interviewing news directors and employees of the stations with regards to their views on recruiting and representing diversity. This type of qualitative research would be useful in addition to the quantitative data used in this study.

No tests of significance were done with this data as the report and discussion of the results were deemed sufficient for the kind of hypotheses tested.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The invisibility of minorities in local television news coverage was partly reinforced by the newscasts that were analyzed for this study. Not one of the news stations analyzed portrayed a demographic reality with regards to representation of minority groups as on-air talent and story content.

This content analysis of minorities in local broadcast news provided a glimpse into more than one market within the Midwest region. As Campbell outlined in his 1995 study, interpretations of newscasts most certainly differ between individuals, but the results and implications of this study is spoken through the numbers. It is evident from the findings that the issue of racial inclusion is still an ongoing concern (Smith, 2008). Similar to the study done by Campbell (1995), this content analysis attempts to identify and showcase the ways in which minorities are ignored in local broadcast news.

The First Amendment ensures freedom of speech as a factor essential in our democratic society for all citizens. The importance of a socially responsible media as outlined in the Hutchins Commission in providing the public with an approximate model of reality, or an over-approximation for those groups who are nearly invisible, is crucial. In order to portray the world in a realistic way for viewers, the media are responsible to emphasize the minority population in some instances. This may be a more effective way of showing viewers that these minority populations do exist. Newsrooms often claim to be 'color blind' and focused on just covering the news. However, instead of simply ignoring race, perhaps it should take a more prominent role in the daily discussion of

news coverage. Television broadcast news should serve as an accurate reflector of society.

Recommendations to Broadcasters

The results have allowed the researcher to assess the impact of the media's commitment to diversity in the television newsroom and in story content. These findings suggest that local television news continues to report from a mostly white perspective and fails to report actively on the different aspects of the minority community. The virtual absence of Latinos and Asians as news anchors and reporters suggests that little progress has been made in diversifying some newsrooms in the Midwest. The findings that story content or talent representing minorities were limited or non-existent in some cases provided further evidence that when it came to race, the news media have not made significant progress since the Kerner Commission (Owens, 2008).

As Heider (2000) and many others suggest, creating the most diverse and proportionate newscast in relation to your market's demographics begins with knowing the demographics within your community. Previous literature and findings (Campbell, 1995; Heider, 2000) have pointed to the fact that those in high managerial news positions, such as news directors, are predominately white. It is essential for those who hold such positions to make sure that the demographics of their markets are known.

It is evident to the researcher, as well as other scholars, that demographics of markets and cities play a small role in whether you see an increase of minorities as journalists or being portrayed in a positive light, or being portrayed at all (Campbell, 1995; Heider, 2000; Larson, 2005). Perhaps the awareness on hiring more minorities into the newsroom doesn't necessarily have to fall completely on the news markets and

stations, but also on the community, consumers, and educators. What seems to be effective is the partnering with professional journalist association networks and universities which has produced an increase in minority journalists through fellowships and other initiatives; however, the percentage of increase is still substandard (The Parity Project, 2005).

Overall, television journalists of all races should stay cognizant of diversity in their content. One of the excuses is that news organizations have trouble recruiting and retaining minorities in the newsroom. This was also the explanation for why studies of news content continuously show little content about people of color (Pease et al., 2001). Another fact of interest is that undergraduate Journalism and Mass Communication students are still overwhelmingly white (Becker, Vlad, & Tucker, 2005).

The dilemma continues to be that minority graduates are not receiving job offers, and the presumption is that the industry is not producing diverse leaders in the job market which ultimately affects the communities they serve (Becker, 2002).

Economic Incentive

Although the cultivation theory may be considered an important incentive for news directors to implement and increase diversity both in the newsroom and in newscasts, there is also an economic incentive. The impact of consumer buying power has increased rapidly the past several years for minority groups. Can any media organization continue to afford to ignore the fastest growing area of its audience? Research indicates a new focus on women and people of color as news consumers by recent studies on media consolidation (Komp, 2006).

Latinos are one of the fastest-growing demographics in the United States, and this minority group's buying power is also increasing faster than that of any other segment of the population. Understanding a minority community is key in tapping into this community successfully (Latino Boom!, 2005). It is extremely important to research all parts of your market's community in order to benefit from the many social and economic incentives of implementing diversity in local television news.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results provide the foundation for other studies that focus on different markets across a specific region. Future studies should also look at the content and makeup of management, in terms of decision-making processes.

Both the Latino and Asian populations in the markets analyzed for this study had relatively low populations; it would be interesting to look at markets that had larger populations in order to further examine the researchers' hypotheses. In addition, the markets used in this study did not show any dramatic change in minority populations between the 2001 and 2009 time span. It would be interesting for future researchers to look at markets that do have dramatically changing demographics over time to analyze if there is a difference in coverage or on-air talent. With regards to qualitative research, other scholars may be interested in also interviewing news directors and newsrooms employees for their opinions on recruiting and representing diversity.

The results may also be useful in presenting to station managers and professional journalism organizations such as RTNDA, NAHJ, NABJ, or AAJA. Another useful possibility may be presenting the study to the Ohio University E.W. Scripps School of Journalism in order to help the school actively recruit minorities, especially those who are

least represented. Additionally, perhaps this would encourage and increase the partnering of journalism schools and television stations or networks specifically to place interns and secure employment after graduation for our journalists of color.

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APPENDIX A: MINORITIES IN LOCAL BROADCAST NEWS CODEBOOK

A. Market/Station: Write the market city and the station name; i.e. Columbus WCMH

B. Record Date: Write the date that the newscast was recorded; i.e. 1-29-01

C. Record Time: Write the time that the newscast was recorded; i.e. 5 p.m.

F. Talent: Code the talent (anchors and reporters) that delivers the story. Code only news stories, not weather or sports. The definitions for race in this study are below, as well as the codes for talent.

- White: a person of Caucasian or European descent
- Black: a person of African-American or African descent
- Latino: a person of Latin-American descent
- Asian: a person of Asian-American descent
- White: a person of Caucasian or White European descent
- Indeterminable: a person whose race is indeterminable to the coder
- Anchor: Main on-air talent who presents information prepared for a television news program; appears as the prominent talent in the newscast, often at a news desk
- Reporter: On-air talent who researches and reports information for a television news package; often appears when investigating or reporting a television news story

G. Story Content: Code any people shown in the story, either interviewed or shown in b-roll (video). You don't have to code group or crowd shots, just SOTs (quote of person being interviewed) or the primary person in b-roll (i.e., defendant in a criminal case, speaker in a speech, subject of profile.) Code only news stories, not weather or sports. There will likely be multiple people in some stories; please note all people. The same racial definitions apply. The definitions for expert/official, "real person," victim/family, and criminal are below.

- White: a person of Caucasian or European descent
- Black: a person of African-American or African descent
- Latino: a person of Latin-American descent
- Asian: a person of Asian-American or Asian descent
- White: a person of Caucasian or White European descent
- Indeterminable: a person whose race is indeterminable to the coder
- Expert/official: a person who is interviewed with an official occupation or expertise.
- "Real person": a person who is interviewed as a "man on the street" for their opinion; an average citizen.
- Victim/family: a person who is the victim of a crime/murder/etc., or the family of the victim.
- Criminal: a person who commits or is accused of committing a crime.

APPENDIX B: MINORITIES IN LOCAL BROADCAST NEWS CODESHEET

Market/Station:_____ **Record Date:** _____ **Record Time:** _____

[illegible]