5-1-2011

Outsiders Within: A Framing Analysis of Eight Black and White U.S. Newspapers’ Coverage of the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1964

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by

Yolanda Denise Campbell

Abstract of a Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate School of The University of Southern Mississippi in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2011
ABSTRACT


by Yolanda Denise Campbell

May 2011

This study offers an important contribution to communication research about how Black and White Newspapers covered one of the most significant periods of racial unrest in the history of the U.S. besides slavery—the Civil Rights Movement. Specifically, this paper examined the unique combination of eight U.S. newspapers—The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, The Pittsburgh Courier, The Birmingham News, The Birmingham World, The Clarion Ledger, The Jackson Advocate, The Chicago Tribune, and The Chicago Defender from 1954-1964, the beginning and end of the Civil Rights Movement.

Through a qualitative framing analysis of the eight newspapers exploring the categories of subject/theme, dominant article/editorial perspectives, headline descriptors, characterization of key Civil Rights figures, article/editorial length and placement, and photos; this study reveals that Black and White newspapers were not in keeping with previous research which proclaimed that Northern Black/White and Southern Black papers would provide supportive coverage towards the movement and that Southern White newspapers would provide unsupportive coverage. Interestingly, an examination of news articles among both Northern/Southern Black/White newspapers revealed that the majority of all papers’ news article coverage was neutral and objective. However, the editorial coverage, in which newspapers were able to make their stance for their
prospective sides of the movement, results revealed that the papers were very much in keeping with previous researchers’ findings that Northern Black/White and Southern Black newspapers were in favor of the cause of the Civil Rights Movement and that the Southern White newspapers were not. The prevalent subject/themes that received the most attention, especially from Southern White newspapers, was integration struggles followed by the murder of Emmett Till and the subsequent trial, the Birmingham Bombing, and the murder of Medgar Evers. The majority of all headlines were neutral, the average length of both articles/editorials among the newspapers was 500 words or less, and most articles were placed in the front section of the newspaper, evidence that the happenings of the movement was significant among all papers whether Black or White. Seemingly most photos from the Birmingham bombing to the violence against the Freedom Riders depicted Blacks as victims at the hands of angry Whites--both police officers and everyday citizens, who were just plain discontent with their segregationist way of life being challenged. Such images which appeared in the newspapers presented a sympathetic image towards Blacks and ultimately helped to shed light onto the injustices they were experiencing.
The University of Southern Mississippi


by

Yolanda Denise Campbell

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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May 2011
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my grandmother, Sarah Teldford Campbell. My generation will never know the struggles you faced in your lifetime. Through you, I know what the face of strength looks like. I can only hope to be a measure of the woman you have been.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to give thanks to my Lord and Savior above for His continued grace and mercy in the midst of all the obstacles that have come my way in trying to finish this work. Many times I doubted, and the finish line seemed to elude me. Yet, I kept my eyes fixed on You and even though I stumbled many times over my own feet, You guided me to completion and I am forever grateful to You. I would also like to give thanks to my mother, Ridgie Hervey, for her unwavering support of all that I have ever tried to accomplish in my life. During the course of this dissertation, you fell very ill but you still did not fail to remind me of the task I had to complete. I thank you and I love you. To my sister, Felicia Johnson, I thank you also for your words of encouragement especially when it got really tough and I felt so alone in my pursuit. To my best friend, Serena Street, you were a shoulder to cry on and arms to embrace me so many occasions when I came up short along the way trying to get it right. Even as you attended to your own studies, you found time to be a listening ear. I thank you and I love you for your counsel. To all the children in my life that I did not birth, Sherebia, Audree, Awasis, Kyrsten, Lailah, Aliyah, and Kaliyah; I hope that you will be inspired as you reflect on what you have seen me go through over the years. From it I pray you will have seen that anything worth having is worth working for. During many times when my spirits were low, your smiling faces and the tasks you gave to me were distractions away from the stresses and concerns surrounding my dissertation. Additionally, you offered revelations toward what I had to look forward to once I finished. I thank you all simply for loving me through my circumstances. Sometimes love is all that is needed.
To my committee members that have changed throughout the years of working on this project: Dr. Fei Xue, Dr. Mazharul Haque, Dr. Arthur Kaul (deceased), Dr. Gene Wiggins, Dr. Christopher Campbell, Dr. Jae-Hwa Shin, and Dr. David Davies, I thank you so much for your diligence and your guidance along the way. The University of Southern Mississippi has thrived and will continue to do so because of professors like you. Thank you so much. To my former colleagues who helped me with this project along the way, I also thank you. A special thanks to the libraries in which I have spent so many hours: The University of Southern Mississippi’s Cook Library in Hattiesburg, MS; Southern A&M University in Baton Rouge, LA; Public Library in Birmingham, AL; University of Mississippi Library in Oxford, MS; and Jones Creek and Goodwood East Baton Rouge Parrish Libraries in Baton Rouge, LA. Without a quiet place to work and friendly staff to assist me in collecting and analyzing my newspapers, this task would have been even more difficult.

Finally, they say the struggles we face truly mold us and define who we are, and that what does not kill us can only make us stronger. Well, this dissertation has been one of the greatest tests of my life. But, indeed, I am much stronger because of it.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

In 2006, a television reality series premiered called *Black. White* on Fox eXtended (FX) network. The series depicted a Black and White family literally trading races. Make up specialists made the complexion of the White family appear to be Black and created a reciprocal circumstance for the Black family. For approximately six weeks each family completed their ordinary daily routines, only, as members of the opposite race. In their new skin, the families would go shopping, working and socializing with both races. In a post interview after the series was completed, participants expressed their views about their experiences and on modern day racism. The Black family asserted they received better customer service from restaurants and other businesses when they were disguised as Whites. Also as Whites, they listened as prejudiced statements were made against Black families moving into all White suburban neighborhoods. In essence the overall viewpoint of the Black family’s White experience proclaimed they received much nicer treatment as a White family than their experiences as Blacks.

The White family disguised as Black also offered their assessments. The general consensus was there was little difference in how they were treated in either skin no matter the setting. However, there were some uncomfortable situations. For example walking through a certain Black neighborhood as a White seemed tense and attracted stares as to why a middle class White lady is walking through a Black poverty stricken neighborhood. In essence, the White family didn’t receive prejudiced treatment as
themselves in Black settings nor as a Black family in a White setting but did experience some racial tensions.

Since 1976, The National Urban League has presented the State of Black America. Released each year during a news conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., the forum assesses the conditions, experiences and opinions of Blacks. In addition, it examines Black progress in education, homeownership, health, and other areas. From 2004 to 2007, findings revealed that Blacks experience disparities and equality gaps in all of the aforementioned areas compared to Whites. What do the synopses above have in common? Both deal with assessing race relations between Blacks and Whites. In order to understand why race seems to be such an undying topic, dinner table conversation, one needs only to examine the history of Black and White race relations in this country. Perhaps the most notable examination goes all the way back to slavery. A time of bondage, it was during this time that Blacks were established as outsiders. Within a country of democracy and freedom, Black slaves were considered unworthy of the rights of their fellow White citizens. In fact, it seemed they were no more than “outsiders within” the country they were trying so diligently to become a true part of. Thus, the slavery establishment became a lifestyle for America. Just as a family has a pet and owns a home, so too were Blacks considered property.

Freedom did emerge for slaves through the September 22, 1862, signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln. The Proclamation stated freedom. However, the lifestyle of Blacks being inferior and deemed as “outsiders” in comparison to Whites continued on for many years. During the 1950s and 1960s, race relations in America between Blacks and Whites were more acrimonious and
disharmonious than ever. Blacks were looked upon as second class citizens undeserving of the rights and privileges of fellow Whites. This was especially true in the American South, where Blacks experienced discrimination, abuse, and injustice. Their second class citizenship included separate facilities such as “colored only” bathrooms, water fountains, and other public places. Additionally, Blacks were denied voting rights and other privileges. As a result of their struggles to seek out equality in all aspects of life; men, women, and children fought through many means to obtain a first class citizenship. In this struggle, some of the media took up their cause for equality. Without the mass media, the happenings of the 1950s and the 1960s might have remained an operation of secrecy and oppression. Perhaps, the protests, marches and demonstrations would have been known only to locals instead of the nation and the world. The media coverage of the Civil Rights Movement drew world attention to the plight of Blacks, who were being treated as “outsiders within” a nation who had built its creed on democracy for all. Some of the media drew sympathy for the Black cause, many went against the cause, and some presented the unfolding drama through the lens of objectivity. Which media fell into what category? This study examines eight U.S. newspapers and their media coverage of the Civil Rights Movement.

Statement of Purpose

This study will conduct a qualitative content analysis examination of Black media’s portrayal of themselves during the Civil Rights Movement in comparison with White-owned newspapers. Known as “minority media,” the voices of Blacks and other minority groups often go unheard or are overshadowed by the voices and images presented of themselves by White-owned/mainstream media. Though the images
presented by White-owned/mainstream media often dominate the conscience of our society, it is important to see those same issues through a different lens. Thus, this study proposes to examine and compare the portrayals of Blacks in the context of their media during the Civil Rights Movement with that of White-owned/mainstream media. Previous studies have examined Black and White coverage separately and during one or two specific Civil Rights Movement events but haven’t spanned the entire movement nor examined the combination of newspapers this study does within the same city/state context under the same living conditions.

The White-owned newspapers will be used for comparison purposes to selected Black media to detect differences and/or similarities in coverage. The time period of analysis is 1954-1964. This time frame was chosen because it represents an important time period beginning with the Brown vs. Board of Education and ending with the passage of the Civil Rights Act. By 1964, Blacks had legally gained the rights that catalyzed the start of their movement for equality. In order to gain an understanding of the purpose of the movement, the following section explores the background of the Civil Rights Movement including the major happenings and influence of those actions on legislation.

The Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1964

History

1954—Brown vs. Board of Education. 1954 was considered the year when an important stage of the Civil Rights Movement occurred. Specifically, it was the year in which the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its landmark decision in Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. The decision in this case declared that the south’s
“separate but equal” doctrine practiced in public schools was unconstitutional. A victory for Blacks fighting for equal rights, this case posited that Blacks should have the same educational opportunities as their fellow White citizens (Sarat, 1997). Although the case did not establish guidelines for desegregated public schools, the victory destroyed the constitutional foundation upon which legal segregation rested in the South. It was a year later; the Supreme Court issued a second ruling regarding the issue in *Brown II*, which stated that schools should be desegregated with all deliberate speed. Nonetheless, the former court decision served as a catalyst for Blacks to push further to obtain equal rights in transportation, housing, and other areas. Many believed that it was the most significant legal decision of the 20th century that advanced the cause of Blacks towards equality and towards educational rights (Martin, 1998).

1955—*Emmett Till and Rosa Parks*. Two major events happened in 1955 that further heightened the Civil Rights Movement: the murder of Emmett Louis Till and the defiance of a Montgomery, Alabama seamstress, Rosa Parks. Emmett Louis Till, a 14 year-old boy visiting relatives in Mississippi from Chicago, Illinois, was savagely beaten, shot, and killed for allegedly whistling at the wife of a White man. Despite admitting to kidnapping and beating Till, the two White men accused of murder and kidnapping, J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, were acquitted of all charges by an all White jury. According to previous researchers who have examined the trial over the years, the murder of Emmett Till shook the foundations of Mississippi, both Black and White—with the White community because of the fact that it had become nationally publicized and with Blacks because it said that even a child was not safe from racism, bigotry, and death (Goldfield, 1990; Hampton & Fayer, 1990; Levy, 1998; Morris, 1984; Raines, 1987). The murder of
Emmett Louis Till not only brought nationwide media attention to the conditions of Blacks living in the South, it also signified that change must come to relieve such oppression.

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a 43 year-old Black seamstress, was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her bus seat to a White man. Her actions inspired Black leaders to organize an association to lead the Montgomery Bus Boycott—the Montgomery Improvement Association. The leader of the association was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The strategically organized boycott deprived the bus company of 65% of its income because of the refusal of Blacks to ride the bus. The boycott lasted for approximately 381 days. On December 20, 1956, the boycott officially ended. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Montgomery’s bus segregation policy was unconstitutional. More than just a seamstress refusing to give up her seat on a segregated bus, the Boycott is credited as one of the first victories of the Civil Rights Movement. In addition, the Boycott gave national attention to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as a prominent leader of the Civil Rights cause (“Rosa Parks, n.d.”).

1956—Montgomery bus boycott. This year focused on securing the Montgomery Bus Boycott victory. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the official spokesman of the boycott led the Montgomery community as it united together to find other means of transportation besides the city buses. Blacks carpooled, hitch-hiked, walked, cycled, rode mules, and horse driven buggies to avoid using the city buses. On June 4, 1956, the federal district court was the first to declare that Alabama's racial segregation laws for buses were unconstitutional. On November 13, 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the lower court’s ruling. The major story of this year in the Civil Rights Movement details the
quest of Blacks to gain the rights and privileges of their fellow White citizens in regard to riding the city buses. Along the way, several boycott participants were arrested, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Nonetheless, 1956 demonstrated Blacks’ dedication to acquiring change and equal rights despite the costs of inconvenience (Childers, 1997).

1957—Desegregation in Little Rock. The pursuit for equality through the Civil Rights Movement continued in 1957 with the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School. Even though the 1954, Brown vs. Board of Education case declared that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional, Arkansas along with many other states prepared to gradually, rather than abruptly, desegregate its public schools. The Little Rock, Arkansas, school board voted to integrate their city public schools beginning in 1957, followed by the junior high and elementary schools in the following years. However, Arkansas Governor, Orval Faubus opposed such integration as he openly defied the new law in attempts to uphold segregation. As the NAACP pushed to get nine Black students into Little Rock Central High School, the students were met by opposition. This opposition was led by the Arkansas Governor, who deployed the Arkansas National Guard to physically block the nine Black students from entering Central High on September 4, 1957 (McMillen, 1971).

United States President Dwight Eisenhower sent U.S. Army troops to Arkansas on September 24, 1957 to take charge of the situation. The following day, the 101st Airborne Division of the United States Army safely escorted the nine Black students into Central High. However, the students experienced such verbal and physical abuse from their fellow White classmates that many of them transferred to other schools or were
expelled for retaliating against the racial antics. Only one of the nine students, Ernest Green graduated from Central High School, becoming the first Black to do so. After the school year ended, the governor closed the public schools to avoid further integration. It would be fall of 1959 before Arkansas reopened its public schools.

1958-1959—Striving to integrate. Most major Civil Rights Timelines reveal 1958-1959 as years devoted to enforcing integration of public schools, following the landmark Supreme Court decision in 1954 declaring segregation of public schools unconstitutional. Yet, many states attempted to maintain the South’s segregated school facilities. Virginia closed their county schools for five years 1959-1964, rather than integrate (Thomas, 2004). Nashville, Tennessee also contributed to the slow transition to integration through its “Grade-a-Year” desegregation plan. Under the Nashville Plan, a single grade was to be desegregated each year starting with first grade. This meant that desegregation would only apply to students enrolling in first grade the following year and never apply to the grade of any child who is already enrolled in a segregated school. The plan also permitted parents to transfer their children out of any school where the majority of students were of a different race (in other words, White kids did not have to attend a school where the majority of students were Black). The Board of Education then gerrymandered the school district boundaries so that only a small fraction of Black children were eligible to enroll in the 1st Grade of a formerly all-White school (Nashville Scheme). Many schools adopted similar resistance tactics. Full integration did not occur until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed (Thomas, 2004).

Other strides towards achieving public school integration occurred from 1958-1959. The NAACP led by Dr. Martin Luther King and Ralph Abernathy launched
marches on Washington that included restless Black youth from all over the nation in hopes of speeding up the process of integration. Whites in support of their quest also joined them. The first youth march took place on October 25, 1958.

The second march convened on April 18, 1959, with an estimated 26,000 students. Although neither march did much to inspire legislation to speed up the process of integration following the U.S. Supreme court decision, the marches did arouse the conscience for social equality of many Americans (“King Address, n.d.”).

1960s—Taking freedom. Despite the successes of the 1950s, racism and segregation in the South was as rampant as ever. According to Thompson (1993),

The freedom struggle...for justice and social change increased its activities during the 1960s. Between 1960 and 1965, a series of freedom movements took place, including the sit-in movements; the establishment in 1960 of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a student activist organization at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina; the Freedom Rides campaign of 1961, which sought to break segregation on public transportation in the South; James Meredith’s attempt to register at the University of Mississippi in 1962; the August 1963 March on Washington to focus attention on the plight of Blacks and the poor (Native Americans, Whites, Chicanos) in the U.S.; the campaign to break segregation’s hold on Birmingham; Mississippi’s Freedom Summer campaign in 1964 to encourage Black voter registration and to combat the fear of the system of segregation. (pp. 58-59)

1960—Sit-in demonstrations. On February 1, 1960, four Black college students from North Carolina A&T sought to desegregate a Woolworth’s lunch counter in Greensboro,
North Carolina. The students ordered food at the Whites only lunch counter, defying the South’s segregationist lifestyle under which Blacks dared not eat, drink, ride, or entertain themselves at any facility designated as “Whites only.” The students were refused service but they remained seated until the store closed. They returned to the store day after day in increasing numbers. The sit-ins inspired many youths to imitate the same practices at segregated facilities all across the nation—54 cities across nine states.

Initially unsuccessful, the sit-in demonstrations continued off and on for several months. In the end the Woolworth stores and other Greensboro stores agreed to integrate. The first Black was served a meal on July 25, 1960 (Bramlett, 1987).

1961—Freedom riders. In 1955, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) banned racial segregation on interstate carriers such as bus and/or train travel. However, in 1961, interstate travelers were still being segregated on buses and in bus terminals. To expose the illegal segregation practices in the South, which ignored desegregation rulings, Blacks and Whites rode through the South on Greyhound and Trailway buses (“Get Bus, n.d.”).

The first freedom ride occurred on May 4, 1961. A greyhound bus carrying Blacks and Whites left Washington, D.C. headed to New Orleans, Louisiana crossing several states such as Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. The trip was deterred when the riders’ bus was set on fire by an angry White mob in Anniston, Alabama. As riders tried to escape the engulfing smoke on the bus, they were viciously beaten with pipes and other weapons. Eventually a plane became the safest route to New Orleans. Violence and arrests became the pattern of many freedom rides. Often bystanders mistaken as freedom riders were attacked (McAdam, 1988).
The rides lasted until September of 1961. However, every bus journey seemed to be more difficult because neither the police nor the FBI intervened very often to protect riders. There were instances in which the law enforcement officers participated or assisted in the violence committed against the freedom riders. Because of the continued violence received by the non violent freedom riders, the rides did not last very long. However, scenes of blood, baseball bats, and mobs of Klansmen beating both Blacks and Whites, who tested the South’s way of life, helped to expose the illegal system of segregation still operating in the deep South and eventually influenced the ICC to issue yet another desegregation order. On September 23, 1961, the ICC, at U.S. Attorney General, Robert Kennedy’s insistence, issued new rules ending discrimination in interstate travel. Effective November 1, 1961, six years after the ICC's first ruling, all interstate buses were required to display a certificate that read: seating aboard this vehicle is without regard to race, color, creed, or national origin, by order of the Interstate Commerce Commission (Arsenault, 2006).

1962—James Meredith’s entrance to Ole Miss. On October 1, 1962, James Meredith became the first Black to be admitted to the all White university, Ole Miss in Oxford, Mississippi. However, his acceptance into this historically White university was met with extreme opposition led by then, Mississippi Governor, Ross Barnett. Much like the integration of Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas (1957), integrating the all White university would not be an easy task. A former member of the U.S. Air Force from 1951-1960, Meredith was attending the historically Black School, Jackson State University when he applied to Ole Miss for admission.
Meredith was denied admission. He countered with a law suit. Following a high-profile court battle, Meredith was victorious when the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the state could not deny admission to an academically qualified, tax-paying citizen. However, when Meredith tried to gain entrance to the Oxford campus, the Governor of Mississippi himself, Ross Barnett, blocked him. It was not until President John F. Kennedy ordered federal marshals and troops to escort Meredith that his entrance was successful. But, over 200 marshals and soldiers were wounded, 200 individuals were arrested, and two people died in the effort. Meredith graduated in August of 1963 with a bachelor’s degree. During his tenure at Ole Miss, he experienced a wide range of racism and insults from fellow students. He required 24-hour protection for over a year. Nonetheless, his entrance into Ole Miss signified another victorious moment for the Civil Rights Movement’s cause (Meredith, 1966).

1963—Murder of Medgar Evers. Civil Rights activist and Mississippi’s NAACP field secretary, Medgar Evers was gunned down in his driveway on June 12, 1963. A rising activist at the time of his murder, Evers’ involvement with the NAACP drew attention from displeased Whites in Jackson, Mississippi. Prior to his murder, he was harassed and warned by his adversaries that his continued involvement with the NAACP would have detrimental results. Nonetheless, Evers continued with his tasks to help improve life for Blacks—encouraging voting and integration. He had just returned from a NAACP meeting when he was shot. White supremacist, Byron de le Beckwith was charged and tried for Evers’ murder in 1964. Because of two hung, all White juries at the trial, he was released (Hoerl, 2008). The murder of Evers inspired outrage across the nation. Once again, the violent and segregationist mind set of the South appeared for the world to see.
on a national level. Only one day prior to Evers’ murder, President John F. Kennedy
 gave an address regarding civil rights. He asserted that the nation could no longer ignore
 Blacks’ cries for freedom and equality and that legislative action must take place to
 ensure their rights. Both Medgar Evers and President Kennedy were murdered before
 such legislation could be passed. The murder of Evers in June 1963 and the November
 22, 1963, assassination of President Kennedy indicated the extremes to which some in the
 South were willing to go to prevent the social changes that needed to be made in the U.S.
 regarding race relations.

The murder of Medgar Evers would be avenged some 30 years later when in
 1994, the case was reopened. Beckwith was found guilty and sentenced to life in prison.
 He died in 2001 while serving his sentence (Hoerl, 2008).

1963—March on Washington. After years of protests, demonstrations, sit-ins,
 bombings, murder, police brutality, and rejection; prominent leaders of the Civil Rights
 Movement sought to launch the largest non-violent demonstration in history on August
 28, 1963—the March on Washington. Over 250,000 participants attended the march on
 the lawn of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Composed of a multiple races of
 people, the march provided a forum for Blacks and the poor to voice their demands to the
 nation. Issues of race relations had conflated with issues of economic, education,
 employment, and housing. These concerns fueled the desire of Blacks to be looked upon
 as human beings as captioned in the slogan—“I AM A MAN.”

Civil Rights activists, who had spent their lives fighting for the cause, spoke about
 the changes that needed to be made to ensure the rights of Blacks. Dr. Martin Luther
 King, Jr. revealed his vision for the nation in his I Have a Dream speech,
It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment and to underestimate the determination of Blacks. This sweltering summer of the Negro’s legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigoration autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content, will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges. (“Martin Luther,” n.d.)

Pauley (1998) proclaims that the March on Washington represented the peak of the Civil Rights Movement. “The image of Blacks and Whites marching hand in hand presented a powerful vision of interracial cooperation, nonviolent protest, and democratic change” (p. 320).

1963—Alabama church bombing. In September of 1963, the city of Birmingham, Alabama was the site of a huge voter registration campaign for local Blacks. Led by staunch segregationist, Governor George Wallace, the city, and the entire state was fighting school desegregation. Previously that year on June 11, 1963, Governor Wallace stood in front of the doors to the all White, University of Alabama attempting to stop integration. Also on January 14, 1963, in his inauguration as Governor, Wallace declared that segregation would last forever. Thus, the scene of Alabama in 1963 was one of strained relations between local Whites and Blacks as the quest of the Civil Rights Movement intensified (Eskew, 1997).

On the morning of September 15, 1963, Sixteenth Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama continued with business as usual—meeting its Sunday school class and
preparing for morning worship. However, business as usual was interrupted when a bomb exploded around 10:30 a.m. Four young girls, ages 11-14, were killed. Several other members were wounded. The bombing provided an example of yet another persuasive act of violence in addition to the 20 previous bombings in the city—all over the course of eight years. The church made the fourth bombing in four weeks. Neither the city of Birmingham nor the state of Alabama was strangers to social unrest (“Six Dead, n.d.”).

Governor George Wallace had declared on more than one occasion through action and words that the state of Alabama had no interest in integration or any other ideals that equalized the rights and privileges of Whites and Blacks. However, this incident in which four innocent children fell victim to racism—weighed heavily upon the conscience of the nation. Civil rights leaders such as Dr. King, then leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), increased the efforts to ensure that Blacks received the opportunity to live in a safe and just society (Johnson, 2007). After the bombing, Dr. King sent a wire to Governor Wallace accusing him of being responsible for the death of the four little girls because of his continued perpetuation of racial hatred in the city of Birmingham and Alabama (“Six Dead, n.d.”).

Only one man was initially arrested for the bombing, Robert Chambliss. He was found not guilty but served jail time for having 122 sticks of dynamite without a permit. The case remained unsolved until incriminating evidence that FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover, had not revealed in the first trial was made available to the prosecution against Chambliss and others involved in the bombing. In 1978, Chambliss was re-tried with a guilty verdict. He served eight years in prison until his death in 1985. In 2000, two more
men, Bobby Cherry and Thomas Blanton, were convicted for their involvement in the bombing (Branch, 1998).

1964—Freedom Summer, Civil Rights workers murdered. June 1964, Freedom Summer, was a large scale attempt to register Black voters across the nation specifically, in the staunch segregationist state of Mississippi. The project was organized by four civil rights organizations: the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). All four groups united made up the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO). Composed of both Blacks and Whites, from the North and South, the Freedom Summer participants were met with much resentment. Much like the freedom riders of 1961, they experienced acts of violence and intimidation for their attempts to defile the South’s segregationist lifestyle. A Black voter in Mississippi was rare and White supremacists such as the Ku Klux Klan members were determined to maintain that status. In fact out of the 422,000 Blacks living in Mississippi, only 28,500 were registered to vote.

During the 10-week Freedom Summer project, over four civil rights workers were killed. Many were critically wounded and/or beaten. More than 1,000 people were arrested including volunteers and locals. The project was not very successful in registering voters. Yet, it was another push toward freedom.

1964—Civil Rights Act. Notwithstanding other victories along the way, the most prominent accomplishment of the Civil Rights Movement was the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Initially introduced by assassinated President John F. Kennedy, the legislation outlawed racial segregation in schools, public
places, and employment. The bill also created and called upon many entities to enforce the new legislation such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, charged with investigating discrimination complaints because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, and disability. Additionally, the act gave power to the Attorney General to file suits against those schools who did not adhere to desegregation. If government agencies receiving federal funding participated in discrimination, they were to be stripped of that funding.

The Act also declared that voting requirements for all races be equal. Prior to the passage of the act, many southern states required that Blacks take literacy tests to qualify to vote. The tests were designed to be especially difficult to ensure that Blacks did not pass. Blacks, in some states, were required to have a White advocate on their behalf to vote.

With the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Blacks had achieved their quest for equal rights at least on paper. Although passing of the legislation did not bring immediate change to Blacks, it began to solidify that change. It also required the Federal Government to take action against discrimination that would greatly impact society, especially America’s south.

*Previous Media Studies about the Civil Rights Movement*

By examining previous research about the media coverage of Blacks and the Civil Rights Movement, a pattern of how the media portrayed Blacks may be established. Radio, television, magazines, newspapers…the media are some of the most influential entities in creating, influencing, and reflecting public opinion and consciousness. It has been deemed by many researchers as capable of shaping societal views and norms.
Because of such power and potential influence, previous researchers assert that the media have a critical responsibility to present news effectively and accurately.

According to Jordan (1960), the mainstream press of the 1950s professed to value objectivity, accuracy, and clarity in news writing. However, mainstream media have been widely criticized for inequitable coverage of race issues. Klein (1967) maintained that news about Blacks often received little attention by the White media before the Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1954. “Some charged that the general news pages before and after the Brown decision failed to address the root problems underlying racial issues and distorted news about Blacks” (Spratt et al., 2007, p.172).

One of the recent studies regarding the media’s coverage of the Civil Rights Movement can be found in Susan Weill’s (2002) book, In a Madhouse’s Din: Civil Rights Coverage by Mississippi Daily Press. This book examines 20 Mississippi Daily Newspapers and their coverage of pivotal Civil Rights Movement events and/or occurrences. Those events included: the Dixiecrat protest at the Democratic National Convention in 1948, the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision, which mandated desegregation in public schools in 1954, James Meredith’s admission to the University of Mississippi in 1962 as the first Black student of record, Freedom Summer in 1964, and the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968.

Every issue of every daily Mississippi newspaper published during the following time periods were examined: July 1948, the month of the Democratic National Convention, May 1954 and August 1954, the month of the Brown v Board of Education decision and the month before school was to begin that year, September 1962, when Meredith enrolled at the University of Mississippi, June through August 1964, Freedom
Summer and April 1968, the month when King was assassinated. Approximately 5,000 issues of Mississippi daily newspapers were examined. From those papers, nearly 1,000 editorials and 7,000 news articles and headlines were recorded and evaluated.

Findings revealed that the overall tone of the newspapers rejected the thought of Blacks and Whites being equal. Specifically, the ideals of integration, desegregation, and equal voting rights were areas in which Mississippi press was not ready to impart upon, a probable reflection of how many Mississippian felt during that time. Weill (2002) also asserts that many of the daily newspapers’ editorials created an “Us” versus “Them” mentality. “Us” represented the White political and power structure favoring separation of the races. “Them” represented all entities that threatened the South’s segregated way of life, such as the U.S. Supreme Court (who mandated that segregation was unconstitutional in 1955) and the federal government (who was charged with carrying out the mandate of the U.S. Supreme Court).

Finally, Weill’s book revealed that Mississippi daily newspapers’ coverage of Civil Rights and race issues between 1948 and 1968 was a failure to both White and Black citizens. Any citizens looking for editorial guidance and/or objective reporting found stories advocating White supremacy and suppression of equal rights for Blacks.

An interesting account of the media’s coverage of the Civil Rights Movement can be found in an article written by John Herbers. A Mississippi newspaperman for United Press International Bureau based in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1962; Herbers wrote a firsthand account of how reporters inside the South covered the happenings of the movement. The article reveals there were many forces that influenced the news content of southern papers. White extremist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and the White
Citizen’s Council intimidated local newspapers to censor stories in support of the movement.

For example, when the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) ordered the desegregation of interstate travel facilities, reporters checked with various cities to see what they planned to do about it. Most planned to continue segregation. However, two Mississippi mayors said they would comply with the ICC order. After the story of the two mayors’ comments was printed, both mayors recanted their remarks. Herbers believed that both mayors changed their stance after being intimidated by members of the pro-segregationist members of the White Citizen’s Council.

As a reporter, Herbers discovered the difficulties of finding out the truth regarding stories involving Blacks, citing people’s reluctance to speak with reporters as a huge barrier. Despite opposition, Herbers stressed the importance of reporting the happenings of the movement so that justice for Blacks may be more apt to prevail (Herbers, 2000).

Muhammad (2003) in an article, “The Black Press: Past and Present,” offers a brief glimpse at the Black press during the Civil Rights Movement. He points out that the role of the Black press was one of protest. In essence, the Black press served as a medium for Blacks to expose the conditions and circumstances surrounding their lives as second class U.S. citizens. They hoped that by exposition, Whites would feel compelled to change their positions against Blacks regarding equal rights.

Publicity was important to the success and growth of the Civil Rights Movement according to Sumner (1998). His article demonstrates that the media were sought out by Civil rights groups and leaders to cover their demonstrations and protests. However, Sumner points out that the media were not uniformly sympathetic to the goals of the
movement. Southern newspapers often ignored or criticized civil rights activities and
demonstrations. “Those editors who supported the movement paid a price with cancelled
subscriptions, advertiser boycotts, or threats of violence…Southern and northern
journalists who covered civil rights activities in the south were often victims of violence”
(p. 374).

“Evaluating the Black Press During the Civil Rights Movement” examined the
role of the Black press in the struggle for civil rights from 1954 through 1968.
Specifically, the study sought to find the frequency, intensity and direction of the papers’
editorials towards nonviolent and militant civil rights groups and their leaders as well as
the controversial issues and campaigns of the era such as riots, sit-ins, and freedom rides.
16 newspapers were chosen from major cities throughout the United States for the
Defender, The Cleveland Call and Post, The Houston Informer, The Pittsburgh Courier,
Kansas City Call, Louisiana Weekly, St. Louis Argus, Indianapolis Recorder, Norfolk
Journal and Guide, Los Angeles Sentinel, Minneapolis Spokesman, San Francisco

In order to assess the opinions of the editorials, a content analysis of the editorials
was rendered. Findings revealed that the majority of the Black press supported the ideals
of the Civil Rights Movement and its cause. In fact, many of the editorials were
favorable towards the more established and respected Black civil rights groups such as
the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the
Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and their nonviolent approaches to
the movement. However, there was less favorable support of militant, radical activist
groups such as the Black Panther Party. A few newspapers expressed favorable attitudes towards the radical philosophies of groups such as the Panthers, including the call for establishing a separate Black nation. Some newspapers were also divided in their support for nonviolent protests such as sit-ins and freedom rides. Editorials by the *St. Louis Argus* showed unfavorable support for sit-ins, boycotts, and the freedom rides. All of the papers had an unfavorable attitude towards riots and looting as a means of protest. The findings from this study reveal that the newspapers were not congruent in how to bring about social change for Blacks. Nonetheless, all of the newspapers supported the ending cause of the movement—equality and justice for Blacks (Hanson, 1997).

In addition to the editorial and news coverage examined during the Civil Rights Movement, some studies examined the portrayal of news photographs. In Schwalbe’s (2006) articles, “Images of Brutality: In the Portrayal of U.S. Racial Violence in News Photographs Published Overseas (1957-1963),” a picture was worth a thousand words. Although the study did not examine U.S. newspaper photographs, it is relevant because many of the photos used in the international papers were taken by U.S. photographers and shared through media organizations such as the Associated Press (AP), which at the time claimed 7,000 users in 80 nations and the United Press International (UPI), which counted 6,400 clients in 103 countries and territories. The study examined four milestones in the civil rights struggle where photographs generated intense overseas reaction: school desegregation in Little Rock Arkansas (1957), attacks on Freedom Riders in Alabama (1961), James Meredith’s enrollment at the University of Mississippi (1962), and the crisis in Birmingham, Alabama (1963).
Through an examination of newspaper photos in Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Africa, and the Middle East, the study established that the inflammatory photos depicting violence against Blacks was very damaging to the U.S. and its stance for democracy. How could a nation grounded on such principle of equality and freedom for all people have such an internal issue of oppression occurring?

Pictures of police officers holding down Blacks, spraying them with fire hoses while fighting back attack dogs—was the general census of the oversees photos. According to interviews with prominent citizens and officials, the photos seemed to fuel anti-American sentiments. Americans visiting countries such as Japan reported that “pictures of Birmingham policeman kneeling on the throat of a Negro woman and a police dog chewing at the vitals of a Negro youth” were damaging American-Japanese relations (Schwalbe, 2006, p.104). Photo captions read “Police dog leaps at youth” and “Negro marchers savaged by police dogs.” Regarding the treatment of Blacks attempting to march in Birmingham, Alabama, London’s News Chronicle wrote, “The scenes have been nauseating and pitiful” (Schwalbe, 2006, p.97). Japan’s major pictorial news magazine, illustrated a two-page spread with scenes of conflict in Little Rock as well as in Birmingham and Nashville. The caption read, “America’s incurable disease” (Schwalbe, 2006, p.98).

The images presented of the racial conditions between Blacks and Whites abroad dampened the nation’s ability to be a world leader and example. President Kennedy said, “Racial discrimination…hampers our world leadership by contradicting at home the message we preach abroad” (Schwalbe, 2006, p.109). In essence, this study revealed
that by showing the world such injustices that undermined democracy, the U.S. was forced to reaffirm its democratic ideals.

Weills (2000) offers a look at how southern women editors covered the movement. According to the author, the majority of southern women editors, like their men counterparts, urged the support of traditional White supremacy and called for resistance to the Civil Rights Movement. Through a content analysis of 247 issues of Mississippi newspapers examining editorials, photos, news articles, guest editorials, letters to the editor, and syndicated opinion columns, she found that only one woman editor or publisher of the Mississippi press, Hazel Brannon Smith, editor of the *Lexington Advertiser*, acknowledged the relevance of the movement and the importance of equal rights for all people, no matter their race. In fact, Smith won the Pulitzer Prize in 1964 for her adherence to her editorial duties in the face of great pressure and opposition (Newman, 2008).

Bond’s (2001) book, *Media, Culture and the Modern African American Freedom Struggle*, examines the history of media portrayal of Blacks in the twentieth century. Bond looks at the interaction between the southern freedom movement and the media to determine how each served the other. By examining coverage of the struggle from 1955-65, Bond credits the national media with giving legitimacy to the previously ignored needs of southern Blacks. Southern journalists, on the other hand, were more cautious in their coverage of local struggles. Bond argues that, although a few moderate journalists urged more accommodation for Blacks in their community, they could not be labeled integrationists by any means. He notes that local newspapers were almost wholly
dependent on White advertisers and subscribers and thus could not be expected to be outright integrationists.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Framing Theory

The theory that will inform this study will be framing theory. The framing theory studies presented will establish that journalist present news in a specific manner—in frames. Each news story consists of certain framing techniques. How the news stories are framed will help develop an understanding as to how Black and White/owned mainstream media portrayed the Civil Rights Movement. Particularly, the framing studies reported in this review of literature will examine what news frames are, what are the different types of news frames, and how they are used in news stories.

According to Watkins (2001), journalism is a professional field established on the morals of reporting news effectively and should serve as a reflection of the society on which it reports. Grimes (2005) also states that journalists have a mission to serve as public watchdogs and witnesses. In essence, journalists’ basic obligation is to tackle tough issues that involve the American people, to investigate them, to study them, to go into them. Through the media, the world is reflected, refracted, represented, imagined, and claimed (Silverstone, 2001).

Thus, researchers assert that news is a man-made cultural product. In the course of making news, journalists often make framing judgments or decisions regarding how to deliver real world events in an understandable manner. Tuchman (1978) states that, “Frames turn unrecognizable happenings or amorphous talk into a discernible event . . . without the frame, they would be happenings of mere talk, incomprehensible sounds” (p.192). Goffman (1974) asserts that, “In order to negotiate, manage, and comprehend a
complex social world, everyone practices framing” (p. 467). Gitlin (1980) acknowledges that “Frames enable journalists to process large amounts of information quickly and routinely: to recognize it as information, to assign it cognitive categories and to package it for efficient relay to their audiences” (p. 7). Journalists’ ability to select and organize data from the world into frames makes the labor of news production more manageable (Watkins, 2001). Entman (1993) states, “the frame in a news text is really the imprint of power—it registers the identity of actors or interests that competed to dominate the text” (p.55). In essence, news frames involve the selection and salience of dominant topics.

The topics of news framing studies span a wide range of social problems, disputes, and protests; including abortion, child mistreatment, welfare, ethnic minorities, women’s issues, affirmative action programs, and terrorist attacks. Because of its wide use, critical researchers consider media framing a tool of power that can be used in the struggle to define whose view of the world will predominate (Hallahan, 1999). Ashley and Olson (1998) claim that social protest groups challenging the norms have been shown to be deviant (abnormal), unimportant, and illegitimate, whereas groups whose beliefs are consistent with society’s norms are made to look important, legitimate, and not deviant.

Those conceptual definitions point out that journalists actively create frames to help package information for efficient delivery to their audiences. Therefore, the framing or presentation of events in the mass media can affect how recipients of the news come to understand those events. Establishing the definition of framing allows an insightful look at the true power the news media have over public expression and opinion. In addition to knowing the function of a frame, it is equally important to note what aspects of a story the media look at when framing a particular event (Scheufele, 1999).
According to Miller and Riechert (2001), journalists use a variety of tactics to analyze a story: text analyses, review of informed writings or discussions, depth or focus group-interviews and ethnography. The media use particular elements of these tactics to establish frames. Frames can be detected by establishing the presence or absence of certain key words. Those keywords do not represent the frames, rather the words are indicative of perspectives by which issues and events can be discussed and interpreted. In addition, Tankard (2001) offers a list of framing mechanisms, or focal points for identifying frames: headlines and kickers, subheads, photographs, photo captions, leads, selection of sources or affiliations, selection of quotes, pull quotes, logos, info graphics, and the concluding statements or paragraphs of articles. All of those things may work together to present an ideological perspective of the articles.

Determining which type of framing to use by the reporter also depends on the different types of news stories or events that are being portrayed. There are several different types of framing used by the media. According to Watkins (2001), three distinct frames situate most news reporting practices: legitimate controversy, consensus, and deviance. Each frame has its own distinct style of news reporting. In the frame of legitimate controversy, journalists strive to achieve objectivity and balance. Legitimate controversy is how most of television news reporting is framed. Examples include coverage of issues that are easily framed in point/counterpoint terms such as presidential elections and abortion.

However, in the consensus frame, journalists stray away from objectivity. Within this area, journalists do not feel compelled to present opposing views or to remain distant observers. In contrast to legitimate controversy, the journalist’s role is to serve as an
advocate or celebrant of consensus values. This type of framing tends to occur during moments of national celebration (presidential inauguration), national crisis (war), or national mourning (death of a prominent figure). In addition to the sphere of legitimate controversy and consensus is deviance, or those persons and events viewed by journalists as outside the boundaries of normative behavior or realm. In cases like these individuals or events become newsworthy precisely because they can be portrayed as violating the taken-for-granted values and beliefs of society in some important way. In this instance, the news becomes a boundary-maintaining mechanism. When operating from this frame, journalists play the role of exposing, condemning, or excluding from the public agenda those who violate or challenge the political consensus. Journalists mark out and defend the limits of acceptable conflict (Watkins, 2001).

Framing Blacks

Usually when journalists cover controversial issues or events that are of concern to the majority of the society, they rely on specific techniques to frame particular stories or events. This is especially evident in the news coverage of minorities. For example, in the coverage of Blacks during the Civil Rights riots of the 1950s, the techniques of legitimate controversy, consensus, and deviance can be identified. Coverage of the riots included the image of angry Blacks, angry police officers, water hoses, police dogs, and clouds of tear gas. These types of images depicted Blacks as disrupters of the peace. It also exposed Blacks as deviant characters, who violated the norms of society through their violent behavior (Hon, 1997).

In addition, the riots were constructed as controversial because they challenged the consensus or the majority of the society, which were the ideals of White America.
During that time, those ideals included the separatism or segregation of Blacks on public buses, in public restaurants, in restrooms, and in public schools. By magnifying the violent images of Blacks rioting and causing chaos, the media served as advocates of the majority of society by condemning the deviant role of Blacks. This type of coverage of Blacks, viewed by Whites, made it difficult for Blacks to obtain their civil rights. With so many images of deviance playing upon the consciousness of Whites, it was difficult to be accepting of Blacks’ quest for equality. Thus, the media’s framing of the civil rights riots made it easy for Whites to exclude Blacks’ efforts to gain their civil rights and to embrace the images that were delivered to them by the media (Domke, 1997).

Another study examined the coverage of mainstream media during the civil rights movement. According to Grimes (2005), the coverage of southern newspapers in particular during the civil rights movement in the United States often silenced the voices of Blacks and their quest for equality. For example, on May 18, 1954, the day following the U.S. Supreme Court’s historic ruling in the case, Brown v. Board of Education, newspaper headlines in cities across the south screamed that it was a “Black day for the south.” The highest court in the land had ruled that the system of separate-but equal public education was unconstitutional. The southern newspapers demonstrated their obvious disagreement with the court’s decision and asserted that it was a “Black day for the south.” In essence, the papers openly argued that separatism and segregation should still apply despite the decision (Williams, 2005).

In further regards to the framing of minorities, Williams’ (2005) article, “Black Radio and Civil Rights: Birmingham, 1956-1963,” offers a look into broadcast media’s coverage of minorities, specifically Blacks. This study explored the way that
Birmingham radio stations covered the civil rights struggle for freedom and equality. Through a content analysis of Black oriented stations in Birmingham—WEDR, WJLD, and WBC, and WENN, the article points out there was little information on the emerging civil rights struggle. This was due to the unwillingness of the stations’ White management to draw attention to the movement. Stay away from politics, no controversial programming on the air; these were the guidelines that had to be followed during this time. Thus, coverage was limited or none.


Findings revealed that coverage of Blacks was limited and often stereotypical. Two Blacks appeared on two *Life* covers in 1937. One picture was of Black children playing in an open city fire hydrant and the other was of a Black man driving a load of watermelons to market. The watermelon theme was featured in another summer issue: a photograph showed a Black woman eating watermelon while nursing her child. The caption beneath the picture said, “Nothing makes a Negro’s mouth water like a luscious fresh picked melon. Any Colored ‘mammy’ can hold a huge slice in one hand while holding her offspring in the other” (Sentman, 1983, p.506).

This study also revealed there was a higher percentage of White everyday coverage than Black everyday coverage. Everyday life consisted of ordinary people engaged in the regular events of living such as farming, church activities, etc. Instead coverage of Blacks included their roles as entertainers, athletes, and criminals. Although there was an increase after the civil rights movement in the coverage of Blacks, coverage still
constituted less than three percent in 1972. In essence, Life failed to provide its audience with an opportunity for equal exposure to the everyday life of Blacks as it had Whites (Sentman, 1983).

The same types of frames presented by the media during the Civil Rights riots emerged during the coverage of the 1992 Los Angeles Riots (L.A. riots). Sparked by the delivery of a not-guilty verdict rendered to White police officers accused of the brutal beating of a Black man named Rodney King, the news coverage of the L.A. riots captured the retaliating images of Blacks burning buildings, looting stores and others participating in physical violence such as the vivid beating of a White truck driver, Roger Dennings. Local television stations, via cameras mounted to helicopters and crews on the ground, covered the event and broadcast it live interrupting scheduled programs and again recapping the event on the evening news of all major television networks (Heider, 1997).

Once again, the role of Blacks seen in the media left them labeled in a deviant manner and presented them in a controversial way. The media depicted Blacks as disruptive and as criminals. Portrayed by the media in this manner, Blacks found it difficult to justify their reasons for their anger. Just as the riots of the Civil Rights era, their quest for justice was overlooked and their anger and disruptiveness exploited. This framing of social protest is common news practice (Heider, 1997). According to Ashley and Olson (1998),

News media can frame a protest group in several ways: by ignoring it, burying the article in the back section, by the description given to the protestors, reporting the events rather than the group’s goals and interests, trivializing the protest by making
light of their dress, language, age, style, or goals, or marginalizing viewpoints by attributing them to a social deviant. (pp. 263-264)

Research on Media Framing of Blacks

Despite the responsibility of the media to report news effectively and accurately, this review of literature reveals that mainstream media’s coverage of Blacks suggests that White male gatekeepers have consistently attempted to block images of Blacks that were not a part of the White experience (struggle, oppression, inequality). Research reveals that this has been the pattern of mainstream media’s coverage from the civil rights era to present. Blacks were often portrayed as disturbers of the peace rather than as peacemakers, as rioters rather than as peaceful demonstrators. Therefore, it is necessary that marginalized groups present their own standpoints. In essence, the ideas of the oppressed can offer a more substantial vision of truth that will contribute to a less repressive society. In order to examine that minority vision, this study will examine a minority media’s portrayal of themselves in comparison with mainstream media during a controversial period—the Civil Rights Movement, namely 1954-1964.

Significance of Study

Although previous studies have examined Black media coverage of the Civil Rights Movement, no other study has examined the Civil Rights Movement utilizing the combination of newspapers suggested by this study. The newspapers that will be utilized in this study cover many regions/sites in which many pivotal Civil Rights activities took place. Also, many Civil Rights Movement studies examine media regarding single, specific Civil Rights Movement events rather than examining the media coverage of the
entire movement. By examining the entire movement, a more pertinent picture of how the Civil Rights Movement was covered can be obtained.

This study will examine the coverage of Blacks during the Civil Rights Movement in eight U.S. newspapers, four Black and four White-owned/mainstream newspapers. Another shared uniqueness of the study is that all four pairs of the Black/White newspapers share four same city/states—two from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; two from Chicago, Illinois; two from Birmingham, Alabama; and two from Jackson, Mississippi. The White-owned/mainstream newspapers will include The Clarion Ledger, The Chicago Tribune, The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, and The Birmingham News. The Black-owned newspapers will include The Jackson Advocate, The Chicago Defender, The Pittsburgh Courier, and The Birmingham World. Further explanation of the newspapers and why they were chosen for analysis have been noted below.

About the Newspapers

Newspapers were chosen as the text of analysis because there were more Black owned newspapers than radio or television stations during that time. In addition, print news often provides more in depth accounts of events than radio and television. Although this study is focused on discovering the Black media’s coverage of the Civil Rights Movement through their media, it is necessary to utilize White-owned mainstream newspapers to bring out the differences in the coverage of Black newspapers (Spratt et al., 2007).

It is also important to note the exact circulations for each year of study 1954-1964, for many of the Black newspapers as well as the mainstream newspapers, were difficult to obtain. Phone calls were made to several of the newspapers and none had circulation
for each of the years under study. “Some newspapers had both paid subscribers and free
distribution. Therefore asking editors and publishers to supply circulation statistics of
their newspapers was not necessarily a reliable method of obtaining information; for
various reasons, they may be inclined to exaggerate their circulation figures” (Clark,
1989, p.18). Previous research studies regarding the civil rights movement and newspaper
coverage that referenced some of the same newspapers used in this study also did not
have such circulation information for every year, 1954-1964.

The Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) was also referenced in an attempt to find
out circulation for the eight newspapers used in this study. Founded in 1914, ABC was
the world’s first circulation auditing organization. As a third party watchdog for the
industry, ABC provided potential advertisers and other consumers with accurate
information regarding newspaper readership. However, it was solely up to the newspaper
and/or publisher to voluntarily undergo circulation audits (“Audit Bureau, n.d.”). ABC
was not subscribed to by many Black newspapers. In fact in 1972, after the period of
analysis for this study, only 17 Black newspapers across the entire nation were members
of ABC (Clark, 1989).

Thus, the circulation information that is provided in this section came from the
slight amount of information provided by the newspapers and their publishers and by the
previous studies about those particular newspapers used in this study.

White-Owned Newspapers

*Birmingham News.* Initially named, *The Evening News*, this Birmingham, Alabama
newspaper was founded in 1888 by Rufus N. Rhodes; only 17 years after the city of
Birmingham began. The paper became the *Birmingham News* in 1895.
Located in a city where several violent incidents were committed against Blacks during the 1950s and 1960s, *Birmingham News* will offer a very close account of civil rights events such as bombings and unrestrained violence against Freedom Riders (Friedman & Richardson, 2008). Such events placed Birmingham, Alabama under media scrutiny when images of police brutality against Black protestors appeared on the front pages of major U.S. newspapers. Eskew (1993) argues that the climax of the civil rights struggle occurred in Birmingham.

By the early 1900s, circulation of the newspaper had reached 40,000. Afterwards, the editor declared the title of “The South’s Greatest Newspaper.” Currently, *Birmingham News* is the largest seven day newspaper in Alabama with a daily circulation of 145,655 (Flournoy, 2003).

*Chicago Tribune.* Founded on June 10, 1847, this White-owned daily newspaper currently has a circulation of 541,663 and 898,703 on Sundays. During the American Civil War, the newspaper pushed an abolitionist agenda and strongly supported Abraham Lincoln, who signed the 1862 Emancipation Proclamation freeing slaves in the South. This paper will be included in this analysis because it shares the same city and state as the Black newspaper, *The Chicago Defender.* Additionally, as a Northern White-owned newspaper, it could potentially help highlight what was unique in the Southern newspapers’ coverage (Spratt et al., 2007).

Consisting of a growing Black population, migrants from the conditions of the South; Chicago, Illinois, was perhaps a reflection of a pool of Blacks yearning for a chance at equality. It will be interesting to see how the *Chicago Tribune* reported on the happenings of the Civil Rights Movement.
The Clarion Ledger. A major role player in the history of Mississippi, this newspaper has been around since 1837. It is one of only a few newspapers in the nation that continues to circulate statewide. ("Chancellor Comments Clarion Ledger, 2005"). From 1954-1964, the paper’s circulation was above 50,000, ranking it as one of the top three newspapers in Mississippi during the Civil Rights Era (Weill, 2002). Like The New York Times, this paper was referred to by many books and articles examining the media coverage of the Civil Rights Movement (Bramlett, 1987; Flourney, 2003; Thomas, 2004). However, it was not applauded for its objectivity. Rather, the newspaper was often referred to as having a pro-segregationist point of view. The paper’s point of view was said to be influenced by the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission (Sovereignty Commission) and the Citizens Council, both established after the landmark Brown v. Board of Education ruling against the constitutionality of segregation in public schools. The court case basically stated that the constitution could not uphold that it was acceptable for Whites and Blacks to attend different schools because Blacks would then be robbed of the chance at an equal education. Most southern states such as Mississippi wanted to keep the system of segregation. However, the Brown v. Board of Education demanded that way of living end.

The Sovereignty Commission and the Citizens Council were both created as a direct result of losing this court case. The Sovereignty Commission was created by the Mississippi legislature in 1956 and the Citizens Council was formed in 1954. The duty of each organization was to ensure that Mississippi continued with its way of life—separation of the races (despite the court ruling). Led by the governor, lieutenant governor, the House speaker, the attorney general, two state senators, three state
representatives, and three citizens; the Sovereignty Commission was in essential opposition to the goals of the Civil Rights Movement and so was the Citizen’s Council, led by prominent White community citizens. The Commission and the Citizen’s Council sought to inform the northern United States of the advantages of a segregated society and that Mississippi was happy with their way of life (Cantrell, 2004).

The Sovereignty Commission provided money to the Citizens Council to harass anyone who threatened their way of life. This included civil rights activists, both Blacks and Whites. Additionally, the Sovereignty Commission along with the Citizens Council tried very hard to control the journalistic practices of newspapers regarding the coverage of the Civil Rights Movement and related activities. *The Clarion Ledger* along with other newspapers came under their direct influence (“Sovereignty Commission, n.d.”; Watts, 2001; Weill, 1993).

Instead of being a beacon of light for the conditions of Blacks, *The Clarion Ledger* became infamous as a symbol of everything wrong with Mississippi in the 1950s and 60s. In essence, the newspaper was considered along with much of the south to have a pro-segregationist stance against the goals of the Civil Rights Movement (“Chancellor Comments Clarion Ledger, 2005”; Rolph, 2004). Previous research regarding the Civil Rights Movement seems to suggest that the *Clarion Ledger’s* methods of reporting on the Civil Rights Movement seemed to conform to the goals of the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission and the Citizen’s Council. This study will attempt to explore that suggestion. The *Clarion Ledger’s* current daily circulation is 97,421.

*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.* The first newspaper west of the Allegheny Mountains, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* began publishing on July 29, 1786. One of the newspaper’s first
public services was the printing of the newly adopted Constitution of the United States in 1787. By 1841, the newspaper was known for promoting the expansion of the nation and fighting for the abolition of slavery. What began as a four-page weekly turned into a daily newspaper around 1829. Over the years, the newspaper has undergone several name changes:

1786 to 1828: *The Pittsburgh Gazette*

1828: *Pittsburgh Gazette and Manufacturing and Mercantile Advertiser*

1829 to 1866: *Pittsburgh Gazette*

1866 to 1900: *Commercial Gazette*

1900 to 1927: *The Gazette-Times*

1927 to present: *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pittsburgh Gazette)*

In Clarke Thomas’ (2004) book, *Front-Page Pittsburgh: Two Hundred Years of the Post-Gazette*, the author examines the history of the newspaper’s stories and how they were gathered. He points out that the paper is a survivor because it has emerged as a dominant paper in a major U.S. city despite undergoing several name changes, ownership sales, numerous mergers, and a competitive landscape once populated by more than 50 newspapers. Thomas also asserts that the Post-Gazette was one of the last papers standing following a devastating labor strike among newspapers in Pittsburgh in 1992.

In his chapter, *Race and Government*, Thomas reveals that the paper’s editorial positions frequently came under fire. Specifically, many readers did not agree with the newspaper’s support of the Civil Rights Movement and school desegregation in the 1960s. Other readers felt the paper’s editorials were always crossing back and forth between political, religious, and racial lines. However, the controversies surrounding the
newspaper’s editorial stances seemed to translate into a wide readership over the years. *The Post-Gazette* was chosen to be included in this study for several reasons: It shares the same city and state as the major Black-owned newspaper being used in this study (*Pittsburgh Courier*)–Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Also, it is the oldest existing White-owned newspaper that existed during the Civil Rights Movement. *The Post Gazette* was not used in any of the previous Civil Rights Movement studies researched or used in this study. Thus, an examination of the newspaper will provide a new contributing viewpoint to civil rights studies. There were other major White-owned newspapers such as the *Philadelphia Tribune* (used in other civil rights studies) that was considered. However, for the sake of the study’s goal to have one major White-owned and one Black-owned newspaper from the same city and state, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* was the best choice.

**Black-Owned Newspapers**

*The Jackson Advocate*. Founded in 1938, *The Jackson Advocate* has been deemed a controversial Black newspaper. It has been both praised and criticized for its coverage of the Civil Rights Movement. Although it did not have the circulation power of some of the larger newspapers in this study, this small weekly in Jackson, MS, was witness to many important Civil Rights events. Sharing the same city and state as the infamous *Clarion Ledger*, this newspaper was also subject to local laws and institutions trying to suppress the voice of the Black community and the Civil Rights Movement. Editor and activist Percy Greene was paid by the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission to write editorials that spoke against integration of the races and that embraced a segregationist lifestyle. Davies’ (2001) book, *The Press and Race* dedicates a chapter exploring the
editorial path of Percy Greene. The book asserts that his editorial practices gained high praise and criticism. In a review of Green’s editorials in congruence with oral accounts of his acquaintances, he was remembered as a bold editor who spoke up for Blacks’ rights. There were others who remembered him as a sell out to the Black community.

Prior to the late 1950s and 1960s (which marks Greene’s years of involvement with the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission) Percy Greene’s efforts on behalf of the Civil Rights Movement solidified his trust and approval from the Black community. He supported Black involvement in World War II. Additionally, he spoke out against segregation in the armed forces and the mistreatment of Black soldiers. Greene strongly supported voting rights and actively supported voter registration drives. By the end of the 1940s, the *Jackson Advocate* editor was well known and respected throughout the Black society and by 1950; the newspaper had a healthy circulation of 5,500. In 1946, Greene received a “certificate of award” for courage in journalism from the nation’s leading Black newspaper, the *Chicago Defender*, recognizing his work from Washington, D.C.’s Institute on Race Relations. Greene also received awards from the Mississippi Association of Colored Teachers and the *Pittsburgh Courier*.

It was after Greene’s paid relationship with the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission, a secretive state agency created to spy and plot against those who supported integration, that his image and editorial practices were said to have changed for the worse. Davies’ (2001) chapter exploring Percy Greene and the *Jackson Advocate* presents more than a dozen editorials as evidence of Greene’s support for continued segregation. Additionally, Greene’s writings turned to attacks against desegregation and the ideals of Black activists such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His relationship with the
Commission continued to grow from the late 1950s until the 1960s. As a result, Greene’s legacy as a bold Civil Rights journalist during the 1930s and 1940s was deeply affected. There is much controversy among historians as to whether he should be commended or condemned for his voice during the Civil Rights Movement.

One may assert that the *Jackson Advocate* cannot serve as a true representation of Black media because its editor was being paid to speak against Black hopes of integration. However, despite being on the payroll of the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission, Percy Greene and *The Jackson Advocate* are just as vital as *The Chicago Defender* or any other Black owned newspaper in examining the voice of the Black community. Cantrell (2004) asserts that Black southern newspapers found a way to disguise information helpful to the Civil Rights Movement despite intimidation by organizations such as the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission. Many Blacks feared the angry Whites of the Sovereignty Commission, the Citizens Council and the community if they did not comply with their tactics. Thus, some Black editors opted to do without an opinion section or they disguised their editorials within larger stories to avoid scrutiny. According to Thompson (1993), many southern newspapers were under the same influence as the *Jackson Advocate* and were urged to let the happenings of the Civil Rights Movement go unnoticed or unmagnified. All Black press had reason to fear the state government and its agent, the Sovereignty Commission, which had the power to curb the press’s effectiveness or to coerce it outright through direct payments to editors.

In essence, it may be too presumptuous to declare before a thorough examination that the *Jackson Advocate* followed the rules of the Sovereignty Commission in every single issue for the entire Civil Rights Movement or even for the major part of the
movement. Davies’ (2001) book offers only a dozen or so editorials to support that assertion over a period of nine years (1956-1965). Other critics such as Thompson’s (1993) book examining the Black press in Mississippi from 1865-1985 offers plenty of selected and similar criticisms of Greene’s relationship with the Sovereignty Commission. However, do these selections suggest that the bad outweighed the good of this Black newspaper? Perhaps, the Jackson Advocate like other Black southern newspapers found a way to place their editorials/opinions within larger stories to avoid scrutiny.

Also, editorials usually occupy a smaller space than news articles. Although editorials can offer a clear stance on particular issues, news articles can offer a multiplicity of stories and viewpoints about the happenings in society. Davies’ (2001) exploration of Greene and the Jackson Advocate only explored editorials. This study will offer a thorough examination of the newspaper from 1954-1964 of the editorials as well as relevant news articles. It will be interesting to see if the legislative influences of Mississippi and the southern way of life had a true impact on the Civil Rights Movement news coverage of The Jackson Advocate or if its influence was only present in the editorials. Additionally, it will be important to compare a Black newspaper under the influence of the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission with that of a White owned one—The Clarion Ledger (“Jim Crow Press, n.d.”; Watts, 2001; Weill, 1993).

The Chicago Defender. The Chicago Defender was chosen because it is a well-known Black newspaper. Founded in 1905, the newspaper has been recognized as the voice of the Black community in Chicago, Illinois, and across the United States. During the Civil Rights Movement, the newspaper was quick to speak out against lynching, racism, and
segregation. As a northern paper, it had more freedom to denounce issues and its editorial positions often attacked racial inequalities head on (“Chicago Defender, n.d.”).

*The Chicago Defender* heralded itself as the “World’s Greatest Weekly” for the Black community in America. More than two thirds of the paper’s readership base was located outside of Chicago. The newspaper had several correspondents all over the south and it always ran major stories in areas such as Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Alabama. The paper often had to be smuggled into the South because White distributors refused to circulate it. Many groups such as the Ku Klux Klan tried to confiscate it or threatened its readers. Nonetheless, it became the first Black newspaper to have a circulation of over 100,000. In 1956, *The Chicago Defender became The Chicago Daily Defender*, the largest Black-owned daily in the country. It continues to thrive as one of the most prestigious newspapers in the nation and is credited with being the voice of the Black community during the Civil Rights Movement (“Chicago Defender, n.d.”).

*The Pittsburgh Courier*. Founded in 1907, *The Pittsburgh Courier* once stood out as the nation’s most widely circulated Black newspaper. Promoting the empowerment of Blacks and the need for improvements in their housing, health, and educational dilemmas was the primary focus of the newspaper’s news coverage before and during the Civil Rights Movement.

To truly understand the importance of utilizing this newspaper, it is important to take a brief historical look at the paper’s history of covering issues concerning Blacks. In the early 1930s, *The Pittsburgh Courier* openly and avidly protested against misrepresentations of Blacks in the mainstream media. Specifically, the newspaper petitioned to have the Amos n’ Andy daily radio serial removed from the air because they
felt the show offered negative portrayals of Blacks. The newspaper’s quest for improvements in the lives of Blacks was also evident in its successful “Double V” campaign. The campaign suggested that Blacks who were fighting in World War II should receive full citizenship rights at home. Many news articles, editorials, letters, and photographs promoted the campaign (“Pittsburgh Courier, n.d.”).

During the Civil Rights Movement, the newspaper continued its legacy of being a voice for the Black community. The paper openly denounced segregation in sports, transportation, and housing. Additionally, The Pittsburgh Courier encouraged Blacks to take charge and become active politically, economically, and socially. In 1965, the newspaper was sold to John Sengstacke, owner and publisher of the Chicago Defender.

*Birmingham World.* Many of the major events that occurred during the Civil Rights Movement occurred in Alabama. In fact, a catalyst for beginning the modern Black Civil Rights Movement began with a specific event in Montgomery, Alabama, in December of 1955. Rosa Parks, a Black seamstress, was arrested for not giving up her seat to a White passenger, as required by Montgomery city ordinance. The arrest of Mrs. Parks influenced a boycott against the city’s bus line that would last an entire year. Moreover, Mrs. Parks and the Montgomery bus boycott led to many nationwide demonstrations and protest marches for other injustices against Blacks. As the site of so many vital Civil Rights Movement events, choosing an Alabamian newspaper will be useful to this study. From the 1963 church bombings in Birmingham, which killed four young girls to the 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery, where police officers attacked peaceful Civil Rights demonstrators (an event that became the infamous “Bloody Sunday”), Alabama, like Mississippi has a rich history of activities and occurrences that are major memories
of the Civil Rights Movement. An analysis of the content of a newspaper in Alabama like the *Birmingham World*, during this era may provide a useful eyewitness account of Civil Rights events.

The Alabama newspaper chosen for this study was the *Birmingham World*, a bi-weekly newspaper from 1940-1969. During the Civil Rights Movement, this newspaper focused on covering issues concerning Blacks’ quest for equality ("*Birmingham World*, n.d."). The paper’s editor, Emory Jackson was a huge supporter of the Civil Rights Movement promoting Black voting rights and economic and social integration in all areas of the Black way of life. Led by this strong Civil Rights activist, the newspaper was considered a strong force in the Black community in Birmingham. Citizens of Birmingham relied heavily on *Birmingham World* for any information concerning Blacks, a subject usually absent from the city’s White-owned newspaper—*Birmingham News* (Davis, 2006).

*Putting the Pieces Together: Theoretical Perspectives Revisiting Framing Theory*

Recall, this study employs framing theory. This theory asserts that journalists actively create frames to help package information for efficient delivery to their audiences (Scheufele, 1999). News frames can be detected by establishing the presence or absence of certain key words. Those key words or lack of them can be discussed and interpreted. Tankard (2001), proclaims there are certain focal points for identifying frames: headlines and kickers, photographs, leads, selection of sources or affiliation, concluding statements or paragraphs of articles.
By applying framing theory, the researcher will explore what frames journalists employed in their coverage of the Civil Rights Movement. The focal points that will be examined in this study will be news articles, editorials, headlines, and photos. Thus, the following research questions are proposed:

RQ 1  How does Black and White-owned newspapers use the framing elements of article/headline descriptors, article placement/length, and photographic sentiment regarding the Civil Rights Movement?

RQ 2  What are the major subjects/themes in the news articles and editorials in both the Black-owned and White-owned newspapers regarding the Civil Rights Movement?

RQ 3  What are the dominant perspectives of the news articles and/or editorials in the Black-owned news articles/editorials in comparison with the White-owned newspapers regarding the Civil Right Movement?

RQ 4  How does each same city/state newspaper compare/contrast to each other in regards to their use of all framing categories?
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY


As previously stated, those newspapers were chosen for analysis as opposed to radio and television because there were more Black owned newspapers operating during that time frame. Black newspapers, particularly community newspapers are one of the strongest means of communication for Blacks and have always provided a powerful means of disseminating useful news and views. In fact establishing their own newspapers offered a vital opportunity for Blacks to voice their opinions. The researcher proposes a framing analysis of the articles/editorials of the eight newspapers related to the Black Civil Rights issues.

Framing Analysis

Framing analysis allows researchers to measure the content of messages embedded within texts. Framing analysis has particularly been used to analyze messages in communication studies, news, politics, and social movements. This method of analysis is especially important to explaining the process of this study which will examine the media coverage of the Civil Rights Movement. By using framing analysis, researchers are able to identify and analyze occurrences of specific messages and message characteristics.
Through an examination of words and phrases appearing in headlines, quotes, the concluding paragraphs of sentences, etc, a meaning of the texts can be derived (Frey et al., 2000)

Sample

As stated, the selected texts to be analyzed will be White-owned newspapers, *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, The Chicago Tribune, The Clarion Ledger, and The Birmingham News*; and Black-owned newspapers: *The Pittsburgh Courier, The Chicago Defender, The Jackson Advocate, and The Birmingham World*. All newspapers will be collected via microfilm because hard copies of the papers were unavailable due to the time frame of analysis which will span from 1954 to 1964. It should be noted that this time frame was chosen because it reflected the beginning and ending of many of the most significant moments of the Civil Rights Movement. Within that time frame (1954-1964), only the media’s coverage of specific events will be examined.

Below is a list of each year to be examined, its corresponding event or events and the exact date of occurrence of the event to be analyzed. If the event was pre-planned such as an important court decision or a specific date of school integration, the time frame of analysis will be at least two weeks prior to and after that event. However, if the event was spontaneous or breaking news (unexpected) such as a murder or an act of violence, the time frame of analysis will be two weeks from the start of the event. The only exception to the latter will be the news coverage of the Emmett Till murder. Assessment of the media’s coverage of this story will cover the duration of the indictment and acquittal of his alleged murderers.
Major Civil Rights Events

May of 1954

Brown v. Board of Education—May 17th

Aug-Dec. of 1955

Emmett Till Murder—Aug 28th-November 30th

Rosa Park’s refusal to move to the back of the Bus—December 1st

November 1956

U.S. Supreme Court rules that segregation in Montgomery, Alabama buses is unconstitutional

September of 1957

Little Rock Nine integrates all-White Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas

September of 1958

September 20th Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is stabbed in the chest by Izola Ware Curry, a Black woman, at his first book signing, Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story

February and March of 1960

Sit-ins

June-August of 1961

Freedom Riders

October of 1962

James Meredith’s entrance into University of Mississippi

June 12th-June 30th, August 28th - September 30th, of 1963 (this time frame covers 3 major events)

Murder of Medgar Evers on June 12th
March on Washington on August 28th
Birmingham, Alabama Bomb kills 4 girls on September 15th

January 23rd-February 5th; June 1st-June 30th; July 2nd-July 31st; August 4th-August 30th of 1964

Freedom Summer, a massive effort to register Black voters in the South
Civil Rights Act of 1964 is signed—July 2nd

Three Civil Rights workers murdered—Their buried bodies found on August 4th

No other notable events regarding the Civil Rights Movement emerged during the process of research, thus they were not added to the study.

Framing Categories of Analysis

Once the articles were gathered, each were analyzed according to the following framing variables: name of newspaper, date of publication, story/editorial subject/theme, dominant perspective in the subjects/themes, intensity of coverage (article placement, article length), characterization of article’s leading figure(if applicable), headline descriptor(s), photographic sentiment, and photographic manifest image. Those categories were generated from the review of literature regarding my subject.

The type of newspaper and date of publication identified general information such as the name of the newspaper and its date of publication. Characterization of the article’s leading figure will deal with how the leading character(s), notable figures and/or group(s) are portrayed in articles and editorials. This variable or frame will be divided into three sub-categories—favorable, unfavorable, and neutral. In order to determine how an article or editorial characterizes the leading figure and/or group, the language of the article will be examined. An article/editorial that mentions the group or figure could be said to
portray the group or him/her favorably if the adjectives and/or language used to describe the character advocates, supports and/or empathizes with the character’s efforts to obtain any or all of the goals of the Civil Rights Movement—equal rights for Blacks.

Additionally, an article/editorial that sympathizes with a character/group that has been the victim of violence or oppressive behavior and is critical of his/her opponents can be said to have a favorable portrayal of the character. An article that mentions the group or figure could be said to portray the group or him/her unfavorably if the adjectives and/or language used to describe the character opposes and challenges a character/group(s) goals of establishing equal rights or any other specific goals of the Civil Rights Movement such as voting rights, etc. Also, an article/editorial that criticizes the actions of the leading character’s efforts to achieve the goals of the Civil Rights Movement could be said to be unfavorable. Describing a leading figure as a peace breaker and/or perpetrator against the ideal of segregation can also be viewed as an unfavorable portrayal. An article that mentions the group or figure in neither a favorable nor unfavorable way could be said to portray the group or him/her neutrally. In essence, an article that characterizes the Black figure or group neutrally presents the article with objectivity simply stating the facts without criticism or favor, without advocacy or opposition.

The second category was subject/theme, which is concerned with determining the focus or topic of the article/editorial. Subject/theme categories may fall under the following themes, but are not limited to these: Depictions of civil rights activist groups/leaders, general civil rights movement issues such as: Segregation and/or Integration of Schools, Segregation and/or Integration of Public Transportation or other areas of American Society, Equal Employment Opportunities for Blacks (Boycotts),
Voting rights issues, Civil Rights Legislative Acts, Landmark court cases, Protests/Demonstrations/Marches, Acts of Violence against Civil Rights Activists, Acts of Violence against Black Citizens, and Civil Rights Major Leader assassinations. These themes were derived from the official timeline created on the Civil Rights Movement that lists all major occurrences of the movement as well as on a thorough reading of studies pertaining to the movement (“Civil Rights,” n.d.). Although an article may include more than one subject, only the article’s most dominant focus will be assigned it.

The third category is dominant perspective. Semantic devices such as language use will be examined. Specifically, the use of catch phrases, word choice, adjectives, descriptors, and exemplars will be examined in the dominant perspective category. This category is aimed at discovering the standpoint of the articles regarding subjects and themes about the Civil Rights Movement. Which side of the fence did the article/editorial appear to take regarding the subject of interest or was the article neutral in its depiction of the subject/theme? Were the articles/editorials advocates, opponents, or mere reporters of the Civil Rights Movement cause? The article/editorial dominant perspectives can fit into three categories pro, anti, or neutral. If the article’s dominant perspective is pro, it is considered in favor of the subject. If the article’s stance is anti, it is considered in opposition of the subject. If the article is neither pro nor anti, it is considered neutral. An article could be said to have a pro stance if it shows support towards subjects/themes that embrace the efforts of the Civil Rights Movement to gain equality for Blacks. For example, any article that speaks against the ideals of segregation, inequality, racism, and discrimination towards Blacks could be said to have a pro stance. On the other hand, an article that uses language to support the ideals of the
subject segregation, disunity among the races, and/or all subjects that oppose the goals of the Civil Rights Movement can be considered to have an anti stance regarding that particular subject/theme. An article could be said to have a neutral stance if it does not utilize language that shows favor or disfavor regarding the subject. In essence, the article presents the subject with objectivity or simply states the facts or happenings of the time regarding the subject.

Each article will also be examined for intensity of coverage and/or frequency of article placement and length. Articles that are newsworthy or important are usually devoted more space than other articles. In addition, articles of importance are usually placed on the front or front-inside page while less significant articles are usually placed in the middle or toward the back of the paper or section. The articles’ placement will be determined according to the categories defined by each newspaper because of the varying page lengths of each newspaper. The total number of words that make up each article will be counted. Thus, article placement and length will be used to determine the intensity of coverage of the articles.

Additionally, each headline will be analyzed for the specific use of adjectives. Those adjectives will be categorized as positive, negative, or neutral. An adjective could be said to be positive if it referred to positive traits of Blacks and/or Civil Rights Activists and/or the movement such as unifiers and advocates of peace. An adjective could be said to be negative if it referred to the groups as racists or disturbers of the peace. An adjective could be said to be neutral if it referred to neither negative nor positive attributes of those groups.
Finally, the photographs in the newspapers will be analyzed for their pictorial depictions of Blacks and the Civil Rights movement. Specifically, the photographs will be analyzed to see what types of images of the movement were projected by the newspapers and what the sentiments of those photographs were.

In regards to Photographic Sentiment, this category will be divided into two sub-categories—Antagonistic and Non-Antagonistic. A photograph that portrays Blacks, activists, and/or the Movement in a manner that follows the goals of the Civil Rights movement, the American constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Emancipation Proclamation, all of which promoted—unity, peace, and equal rights for all, could be said to be favorable of the movement or have a Non-Antagonistic tone. For example, nonviolent marches and demonstrations could be seen as non-antagonistic pictures. If a photo reveals Blacks, activists, and/or the Movement as victims of police brutality or forcefulness, it could also be viewed as Non-Antagonistic as it reveals the radical lawlessness and lack of decency of White authorities/foes of the movement. In essence, these photos often drew sympathy from American citizens and other countries because of the brutality and oppression demonstrated against Blacks. A picture of police dogs and water hoses being forced on Blacks could also be considered Non-Antagonistic to the movement.

However, photographs that portrayed Blacks and the Civil Rights Movement as disturbers of the peace or as agitators could be said to be unfavorable towards the movement or Antagonistic. For example, a confrontational picture of a Black man and an officer, in which a photo is taken of a Black man punching the officer in the aftermath of the officer hitting the Black man, a peaceful protestor, could be considered Antagonistic
to the movement because it portrays the Black man as a disturber of the peace rather than as a peaceful demonstrator defending himself. Also, a photograph degrading Blacks, such as a stereotypical photo of a woman eating watermelon with a caption describing her as lazy could also be considered Antagonistic to the movement.

Photographic Manifest Value image will represent the subject of the photo taken. What was the photo about? In essence, manifest asserts those things on the surface only. The categories for the Photographic Manifest Value image will be the same as those for the subject/theme category. In essence, photos presented in newspapers usually correlate with the news stories. They are likely to convey the same or similar meanings.

It is believed that these framing categories outlined above will allow us to see how each news article/editorial and photo has been framed from the standpoint of their overall ideological perspective of the Civil Rights Movement.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

The following section will present the findings/results in a three-point manner:
Each individual newspaper results will be reported first followed by a summary of the findings, and then finally, the results will be situated according to the research questions proposed by the study.

Individual Results

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

1954 Brown vs. Board of Education. Four articles, three editorials, and two photos were printed in the Gazette regarding the Supreme Court’s landmark decision to end segregation. All four articles had a neutrally dominant perspective and a neutral headline. All articles also appeared in the front section of the newspaper. Two articles were 501-1000 words while the other two were 500 words or less. As for the editorials, all three had pro dominant perspectives but neutral headlines. Two of the editorials were less than 500 words and the other was 501-1000 words. One photo was neutral and the other was non-antagonistic.

“The Supreme Court ruled today that the states of the nation do not have the right to separate Negro and White pupils in different public schools,” (“Segregation Ban,” 1954, p. 1),—that was the opening statement of one of the two articles printed by the Gazette. The paper cautioned that the ruling would not end segregation at once and that further hearings would be held to decide when and how to end the practice of segregation. The paper also provided reactions of several senators and other government officials in its other articles. Specifically, the paper described the reactions of some Southern leaders as
being “bitter” and “near defiance.” One governor in particular was pointed out. The rhetoric of Georgia, Governor Herman Talmadge was referenced by the Gazette as “the most violent in his reaction” (“Segregation Ban,” 1954, p. 1). Talmadge declared, “The U.S. Supreme Court by its decision today has reduced our constitution to a mere scrap of paper” (“Segregation Ban,” 1954, p. 1). The Gazette did not offer its own opinion about the decision in the article.

Yet, in its editorials, the Gazette openly applauded the Supreme Court’s decision against racial segregation in public schools and suggested that every fair-minded American should also. The paper said the decision was not surprising given the change in the social climate of the country. In many other arenas of everyday living such as in the armed forces, institutions of higher learning, and in job opportunities, segregation had been brought to an end pointed out the Gazette.

In addition to welcoming and supporting the court’s decision, the Gazette told about the difficulties the South would face trying to implement the law such as the economic cost to equalize and integrate Black and White schools. The paper also expressed the complexity that would exist in trying to change the South’s segregated way of life which often times included hostile climates of public opinion. Nonetheless the editorial concluded that the South and those promoting segregation would one day look back and see that the court’s decision released a great social burden. In essence, this particular Gazette editorial saw the court’s decision to be beneficial overall despite the hardships that may be ahead.

Although, the paper admitted the benefit of the Court’s decision, in its next two editorials, the Gazette spent much time elaborating on the difficulties that would be
brought on by the court’s decision. Specifically, the paper believed that with the economic strain put on the South to upgrade its facilities and increase its number of students that the immediate gains for students would not be promising. The paper described that it would take a couple billion dollars—money the South did not have to fix the economic side of the problem. However, the paper revealed that equal facilities may not help with the educational gaps between Blacks and Whites. “How will Negro students who have not been equally educated fair in the classroom? Will they not because of inferior educational background, find themselves handicapped, and will this not intensify the “inferiority complex” which the Supreme Court cited as one reason for its decision?” (“Thompson,” 1954, p. 10), asked the paper.

The Gazette’s editorial view of the court’s decision appeared to be multidimensional celebrating the civil victory that finally a Black student would have the opportunity at an equal education. Yet, the paper does not take the decision at face value but interrogates what it really means for the South and the Nation—great difficulties economically, educationally, and socially.

The paper spent so much time pointing out the difficulties brought on by the court’s decision that if its first editorial had not voiced its support for desegregation, it would be difficult to decipher from the latter two editorials where the paper stood. Nonetheless, it seemed the paper was merely trying to delve underneath the surface and present the true reality of what effects the decision would have for the country—especially the South.

In addition to the neutral articles and pro dominant editorials presented, there was really only one Gazette photo which contributed to their coverage. One of the two images that appeared in the paper was a head shot of Chief Justice Warren, the Supreme
Court judge who read the decision of the court. The other photo was a picture of NAACP lawyer, Thurgood Marshall and two others celebrating the victory of the case outside of the courthouse. While one photo, just by observation provided no sentiment, the other photo of Marshall and the others standing outside of the courtroom seemed to provide a face for the long fought victory of the lawyers on behalf of Blacks. The picture of victory showed that finally equal rights, at least in the realm of public education, had been achieved. This was definitely non-antagonistic towards the movement.

Overall, the Gazette news articles provided a very neutral perspective towards the Court’s decision and in contrast the editorials were all pro dominant and in favor of their decision. Therefore, the paper kept their biasness in its proper place—on its editorial pages.

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

1955 Rosa Parks. There were no articles, editorials, or photos printed by the Gazette regarding this topic during the specific time frame of analysis for this study. The absence of coverage during this time period suggests that the event may not have been important to the newspaper.

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

1955 Emmett Till. There were 10 articles, one editorial, and five photos about the murder/trial of Emmett Till. All articles presented a neutrally dominant perspective as well as neutral headlines. Seven of the articles were less than 500 words and three were 501-1000 words in length. All 10 articles appeared in the front section of the newspaper. As for the single editorial, it provided a pro dominant perspective with a neutral headline, and was less than 500 words. All five photos had a non-antagonistic sentiment.
Dubbed “the Mississippi Wolf Call Murder Trial,” the Gazette’s media coverage of Emmett Till’s murder included articles that examined the details of the investigation and trial of Emmett Till’s alleged murderers. The neutrally dominant articles presented a well-balanced account of the situation. There were comments from individuals who were angry and sure of the two White men’s guilt and there were some comments by people who didn’t want to jump to conclusions but let the trial by jury run its course.

For example in one of its initial articles Roy Wilkins, Executive Secretary of NAACP said after the boy’s body was found that his “slaying” showed Mississippi was determined to keep segregation “by murdering children” if necessary. In contrast to his viewpoint, another Black, President of the Greenwood, Mississippi NAACP urged that his people keep calm and said, “I have not lost faith in trial by jury” (“Two Indicted,” 1955, pp. 1, 11). The paper offered no support towards either viewpoint—neither the one promoting faith nor the faithless one. The presentation of both views demonstrated the objectivity practiced by the paper in its articles. The same neutral approach was taken by the Gazette in its other articles about Till’s funeral and his trial. The paper provided the comments of those involved in the situation but did not provide its own feelings about the funeral or the proceedings of the trial.

The absence of comment and the presence of neutrality and objectivity would not be the approach taken in the Gazette editorials. Instead, the paper was very open in its condemnation of the murders but apprehensive about taking sides as to whether the men were guilty or not. As a sort of exploration of the issue, the paper went on to explain the positives and negatives that emerged from the case. Headlined, “Acquittal in Mississippi,” a specific editorial asserted that the mere fact that two White men had
actually been arrested, charged, and tried for killing a Black man was an advancement towards justice in the South despite the verdict. In addition, to pointing out the advancement made by the South through this trial, the paper found other things about the trial it called “credits” or “positives.” “The speedy trial given the defendants, the impartiality of the judge, and the vigor of the prosecuting attorney should all be posted on the credit side of the ledger” (“Acquittal in Mississippi,” 1955, p. 10), proclaimed the paper.

However, the paper also pointed out there were some negatives/debits that left the trial/verdict unbalanced. Specifically, those negatives included the following factors: The prosecutor was handicapped by lack of funds and investigators. There were no eye witnesses and the evidence was circumstantial. And the defense did not hesitate to play upon ancient race prejudices. Additionally, because there were no Blacks called for jury service, this made the proceedings look bad to the critical world.

The Gazette’s take on the trial reveals a huge effort to weigh out the evidence rather than automatically convict or release the two White men of the charges against them. In essence, it appears the paper feels a lot of things could have been done better and/or differently. Nonetheless, the paper’s assertion that there were no eyewitnesses and only circumstantial evidence that the men had committed murder sheds a light of doubt in the thoughts of the paper as to whether or not the case was totally proven against the two men.

In another editorial, the paper pointed out that even though the men had been acquitted of murder, they still had to answer to a charge of kidnapping. “Perhaps a better measure of justice in Mississippi will be made in that case since the men reportedly
admitted to doing that” (“Till Murder,” 1955, p. 10), proclaimed the Gazette. In essence, the paper torn by whether or not the men were guilty due to circumstantial evidence and doubt that the body found was not Tills assumed that justice must be delivered in the next trial against the two Whites, despite another probably all-White jury, because the two men admitted taking Till from his Uncle’s home. Of course, after the timeline of this study, the men would be acquitted in that trial also. So a better measure of justice did not occur for the small Mississippi town.

In regards to the Gazette’sphotographical coverage, all pictures found were taken of the murder trial—Headshots of the two White men on trial, photos of the men playing with their children in their laps and cuddling with their wives, who sat by their sides during the majority of the trial. A picture of both couples was also taken after the announcement of the not guilty verdict—defendant Roy Bryant was shown kissing his wife and J.W. Milam and his wife were all smiles. In addition to pictures of the defendants were pictures of Till’s mother, Mamie Till, preparing for testimony. Although individually some of the photos were neutral, there were some such as the photos of the defendants laughing and playing with their kids that seemingly presented a picture of the men relaxed and unworried about the charges against them. Mississippi’s long history of dismissing violence against Blacks at the hands of Whites may have been on the minds of the defendants. Certainly from the photos, conviction of murder was not an overt concern.

Overall, the news coverage by the Gazette regarding the Till murder must be viewed as neutral. No support was provided for the process of the trial or acquittal in the paper’s articles. Additionally, the paper’s single editorial didn’t know which side to take
in the matter. Thus, it weighed the evidence of the case like an actual juror may. On the one hand the editorial pointed out some unfairness in the trial due to an all-White jury. On the contrary, the paper ultimately agreed with the court that the evidence against the men was circumstantial. Yet, the paper never verbalized the defendants’ guilt or innocence. Finally, it is important to note that the *Gazette* did not print any editorials on Till’s murder/trial until after a not-guilty verdict was delivered evidence that the paper was apprehensive from the very beginning of what side to take.

*The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

*1956 Alabama bus desegregation.* There were three articles, one editorial, and no photos printed by the *Gazette* to detail the desegregation ruling. All three articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines and were less than 500 words in length. All three articles were also found in the front section of the newspaper. The editorial had a pro dominant perspective, was less than 500 words with a neutral headline. Again, there were no photos found.

“All Bus Segregation Laws Wiped Out,” was the *Gazette’s* lead article headline detailing that the Supreme Court had finally ruled that the segregation of Whites and Blacks on buses was unconstitutional. There was no comment made by the paper for or against the decision. However, the paper provided reaction from Black leader, Dr. Martin Luther King who expressed great pleasure in the decision being that he was the leader of the boycott against Blacks riding Alabama buses to begin with.

The content of the other two articles discussed the efforts of the city of Montgomery to try and end the boycott even after being informed of the Court’s ruling.
However, as the paper reported, Blacks led by Dr. King ended the boycott officially themselves. Again, no comment was made by the paper in regards to King’s response.

In its single editorial the Gazette would step forward with its opinion of the matter. The paper said it was inevitable that the Supreme Court should strike down racial segregation on intrastate buses because it had already struck down segregation in the public schools, in public parks, and on public golf courses. Consequently, the paper called the decision “justice” and predicted the decision would be generally applauded outside of the South. Like its editorial coverage of the their take on the Brown vs. Board of Education decision, the Gazette pointed out that despite the victory, there would be difficulties in compliance with the Court’s ruling because the South was used to living in segregation for so long.

So, overall, the Gazette’s small amount of coverage on the desegregation of Alabama buses provided neutrality in its articles but support for yet another Court victory for Blacks, this time in the area of transportation.

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

1957 Little Rock Nine. For the first time in all of its news coverage about the Civil Rights Movement, the number of editorials printed by the Gazette tremendously outweighed its number of news articles—seven articles, 15 editorials, and two photos revealed the paper’s coverage of this event. All seven articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. Three of the articles were less than 500 words while the other four were 501-1000 words. As for its large number of editorials, they all offered pro dominant perspectives. All 15 were less than 500 words in length. Thirteen
of the headlines were neutral while two were positive. Both photos found had non-antagonistic sentiments.

Presented in a neutrally dominant perspective the articles merely presented the unfolding of the Little Rock saga as it happened and never gave a hint of favor/support or disfavor towards whether integration or segregation was the better path that should be taken nor did the paper comment for or against the rebellious Governor Orval Faubus’ defiance of the federal government. Also at stake was whether or not state law should prevail over federal law—yet, the paper did not choose sides in its article coverage. Comments from key role players such as Faubus, President Eisenhower and those who supported and opposed Faubus’ stance was the focus of the majority of the seven articles. Those in support of Faubus consisted of other Southern governors and congressmen who claimed the U.S. had no right sticking their noses in state’s business. Those against Faubus included the President as well as Black leaders such as Dr. King who agreed that the Arkansas governor was doing nothing to uphold the image of democracy but rather was stomping on its radiance and its progress by being so openly defiant.

As for its editorials, essentially, the paper was on the side of the federal government along with the Supreme Court as they insisted that Little Rock’s Central High should be integrated. In regards to states rights versus the federal government; the paper asserted that states were entitled to certain rights but when the federal government laid down certain boundaries, it was in the best interest of democracy for them to follow it. Consequently, the paper was very critical of Faubus’ retaliation proclaiming that his stand challenged the democracy and would set back race relations between the races in the South and between the Southern states and the Northern states. The Gazette even
expressed anger that President Eisenhower allowed Governor Faubus’ defiance to go on as long as it did. In essence, the paper felt that there should never have been back and forth defiance of a federal order but that the President should have enforced the law to integrate the high school at Faubus’ first defiance.

In another editorial, the paper said that allowing such leniency to Faubus may give rise for others to believe they could challenge the federal government in the same way. “How easy it would be for impassioned opinion to uphold a dictator in America today if he attempted overnight to transform the American system of government into an irresponsible government—judging by the widespread indifference to what is happening in Arkansas” (‘Lawrence,” 1957, p. 10), complained the editorial.

Additionally, the paper criticized Faubus’ claim that he was preserving peace and order in the community when he ordered the state’s National Guard to prevent the Black students from entering the all-White school. “In actuality, it encouraged disorder” (“No Leg,” 1957, p. 12), said the Gazette. Another editorial further challenged Faubus’ claim saying that a Governor could not be allowed to nullify federal law in the name of preserving peace. According to the paper, the only way that could happen was if there was open popular rebellion within the state—“Thus, the Governor might use the National Guard to maintain order, while calling for federal help. But that is not the situation in Little Rock. The rebellion there is the Governor himself” (“No Leg,” 1957, p. 12).

The paper continued its editorial rant against Governor Faubus’ standoff and also showed great concern for the safety of the Black students attempting to integrate the high school. Upon one unsuccessful attempt of the students into Central High, rioting occurred. After the riot, the Gazette questioned whether or not it would be a mistake to
continue to send the Colored children there. “It would be better we believe,” pleaded the paper, “to keep them out until tempers cool and the atmosphere is more favorable. Then another attempt can be made” (“Bad Day,” 1957, p. 14). Thus, the paper acknowledged that some proponents of integration may be displeased by that suggestion. However, the paper asserted that the welfare of the children must be considered as the most important factor in the whole ordeal. “The children will carry emotional scars to their graves as a result of having been the shields in this fight. For their sake, if no other reason, the integration effort in Little Rock should be delayed” (“Bad Day,” 1954, p. 14), asserted the editorial.

After the nine Black students were finally escorted into the all-White school, the Gazette printed no editorials with specific focus on their feelings of the successful integration. Nonetheless, the editorials that were printed throughout the drama were very adamant about the papers stance in the affair—pro federal government and in support of integration.

Unlike its article/editorial coverage of the integration case, in regards to photos, the paper’s coverage of the account was limited. Yet, the pictures that did emerge created the same picture of victimization, discrimination, racial hatred that most other newspapers’ photos of the incident did. A very racially tense scene, one Gazette picture showed an armed soldier holding his rifle in the aftermath of hitting a Black man. The other photo showed a Black reporter being kicked by a White Segregationist. Both scenes summed up visually the brunt of what happened in Little Rock and left the reader with a feeling of the lawlessness and lack of decency of White authorities, who were obvious foes of the movement and the cause of integration.
Overall, the *Gazette* maintained its consistent reporting style of neutrality in regards to its articles, but revealed its favor towards the cause of civil rights—this time through the fight to integrate the all-White Central High School. Not necessarily an adamant cheerleader for integration, the paper is clear that Governor Faubus’ stance taken against the federal government was wrong and the violence that resulted was instigated by him and served no positive purpose in progressing or improving already stressed race relations between the races in the South and anywhere else in the nation. Therefore, although there was no clear stance taken that integration was the right choice, the paper was against the defiance of Faubus’ to the federal government and this alone provided support to the movement because the paper showed respect to the law above all.

*The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

1958 Stabbing of Dr. King. There were no articles, editorials, or photos printed by the *Gazette* regarding this topic during the specific time frame of analysis for this study. This was the only paper in the study that did not include some sort of coverage regarding this event. The absence of any coverage showed that the issue may not have been pertinent to the newspaper at the time.

*The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

1960 Sit-ins. There were no articles, editorials, or photos printed by the *Gazette* regarding this topic during the specific time frame of analysis for this study. The absence of any coverage showed that sit-ins and/or demonstrations were not pertinent to the newspaper at the time. Additionally, the paper may have been in disagreement with the fact that demonstrations were at all posed by Blacks.
1961 Freedom riders. There were no articles, editorials, or photos printed by the Gazette regarding this topic during the specific time frame of analysis for this study. The absence of any coverage showed that sit-ins and/or demonstrations were not pertinent to the newspaper at the time. Additionally, the paper may have been in disagreement with the fact that the Riders attempt to test segregation were at all posed by Blacks.

1962 James Meredith enters Ole Miss. Approximately 11 articles, four editorials, and three photos were printed in the Gazette regarding Meredith’s entrance into Ole Miss. All 11 articles had a neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. All articles appeared in the front section of the newspaper also. Five of the articles were 500 words or less and six were 501-1000 words in length. As for the editorials, four had pro dominant perspectives and were less than 500 words. One editorial headline was positive and the other three were neutral. All three pictures found were non-antagonistic in sentiment.

As the Gazette presented the back and forth account of Meredith’s controversial entrance into Ole Miss, it offered no opinion in its storytelling language or otherwise that it was in favor of Governor Barnett’s defiance of the federal government. Nor did the paper throw any support or condemnation for Meredith’s attempt to enroll into the all White university.

The content of the articles presented commented from all sides including Governor Barnett, Meredith, and other key players such as President Kennedy and Attorney General, Robert Kennedy throughout the struggle. Once Meredith was enrolled and
violence erupted on the Ole Miss campus as a result, the paper still presented the happenings of the moment without comment.

However, the Gazette’s initial editorial was very forthcoming as it asserted whose side it stood on. The paper called Governor Barnett’s attempt to block Meredith from Ole Miss and defy the federal government “intolerable” and “obstructive” (Lippman, 1962, p. 12). A call for the President to counter Barnett’s stand was made by the Gazette. According to the editorial if Governor Barnett prevailed in keeping Meredith out, there would be no future peaceable solution to healing race relations between Blacks and Whites. Thus, the paper felt that Governor Barnett was hindering social progress towards unity/harmony between races with his actions in both the South and the nation.

In another editorial, the paper accused Governor Barnett of instigating the violence/riots on the campus of Ole Miss—due to his explosive language and feelings against integration. In other words the paper felt that it was no coincidence students chose to act so violently; their actions were a reflection of their leader. “Under responsible adult leadership, the students at Ole Miss, despite their heritage and tradition, would have accepted the inevitability of racial integration…There has been a failure of leadership in Mississippi” (“Failure Leadership,” 1962, p. 12), exclaimed the Gazette on the matter.

The paper was also concerned about what effect the showdown in Mississippi would have during election time upon the congressional, state, and presidential elections. There was a fear the Democrats would be unseated in most elections because it was a Democrat President who had unleashed the federal troops into Mississippi. Although the paper didn’t recommend which way or another people should vote, it stated that racism was condemned by the majority of both political parties—Democrats and Republicans.
Therefore, the paper suggested that people make their voting decisions on something more substantial and promising than race, like economic issues.

In regards to the *Gazette’s*photographical coverage of Meredith’s entrance into Ole Miss, all three non-antagonistic photos showed pieces of discrimination and racial hatred targeted at a single Black attempting to break through the color lines of an all White university. The pictures were determined to be non-antagonistic because they magnified the injustice happening in Oxford, Mississippi for many too see.

One photo showed a horizontal line of White men in suits standing in front of the Ole Miss entrance to block Meredith. Further out in front of that line was a string of patrolmen wearing steel hats and carrying riot sticks. Apparently the second line was a precaution taken just in case Meredith got through the first line. The patrolmen were armed and appeared ready to take action if necessary. One of the final photos showed Meredith being escorted by Marshals to register for classes at the University. A day later, another photo showed a picture of students being arrested as riots had broken out on the campus in protest to Meredith’s entrance. In essence, the violence that erupted displayed that America may need to rethink what it stood for and what it was doing to live up to their creed—freedom for all.

Overall, the *Gazette’s* coverage of the entrance of Meredith into the all-White Ole Miss was much like its coverage of the Little Rock integration case. Once again, its articles were neutral. However, the paper condemned both Governor’s for their defiance of the federal government and blamed them for instigating violence because of it. However, the paper never truly voices its support for integration but rather takes that, “its’ the law so we must follow it” approach. Again, the mere fact that the paper
condemned the actions of Governor Barnett, was enough to make the paper’s comments pro dominant because it didn’t side with Barnett and his stance nor did it stand in the middle.

*The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

*1963 Murder of Medgar Evers.* There were eight articles printed regarding the murder of Medgar Evers. No editorials or photos were found to add to the Gazette’s coverage. All eight articles had a neutrally dominant perspective with neutral headlines, appeared in the front section of the paper, and were 500 words or less in length.

As stated, all articles about the murder of Medgar Evers were neutrally dominant in perspective. The paper merely presented facts about the murder providing information on the crime scene where Evers was shot and the events leading up to his murder. Additionally, brief statements and reactions from President Kennedy and members of congress were provided. Particularly, one Mississippi Senator declared, “The murder was very regrettable and deplored by everyone. I know I speak for everybody in the state in expressing the hope that justice will be meted out to the guilty party or parties” (“Aide Slain,” 1963, p.1). Some congressmen even said the slaying may help the cause of civil rights legislation. However, the paper provided no comments condemning or advocating the murder or murderer. The paper’s eight articles also covered Evers’ funeral and his burial. The coverage rounded up with an article about Evers’ accused murderer Byron de La Beckwith, a member of the White Citizens Council. According to the article, Beckwith hated Blacks deeply. Again, the paper made no comments regarding the arrest of Beckwith or the fact he was associated with a White segregationist group.
With no editorials or photos to add to its perspective, the articles’ neutrality was the paper’s overall stance regarding Evers’ murder. The Gazette would go on to be the only paper in this study that did not provide any additional coverage of Evers’ murder/funeral.

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

1963 March on Washington. The Gazette produced 18 articles, two editorials, and three photos on the March on Washington. 14 of the articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and four were pro dominant. All 18 of the articles found appeared in the front section of the newspaper. Seven of the articles were 500 words or less while nine was 501-1000 words. Only two articles were 1001-1500 words in length. 15 of the articles’ headlines were neutral and only three were positive. As for the two editorials, both had pro dominant perspectives of the March and both had positive headlines. One of the editorials was less than 500 words and the other was 501-1000 words. Two positive characterizations were made towards Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. All three photos were non-antagonistic.

In its initial two articles, the Gazette reported on the planning process of the March. Specifically, the articles discussed the March’s itinerary regarding transportation, food, and security. In another article, the paper discussed the atmosphere of Washington in wake of the upcoming March. A Gazette Washington correspondent stated that a bit of jitters had developed among Washington officials as they reflected on the prospects of whether or not a peaceful demonstration could be pulled off. According to another article, the opinions of some Black congressmen also questioned the same issue. Some congressmen felt the March may turn into a messy riot and do more than good. Others backed it but questioned whether it was worth the money and effort. The paper expressed
surprise that the congressmen had differing opinions. Perhaps because the March was for Blacks held by Blacks, the paper felt that all Blacks would be in support of the demonstration.

In another article, rather than focus on whether or not violence would erupt in Washington as a result of the massive demonstration, the Gazette turned its focus towards revealing the purpose behind the March. “Behind the current Washington March is the hope of the demonstrators that their massive display in the nation’s capital will help press the enactment of civil rights legislation” (“March Test,” 1963, p. 7). This shift in focus put the Gazette on the side of the proponents of the March who were working diligently to push their cause to the forefront rather than focus on any past or proposed march violence.

Headlines of the first Gazette article after the March immediately confirmed the event had not caused the disarray that opponents thought. “200,000 Stage Giant, Orderly Demonstration,” was the headline printed next to a photo showing the mass of people in attendance. The article called the March, “a great, dramatic demonstration” and referenced the masses of people as “the great sea of humanity” (“Orderly Demonstration,” 1963, p.1). The paper went on to present President JF Kennedy’s remarks, which mirrored those feelings. The paper also printed exerts of Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech pointing out that of all the speeches, his had drew the strongest applause. No comments were made by the Gazette in this particular article about King’s speech but some remarks of some of the people in the crowd were printed, “He’s a power house,” one person cried and another shouted, “the next President of the United States” (“Orderly Demonstration,” 1963, p.1).
In a latter article, the paper dedicated an entire piece towards analyzing the speech of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Apparently moved by the speech, The Gazette compared King’s speech to the cries of old American reformers that had come before him demanding emancipation and crying for economic equality. The paper said that each time King echoed the words, “I Have a Dream,” the dream “was a promise out of the nations ancient articles of faith: phrases from the constitution, lines from the great anthem of the nation, guarantees from the Bill of Rights, all ending with a vision that they might one day come true” (“Negro Leader,” 1963, p. 5). By comparing King’s words to the words of the constitution regarding civil rights, the paper acknowledged that King’s speech about his hopes were aligned with the constitution’s declaration of freedom and equality for all, which is something that segregationists in the South failed to acknowledge. Essentially, the paper seemed optimistic when it said that King’s dream would meet up with the constitutional promise someday.

The proceeding articles presented more viewpoints about the March particularly some world-view perceptions. According to the Gazette, apparently some countries such as Europe viewed the March and were sympathetic to the Black struggle but were a little reluctant and restrained to provide too much opinion.

The only two editorials printed about the March on Washington came on the day of and the day after the March. Thus, no opinion was given on behalf of the paper until after the controversial march had taken place. “An Impressive March” was the headline used to describe the Gazette’s opinion on the 1963 demonstration. Declaring that tribute should be paid the “responsible” Black leaders of the March, the paper credited them with orchestrating such a peaceful assembly and petition (“Impressive March,” 1963, p.
The editorial even suggested that the March should go down in U.S. history as a symbol of such peace. Additionally, according to the Gazette, the participation of both Blacks and Whites in the peaceful demonstration increased the character of the March. Although the paper did not elaborate further on that statement, the comment suggests that the paper felt that Whites standing with Blacks to fight on their behalf despite the history of strained race relations added support, soundness, and integrity to the March. The paper went on to call the March a “revolution of greater freedom” whose impact would make it more difficult to deny civil rights wherever there were people of good conscience everywhere, even in segregated Mississippi (“Impressive March,” 1963, p. 8).

In its second and last editorial the Gazette expressed its concerns not only about U.S. perception but how foreign correspondents would describe the March. “Although we must unravel these tangled probes of prejudice and hope by ourselves and for ourselves…What the world thinks of us does matter” (Freeman, 1963, p. 6), asserted the paper. The Gazette furthered the discussion by presenting two avenues the foreign press could take: a) Present the March as ugly proof of the divisions and discords in America or b) See in the March the tardy promise of a better day, a nation searching its conscience for the meaning of equal citizenship, a people looking beyond the stiff tumult of its defeated dreams to the ideals that do not fade; a festive of freedom.

From the support garnered by the paper in regards to its impression and declaration of the March as a revolution of freedom and other kind words, it is not hasty to assume their support of the latter avenue and their hope that the rest of the world would also take the latter view of the March and see it as an investment into a more harmonious future between Blacks and Whites.
In regards to photographic coverage, there were only a few snapshots taken of the March. Specifically, one was of some notable Black leaders who participated and another showed the demonstrators holding signs—the words could not be distinguished. A compelling aerial picture was taken of the mass of people filling the court in between the Washington Monument and Lincoln’s Memorial. Together these photos, like many taken of the March, provided a non-antagonistic sentiment as they promoted an image of peace and orderliness—the key ideals behind the planned March.

Overall, the Gazette’s news coverage of the March was presented neutrally. However, its pro dominant articles along with its editorials did provide support for the March at least after the controversial event had taken place. It seems the paper itself may have been just as apprehensive as others about throwing its support behind the March for fear of how it may turn out. This seems a feasible conclusion because both pro editorials were written after the March as well as the pro dominant articles.

_The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette_

1963 Birmingham church bomb. Eight articles, three editorials, and four photos detailed the Gazette’s coverage of the bombing in Birmingham, Alabama. All of the articles had neutrally dominant perspectives with majority neutral headlines. Only one headline was positive. Five of the articles were 501-1000 words while one was less than 500 and one was 1001-1500 words in length. All three editorials were quite the opposite presenting pro dominant perspectives and positive headlines. Two of the editorials were 501-1000 words and one was more than a 1000 words but less than 1500. All four photos had a non-antagonistic sentiment.
Overall, the Gazette news articles offered very neutral perspectives about the bombing in Birmingham while gathering the viewpoints of both Blacks and Whites. A quote from Blacks’ leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Alabama Governor George Wallace and President Kennedy were printed by the paper. There were no attacks or applauding of character of the renowned segregationist Governor or any feelings expressed towards Dr. King or President Kennedy’s condemning of the bombing. Much like the purpose of news, the articles presented the event providing details of the loss of life and injuries and the damage caused by the bombing to the physical structure of the church.

The reactions of those who survived the bombing, such as the members inside the church, described the moments leading up to the explosion and the scene of things in the aftermath of the bombing, which seethed of more violence and unrest between Blacks and Whites. In one of its final articles, the Gazette gave details of the last rites given to one of the Black girls killed in the blast.

Unlike its articles, which included absolutely no suggestive language, the paper’s editorials were filled with everything but neutrality as it offered its pro dominant stance on the matter. With a play on words the Gazette’s first editorial headlined, “Scars Fall on Alabama,” offered a contradictory view on the state’s slogan, “Stars Fell on Alabama” as it used it to reference its feelings about the tragedy that had yet struck Blacks once again in Birmingham. The paper called the bombing “barbaric” and declared that prompt and severe punishment should be used against those responsible (“Scars Fall,” 1963, p. 12). Additionally, the paper accused Alabama’s “demagogic” Governor, George Wallace of encouraging an atmosphere conducive to such violence with his racist posturing (“Scars
Fall,” 1963, p. 12). The Gazette pointed that tempers may be even the more aroused unless intensive effort were made by local, state, and federal authorities to curb peoples tempers. “This will not be easy…It will require widespread patience and understanding of the sort shown by the Negro leader, the Rev. Martin Luther King…If Governor Wallace would join…there would be better hope of preventing more violence in Birmingham” (“Scars Fall,” 1963, p. 12).

In its second editorial, the Gazette asserts that not only were the lives of four Black children destroyed, but the confidence of the whole community in law and order. Hoodlums instead are running the city, stated the paper, and Blacks and Whites are at their mercy. “This is what happens when the leaders of a community think law can be unequally applied to protect them and not to protect their fellow citizens. Eventually, others act on their own impulses, and everybody is left with his own fears and suspicions” (Reston, 1963, p. 12), responded the paper. In essence, the paper believed that the bombing had created an atmosphere of suspicion—Blacks were unsure whether another bomb would go off and Whites were more concerned about if Blacks would retaliate in return if one did. “Both races deplore the tyranny of a lawless minority, but cannot agree on any way of co-operation together to protect the community as a whole” (Reston, 1963, p. 12), concluded the Gazette.

In its third and final editorial in regards to the Birmingham Bombing, the paper points out that the Black church bombing brought attention to the fallible race relations in Birmingham that had been occurring for years. “There’s something in the atmosphere of this place, some relationship between the idea of supremacy of the dollar and the supremacy of the White man, that has made them feel they could hold out longer against
social change” (Reston, 1963, p. 10). The paper went on to criticize the city and its efforts to try and maintain their segregated way of life despite the changing of society. “The striking thing about Birmingham to an outsider is that it seems so advanced industrially and so retarded politically. It has seized the scientific revolution and rejected the social revolution of our time” (Reston, 1963, p. 10), said the *Gazette*. As for the effects of the bombing on the society, the editorial expressed that there was little evidence that it had changed the convictions of the White leaders but only convinced them that such uproar was bad for the city.

As detailed, the news coverage in the *Gazette’s* articles was completely neutral. The paper only provided its opinion in its editorials. Thus, their news coverage was determined to be neutral. Nonetheless, their editorial stance was overwhelmingly in support of the Civil Rights cause. Particularly, the paper took time to express that the mindset of America and the South was evolving in terms of race relations towards something different than the South of old or slavery days but that because of a small minority trying to hold on to the ideals of segregation, change could not be achieved. In other words, the paper felt Birmingham needed to jump on board so that future violence such as the bombings would happen no more.

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

1964 Freedom summer. There were no articles, editorials, or photos printed by the *Gazette* regarding this topic during the specific time frame of analysis for this study. This was the only paper in the study that did not include some sort of coverage regarding this event. The absence of any coverage showed that the issue may not have been pertinent to the newspaper at the time.
The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Civil Rights Act of 1964. Six articles, one editorial, and one photo depicted the Gazette’s coverage of the signing of the Civil Rights Act. All six articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. Additionally all six articles were printed in the front section of the newspaper. Four articles were less than 500 words and two were 501-1000 words in length. The single editorial had a pro dominant perspective with a positive headline and was less than 500 words. As for the photo, it had a non-antagonistic sentiment.

Much like most of its news article coverage throughout the Civil Rights Movement, the Gazette’s detail of the signing of the Civil Rights Act was also neutral. The paper provided mostly details of the Act’s provisions and meanings for citizens in terms of job discrimination and other areas in which Blacks had been treated unequally. Also much comment from President Johnson, who signed the bill into law, was included in the paper. The President called the act of segregation, “springs of racial poison” that the nation must move away from towards a more equal and sound nation (Beckler, 1964, p.1). Although the paper showed no favor or disfavor towards the President’s comments in its articles, they would use his words as a guide for people to live by in regards to race relations in its editorials.

In fact, in its editorials, the Gazette openly and greatly approved of President Johnson’s signing of the Civil Rights Act. The paper called the Act “a part of this generations’ effort to enlarge the meaning of freedom for millions of people who, as the President said are being deprived of the blessings of liberty not because of their own failures but because of the color of their skin” (“Spirit Liberty,” 1964, p. 6). Thus, in
agreeing with the President that a Black’s skin color should not deny him the same equality as a White, the *Gazette* once again put itself on the side of the ultimate cause (equality) of the Civil Rights Movement. No other White newspaper in this study expressed its support for the Bill as boldly as the *Gazette*. The paper even declared that the decision to sign the law was long overdue and should have already been passed.

At the end of its editorial, the paper closed with an invitation/plea for all Americans to follow the instructions of the President and “to dedicate themselves to working in the states and communities, in homes and in hearts, to eliminate the last vestiges of injustice in America” (“Spirit Liberty,” 1964, p. 6).

In regards to photos, there was only one photo that appeared in the paper, a close-up photo of President Johnson’s hand as he signed the Civil Rights Act into law. This photo was non-antagonistic as it provided a visual sealing of the deal, a deal which granted Blacks, by law, all the rights and privileges as their fellow White citizens in all areas of life.

Overall, the news articles of the *Gazette* provided a neutrally dominant perspective regarding the passage of the Bill. However, the paper’s single editorial gave deep insight into its support and approval that equality had been given to Blacks. Because the paper included its opinion in the proper section of its paper and not in its articles, its coverage should be considered neutral.

*The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

1964 Three Civil Rights workers murdered. Five articles, one editorial and three photos revealed the *Gazette’s* coverage of the murder of the Civil Rights workers. All five articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. Additionally all
articles were less than 500 words and appeared in the front section of the newspaper. The editorial had a pro dominant perspective with a neutral headline and was less than 500 words in length. All three photos were non-antagonistic.

As previously stated, the majority of the paper’s coverage of the Civil Rights workers’ murders was neutral but there were some instances of favor and condemnation shown. Most of the Gazette’s news articles detailed the FBI’s report about where and in what condition the bodies of the workers: James Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman were in. Specifically, the paper reported that experts used dental charts to help identify the decaying bodies. The paper called the discovery a grim ending to a 44-day search by the FBI.

The only other article headlined, “A Proud Death: Slain Civil Rights Workers Buried in N.Y.,” told of the funeral and memorial services of all the workers, but specifically Andrew Goodman. The phrase, “A Proud Death” was taken from a quote in the article spoken by a spiritual leader as he spoke to the mourners at Goodman’s funeral. The paper’s use of the phrase in its headline suggests that it may have also seen the rights’ worker’s death as a proud one.

In its single editorial, the paper is heavily critical of then Mississippi’s Governor Paul B. Johnson and Mississippi Senator James Eastland for suggesting that the disappearance of the three men was a “hoax” and that no crime had been committed against the “agitators” (“A Crime,” 1964, p. 6). The paper called the politicians’ suggestions just an attempt to divert attention from the state’s long record of violence against Blacks. Angrily, the Gazette then called on the Mississippi leaders to retract their statements when the bodies of the workers finally turned up after a 44-day search,
What do Mississippi officials have to say now about a hoax or publicity stunt?

Are Mississippi politicians now ready to urge that the perpetrators of the crime be tracked down and prosecuted? Will they now plead with their constituents to respect the rights of those whose only “crime” is in seeking to aid the enlightened exercise of citizenship by Mississippians? (“A Crime,” 1964, p. 6)

Thus, the Gazette’s sarcastic tone solidified its disapproval of the stance taken by the politicians and showed that it felt that it was ridiculous and an injustice that the workers died simply because they were trying to help Mississippians utilize rights that were already theirs.

As for the three photos found, they were headshots of the three victims, a visual of the lives that had been taken, pictures of innocence, mirrors that reiterated the Gazette’s statement of how ridiculous it seemed for the workers to be murdered for simply helping their fellow citizens. At least that’s a realistic assumption that can be made as to what may have been going through the minds of readers as though placed faces of innocence with the descriptions of the conditions of the bodies detailed by the paper in its articles.

Overall, as usual, the Gazette followed the same style of reporting that it had for the entire Civil Rights movement—it maintained neutrality regarding the topic in its news articles and left its opinions for its editorial section.

The Pittsburgh Courier

1954 Brown vs. Board of Education. Twelve articles, five editorials, and five photos revealed the Courier’s coverage of the Brown vs. Board of Education Supreme Court decision. All 12 articles had neutrally dominant perspectives. Six of the articles were 500 words or less, five were 501-1000 words, and one was 1001-1500. Only one article
headline was positive, the others were neutral. All except two middle articles appeared in
the front section of the paper. As for the editorials, all five had pro dominant
perspectives. Three editorials were 500 words or less and two were 501-1000 words.
Two of the editorial headlines were positive and the other three were neutral. One
editorial was found on the front page instead of in its normal section of the paper. There
was approximately one positive characterization made among the articles and one among
the editorials. All five photos were non-antagonistic.

Some of the specific topics of the articles regarding the Brown-education decision
included: examining the details of the court’s decision and the justices who handed it
down, gathering the opinions of both Blacks and Whites across the nation, and the
reactions of some southern governors and other leaders. Mostly neutral, the newspaper
provided no comment for or against the court’s decision except in one article. In one
article, the Courier answers those with mixed feelings regarding the decision citing that
despite how people may feel about it, the law has spoken and the nation must follow:

Make no mistake about it! Public school segregation is ended, and the South is
realizing the fact. Wild statements won’t do any good and now that the huffing,
puffing and damning are over…logic will slowly take the place of emotionalism.
(“Shock Over,” 1954, p. 4)

The other pro dominant article was an entire piece honoring NAACP lead attorney,
Thurgood Marshall. In fact, the article was the longest of all 12 articles. The Courier
referenced Mr. Marshall as “Mr. Civil Rights” as it detailed his rise to his position with
the NAACP (Geiger, 1954, p. 13). The paper credited him as the architect and brains
behind the desegregation victory.
In its first editorial, the paper called the landmark court decision an impossible dream come true. Long and frequent strides toward racial equality had been made said the paper, and finally it had been accomplished. In another editorial, printed on the front page of the paper (highly unusual for an editorial), the Courier credits God, Supreme Court justices, NAACP lawyers, and activists for the huge victory. The paper called for every Black to especially give thanks. “Public school segregation would not have been outlawed if God had not been on our side and if many persons had not given all of their time, of energy, of talent and of influence to the struggle to abolish segregation” (“Give Thanks,” 1954, p. 1). The Courier even asked that a day be set aside for churches across the nation to give prayer and thanksgiving for the newly won freedom.

In another editorial, headlined, “Orchids to the NAACP,” the paper openly commends the organization for their work on the case. “Thanks and praise to the Courts but even greater praise to the NAACP, whose legal department, headed by Attorney Thurgood Marshall, launched the legal actions that led to the decision” (“Orchids NAACP,” 1954, p. 6). Although the paper gave credit and much thanks to the courts and those presenting the case, it also credited the changing mindset of society. If it had not been for a change of mind regarding racial restrictions, the public opinion might not have been as ready to accept such a revolutionary decision. Thus, the paper proclaimed that a lot had transformed the hearts of American society since the Plessy vs. Ferguson 1896 decision when the separate but equal doctrine was established.

After reviewing the articles and editorials, it was no surprise that the Courier’s photos mirrored the joy it felt regarding the court’s decision. Pictures of the attorney (Marshall) they had praised smiling and shaking hands with other members of the NAACP team
graced the newspaper’s pages. Another picture showed the lawyer being interviewed by the press outside the court. Other shots captured the joyous reaction of some Black school age children.

Overall, the newspaper provided a neutrally dominant perspective in their articles regarding the Brown-education decision. It gathered differing viewpoints of both Blacks and Whites, and opinions of leaders in favor and against the decision. Yet, the paper was clear in its editorials that it was very much in support of desegregation and very pleased with the Supreme Court’s decision and it applauded the work of the NAACP and Thurgood Marshall in speeding up the process so long awaited for by Blacks across the nation.

*The Pittsburgh Courier*

1955 *Rosa Parks*. There were only two articles, no editorials, or photos that covered Rosa Parks arrest for refusal to move to the back of an Alabama bus. Both articles were presented from a neutrally dominant perspective, were less than 500 words, had neutral headlines, and were found in the front section of the paper.

The articles were mainly about the Montgomery Bus boycott but mentioned Parks arrest as being the catalyst for the city-wide Black bus boycott. It was Park’s arrest that inspired activists and Black leaders to launch the protest in hopes of securing fair treatment on city buses. Under the ban, Blacks refused to ride city buses until equal seating arrangements were made. *The Courier* did not show favor for or against the boycott. However, the paper did offer a favorable characterization of the 42-year-old Mrs. Parks, referencing her as having a reputation of being a Christian, church-going woman.
1955 Murder of Emmett Till. The Courier produced 11 articles, three editorials, and 25 photos to uncover its take on the murder trial of Emmett Till and its impact on the nation. Six articles had predominant perspectives and five had neutral perspectives. Four articles were less than 500 words, six were 501-1000 words, and two were 1001-1500 words. Five of the article headlines were positive while the other six were neutral. All three editorials had a predominant perspective. Two of the editorial headlines were positive while the other was neutral. Two editorials were 500 words or less and one was 501-1000 words. Positive characterizations were made towards Emmett Till and his mother Mamie Till. All 25 photos were non-antagonistic.

After the initial news of Till’s murder; in its first news article, the Courier dubbed the crime a “barbaric throwback to the Savage Age” and saw it as “the latest atrocity in Mississippi” (Coleman, 1955, p.1). This was an indication of the paper’s feelings towards the state and its belief that it had a long history of violence against Blacks. After that article appeared the comments of community and national leaders, which seemed to share the paper’s sentiments about the murder. Some suggested that the state be called the “Lynch State” (“Protests Mount,” 1955, p.1). Other comments expressed their hope that justice be done. Even the remark of the executive secretary of Mississippi’s White Citizens Council was printed calling the incident “very regrettable” (“Protests Mount,” 1955, p.1).

The rest of the news articles that appeared in the Courier were printed beginning from the opening day of the trial to the delivery of the verdict. The newspaper’s reporters on the scene gave firsthand accounts of what they termed a racially tense situation. “Here
men’s souls are torn by fear…and hatred…and violence…Here the atmosphere is depressing to the human spirit” (Boyack, 1955, pp. 1, 5), illustrated a correspondent for the paper. The paper described the seating that took place inside the courtroom among the people and the press as being segregated—Blacks and Whites in separate sections. And from day to day, it covered the testimonies of the major players in the trial such as Till’s Uncle, Moses Wright and his mother Mamie Till.

According to the paper, the identity of the body found in the river was the crucial evidence in deciding for an acquittal in the case. The paper commended Mrs. Till for being unshaken by the cross examinations about her certainty that the body was that of her son. Additionally, in a one-sided approach, the entire concluding summation of why the two White half brothers—J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, should be found guilty of Till’s murder was printed in the paper. No closing statements made by the defense were printed.

Finally, when the not-guilty verdict was released, The Courier headlined its edition, “Lynch Trial Disgusting: September 23, 1955—Black Friday.” Correspondent for the newspaper stated,

I’m sick in heart, in soul, in body! This is Black Friday in Mississippi, in America, and throughout the entire civilized world! I’ve just witnessed the most revolting, the most disgusting, and the most callous miscarriage of justice that has been my lot…in more than 20 years of crime reporting. (Boyack, 1955, pp. 1, 4)

The writer also lashed out at the defendants accusing them of being arrogant. He even referred to the wives and children of the defendants as “bait” used to appeal to sentiment and to drum up more sympathy (Boyack, 1955, pp. 1, 4).
Adjacent to another article, which described the jury’s 67 minute deliberation as a period when time stood still, was a poem by renowned author, Langston Hughes entitled, *In the Memory of Emmett Till*. The opening paragraph of the poem read, “Oh, what sorrow! Oh, what pity! Oh what pain that tears and blood should mix like rain and terror come again to Mississippi” (Hughes, 1955, p. 9). The stanza of the paragraph was an echo of much of what the *Courier* had expressed in its articles. It was evident; the paper was passionate and deeply engaged by the murder of young Till. It was also apparent that the paper had a differing verdict for Milam and Bryant than what was delivered by the jury. Although, objectivity and neutrality was the standard for journalism practices even then, the paper seemed to be driven by subjectivity and emotion.

This emotion further flowed over into the paper’s three editorials—perhaps few in number because its lack of hesitancy to express its own viewpoints in its articles left little need to write a large amount of editorials about the matter. Of the three editorials written about the murder of Emmett Till, two were printed prior to the non-guilty verdict delivered by the Sumner, Mississippi court. The first editorial, entitled, “I Can’t Cry Any Tears: Mom Wants Son’s Murder Avenged,” asked whether Till’s murder was a sacrifice on the altar of White supremacy. The editorial also described Till as innocent and unaware that he had offended anyone to the extent that murder compounded with race hatred would end his short happy life. In essence, the paper saw Till’s murder as another race crime committed against a Black for no other reason besides being a Black who had offended a White. *The Courier* even defended Till’s offense of whistling at a White woman at a grocery store in Money, Mississippi—the action which led the two White men on trial to allegedly kidnap and murder him:
Fate led Emmett Louis (Bobo) Till to a grocery store to buy bubblegum. Emmett was not subservient, not cowed by Dixie mores, so he said something to the grocer’s wife and whistled—just as he had seen people do on television, in movies, in comic books, on the streets. It was just something he had been conditioned to do. Remember he was conditioned to his way of life just as the people in Mississippi are conditioned to their feudal ideas. Till was a product of his times and he died for it. (Brown, 1955, p. 4)

Great sympathy was also extended to Till’s mother Mamie Till, by the newspaper. She was referenced as “crazed with grief” and “emotionally shattered” after seeing the “pitiful remains of her only son” (Brown, 1955, p. 4). The paper pointed out that Till’s body arrived back in Chicago the same day he was to start back to school. “He was brought back in a pine box—his fine features crunched beyond recognition, one hazel eye gouged out, a hole in his skull, his body swollen out of shape from muddy water” (Brown, 1955, p. 4), the Courier detailed. Will America Forget Why?—was the closing question posed by the editorial. The specific language used by the editorial showed a strong desire for what it felt regarding Till’s murder—that it was unnecessary and tragic. Because of this racially motivated crime, an innocent child and a helpless mother were victimized.

In the second editorial printed at the open of the trial, the paper strongly asserted their belief that the two men on trial were guilty and suggested they be sentenced to death. Headlined, “Is Mississippi Dead?” the editorial expressed its hope that the outcome of the Till trial would determine whether Mississippi is already dead or whether there is hope for revival and improvement. Essentially, the paper believed a guilty verdict was in order
for the two White men and anything else was a reflection of Mississippi’s dark past/reputation as being “the worst American state” in regards to race relations (“Mississippi Dead,” 1955, p. 6).

The Courier lashed out at Mississippi in its third and final editorial after, to their dismay, a “not guilty” verdict was handed down:

Those who know Mississippi, the sin-hole of American civilization, never doubted the outcome of the Till murder trial, not withstanding the correctness of judicial procedure. Unpunished murder of Blacks of all sexes and ages is so common in that state and its neighbors, that any other verdict than acquittal would have astonished an incredulous world. (“Naked World,” 1955, p.1)

To add, the paper called the state “God-forsaken, operators of a savage terror system” and even suggested that the only escape for Blacks of a similar unprosecuted crime was to flee the state (“Naked World,” 1955, p. 4)! “The United States government asserted the editorial, which fights for unfortunates all over the globe, except in Dixie, is not helpless like the million chained Mississippi Negroes” (“Naked World,” 1955, p. 4). The editorial closed its rant of anger with a cry out to Blacks and others across the nation to join forces and mobilize against the injustices experienced for years by Mississippians:

This foul cancer of racism needs to be destroyed, the south of racial insult, disfranchisement, segregation, and lynch terror has made plain its determination to continue the debasement and destruction of our people. We must mobilize our forces, our funds and our ingenuity to make sure that this genocide does not succeed.

(“Naked World,” 1955, p. 4)
Heavily non-antagonistic, the 25 photos taken and presented by the newspaper seem to work together to create one sentiment—a young Till was just an innocent Black from an honest family caught up in the wrong place at the wrong time in his life. In unison towards this sentiment, the *Courier* presented sympathy provoking images of Till’s family from his uncle and cousins to his mother and grandmother. The pictures of Till’s Mississippi side of the family were especially appealing as they highlighted them as poor, humble, hardworking, innocent Blacks. These images showed them as vulnerable and victimized at the thought of two White men coming in the middle of the night to take a young Black from his bed—which the *Courier* also printed a picture of as his cousin sat on the edge rubbing what appeared to be a cat. The picture of Till’s step grandmother crying only added to the vulnerability. Then, the picture of Till’s battered, bruised, and swollen body was printed in the front section of the paper for all to see followed by a picture of a mass of people gathered to give their last rites to him. Mixed in with those photos were pictures of the White woman Till had allegedly whistled at—a hard, stone faced, mean looking Carolyn Bryant, wife of defendant Roy Bryant.

Overall, it is not difficult to see from the language used in its news articles and/or editorials the standpoint of the *Courier* regarding the murder and trial of Emmett Till. The paper even announced on an edition prior to the start of the trial that it would provide full coverage of the Till murder-kidnapping case. The paper dispersed its News Editor, Robert Ratcliffe to Mississippi for on the spot news, George Brown in Chicago, to keep in touch with the boy’s mother and family, and Levi Jolley in Washington, D.C., to keep on top of the Justice Department’s attitude about the case. Perhaps these were things that other papers did also. However, the *Courier* was the only one to make a front page
announcement of the fact—these could not help but be noticed. As for the type of coverage presented, the paper was overwhelmingly pro dominant in their perspectives regarding the murder—even though the number of neutral articles was almost as much as the pro. The photographic coverage was like a mural of visual support for the verbal expression that had already come forth in the articles and editorials written about the matter.

*The Pittsburgh Courier*

1956 Desegregation of Alabama buses. There were four articles and one editorial printed about the U.S. supreme court’s decision to desegregate Alabama buses. All four articles were 500 words or less and appeared in the front section of the paper. Additionally, all four articles had a neutrally dominant perspective and neutral headlines. The one editorial found had a pro dominant perspective and a positive headline and was less than 500 words. There was one photo found which was non-antagonistic.

The neutrally dominant articles briefly discussed the planned attempt made by the Montgomery City Commission to end the boycott, which the city considered illegal. However, as the *Courier* reported the group received an injunction against the city so that it could continue its boycott as it awaited a decision on the constitutionality of state and local segregation on public carriers by the Supreme Court. The paper produced another article detailing that the boycotters were victorious as the court declared segregation unconstitutional. Although the majority of the article was neutral there were some pro dominant statements made as the paper called the victory a historic date for democracy. In essence, the article saw the victory as a step towards equality for Blacks which under democracy they too were included.
As for its editorials, “Death in the Deep South,” was the victory headline hoisted by the *Courier* as it celebrated the Supreme Court’s decision. The editorial gave praise to the citizens of Montgomery, Alabama for holding out for 11 months in protest against segregation on city buses. Additionally, the same editorial also praised the “powerful” NAACP for fighting the battle. “Segregation in public transportation has been irksome, onerous and humiliating; a daily reminder of second-class citizenship, a constant flaunting of White supremacy—and now it has been done to death” (“Death in the Deep South,” 1956, p. 9), proclaimed the *Courier*.

The single photo printed by the paper resounded that statement as it showed a bus sign that said Whites and Blacks could not sit in the same section. Above the photo was the headline “Outlawed Forever in Dixie.” Below the picture was the caption—“This sign a blot on democracy wherever segregation is practiced or legally sanctioned, is now unlawful. No longer must a Black be a pariah in his own country and pay first-class prices for second-class accommodations” (“Forever Dixie,” 1956, p. 1).

Overall, the news articles presented by the *Courier* were neutral in their coverage but a bit one sided when it presented only the negative reactions against the decision. However, in its editorial and photo, the paper was clear on its stance against segregation and the delight they felt as a result of the court’s decision.

*The Pittsburgh Courier*

1957 Little Rock Nine. There were eight articles, four editorials, and eight photos printed about the federal government’s forced escort of nine Black students into an all White high school in Little Rock, Arkansas. Five of the articles had a pro dominant perspective and three were neutral. All four editorials had pro dominant perspectives. As
for placement, all articles were found in the front section of the paper. Two of the article headlines were positive while the other six were neutral. All four editorial headlines were neutral. Four of the articles were 500 words or less and the other half 501-1000 words in length. All four editorials were 500 words or less. Four of the photos were non-antagonistic and four were neutral. There were five negative characterizations of Arkansas Governor Faubus and one positive characterization of President Eisenhower.

Several of the articles by the *Courier* attacked the character and motivation of Governor Faubus. One of the paper’s reporters even had a one on one interview with the Arkansas governor. In the article the reporter called Faubus’ responses to his questions untruthful and evading when he asked the governor about a suggested conspiracy with Georgia Governor. The conspiracy theory referenced suggested that the Georgia Governor and another constituent had met previously with Faubus and told him how if Georgia was forced to integrate its schools how it would react—they would resist segregation by utilizing state highway patrol, the National Guard and other citizens to guard the school. That action was coincidently the same act taken by Governor Faubus. The *Courier* reporter claimed that the Georgia Governor had told him (the reporter) in an interview months earlier of Georgia’s resistance plan. However, Faubus when asked by the Courier denied being involved with the conspiracy and having discussed such actions with the Georgia Governor and his constituent. Yet, the *Courier* was not satisfied with Faubus response and printed a second article after its interview with Faubus that again reiterated its distrust of Faubus and again accused him of being the first to enact the Georgia plan against school integration. “Whether he knew it or didn’t know it, Arkansas’ Governor Orval Faubus was the guinea pig in the first unveiling of the
“Georgia Plan” for thwarting integration in Dixie’s public schools,” (Anderson, 1957, p. 11), asserted the paper. The article was headlined, “Faubus Guinea Pig for Georgia’s Top Segregation Bosses.” Some of the other articles printed about the Little Rock incident further explored the conspiracy theory as described by the Courier and at the sum of them all Faubus was the villain.

Another article by the paper examined what other editorials had to say across the nation about the actions of Faubus. Considering the paper’s negative character portrayal of Faubus in its previous articles, it was not surprising to see that all of the editorials gathered from 10 northern and southern newspapers, condemned the actions of Faubus. The Courier referenced the newspapers whose editorials it chose as “the nation’s most responsible newspapers.”

When the Little Rock Nine were finally escorted by the National Guard into the all White high school, the paper reported about the violence that had taken place against news reporters, specifically four Black reporters:

Four Negro reporters and photographers, who arrived on the scene ahead of the colored students, were turned on by a mob, reported the Courier. They were beaten and kicked and were forced to flee before police could break up the crowd…While the reporters were being beaten, the Negro students arrived from another direction and were ushered into the school by police. (“Mob Beats,” 1957, p. 1)

In a follow up article, the paper reported that it was because of the attention paid to the mob attacking the four reporters that the Black children were able to slip into the school unnoticed. The paper referred to the Black reporters as “four firecrackers” (Ratcliffe, 1957, p. 7). The Courier did not really explain what it meant by the term
firecracker. Perhaps, the paper meant the Black reporters were unexpected role players in the Little Rock saga that caught those on the scene hoping to be a blockade against the students by surprise. In essence, the paper credited the reporters with inadvertently helping the students succeed at integration. The paper’s article portrayals of Faubus and segregation were further expounded in its editorials.

From the start of its editorials, the *Courier* was quick to assert that the United States government could not afford to allow the rebellious Arkansas Governor Faubus to put one state above federal law. The paper urged the President to take charge of the situation quickly including the Arkansas National Guard which Faubus was using to blockade the nine Black students from entering Little Rock. The President must stand up, exclaimed the paper, because the South would just as soon keep segregation forever if not challenged:

Left alone, the majority of the White people of the South would accept racial integration in the schools and everywhere else, even though many would find this an affront to their racial ego, but the calculating and fanatical minority will not leave them alone. (―United States,‖ 1957, p. 8)

In another editorial, the paper referred to Faubus as a “stooge”, whose madness would only serve as a speedy path to integration rather than a delayed one (“Dixie’s Rear,” 1957, p. 8). Another editorial called Faubus the “leader of a conspiracy by a minority of other Whites such as the White Citizens Councils and the resurgent Ku Klux Klan. They are inspired to suppress democracy and defy the government” (“Smashing Conspiracy,” 1957, p. 8), stated the *Courier*. 
When the federal government finally did make a move on Faubus, the paper’s editorial reflected thankfulness but cautioned its celebration, “The mobilizing of troops to patrol and escort the Little Rock nine into Central High School was a move to be applauded but doesn’t end this hard core conspiracy” (“Smashing Conspiracy,” 1957, p. 8). The ambition of those against integration has not been destroyed.

The photographic coverage by the **Courier** included photos of some Black reporters being beaten and other victims that faced abuse at the hands of those surrounding the Central High school during the failed and successful attempts to integrate the school. Other photos included head shots of Governor Faubus and pictures of two members of the Little Rock Nine. The depictions of violence like in many of the other papers gave insight to the racial climate and the feelings of Whites against the integration of its all White school. At best, these photos appealed to American sympathy and aroused attention to the movement—attention that was necessary to progress the fight for equality.

Overall, the **Courier’s** entire coverage of the Little Rock integration saga was definitely pro dominant and one sided in favor of integration and in condemnation of Governor Faubus and his attempts to blockade the nine Black students to its all White high school.

**The Pittsburgh Courier**

*1958 Dr. King stabbed.* There were five articles and three photos written about the stabbing of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. No editorials were found. All five articles were 500 words or less and appeared in the front section of the newspaper. Additionally, all five articles hoisted a neutrally dominant perspective although one of the articles
presented a favorable characterization of Dr. King. As for headlines, all articles’ were neutral. Two of the photos found were non-antagonistic and one was neutral in sentiment.

As stated there was a neutrally dominant perspective that emerged from the articles as they detailed the scene of King’s stabbing in Harlem, New York as well as the background of his assailant—Izola Curry, a mentally disturbed Black. The *Courier* described King as an “inspiring leader” (“Youth March,” 1958, p. 3). That comment was the only reference made to King and his stabbing that was outside the lines of neutrality.

The photos which appeared were of King’s wife and friends visiting him in the hospital as well as pictures of King lying in his hospital bed in recovery. An obvious target because of his beliefs, the pictures of King showed him as a victim on behalf of the movement. Thus, the pictures were determined to be non-antagonistic.

However, overall, the *Courier’s* coverage of King’s stabbing was neutral as they showed no favor or condemnation of the act of violence committed against the integration leader.

*The Pittsburgh Courier*

1960 *Sit-in demonstrations.* There were only two articles printed by the paper in regards to the 1960 sit down demonstrations launched by Black students in North Carolina. There were no editorials or photos found. Both articles were 500 words or less, appeared in the front section of the paper, had neutral headlines, and neutrally dominant perspectives.

The *Courier* reported that representatives of the Black student protestors anticipated a continuance of its sit in demonstrations until businesses decided to desegregate their
lunch counters and other services which separated Blacks and Whites. The paper provided no support for or against the sit-ins. However, the scene of the sit-in at the Woolworth lunch counter was described as being “orderly” (“Seek Service,” 1960, p. 4). Two photos accompanied the article which demonstrated that fact. The young college students appeared to be sitting peacefully, even though they were refused service at the Whites-only counter.

In its second article, the paper stated that the demonstrations posed by the Black students at the Woolworth counter in North Carolina had spread to another state, particularly South Carolina. Unlike the first sit-in, there were minor outbreaks of violence and mass arrests made at this demonstration. “A Negro was knocked from a stool by a White youth, another was struck by an egg and a bottle of ammonia was hurled into a drug store” (“Student Protest,” 1960, p. 3), said the paper. The Courier again presented the facts in regards to the incident with no follow up opinion of the treatment of the Black demonstrators.

The Pittsburgh Courier

1961 Freedom riders. Eight articles, one editorial, and five photos revealed the Courier’s coverage of the attacks made against the 1961 Freedom Riders as they tried to expose the illegal segregation practices in the South, which ignored desegregation rulings in regards to intrastate travel. All articles were 500 words or less and appeared in the front section of the paper. Six of the articles had pro dominant perspectives and two were neutral. There were five positive article headlines, and three neutral ones. As for the editorial, it had a pro dominant perspective, was 501-1000 words, and had a neutral headline. Two positive character portrayals were made towards the Freedom Riders.
One negative characterization was made of Alabama Governor Patterson. Four of the five photos were non-antagonistic, the other was neutral.

In the aftermath of the violence against the Freedom Riders, one Courier article called the youths, “courageous” and “determined” for wanting to continue their quest through Alabama despite meeting attacks in Anniston, Birmingham, and Montgomery, Alabama (“Courageous Youth,” 1961, p. 2). Another article criticized the governor of Alabama—John Patterson for making light of the attacks against the Blacks by saying that “Alabama has always upheld law and order and intend to keep doing so” (“A Mockery,” 1961, p. 3). The paper scoffed at the comment and called the governor’s words a mockery to the people of Alabama. To prove its case, the article provided other examples of when violence erupted in the state against Blacks and went unpunished. One specific example was made about a columnist for the Courier, Rev. F.L. Shuttlesworth, also a Black activist. According to the article, Shuttlesworth had been beaten by a White mob in 1958 for trying to enroll his children in an all White school in Birmingham. The beating took place while police were on the scene and under the eyes of a camera; yet no White person in the mob was punished. Mrs. Shuttlesworth was also stabbed in the stomach and cut on the wrist by the same mob. The paper’s attack against Governor Patterson and its efforts to disprove his statements provided a strong signal that the Courier was highly upset about the treatment of Blacks in Alabama. Even the more, the paper appeared to see no justice that ever prevailed on behalf of Blacks in the state when met with violence.

Rev. F.L. Shuttlesworth himself wrote an article in response to the violence against the Freedom Riders. “Cool Off?...For What?: The Mob Must Not Win,” was the article’s
headline. The piece, radiating with resolve, set forth Shuttlesworth’s belief that the Freedom Riders should continue their quests in the South despite the violence experienced by them. “If we are willing to go to jail, stay in jail, keep on riding, have our brain bashed out by mobsters, then it would appear unwise, un-American to ask us...being right...to call off our quest for freedom” (Shuttlesworth, 1961, p. 2), stated Shuttlesworth. A separate article printed in the same paper entitled, “Montgomery’s Negroes Tired of Being Kicked,” provided confirmation that something needed to be done but that stopping should not be an option for Blacks.

One of the final articles printed in regards to the Freedom Riders did not cover the demonstrators specifically but offered a prelude to even large plans that had resulted from the violence experience by the first group of riders. Entitled, “SCLC’s Mass Assault on Segregation Begins,” the article detailed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and other Black activist group’s attempt to pose an even larger assault on segregation in the hard-core states of the South—South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. The assault was going to be led by Dr. Martin Luther King among other Black leaders read the article.

The one and only editorial found during the specific time under study was printed after the violent Alabama encounters endured by the Freedom Riders in the cities of Anniston, Birmingham, and Montgomery. The editorial offered specific insight into the paper’s opinions about Alabama, specifically Montgomery. “This city can ignite and explode at any time” (“Reprisals Hit,” 1961, p. 4), warned the Courier. According to the paper, the editorial was an analytical report written after a three day tour of Montgomery, plus observations from people who lived there. “Although Negroes made up a large
portion of the population, only handfuls were allowed to vote. Many had no jobs of
influence in the city, county or state and in regards to facilities, “segregation is total and
complete” (“Reprisals Hit,” 1961, p. 4), printed the Courier. There are separate water
fountains at the airport, separate waiting rooms and rest rooms at all transportation points.
After its visit to see firsthand the living conditions of Blacks living in the city that had
handed down such violence to the Freedom Riders, the paper proclaimed, “Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr. knew what he was talking about when he wired President Kennedy and
asked him to keep the U.S. marshals in this town” (“Reprisals Hit,” 1961, p. 4).

As for the photographical coverage by the Courier, the newspaper captured a
similar scene to the other newspapers of the time: the burning Freedom Rider bus,
victims beaten by the mob in Montgomery—the man is seen pulling out a tooth that was
loosened when he was beaten. Additionally, there were pictures of National Guardsmen
on site to maintain order in the aftermath of violence. All photos that captured the
happenings of the violence practiced against the Riders were non-antagonistic as they
drew national attention upon Alabama and its treatment of Blacks and its obvious
disregard for the federal laws against segregation on interstate travel. Other neutral
snapshots showed members of CORE meeting to discuss the Alabama attack.

Overall, the Courier’s media coverage of the Freedom Riders was pro dominant in
its article and editorial perspectives. To add their photos provided evidence of the
violence it discussed and condemned. Furthermore, providing article/column space to a
civil rights activist who had experienced a similar violence at the hands of a White
Alabama mob (Shuttlesworth) gave more tribute to the paper’s stance for the
“courageous” Freedom Riders whom they praised.
The Courier

1962 James Meredith enters all White Ole Miss. There was a large amount of attention given to James Meredith’s controversial entrance into Ole Miss. Specifically, there were 22 articles, two editorials, and eight photos found. 17 of the articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and five were pro dominant. Three of the article headlines were positive and 19 were neutral. 18 articles were 500 words or less and four were 501-1000 words. All 22 articles appeared in the front section of the paper. Three positive characterizations were made about James Meredith. In regards to editorials, both were pro dominant and 500 words or less in length and both editorial headlines were neutral. All Eight of the photos were non-antagonistic.

The articles found detailed the efforts of Meredith to get into Ole Miss and the roles of the people helping him and those who stood against him. The former Jackson State College student’s attempt to enter the all White school was well supported by the Courier. The paper seemed to brag on Meredith’s intelligence. “He is a deep thinker and extremely persistent, not easily deterred from any goal toward which he sets himself,” (Anderson, 1962, p. 2), the paper said, as if they knew him personally and exactly what he was capable of achieving. Written at the onset of Meredith’s announcement that he would attempt to enter Ole Miss and before the actual battle against Mississippi began, the paper seemed to prematurely hang their hopes on young Meredith as he became the new focus in the ongoing integration battle.

When the Governor of Mississippi, Ross Barnett stepped in and began denying Meredith entry into Ole Miss, one Courier article said that the U.S. needed to step in and end school segregation. Despite the efforts of organizations such as the NAACP and its
herculean efforts over the years, segregated school systems remain 92% intact. The government has the hands and the power needed to end segregated schools claimed the article.

In one article, the Courier described the violence that erupted because of Meredith’s attempted enrollment into Ole Miss as a “war” (“War Mississippi,” 1962, p. 1). Two people were dead, some 75 or more wounded, and at least 150 people were under arrest. This “war” in Mississippi hurts the image of the United States proclaimed the article and the mere thought that we are fighting and a causality and injury list exist is like a scene from a war with the outside enemy. The article also brought up Governor Orval Faubus’ similar defiance of the federal government in Arkansas some years prior:

Just five years ago…U.S. paratroopers with fixed bayonets were called up to escort nine defenseless Negro pupils into Central High School in Little Rock, Ark., where another governor of the Ross Barnett like, Orval Faubus decided to defy the orders of the federal government. (“War Mississippi,” 1962, p. 1)

The Courier’s connection between Faubus and Barnett revealed the paper’s awareness of the years elapsed, and the existence of the same problems facing Blacks in the South in regards to school segregation. Like war, Faubus and Barnett were so passionate about segregation; it took being surrounded by the enemy before they would waive the White flag of surrender.

In regards to its editorials, the Courier said the nation should respect and applaud young James Meredith for his efforts to become the first Black at the all-White Ole Miss. The paper referred to him as the “New Negro; an example of courage, determination and principle” (“New Negro,” 1962, p. 12). Additionally, the paper described the efforts of
Meredith against Mississippi in a David vs. Goliath context—Meredith being David of course. “It is thrilling to see one slight young man standing up to all of the forces of Mississippi law and order…” (“New Negro,” 1962, p. 12), said the Courier. The paper went on to ask, “How can Jim-Crowism and exclusionism survive in the face of such courage, determination, and selfless devotion to principle” (“New Negro,” 1962, p. 12)? Thus, the newspaper was very much in support of Meredith’s actions. It also seemed the paper realized that he was up against a strong force—Mississippi law, which had a long history of keeping out Blacks where they did not want them to be—with violence if necessary.

An obvious advocate of Meredith’s and integration, the second editorial printed by the Courier called the barring of Meredith by Mississippi an “atrocity” (“Meredith Mississippi,” 1962, p. 12). The editorial’s main focus however was to provide an excerpt of Meredith’s viewpoint on his attempts to integrate Ole Miss which he (Meredith) had previously provided to another newspaper. “I believe that Mississippi may well take the initiative and blot out its Blackened past and proceed on to an enlightened phase of race relations and human decency” (“Meredith Mississippi,” 1962, p. 12). The paper responded calling Meredith’s views enlightened and statesmanlike, so much so that he should be Governor of Mississippi! This take on Meredith was very favorable and much like the first editorial’s characterization of him.

The photos found in the Courier were again similar to the pictures taken by other newspapers. Non antagonistic, they reveal the “warlike” image talked about in the paper’s articles. Pictures of guards with guns stood outside the federal buildings in which the back and forth hearings occurred regarding the fate of Meredith’s entrance into
Ole Miss. Protestors filled the sidewalks and streets with picket signs that read, “All Men Are Not Created Equal” and “God Help Us Keep Cool, Calm, and Segregated.” To contrast the hate filled messages, there was a picture of achievement—as Meredith was escorted into Ole Miss by armed U.S. Marshals.

Overall, the Courier’s news articles detailing Meredith’s journey was neutral although the paper’s feelings about Meredith and integration were apparent in some of the articles. In its editorials, the paper was very much outspoken in regards to its’ support for Meredith and his quest to enroll as the first Black at Ole Miss. As for the photographic coverage, the images captured by the paper worked together in favor of Meredith and integration.

The Pittsburgh Courier

1963 Murder of Medgar Evers. There were six articles, two editorials, and 13 photos printed by the Courier about the murder of Medgar Evers. All appearing in the front section of the paper, two articles had neutrally dominant perspectives while the other four were pro dominant. Half and Half—three article headlines were neutral and three were positive. In regards to length, two of the articles were 501-1000 words and four were less than 500 words. Both editorials had pro dominant perspectives and neutral headlines and were 500 words or less. Two positive characterizations were made towards Medgar Evers. All 13 photos were non-antagonistic.

One article discussed the tributes paid to Evers by Black businesses and citizens in Jackson, MS; they closed their doors and raised the American flag at half staff in his honor. Those actions of mourning, according to the paper were, “mute testimonies of the shame the murder had brought to the nation called “the land of the free and the home of
the brave” (Rundles, 1963, p. 1). The remarks made the paper sound blameful and critical of the American way of life. The idea that the concept of freedom was not shared by all or for all if such an act of violence occurred against a Black trying to gain equality.

A neutral article told that Jackson, MS police were holding a suspect for Evers murder. Although, the paper had expressed its condemnation of the murder, it didn’t comment on the possible suspect. However, the paper did reference the murder as a cowardly act because Evers was shot in the back by his assailant.

When Evers’ funeral took place, the Courier called its report on the event, “At the End of a Long, Long Road Lies Evers.” In the article, the paper seemed to be regretful that Evers had fought and risk his life for his country on the battlefields during World War II, only to meet death on the soil of his homeland. In another article, the paper declared that even in his grave, Medgar Evers was surrounded by segregation. The Courier was referencing the Arlington National Cemetery, where Evers was buried. Interestingly, the cemetery—a shrine for veterans of all wars in which America participated, practiced segregation in its locker rooms and eating facilities for Black and White workers. Thus, even in his place of supposed rest, things around him were still not what Evers had fought for.

The two editorials written by the Courier expressed anger and outrage that Evers had been murdered. Evers was celebrated by the paper as a “martyr” for his work towards helping Blacks gain their civil rights (“Medgar Evers,” 1963, p. 10). Linked to its praise of Evers and his lifeworks, the paper felt that his murder was inspired by his environment. Specifically, the paper took the time to attribute Evers death to the atmosphere in his home state of Mississippi. “Medgar Evers rests in a martyr’s grave, in
a coffin shaped like the State of Mississippi he vainly strove to reclaim for civilization,” (“Medgar Evers,” 1963, p. 10), said one editorial. The paper went on to criticize the state declaring that its atmosphere of violence, injustice, prejudice, hatred and discrimination was a predictable catalyst for Evers murder. To suggest that Evers was attempting in vain to reclaim the state from practicing such an atmosphere was admittance by the paper that it saw the state as hopeless in changing. This thought process was in keeping with the ideas and goals of those fighting the civil rights cause—that Mississippi and Alabama were the most segregated and unfair states in regards to treatment of Blacks, in the South. When discussing Mississippi’s treatment of Evers and other Blacks, the paper suggested that the only way the state would change was by the only force they feared and respected—the Federal Government. Again, this comment about Mississippi reflected the paper’s deep disapproval of the state and its way of life and admittance that they felt the state was out of control in its tactics and needed order regained.

Different from its entire previous showcase of pictures, the Courier put together a collage of photos of Evers funeral and placed them on their editorial page. So rather than provide verbal comment only, the paper affixed each picture with a caption. Some of the photos revealed Evers’ coffin being carried out of the church covered in the American flag—a contradictory image to the paper’s feelings regarding Evers’ murder as being undemocratic. Evers was: a Black, not honored in his own state, segregated because of his race, yet served as a soldier in the war on behalf of his country, even though he could not be served a glass of water at any restaurant of his choice in the state of Mississippi.

Other photos showed a kiss of goodbye being given by his wife as his brother offered her comfort. Then there was the seemingly endless line of mourner marchers
who journeyed to see the last remains of the NAACP field secretary. All photos were non-antagonistic as they detailed the mourning of an activist slain because of his role in the civil rights movement.

*The Pittsburgh Courier*

1963 *March on Washington.* A large amount of news coverage was given by the *Courier* to the largest demonstration of its time—the 1963 March on Washington. Although, only three editorials were printed, there were 18 articles, and 13 photos used to detail the event. All 18 articles were found in the front section of the paper. Eight of the news articles had a neutral perspective and the remaining 10 were pro-dominant. In regards to length, eight of the articles were 500 words or less, four were 501-1000 words, and six were 1001-1500 words. Only two of the 18 article headlines were positive while the others were neutral. All three editorials found had pro-dominant perspectives. Additionally, all were 500 words or less. One of the three editorial headlines was positive and the others were neutral. All 13 photos had a non-antagonistic sentiment.

The *Courier* was on top of its coverage of the March on Washington from the planning stages of the March by organizers to its aftermath. Its coverage began with the transportation plans for the marchers. Coming from all over the nation, transportation, food, lodging, and traffic regulations were huge concerns according to the article entitled, “2,000 Buses, 14 Special Trains Set For Travel.” The article also provided specific details of what type of people would be participating and the cities they would come from. Also, details of the March route were provided. In another article, the paper provided updates of information released by March leaders such as A. Philip Randolph.
One specific piece of information released by Randolph was a newsletter to all participating groups telling them the purpose for the March.

Two days prior to the March, another Courier article was printed, “Decade’s Biggest Story is March.” In the article, the reporter describes the atmosphere, while awaiting in Washington as being “morally gripping” and “highly emotional” (Robinson, 1963, p. 1). The reporter also called the event “a story of faith and courage and humility, and one hundred years of waiting” (Robinson, 1963, p. 1). The writer then began to give a preview of some of the slogans/phrases that would appear on the signs being held by demonstrators: “Injustice will not stand against our desire to be free”; “God of Justice—God of Power; Can America deny freedom in this hour?”; and “No matter how you polish it, Segregation is dirty rotten Evil” (Robinson, 1963, p. 1). The reporter called the slogans mere manifestations of much deeper feelings that must be felt by many Blacks that have long awaited freedom and justice. The paper also said that it would be a tremendous task to correlate those feelings to the rest of watching America. The Courier’s special attention to detail and the feelings of the marchers in its initial articles prior to the march provided a perception that the paper held a deep concern and possessed an emotional investment of its own in the March and had a great hope and confidence that it would go well. “There will be no trouble! No one but the rabble rousing fascist hate-groups…wants trouble” (Robinson, 1963, p. 1), said the paper. Its reference to the March as the “decade’s biggest story” also revealed that it saw it as a monumental part of American history when segregationists described it as “senseless” and “unnecessary” (Robinson, 1963, p. 1). After the March, the paper’s feelings would become even more evident.
The articles after the March, which was more than half of the paper’s coverage, gave unanimous praise to the event. The leaders of the March were also exalted on high. Particularly, the speech of Dr. Martin Luther King was printed in its entirety without comment. However, in a separate article, the paper offered its thoughts on the speech calling King’s words electrifying and a rallying cry for Black Americans. So moved, the paper referred to King as a “20th century Messiah” (Nunn, 1963, p. 1). Such reference to this Black leader was an indication of how high they regarded the man behind the speech. Additionally, calling him a “messiah” was an investment in him that he was a leader, a savior upon which not only Blacks could depend for leadership but all disadvantaged Americans. The dream of Dr. King, stated the paper, was the dream of millions of Americans, a call to arms to those who believed that Blacks and all people needed to be given an equal chance as Whites to pursue the American dream.

Other Courier articles presented the reactions around the world to the large March. Views of participating Jews, Protestants, and Catholics were presented. No opposing views to the March were printed only positive.

As for the photographic coverage of the March on Washington, there were several photos of the leading figures of the March such as Dr. King and A. Philip Randolph and of the individual and group participants. Each person had a massive backdrop that consisted of other marchers. Some were united arm in arm or hand in hand—a symbol of unity as people of various races touched to show that the nagging problems of race relations could be dealt with—in compromise. Another photo detailed a mass of the thousands in attendance in front of the Lincoln Memorial, a heroic symbol held in high regard by Blacks because Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves. Together, the photos were a
dramatic account of the event. A show of peace and unity, the picture was definitely non-antagonistic to the movement.

Interestingly, there were no editorials written in the paper prior to the March. It was only after the March had taken place that the three editorials found appeared. In one of its editorials, the paper touted on the success and peacefulness that emerged at the massive March. In fact, the *Courier* suggested that the absence of violence at the event provided some validity to the charges of police brutality which had been leveled at law enforcement officials across the nation during various other demonstrations put on by Blacks. According to the paper, the orderliness of the March proved to the nation that demonstrations could be carried off non-violently provided that local law enforcement officials see to it that marchers are protected. The editorial further praised the March calling it a “beacon light of inspiration to Negroes throughout the great United States…a blueprint for future demonstrations” (Keith, 1963, p. 3).

Another editorial entitled, “An Impressive Demonstration,” the *Courier* stated that those who had worked to plan and carry out the March deserved high commendation for a difficult job superbly done. “In a most dramatic manner, the nation in general, and political Washington in particular, was shown the temper and determination of loyal, law-abiding citizens seeking equality and fair play in voting, education, work, housing, and retraining” (“Impressive Demonstration,” 1963, p. 10), stated the paper. So awed by the demonstration the paper felt that the March could be the turning point in the campaign towards gaining the equal rights that had eluded Blacks up until then. The *Courier* pointed to the participation of White citizens and people of all color as an indication that the nation just may be ready for change. “Civil rights is the nation’s No. 1 moral issue of
the second half of the 20th century…This is the beginning of the battle to save America” (“Impressive Demonstration,” 1963, p. 10), exclaimed the editorial. The comments made by the Courier show the high regards held by the paper for the cause of the Civil Rights Movement. Suggesting that if Blacks gain their equality that America will be saved gave insight into the paper’s viewpoint of America and its democracy—that equality for all does include Blacks. Of course this view was highly condemned by segregationists and those against granting civil rights to Blacks.

Overall, the Courier’s coverage of the March within all facets, articles, editorials, and photos provided a very pro dominant perspective in favor of the ideals and leaders of the March. In fact, in one heading, the paper flaunted its devotion to the story as its headline read, “Courier Gives Greatest Coverage to D.C. March.” This declaration was an admittance of the pride taken in the attention the paper was giving to the story at the time. Additionally, the number and length of articles was a great indication of how important the story was to the paper.

*The Pittsburgh Courier*

1963 *Birmingham church bomb*. Through five articles, one editorial and 13 photos, the Courier described the bombing of a Birmingham, Alabama church. All five articles were pro dominant in perspective and appeared in the front section of the paper. Three of the articles were 501-1000 words in length and two were less than 500 words. Only one article headline was positive, the others were neutral. As for the editorial, the dominant perspective was pro and its headline was positive. In regards to length, the editorial was less than 500 words. All 13 photos were non-antagonistic. One negative characterization
was made towards President J.F. Kennedy and five positive characterizations were made towards the four bombing victims.

A sense of rage, grief, and dissuasion surrounded the articles printed by the *Courier* in regards to the Birmingham Church Bombing. In its initial article, the paper called the city of Birmingham—“a hell-hole in America, Terror City, U.S.A, a place where total disregard for law of any kind has become routine practice, a place where Negro life isn’t worth a plugged nickel‖ (“Move Fast,” 1963, p. 1). So distrusting of the city because of the bombings, the paper suggested it should no longer be allowed to govern itself but should be placed under martial law immediately.

In a quest to support its claim that the city was indeed a “terror city,” the paper printed the specific dates and locations of bombings that had been committed against Black homes and churches. Included in that list was the home of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In one year—1957, five homes were bombed.

In another article, the paper detailed the meeting of Black leaders such as Dr. King, and Rev. F.L. Shuttlesworth with President Kennedy in the aftermaths of the bombing. The leaders were trying to seek injection from the federal government to help solve the bombing and to help establish communication between Whites and Blacks as a result of the stressed relations. However, according to the *Courier*, the leaders were “outfoxed” by President Kennedy as he did not enact martial law and call on the states National Guard to maintain order. Instead, the President left it up to the segregationist Birmingham mayor and/or governor to ask for help—which the paper seriously doubted would ever happen. In essence, the hopes that the president would provide such help to the Blacks in Birmingham seemed disappointing to the *Courier*. 
Entitled, “Bombingham, the Unrepentant,” the Courier’s one and only editorial denounced the city of Birmingham, Alabama for the killing of the four little Black girls calling the city “disgraceful”, “shameful”, and “barbaric” (“Bombingham Unrepentent,” 1963, p. 10) As well, the paper cited that 52 bombings had been committed against Blacks in the city and all had gone unpunished. Yet a White grocer accused in the slaying of a White man attempting a freedom walk through the South, has just been set free by a grand jury, exclaimed the editorial.

The editorial further expressed its disgust that the rest of the world had expressed indignation over the atrocities. Yet, Birmingham, the state of Alabama or its neighbors seemed unrepentant for the crimes. So angry by the historical violence that had occurred in the city/state, the paper expressed a sense of hopelessness that things would ever change for Blacks: “If there were any shame in these people there might be some hope for the future, but when has Birmingham or Alabama shown any shame over sins against the Negro?” (“Bombingham Unrepentent,” 1963, p. 10)

The photographs printed by the Courier appeared to correlate with the paper’s sense of loss expressed in its articles and editorial. The scene of the dynamited blast surrounded by debris and angry crowds being dispersed by police officers was the image of one photo. That image was shadowed by the individual smiling faces of the four victims, looking youthful and innocent. Surrounding the young girls were photos of various family members and Black leaders paying homage to those they called “martyrs.” Then another picture shows three women, who were not the children’s mothers, crying and being helped out of the church where the funeral was at. All together and individually, the photos serve as a catalyst for the anger and frustration expressed by the
paper. Photos of and about a crime that was oft unsolved in the city of Birmingham, a crime because of race in the midst of a movement fighting against such injustice; these photos were non-antagonistic towards the cause.

Overall, the Courier’s coverage of the four bombing victims was extremely biased and supportive of the cause of the civil rights movement because the paper made extra efforts to expose the injustices that had been committed against Blacks beginning with this single bombing and spreading to a history of violence by the city of Birmingham, Alabama. The paper was extremely angry in its language usage in its articles and its editorials. Seemingly inflamed by passion over the death of the four young girls, the Courier was not hesitant to call the city out on its crimes and even requested that the federal government step in to help. There was indeed nothing neutral about the paper’s coverage of this particular civil rights event.

The Pittsburgh Courier

1964 Freedom summer. During this time period, only one article was found, no editorials, or photos. The dominant perspective of the article was pro. The headline was neutral and the article was 501-1000 words in length and was printed on the front page of the paper. According to the one article found, 1,000 Black and White volunteers were set to go to Mississippi to conduct a massive voter registration campaign, in connection with desegregation demonstrations. The article expressed great concern that violence may emerge from the Freedom Summer voter registration efforts. Considered a state of staunch segregation, the article stated that Mississippi had made plans of how to deal with the demonstrations in various ways. The strength of the State Highway Patrol doubled in numbers, new laws were created that allowed more restraint against
demonstrators, and fines and jail time for demonstrators also were increased. Additionally, the article stated that groups such as the Klu Klux Klan had begun early campaigns of violence against Blacks to damper their will to participate. Because of such hatred, the Courier believed that by summer’s end, a lot of blood would be shed. The Courier’s assumption that violence would emerge as a result of the Black campaign was evidence that the paper saw the South as a violent place with a violent past whose usual actions would again emerge during the staged demonstrations. This viewpoint of the South was shared by Black activists and other proponents of the movement.

*The Pittsburgh Courier*

*Civil Rights Act of 1964.* There was only one editorial and one article found in the Courier that detailed the signing of the Civil Rights Act. The pro dominant article appeared on the front page of the paper, it was 501-1000 words, had a neutral headline, and provided a positive characterization of President Johnson. One photo accompanied the article, which was non-antagonistic as it showed President Johnson signing the bill into law. As for the editorial, it had a pro dominant perspective, was 501-1000 words, and had a neutral headline.

The Courier called the signing of the Civil Rights Act, the most sweeping measure of its sort since the Emancipation Proclamation. The paper also provided some excerpts from President Johnson’s speech regarding the implications of the Civil Rights Bill as he signed it:

The purpose of this law is simple, said Johnson. It does not restrict the freedom of any American so long as he respects the rights of others. It does not give special treatment to any citizen. It does say the only limit to a man’s hope for happiness
and for the future of his children shall be his own ability. ("Rights Bill," 1964, p. 1) The paper referenced Johnson’s remarks as his finest address, one which stabilized his position as a great statesman.

In regards to its own feelings about the Bill, the Courier said it did not believe that it would bring about utopia but in fact, some bitterness may be a consequence. “But the difference between ‘before’ and ‘now’ is that the law is on the side of right, that local and state instruments of oppression have been subordinated and made illegal with the broad sweep of a pen” ("Rights Bill," 1964, p. 1).

In its editorial, the paper was even more celebratory of the signing of the Civil Rights Act and optimistic about what it meant for the future of Blacks. However, the piece also encouraged Blacks to avoid complacency and satisfaction and instead to view the milestone achievement as a beginning and not an end. “The Civil Rights law marks but one step on the thousand-mile journey to first-class citizenship and recognition of the Negro as a contributor to the greatness of this great country” (“Opportunity Challenge,” 1964, p. 10), stated the editorial.

The editorial furthered its encouragement urging Blacks to create job opportunities for themselves and not wait on Whites to hand them one:

Blacks helped to build this country practically with little or no pay; Black slaves were the craftsman of the South working in the cotton fields for free and after the Emancipation Proclamation were still subdued to indentured servitude with little pay. With the signing of the Civil Rights Bill, new doors have been opened and now it’s time to start Negro businesses and create jobs for your sons and daughters. ("Opportunity Challenge," 1964, p. 10)
In essence the paper was urging Blacks to be happy about the opportunity but be aware of the challenge that awaits you. The Bill was a victory but it was not the end of Black struggle. Just as the Emancipation Proclamation had freed slaves, it was the beginning of hundreds of years of struggle for the Black man to really become free. This too was a new beginning with a new struggle. “The Civil Rights Bill…does not usher him (Blacks) into a land of milk and honey nor place golden slippers on his feet…It is not going to change the Negro’s outlook unless and until Negroes in great measure work to change themselves” (“Opportunity Challenge,” 1964, p. 10), exclaimed the Courier.

Overall, although there was a small amount of coverage to examine, it was clear that the Courier had a very pro dominant perspective in regards to the signing of the Civil Rights Bill as it expressed its hopes for the future of the Black.

*The Pittsburgh Courier*

1964 *Three Civil Rights workers murdered.* There were five articles, one editorial, and three photos about three civil rights workers murdered in Philadelphia, Mississippi. Four of the articles had a neutrally dominant perspective and only one was pro. Three articles were less than 500 words and two were 501-1000 words. All article headlines were neutral except one which was positive. All articles were printed in the front section of the paper. As for the editorial, it had a pro dominant perspective, was 501-1000 words in length, and it had a positive headline. The three photos found were non-antagonistic.

“Warned of Dangers in ‘Strange Land’: Student Rights Groups Fear For Lives in Miss.”—this was the headline of the first article printed by the Courier regarding the three Civil Rights workers murdered in Mississippi. The article suggested that the
disappearance of the workers was creating an enormous fear among Blacks and anyone else involved in the voter registration drives. Referencing Mississippi as a racial no-man’s land, the article said the state was so harsh in its race relations that it was difficult to see it as a part of the United States but rather it was like a whole other strange land:

Mississippi Whites, particularly those in ‘Bloody Neshoba’ County, (county where workers went missing) don’t like outsiders, especially when their aim is to do something for Blacks. That is why civil rights workers fear that the fate which befell Schwergner, Chaney, and Goodman—whatever it might be—may also befall others. (“Student Rights,” 1964, p. 1)

In essence, the paper was referencing fear that was probably being felt by Blacks and Whites involved in the cause. Yet, the papers use of language and word choice worked together to create accusations and anger against the Whites of Mississippi which presented a picture of personal offense, concern, and fear by the newspaper itself.

The second article was written after the three workers’ bodies were discovered—all shot, and one beaten also, close to Philadelphia, Mississippi. Neutrally written, the article explores the FBI’s work towards discovering the bodies. Apparently, the Bureau had received a tip some weeks earlier about the location of the bodies but did not follow the tip given by Black comedian, Dick Gregory. The FBI took a “no comment” stance according to the paper. The article further explored the condition of the three bodies. Apparently, only the young Black, Chaney had been beaten out of the three young workers. Additionally, Chaney had been shot two times more than the other men, reported the Courier.
In its next article, also neutral, the paper tells of the request made by Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) to the federal government. The Black group asked the government to “protect the lives and welfare of voter registration workers and local citizens in Mississippi” in the aftermath of the workers’ murders (“SNCC Requests,” 1964, p. 1). No language in favor or condemnation of the group, their request, or the federal government was made.

One of the final articles talked about the absence of Blacks and Black leaders at the funeral of Andrew Goodman. In the article, it tells of a letter written to the Courier by a preacher that was in attendance about the matter:

I hope that the three young men could not have looked down from heaven, and seen the few Blacks. They would have wondered what they gave their lives for. I hope that the small showing of Negroes will not hurt…the feelings of the thousands of White and colored workers which we have in the field, who are being intimidated morning, noon and night, by the local Ku Klux Klan and the White Citizens Councils and the local enforcement agencies. (“Martyr’s Funeral,” 1964, p. 4)

The Courier provided no comment on the remarks made by the preacher. However, the articles headline, “Few Negroes Attend Martyr’s Funeral,” suggested that the paper’s reference to Goodman as a “martyr” seemed on the side of the preacher in declaring the young man’s life as sacrificial for a worthy cause.

As previously stated, the Courier produced only one editorial about the murder of the three Civil Rights workers. The piece was written around the time the workers first went missing. Not waiting for their bodies to turn up dead or alive, the paper said it felt the
need to make a comment immediately about the situation and that Americans needed to answer as well:

The American nation can’t wait but must express its horror and recoil at the murderousness with which groups of young Americans are being threatened by guerilla and lynching units of the Klan and of the Americans for the Preservation of the White Race. (“Heartbreak Miss.,” 1964, p. 11)

The paper also accused Mississippi police officers, whom they called “vigilantes” of trying to get an early start at scaring off other students from helping Black voters register (“Heartbreak Miss.,” 1964, p. 11). The Courier described the missing young volunteers and those training to go to Mississippi as having the “qualities of a good soldier” and also something sometimes rare among soldiers—authentic commitment (“Heartbreak Miss.,” 1964, p. 11).

Photos of all three good soldiers were printed by the paper. Although they were merely head shots of the young men, the pictures put a face with the victims who had died as a result of their involvement with furthering the rights of Blacks in Mississippi in the arena of voting. Their youthfulness and look of innocence seemed to evoke a reason why the paper called them martyrs.

Overall, the news articles by the Courier regarding the workers were neutral and examined the details of the crime, the investigators and opinions of those in attendance to the funeral. Only one article in addition to one editorial provided the views of the paper about the murder—which included remarks of resentment towards the state in which they were murdered and their alleged murders—which could have included anyone from the large pool of hatred filled Whites in Mississippi.
Chicago Tribune

1954 Brown vs. Board of Education. There were seven articles and two editorials printed by the Tribune regarding the Supreme Court’s decision outlawing segregation. No photos were found. All seven articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. Additionally, all seven articles appeared in the front section of the newspaper. Four of the articles were 500 words or less while two were 501 to 1000 words. One article was 1001-1500 words. As for the editorials, both had pro dominant perspectives and both had neutral headlines. One editorial was 500 words or less and the other was 501-1000 words.

The Tribune’s coverage provided an outline of the Court’s decision and gauged the reactions of leaders across the nation to the decision but particularly Southern leaders. For example one article asserted that leaders in the South’s opinions ranged from bitter criticism and near-defiance to milder anger and on to quite caution of the decision—Governors of Mississippi, Georgia, as well as Alabama were included in that list. Georgia Governor Talmadge said that his state would go so far as to lease out public schools to private operators in order to avoid adhering to the Court’s decision. The move would allow White children to be able to attend the school of their choice while keeping out unwanted Black children. The Tribune provided no opinion towards the leaders and their opposing viewpoints.

Other Tribune articles examined Educators’ concerns that a reversal in Whites’ attitude towards Blacks from benevolence to unkindness would be taken and may even result in violence because of the Court’s decision. Additionally, White Educators seemed to think that Black teachers would be unable to get jobs in integrated schools and that
Black children would be shunned by their White playmates. According to the paper, the leaders felt the decision was very unnecessary because the majority of Black sentiment was that they were happy with separate but equal facilities. Additionally, Southerners were apprehensive because they felt that a lot of money had already been spent to ensure separate but equal schools and it would only be an additional burden to have to undo that. Finally, the Tribune stated that some Southern educators felt that the Court’s decision was not necessary because Blacks had achieved a degree of economic and political equality undreamed of a half century ago.

Despite the opposition reported on by the paper against the Court’s decision, in its initial editorial response to the outlawing of segregation, the Tribune made a strong case for why the decision was the only logical approach to take. First, the Tribune declared that if the Court had held that a state government may discriminate on account of race, it would probably encourage states to continue to discriminate and this would not have been a good decision as it may have dampened the improvements that had been made in the area of race relations in the South. What was the big deal, asked the paper when higher education in the South had already taken strides toward integration. In addition to that logic, the paper said that the Court’s decision was not novel but simply went along with the ideals of the constitution which did not excuse Blacks. The state governments, north and south, must regard all men as created equal, declared the paper.

In its second editorial, the Tribune reaffirmed that the judgment of the court was right, but said the problem of giving effect to it would not be easy. Reason for its difficulty was attributed to the effort that it would take to change the attitudes of the average segregationist along with the financial challenge it would take to bring facilities
up to par for the transition. According to the paper, a good deal more money was being spent on education for the average White child versus the Black child but still, the money spent on the White child was still below the nation’s standard. Thus, the paper believed that in the end it would take quite a few years to make a complete transition to complete integration but that it was worth the efforts.

Overall, the Tribune’s news articles were very neutral in its presentation of the Brown decision. Yet, the paper’s editorials provided their pro dominant stances on the issue and additionally presented some logic behind the difficulty they felt lay ahead for the South in putting the law into full action.

*Chicago Tribune*

*1955 Rosa Parks.* There were no articles, editorials, or photos printed regarding Mrs. Rosa Parks’ arrest in Montgomery, Alabama. The absence of coverage during this time period shows that this issue may not have been relevant to the paper at the time.

*Chicago Tribune*

*1955 Murder of Emmitt Till.* There were 20 articles and nine photos which detailed the Tribune’s coverage of the murder trial of Emmitt Till. Seventeen of the articles had neutrally dominant perspectives while only three had a pro dominant perspective. All 20 articles had neutral headlines and appeared in the front section of the newspaper. Thirteen articles were 500 words or less, four were 501-1000 words, and three were 1001-1500 words. As for its photos, all nine were non-antagonistic in sentiment. No editorials were printed during the specified time of analysis.
The Tribune’s coverage of the Till case was extremely informative offering details of the jury selection process, excerpts of testimony from key case figures including Till’s mother and uncle, and day to day accounts of the happenings in the trial.

Specifically, one article put the Till case into perspective as it described the case to be a “way of life going on trial” (Holmes, 1955, p. 1). By this, the article asserted that the two White men going on trial for killing a Black was a scenario uncharacteristic of the deep South who did not usually even attempt to prosecute any White for committing acts of offense of any kind against Blacks. Thus, the Tribune believed that a lot of the nation’s perception of Mississippi and the rest of the South centered on the outcome of the case. “The very way of life in terms of segregation and the regions treatment of Negroes will be projected into a spotlight of national publicity” (Holmes, 1955, p. 1), declared the Tribune. In the same article, the paper surveyed some of the White residents in the Mississippi counties where the murder/kidnapping had allegedly taken place for their opinions on the case; no one expected the two murder defendants to be found guilty.

In a pro dominant article, headlined, “2 Go on Trial in South for Till Murder,” the Tribune opened up with specific details about the jury selection for the case:

Ten White men who have sworn they have no racial prejudice were accepted by both state and defense today…There are seven farmers on the tentative jury of 12, some of them neighbors of the men on trial. One of the seven is a former client of one of the prosecution attorneys and sits at the prosecution table as one of a trio. (Holmes, 1955, p. 1)

The mere open of the article with this information showed that the all White jury selection made up of neighbors and associates was a suspecting issue for the Tribune.
The paper went on to stress that the expectation of an all White jury acquitting two White men for killing a Black person “brought the racial issue frankly into the open” (Holmes, 1955, p. 1). The Tribune worried that it would be a soul searching inquisition into whether the juror, a White man, could sit in judgment on two other White men accused of killing a Black.

When discussing the trial proceedings, the paper opened frequently by pointing out that an all-White jury was trying two White men for murder of a young Negro. The repetitive opening again indicated that the paper wanted to emphasize this information.

“Acquit Two in Till Slaying,” was the headline of the Tribune’s only article written after a not guilty verdict was delivered in the Till case (according to the time frame of study). In its final article, the paper remained neutral in its reporting, offering no condemnation or approval toward the verdict. Nonetheless, the paper spent a considerable amount of space describing the scene in the courtroom on that day detailing that many people crowded around the defendants and their families, shaking hands and murmuring words of approval at the result. “Even the jurors received a few slaps on the back from the persons they passed. Such exclamations as “good work” and “nice going” were heard” (Holmes, 1955, p. 1), according to the paper. In conjunction with the article, the Tribune hoisted two large photos, larger than any of their other photos regarding the trial, of both defendants, both smiling as one kissed his wife in celebration. The almost 1,000 word article along with the large photo seemed to suggest that the Tribune was trying to highlight a sort of basking or loathing going on as the all White jury had followed the “way of life” suggested in a previous Tribune article regarding the trial (Holmes, 1955, p. 1). Recall the paper said that the trial’s verdict would be a challenge to
the way of life of the South. Rarely had a White been convicted of any type of violence against a Black in Mississippi. And certainly the paper offered a hint of doubt that an all White jury, who were neighbors of the two White men on trial, would ever convict them and even surveyed citizens who confirmed the same thought. Indeed the paper’s final article and photo magnified that statement and seemed to reiterate an “I told you so” mentality.

As for the rest of its photos, they too were non-antagonistic in sentiment as they presented sympathy evoking pictures that victimized Till’s mother and Uncle and what had happened to him. Photos of Till’s mother crying, crowds of people outside the church to attend his funeral, pictures of the all White jury selected to decide the fate of two White men in the alleged slaying of the Black, segregated seating arrangements of Blacks and Whites inside the courtroom, pictures of the casualness of the defendants sitting and playing with their children as the proceedings of the case went on—all worked together to create a non-antagonistic sentiment as they demonstrated the racial tensions and prejudices that existed in the South particularly in Mississippi.

Overall, the Tribune’s coverage of the Till murder trial was neutral. However, there were a few instances in its articles in which the paper questioned the fairness that could be reached by an all White jury in a state that rarely arrested let alone convicted a White person for any act of violence/offense against a Black. The paper’s questioning of the fairness of the trial was the only evidence available to provide insight into any personal stance taken by the paper regarding the murder since no editorials were printed. Although a native of Chicago, the Tribune’s coverage of Till was the only newspaper who did not provide a single editorial comment regarding his murder or trial. The
absence of any editorial comments no matter their perspective, suggests there was apprehension about commenting on the extremely high profile case.

*Chicago Tribune*

*1956 Alabama bus desegregation.* There were only two articles printed about the Supreme Court’s decision banning desegregation on public transits. No editorials or photos were found. Both articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines and were featured in the front section of the newspaper. One article was 1001-1500 words in length while the other was less than 500 words.

Though a brief showing of coverage, the paper managed to present both a Black and White perspective on the court’s decision. The paper declared that Blacks in Montgomery, Alabama were cheering and rejoicing at the decision while staunch segregationist leaders vowed that the decision was unconstitutional and that they would go on with their same system of segregated transportation laws. Comments were recorded from Dr. King who called the victory, “a glorious daybreak to end a long night of enforced segregation in public transportation” (Dodd, 1956, p. 1). Another remark from Sam Engelhardt, an Alabama state senator and a leader of one of the state’s White Citizens Council proclaimed that, “as far as I am concerned they can move the Montgomery City Lines, Inc., lock, stock, and barrel, to Washington, D.C. This is another attempt by a group of misguided zealots in Washington to torpedo constitutional government” (Dodd, 1956, p. 1). A separate article was printed to further focus on Blacks’ reaction to the decision and their resolution to finally end the bus boycott of Montgomery buses in light of the Court’s verdict. Again, no comments from the paper were made, just the views of Black leaders such as Dr. King.
Chicago Tribune

1957 Little Rock Nine. The Tribune dedicated a large amount of attention to the Little Rock integration saga as it put together 54 news articles about the incident. Additionally, seven editorials, and five photos were found. All 54 articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines and were printed in the front section of the newspaper. 34 of the articles were 500 words or less while 17 were 501-1000 words. As for the editorials, all seven had pro dominant perspectives. Also, all seven editorials were 500 words or less in length. Two of the editorial headlines were positive while five were neutral. All five photos were non-antagonistic in sentiment. Approximately five negative character portrayals were made against Governor Faubus. One negative and one positive character portrayal was made against President Eisenhower.

In a very large way with 54 news articles, the Tribune seemed to cover every possible avenue regarding the Little Rock standoff between Arkansas Governor Faubus and President Eisenhower and the federal government. The paper covered the viewpoints of Blacks, Whites, Black integration organizations, segregationists, who were leaders of the White Citizens Council and the editorial opinions of newspapers across the nation including in Little Rock. Additionally, international viewpoints were presented, as well as the views of congressman, Faubus himself and President Eisenhower. In all of its reporting the newspaper refrained from using any language that would suggest they supported or condemned the actions of Faubus or President Eisenhower. Yet, the paper’s selection to print a majority of opinions that criticized Faubus’ stance lent an interesting back drop for the all pro dominant editorials to come on the matter. So rather than criticize the Governor’s actions in its articles, it seemed the paper utilized the negative
characterizations made by its sources such as the NAACP and other newspaper editorials to speak on its behalf; All comments condemned Faubus’ actions and asserted that compromise shouldn’t be made and that the federal government had to enforce its laws. In a less dramatic fashion in terms of numbers, the Tribune’s editorial voice on the issue would coincide with the viewpoints of the various individuals who spoke against Faubus in the paper’s neutrally dominant articles.

In its initial editorial, the Tribune heavily criticized the actions of Governor Faubus asserting that his actions were “silly” and illogical considering it had been three years since the Supreme Court had declared segregation an unconstitutional practice in public schools (“Arkansas Law,” 1957, p. 14). The paper exclaimed:

Governor Faubus’ resistance to the Constitution and the courts must and will be overcome, but there is no need to worry…the longer Mr. Faubus hides out the more probable it is that he will become an object of ridicule—a defeated litigant who fancies that he is bigger than the courts, bigger than the law, and bigger than the United States Constitution. (“Arkansas Law,” 1957, p. 14)

In another editorial, the paper continued with its declaration that Faubus was simply wasting time with his defiance against the government. Additionally, the paper also stated that the Democratic Governor was making it bad on other Democrats chancing for re election with his stunt. “If Faubus continued to be on the front page because of his actions, declared the Tribune, then Democrats stood a chance to lose the upcoming elections” (“Pacify Arkansas,” 1957, p. 20).

One editorial went so far as to blame Faubus’ defiance and racial propaganda against segregation for inspiring the Birmingham, Alabama Ku Klux Klan to beat a
random Black man just as a warning of what would happen to him if he sent his children to White schools. Moved by the act of racial hatred, the *Tribune* called on the South to quite making excuses for Governor Faubus’ stance and see what kind of allies (such as the KKK) were working on behalf of them in the race hatred racket. In essence, the paper again denounced Faubus’ standoff with the federal government and basically declared that absolutely no positive benefit was being accomplished rather a promotion of racial hatred was penetrating the psyche of those who called themselves segregationists and a belief that they too should go to the extreme in trying to prevention integration of their way of life.

In another editorial entitled, “Actions Speak Louder Than Words,” the *Tribune* called upon the federal government to take a stand against Faubus with action not just in words. The paper made the statement in response to the meeting between Faubus and President Eisenhower, in which it referenced as a “press agent stunt” (“Actions Speak Louder Than Words,” 1957, p. 20). Apparently the paper was angry with the back and forth communications going on between the President and the Governor, which were to no avail because Faubus wasn’t pulling out. “We have no intention of trying to read sense into the meaningless inanities” (“Actions Speak Louder Than Words,” 1957, p. 20), stated the paper about the meeting as it declared that whatever move was made by both men would be judged by the nation.

In its last editorial printed prior to Little Rock Nine’s forced entrance, the *Tribune* criticized two Arkansas Senators, McClellan & Fulbright for not expressing a clear opinion on their Governor’s defiance of the federal government. Known for speaking out against many other practices in society, the paper felt that the two senators should not
have refrained from expressing themselves about the matters of direct concern to Arkansas and its people. “These men profess to be not only men of conscience but leaders of public opinion in their state. Certainly that is what senators should be. Their behavior these days suggests how far they depart from the ideal” (“Two Strangely,” 1957, p. 16), decreed the Tribune.

Printed after the nine Black children were successful in their attempt to get into Central High, another Tribune editorial headlined, “The President Acts,” was a follow up to its previous editorial which had criticized the President for talking about what should be done rather than acting against Faubus. In the editorial, the paper expresses relief that the President had finally done what his oath required him to do—uphold the constitution. Yet, the paper criticizes the President for taking so long in doing so. Consequently the paper blames both President Eisenhower and Governor Faubus for contributing to heightening the conflict rather than allaying it. Additionally, the Tribune felt that because of the back and forth through the courts and talks between Faubus and the federal government, the problem was not dealt with promptly and ended more violently than it should.

In its final editorial about the Little Rock Nine, the Tribune expressed they had hope for peace in Arkansas despite the fact that many segregationists were against the integration of the Black students. The paper went on to say that it hoped that other Southern Governors would not arouse their people to resist the inevitable. Thus, the paper saw the process of integration as a tide of change that was taking place that all had to ride—violent resistance was not an appropriate action according to the Tribune.
As for its photographical coverage, all photos were a reflection of the drama that was unfolding in Little Rock. One photo revealed violence being committed against a newspaperman, specifically a reporter’s camera had been smashed by one of the angry protestors outside Little Rock’s Central High. Other photos showed arrests of a few young White men being made as they must have gotten out of hand with their protests. Also, a photo of the troops guarding the high school made its way into the coverage along with a shot of Faubus talking with newsman about the ordeal happening as a result of his defiance against the government. Though separate images reflected the event, the photos worked together to create a non-antagonistic sentiment as they presented the racial tensions and acts of violence occurring at the act of integration being imposed upon the city of Little Rock. Such violence and opposition was not in accordance with the cause of the Civil Rights Movement.

Thus, overall, the Tribune presented the Arkansas account with neutrality in terms of the language it used in its articles. However, the paper’s majority focus on presenting negative viewpoints against Faubus to coincide with its editorial stances against the Governor made for a rather pro dominant perspective on the matter due to its selection of certain viewpoints and omission of others.

Chicago Tribune

1958 King stabbing. Only three articles were printed by the Tribune regarding the stabbing of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. There were no editorials but two photos were found. All three articles offered a neutrally dominant perspective and neutral headlines. One article was 501-1000 words while the other two were less than 500 words. All three articles were printed in the front section of the newspaper. As for the photos, one was
neutral and one was non-antagonistic. In regards to characterizations, two positive references were made towards Dr. King.

The Tribune’s lengthiest article was focused on the details of King’s stabbing according to the reports of investigators. Another article zeroed in on the mental status of King’s assailant, Ms. Izola Curry, who declared that she was not ill but had good reason for stabbing Dr. King—because he was a Communist. The last article was a status update of King’s health in which the paper reported that King had developed a light case of pneumonia. When referring to King, the paper called him an advocate of non violence when it came to racial issues. However, the paper did not make any remarks regarding his stabbing.

As for its two photos, one was a head shot of King’s assailant, Izola Curry and the other was a shot of him lying in the hospital bed in recovery. The first photo was neutral while the second was non-antagonistic as it revealed violence having been committed against a Black activist/leader. Overall, the brief news coverage of King’s stabbing was neutral and provided no opinion for or against the violence. The only favor shown was in the paper’s reference to Dr. King and the ideals he stood for—nonviolence.

Chicago Tribune

1960 Sit-ins. Only one article, no editorials, or photos were printed regarding the sit-ins launched in North Carolina to protest segregated eating facilities. The article was neutrally dominant in perspective, had a neutral headline, was 500 words or less, and appeared in the front section of the paper.

The article revealed that several Black college students had been arrested in Raleigh North Carolina and charged with trespassing as they attempted to integrate F.W.
Woolworth store. According to the paper, the incident had followed more than a week of sit-down demonstrations by Black college students at segregated lunch counters in dime, department, and variety stores in which Black shoppers were welcomed but were refused food service. The Tribune provided comments from Black organization CORE who challenged the use of the trespassing laws to stop lunch counter sit down strikes by Black students. In opposition to the sit ins the paper provided the comments of North Carolina Attorney General Malcolm Seawell who advised owners of private businesses that they had the right to sell or refuse to sell to customers and that undesirable customers could be prosecuted for trespassing. As a result of Seawell’s advise, most North Carolina stores erected “no trespassing” signs, according to the article. No opinions in favor or against the sit-ins were provided by the paper.

Chicago Tribune

1961 Freedom riders. The Tribune printed only two articles about the attack against Black and White freedom riders in Anniston and Birmingham, Alabama. Both articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and headlines. One article was 1001-1500 words while the other one was less than 500 words. One article appeared in the front section of the newspaper and the other one was found in the middle of the newspaper. No editorials or photos were found.

Both articles merely detailed the happenings of violence committed against the Freedom Riders in Anniston and Birmingham. However, there was no stand out distinction in the covering of the story by the Tribune that was different than any other papers in the study which had neutrally dominant perspectives. The opinions of Black leaders of CORE, the sponsoring organization for the Riders, Attorney General Robert F.
Kennedy, and Alabama Governor, John Patterson were included. No condemnation or advocating of the acts of violence was revealed by the *Tribune*.

*Chicago Tribune*

1962 *Meredith enters Ole Miss*. A large amount of media coverage was provided by the *Tribune* regarding the forced entrance of James Meredith into Ole Miss. Specifically, there were 35 articles, two editorials, and 19 photos found. All 35 articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. Additionally, all 35 articles were found in the front section of the newspaper. Twenty-five of the articles were 500 words or less and 10 were 501-1000 words in length. As for the two editorials, they both had pro dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. One editorial was less than 500 words and the other was 501-1000 words. Three of the 19 photos were neutral while 16 had non-antagonistic sentiments.

As stated, the *Tribune* provided a detailed account of the back and forth stand-off between James Meredith and Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett. The paper gathered viewpoints regarding the matter from the Southern Press, Southern Governors, and foreign countries. Additionally, the paper included information about the character of Meredith and his reasons for trying to enter into the all White University. All information provided in the articles came from the comments made by others. The articles did not include any language in favor or against Meredith’s quest to integrate the university. However, much like its article coverage of the Little Rock integration case, the paper did include a few articles that were composed of mostly of only opposing views to Governor Barnett’s defiance of the federal government. This type of reporting was similar to the paper’s regarding Governor Faubus’ stance.
In one article headlined, “Southern Press Assails Mississippi Racial Stand,” the newspaper provides comments of several southern newspapers attacking Barnett’s stand. In another article headlined, “Most Southern Governors Praise Kennedy’s Stand,” the paper again presents an article with viewpoints in favor of the integration as the only Governors included in the article were those Governors who were for Kennedy sending in troops to the area and forcing integration.

Much like its editorial viewpoint on the Little Rock Nine forced integration case, the Tribune’s editorials condemned the actions of Governor Ross Barnett just as it had did Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus for defying the ruling of the court that segregation was unconstitutional and instead posing a standoff between a state and the federal government. Once again the paper previewed that such action was not beneficial to the nation. “If the governor is allowed to get away with this usurpation, the Constitution may be reduced to a scrap of paper” (“Open Rebellion,” 1962, p. 12), exclaimed the paper on the matter.

In its second editorial, the Tribune praised President Kennedy for his appeal to the people of Mississippi and particularly to the student body of Ole Miss as he urged them to exercise restraint and bow to the Court’s mandate that the university must accept its first Black student. Further on in the editorial, the paper called the actions of Governor Barnett “unhappy” and “sad” and to no avail since the courts had already made their decision regarding segregation. “The law stands and will prevail, as it must” (“Power Consent,” 1962, p. 24), asserted the Tribune editorial.

As for its photos, the Tribune included many of the same sorts of photos taken by most newspapers in this study—revealing the riots that erupted on the Ole Miss campus,
the face to face blockades against Meredith by the Governor of Mississippi, and the forced integration of Meredith escorted by U.S. Marshalls. Other photos included head shots of key role players in the standoff—Governor Barnett, James Meredith, and President John F. Kennedy. All pictures worked together to create a mostly non-antagonistic sentiment the same as the one created when the Little Rock Nine was met by the same opposition. The visual of continued resistance/opposition in the face of a nonviolent, single Black created a picture of racial tension that needed to be addressed by the nation, especially a nation that prided itself on its founding principle, that all men are created equal. The pictures like the words of some of the article commentators and certainly the editorials questioned this fact and at least drew attention to it.

Overall, the news articles of the Tribune were neutral and the editorials were predominant in perspective. The articles showed a hint of biasness in terms of the types of opinions that were propelled regarding the stand-off—mostly against Barnett/segregation. Nonetheless, with the exception of its two editorials, the paper never verbalized support and/or condemnation of the incident.

*Chicago Tribune*

*1963 Murder of Medgar Evers.* Twelve articles and four photos revealed the Tribune’s coverage of the murder investigation of Medgar Evers. There were no editorials written for this time period. All 12 articles were neutrally dominant with neutral headlines and they appeared in the front section of the newspaper. Ten articles were 500 words or less while two were 501-1000 words in length. All four photos presented a non-antagonistic sentiment. All references/characterizations of Evers were neutral.
The paper’s news articles presented an account of what happened to Evers the night he was shot, the stepping in of the FBI into the investigation to ensure that the case ran smoothly despite the state’s history of excusing violence committed against Blacks especially at the hands of Whites, location of the rifle used to shoot Evers, the reward money being offered for information about the case, the violence that erupted from Black demonstrators mourning their slain leader, the funeral ceremony for Evers and his burial in Arlington cemetery, and the arrest of the man accused of shooting him. None of the articles included any remarks on behalf of the Tribune that would indicate condemnation and/or advocacy of the murdered or murderer.

As for the photos, one included a head shot of Evers in a suit and tie. Another showed a picture of the crowds of people outside the church where his funeral was taking place and a picture of the cars en route to Arlington Cemetery for his burial. Then there was a photo which depicted violence between some Black demonstrators and the police as a part of a mourning march in honor of Evers. All photos worked together with the articles to create a sympathetic tone towards the man who had given his life for the Civil Rights Movement cause.

Chicago Tribune

1963 March on Washington. Approximately 14 articles, one editorial, and seven photos were printed by the Tribune regarding the March on Washington. All 14 articles were neutrally dominant in perspective and their headlines were also neutral. All 14 articles also appeared in the front section of the newspaper. Eleven articles were 500 words or less while three were 501-1000 words in length. As for the editorial, it had a
dominant perspective, was less than 500 words, with a neutral headline. All seven photos were non-antagonistic in sentiment.

The news articles printed by the Tribune were very much neutral. Most articles were written about the planning of the March. Only about three or four were written after the March had taken place. As for the articles geared towards planning, the articles acknowledged the amount of security that would be at the event, the transportation costs needed to get to the event. Particularly the paper presented an article about a fundraising event scheduled in Chicago to send off Chicagoans who would be participating in the March. The paper also featured a story on the Chicagoans’ departure via train for Washington. Acknowledgement of the hopes of the fellow Chicagoans in participating in the March were also presented as the riders called their transportation, “freedom rides” (Ritch, 1963, p. 1). The Tribune acknowledged that the riders were hopeful that the March would be influential in civil rights legislation being passed so that Blacks could have a better way of life.

After the March, the Tribune’s initial article included in its headline, that there were “no incidents” in the Marchers’ plea for Black opportunities (“Roar Plea,” 1963, p. 1). Another article examined the foreign buzz about the March. Countries such as Europe and Russia showed an interest in covering the March but used restraint in sermonizing about the problems of the U.S. Blacks. Additionally, the paper reported the talks between the Black March leaders and President Kennedy regarding the March. The President personally congratulated the leaders on a successful, peaceful March.

No bias language was used when discussing the planning of the March nor was there any biasness shown after the March had taken place.
However, in its one and only editorial, which was very brief, the *Tribune* congratulated the organizers of the March for a job well done. According to the paper, the demonstration showed evidence of careful organization and discipline.

The photographic coverage by the *Tribune* included photos from the March. All were non-antagonistic as the reflected a peaceful, nonviolent protest for Black rights. The pictures included reflected the March’s mannerisms on that day. Specifically, there was a picture of Chicagoans en route to the March and two different photos of Marchers with their placard signs. Some read, “We March For Freedom” and others declared “We March for Effective Civil Rights Now.” And the same aerial photo that appeared in most newspapers to reflect the number in attendance was also included in the *Tribune*—a photo of a massive amount of people both Black and White at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial. The photos worked together with the ideals of the March and the movement—to nonviolently voice their concerns, to dramatize their situation to the nation.

Overall, the *Tribune’s* news articles about the March were entirely neutral. Although, the one editorial that was printed celebrated the fact that the event was without incident, the paper still did not side for or against the ideals of the March—the Blacks quest for freedom and equality. No comments were made for or against their purpose. Thus, the piece was pro dominant because it offered a favorable characterization of the March but it did nothing in terms of speaking out for or against the March.

*Chicago Tribune*

1963 *Birmingham church bomb*. The *Tribune* printed nine articles, one editorial and two photos on the Birmingham, Alabama church bombing. All nine articles had
neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines and appeared in the front section of the newspaper. Six articles were 500 words or less in length and three were 501-1000 words. As for the editorial, it had a pro dominant perspective with a neutral headline and was less than 500 words. Both photos found were non-antagonistic in sentiment.

As for its articles, the Tribune broke the news of the bombing, revealing what investigators found at the scene—evidence of the bomb and the strewed body parts of the four little girls, the reactions of church members and the church pastor, as well as the reaction of Black leaders such as Dr. King and President John F. Kennedy. All expressed condolences and disbelief for the crime. Dr. King even requested that the federal government send federal troops to help preserve order in Birmingham in wake of the bombing. Additionally, the paper covered the funeral services of the girls, eulogized by Dr. King. According to the article, King declared that the lives of the girls would not be in vain but will serve towards a great cause. “The spilled blood of these young girls may cause the White south to come to terms with its conscience” (“Negroes Will,” 1963, p. 1), said Dr. King. The other two articles revealed Dr. King’s and other Black leaders request to meet with the President to discuss the climate in Birmingham in the aftermath of the bombing. Instead the President sent two representatives to the state to try and mediate the racial tension in the bomb stricken city.

In its one and only editorial, the Tribune described the Birmingham church bombing as a “despicable act of shame” that was undoubtedly committed by insane individuals. Additionally, the paper expressed shock that such crime had been committed against children and in a holy place, dedicated to the worship of God. The paper was very adamant that the crime was so horrible that any jury would have to
convict the perpetrator. “A jury in any American city, North or South, would give the guilty persons the punishment they deserved” (“Shame,” 1963, p. 20), declared the paper. Never before had the newspaper expressed such confidence that the South would punish a crime committed against a Black. The fact that the victims were children and the crime was so heinous inspired the *Tribune* to believe that justice would have to be carried out even in the segregated and racially prejudiced South. However, the murder of young Emmett Till did not inspire such words of confidence from the newspaper that justice would prevail and he was a child. Perhaps, the fact that Till’s alleged body was at least still in tack, no matter how badly decomposed, and the question of whether or not the body found in the Tallahatchie River was even his played a role in the paper’s lack of confidence in the South’s law. Additionally, the Till murder had taken place about eight years prior. Nonetheless, the Birmingham church bombing situation left no doubt that a crime had been committed and the pieces of the bodies were undeniable even if they were unrecognizable.

As for the photographic coverage by the *Tribune*, there were only a couple of photos. One picture was an image of the blast as emergency works sifted through the rubble. The other photo revealed the sorrow of one victim’s mother as she wept on the scene after receiving news that one of the children killed in the bombing was her child. An act of violence against ordinary Black citizens—the images of this church bombing were non-antagonistic to the movement as they revealed the urgency of Blacks request that the law stand on their side in order to defray crimes of racial hatred such as these.
1964 Freedom summer. There were no articles, editorials, or photos found during the time period of analysis about Freedom Summer. The absence of coverage indicates that this particular time period may not have been important to the paper.

Civil Rights Act of 1964. There were four articles and two photos printed by the Tribune about the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. No editorials were found. All four articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines and appeared in the front section of the paper. Two of the articles were 500 words or less and two were 501-1000 words in length. Both pictures were non-antagonistic in sentiment.

As for its articles, the newspaper initially acknowledged that the Act would have a huge impact on the nation. Specifically, the paper stated the bill would change the social and economic customs of the nation (“Negroes Gird,” 1964, p. 1). However, the paper did not comment as to whether the change would be for the better or worse.

In its other articles the paper detailed a break down of the law, reactions of President Johnson and his expectations that the nation should use the Act to excel the country towards its founding doctrine of equality for all, as well as the reactions across the nation. According to the paper the reactions varied, some defied the legislation and many expressed that it would yield to the act. Finally, in another article, the paper revealed the plans of organizations like CORE to stage demonstrations to test the law (“Negroes Gird,” 1964, p. 1). No article comments were provided by the newspaper as to its approval or disapproval of the Rights Act. Additionally, the paper had no editorials to decipher their stance on the momentous Bill.
As for its photographical coverage, only two photos were found. One photo showed President Johnson signing the Act—a picture seen in pretty much all of the newspapers in this study. The other photo was a picture of a White restaurant owner in Atlanta, Georgia. The restaurant owner had a pistol in his hand along with a White youth, who had an ax handle; the two appeared to be chasing a Black from the restaurant into the parking lot. The photo was a reflection of what some Blacks experienced as they set out to test the new Civil Rights Bill. Both pictures were non-antagonistic as one depicted the climax to the entire Civil Rights Movement—the signing of equality for Blacks into law. The other photo yet again victimized the Black attempting to get services at an all White facility even after equality for all had become the new law of the land.

Overall, the news coverage of the signing of the Civil Rights Act was minimal, but neutral. No official comments for or against the passed legislation were expressed by the paper in its articles and no editorials were present.

*Chicago Tribune*

*1964 Three Civil Rights workers murdered.* Only two articles and four photos were printed about the murder of the three civil rights workers in Mississippi. No editorials were found. Both articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. Additionally both articles appeared in the front section of the newspaper and were 501-1000 words in length. As for the photos, all were non-antagonistic in sentiment.

Although, the *Tribune* printed only two articles regarding the murders, the articles were fairly lengthy as they detailed the FBI investigation and finding of the bodies. The
paper also provided an account of what led to the men’s disappearance. The search for the men’s bodies had been ongoing for more than a month. Yet, the Tribune’s first article about the men’s disappearance was when the bodies were discovered. In one of its articles, the paper said that “the FBI revealed that an informant had led them to a farm pond dam where the bodies were found” (“FBI Believes,” 1964, p. 1). A second article indicated that entertainer and civil rights activist, Dick Gregory had tipped the FBI off himself by providing them with a letter naming the persons responsible for the deaths and the place to find the bodies (“Death Tipoff,” 1964, p. 1). Again no comments regarding the murder of the workers were made by the newspaper.

As for the photos, three of the four were head shots of the murdered rights workers and the other was a picture of where the bodies were found. Like the other newspapers who utilized those photos, a non-antagonistic sentiment was created as the men/activists were killed in the process of trying to register Mississippians to vote among other efforts. In essence, they were casualties in the cause towards Black equality.

Overall, the small amount of Tribune articles dictated a neutral perspective regarding the murder of the workers. To add to their article neutrality, there were no editorials printed to provide an additional perspective to examine. Thus, it would go unknown as to how the paper felt regarding the murders.

Chicago Defender

1954 Brown vs. Board of Education. 12 news articles and four editorials were found in the Chicago Defender within a four week time frame. All news articles had a neutral dominant perspective except four, which were pro. Most news article headlines were also neutral with only three positive. Only two figures were characterized—one in a
positive light and the other negatively. All articles found placement on the front page
apart from one back page article. In regards to article length five articles were less than
500 words and five articles were more than 500 but less than a 1000 words. Merely two
articles were 1500—2000 words. Of the four editorials, all offered pro dominant
perspectives. Two of the editorials were less than 500 words with positive headlines and
two were 501-1000 words in length with neutral headlines. Only one editorial focused on
a specific character and portrayed the character favorably.

In regards to the news articles, the Defender took a mostly neutral stand in reporting
about the Supreme Court’s decision and the few weeks leading up to the decision.
However, there were also some pro perspectives that emerged. For example, much of the
coverage involved examining how the decision would affect Southern citizens,
specifically Black and White school children, their parents, and teachers. The paper
uncovered the fears and hopes of many of those individuals if the court were to overturn
separate but equal schools. However, in its article, “How Decision Affects Teachers in
the South,” the Defender used few direct quotes from Southern Black teachers citing that
many feared being associated with the NAACP and/or speaking out on racial issues at all
in such a public forum.

To be quoted in any paper, especially a northern Black paper, would be foolhardy.
They have seen teachers who cooperated with NAACP efforts to equalize their
salaries summarily dismissed. They know teachers who have lost their jobs for taking
forthright positions on racial issues…Most have had to content themselves with
making a quiet contribution to the NAACP and then destroying the membership card.

(1954, p. 3)
Nonetheless, in the article mentioned above, the Defender spoke freely on behalf of the Blacks they had spoken with, perhaps using their flexibility as a Northern Black newspaper. The main fear of the Blacks if the Supreme Court overturned separate but equal schools, was how people would react to the new situation. According to the Defender, Black teachers and parents hoped that the decision would not induce either violent or tragic reactions.

Other Defender articles stated they were reports about the responses of the North, the South, and the World, to the court’s decision. However, the paper didn’t really have a balance of negative and positive comments from people. Most quotes were in complete support of the decision but offered concern for how the declaration would be carried out. Specifically, Black Presidents of Historically Black Colleges openly gave their support for the decision. All recognized the decision as significant to the advancement of Blacks and the country in regards to race relations. Thus, the Defender stated that their attempt was to get a varied degree of remarks across racial lines. Yet, their articles did not gather varying opinions, really mostly Black opinions in favor of the decision.

In other news coverage, the Defender seemed to criticize President Dwight (Ike) Eisenhower, accusing him of failing to give a direct quotation about how he felt about the Supreme Court’s decision. The paper stated that apparently as a Republican President, he probably stayed “mum” for fear of losing Southern supporters if he stood up for the decision (Lautier, 1954, p. 4).

Recall, there was one photo printed during this time. It was a picture of Thurgood Marshall and some of the other NAACP lawyers outside the Supreme Court. The men were all smiles and obviously very pleased with the outcome of the long fought case.
Thus, the picture provided a Non-antagonistic sentiment very much reflective of the goals of the Civil Rights Movement. It spoke volumes that Blacks had gained a victory in their path towards equality.

The *Chicago Defender* editorials were highly supportive of the Supreme Court’s decision declaring separate but equal schools unconstitutional in the South. Headlined, “Prelude to Freedom,” one editorial heralded the decision as one of the most important decisions in the nation’s history:

Neither the atom bomb nor the hydrogen bomb will ever be as meaningful to our democracy as the unanimous declaration of the Supreme Court that racial segregation violates the spirit and letter of our constitution…It is the prelude to the eventual complete emancipation of the Black in America. (“Prelude to Freedom,” 1954, p. 11)

Another editorial called the case, “an important milestone in our national history…another firm stone in the foundation of our country…a powerful weapon of defense against Jim Crow waiting rooms, travel facilities, parks, playgrounds, hotels, health facilities, and housing…and a critical factor in our survival as a people” (Bethune, 1954, p. 11). Thus, the Court’s had only declared separate but equal facilities illegal in the field of education. Nonetheless, the Defender saw the win as a stepping stone towards breaking down many other racial barriers across the nation.

In light of the court’s decision, The Defender’s editorials also took the opportunity to point out the hardships that Blacks had endured under the separate and unfair Jim Crow laws—a testament to why this court decision was so momentous. It offered a sort of history lesson of how the country had arrived at the landmark court case citing that, “It was 97 years ago, 1857 when the United States Supreme court in the infamous Dred Scott
decision, of which the nation must be very ashamed today, decreed that a Black had no rights as a human being. The court ruled that like a horse, a cow or a dog, he could be captured and returned to his master regardless of where he was” (Bethune, 1954, p. 11).

Although the Defender recognized the court decision as being an important accomplishment for the Black people, it warned that victory was only the beginning and not the end of a long campaign for equality:

The Court’s decision is not the automatic end of segregation…We must expect that the enemies who dwell within, will do all within their power to circumvent the Court’s decision. We must not expect that they will accept full citizenship for all the people—just as they have been unable to accept the complete social doctrine of the church. (Bethune, 1954, p. 11)

Furthermore, the Defender included an entire editorial in support of the NAACP’s leading lawyer in the landmark Supreme Court Decision—Thurgood Marshall. The paper labeled him as the most outstanding civil rights lawyer of the nation. In fact the paper was so appreciative of Marshall it presented him with an award named in honor of the Defender’s founding editor—Robert S. Abbott. At the time, the award was the newspaper’s highest tribute, an honor presented each year upon the anniversary of the founding of the “World’s Greatest Weekly” to the person or organization who, in the preceding year “had done most to advance American democracy” (“Thurgood Marshall,” 1954, p. 11). In awarding Marshall with this honor, the paper made the Defender’s quest to end segregation synonymous with Marshall’s.

All of these compliments to Mr. Marshall came prior to the decision of the courts. Thus, the Defender had already declared its support of Marshall based on his longtime
arguments of the five cases appealed to the Supreme Court, “As the nation anxiously awaits the momentous decision...there can be little doubt that Marshall has become one of the outstanding architects of freedom. He is building his own monument—one that is at the same time a living memorial to the faith of the founding fathers—to Abraham Lincoln, to Frederick Douglas, and to Booker T. Washington” (“Thurgood Marshall,” 1954, p. 11).

So, overall, the Defender had a very pro dominant perspective about the Supreme Court’s decision to outlaw segregation in public schools. This support for integration was seen in the paper’s articles as well as clearly in their editorials. The paper celebrated their pleasure with the decision and applauded those they felt were responsible for the victory and was not bashful in doing so.

Chicago Defender

1955 Rosa Parks. Only one article was printed on Rosa Parks. There were no editorials or photos found. The article talked about the Montgomery Boycott and briefly mentioned Park’s arrest. According to the neutrally dominant article, it was following the arrest of Parks that Black leaders said they would “boycott the buses until patrons were no longer intimidated, embarrassed or coerced” (“Vote Continue,” 1955, p. 1). No characterization of Parks and/or her refusal to move to the back of the bus could be determined from the 490-word front-page article.

Chicago Defender

1955 Murder of Emmet Till. 11 articles, four editorials and seven photos covered the details and trial of two accused White men in Mississippi for allegedly murdering a Chicago born/native Black boy—Emmet Till. Of the news articles, five had pro
dominant perspectives; five were neutral dominant perspectives along with one anti perspective. All of the articles were 500 words or less and were located on the front page of the newspaper. There were seven neutral and four positive headlines. Only four articles characterized a specific Civil Rights figure—three of the four were favorable with one neutral portrayal.

In regards to the editorials, all four were pro dominant perspectives. As for length, three were 501-1000 words. Only one editorial was 500 words or less. Three of the editorials were placed on the front page of the newspaper instead of in their normal position, which was around the middle of the newspaper. Three positive and one neutral headline were found. There were no characterizations present.

All seven of the photos perpetuated a non-antagonistic sentiment. Most were pictures depicting Till and his family, Till’s funeral, and/or the trial of those accused of murdering Till.

The Defender presents a half and half perspective about the murder/trial of Emmitt Till, in which two White men were eventually found not guilty of murdering young Till. Some articles openly condemn the murder and criticize several leading Mississippi officials for their handling of the case and others simply report on the facts and happenings in the investigation and trial.

In one article the Defender offers an interview with then Mississippi Governor Hugh White shortly after Till’s battered and bruised body is discovered in the Tallahatchie River. In the article Gov. White says he doesn’t condone the act against Till, that it was outright murder but says that it was not a ‘lynching’ (“Murder White,” 1955, p. 1). The newspaper goes through the trouble of arguing with Gov. White’s statement declaring, “It
appears that Gov. Hugh White was splitting hairs when he said the slaying of Till was not a ‘lynching’. Webster defines ‘lynch’ as to inflict, punishment, especially death upon without the forms of law as when a mob captures and hangs a suspected person…there seems to be no doubt that Till was being punished. The doubt is over what for” (“Murder White,” 1955, p. 1), argued the Defender. To further defy the Governor, the newspaper still uses the word as that specific editions headline, “Nation Shocked, Vow Action in ‘Lynching’ of Chicago Youth.”

In contrast to this Mississippi official, the newspaper is very supportive of the Leflore County Sheriff, George W. Smith. One article applauds the sheriff and urges other Blacks and the NAACP to do so also for “moving without delay to arrest two White men accused of kidnapping a Black boy…and holding them without bond. Finally, a Mississippi lawman was doing his job” (“New Threats,” 1955, p. 3), claimed the Defender.

Thus, the newspaper was fervent about how to reference what happened to Till and they were no less passionate in their description of Till and his family. The paper characterized him as an innocent, young boy who was killed simply for ‘allegedly’ whistling at a White woman. Yet, in their initial articles the newspaper did not refer to the two White men as his “alleged” killers rather as his killers. The paper included interviews with Till’s neighbors, Sunday school teachers and family who described him as being quiet an mannerable, polite, artistic, a good student, who had polio as a young child, which left him with a stutter; so he couldn’t have possibly whistled at that White woman, reported the Defender in their article, “Here’s a Picture of Emmett Till Painted by Those Who Knew Him.”
During the *Defender’s* coverage of the Till funeral, there was very descriptive and sympathetic language used. One article entitled “Mother’s Tears Greet Son Who Died a Martyr” references the victim’s mother, Mamie Till, as “limp with grief and seated in a wheelchair” (Colin, 1955, p. 1). Additionally the newspaper asserted the death of Till as a sacrificial act to advance the cause of the Civil Rights Movement, a statement that was openly made by Till’s mother Mamie. “Who knows, but what the death of my only son might bring an end to lynching…Lord take my soul, show me what you want me to do and make me able to do it” (Colin, 1955, p. 1), cried Mamie Till at his funeral. The *Defender’s* reference to Till as a martyr was evidence of their agreement with Ms. Till.

Without using direct quotes from those who were present at the viewing of Till’s body, the *Defender* describes the happenings of the moment but also offers its own assumptions of what people must be thinking as they viewed Till’s mutilated body. “Some of the people were thinking it is no crime for a boy to whistle at a pretty woman…my son might do it…or yours” (Elliot, 1955, p. 1), stated the *Defender* as it shared its own feelings regarding the matter. In fact, it seemed evident that the newspaper had a deep emotional connection to the moment during this news coverage that was suppose to be objective.

In some of the more neutral perspective articles, the *Defender* offers up interviews with members of the Till family, specifically the boy’s Uncle, whom he was visiting with in Money, Mississippi, when he was allegedly kidnapped and murdered as well as his cousins. The family offered details as to how the two White men came in the middle of the night asking if the boy who had done the talk was staying there. The men then took Till and that was the last time he was seen alive according to the family. Other neutral
articles simply state the facts regarding the charges against Till’s alleged murderers and the court proceedings of who would testify and who would not.

In stark contrast to the news articles, which were split half and half pro and neutral, the dominant perspectives of the Defender’s editorials during the coverage of the Till murder/trial were all pro. The newspaper did not hold back on its views. It speaks passionately about the murder of Till calling it “an outrage to all decent American citizens, White and Colored…the murder is the ugliest aspect of life in our democracy” (“Blood Hands,” 1955, p. 55).

The paper charged the atmosphere of the state of Mississippi for this act of violence, “The blood of “Bo” is on the hands of the five candidates for Mississippi governor who campaigned on an anti-Negro platform in recent elections” (“Blood Hands,” 1955, p. 1). In addition to their accusations against the Mississippi officials and way of life, the Defender claimed that unless the Federal Administration brings Bo’s killers to justice the blood of Bo would be on their hands. Thus, the newspaper was very doubtful that a state so notorious for not convicting Whites who committed crimes against Blacks would dare to convict these two White men either.

The Defender’s beliefs about Mississippi injustice were only fueled when the two White men were acquitted of Till’s murder. Afterwards, the editorials seemed to spew anger at the Till acquittal calling it a disgrace, “Mississippi and the South are backwards… The death of Till has brought attention to the South and how they treat Blacks and it’s shameful—the pitiless White light of publicity” (“What You Can Do,” 1955, p. 1).
Explicitly, the editorials called the White House, the Department of Justice, and Mississippi failures for being negligent to the situation in the South:

The trial is over, and this miscarriage of justice must not be left avenged. The *Chicago Defender* will continue to uncover new witnesses in the case, to find other Blacks who actually witnessed the lynching, before they too are found in the Tallahatchie River…the citizens councils, the interstate conspiracy to whip the Negro in line with economic rains, the open defiance to the Supreme Court’s school decision—none seem to be violations of rights that concern the federal government.

(“What You Can Do,” 1955, p. 1)

Thus, the newspaper was openly angry about the outcome of the trial and vowed that it would work on behalf of the Till family to pursue justice for Emmett Till. Essentially, the *Defender* felt that the verdict was just another symbol of the injustices against Blacks in the South and an expose of the real need for the government to catalyze change.

Recall there were several photos that appeared in the *Defender* about the murder/trial of Till and although, they were mere photos, the *Defender* seemed to use them to compliment their written words. Half of the photos offered a neutral sentiment and the other half drew much sympathy regarding the murder of this young boy and ultimately favored the cause of the Civil Rights Movement.

There were pictures of Till himself with his boyish smile and big brim straw hat contrasted with pictures of his mother sobbing as men unloaded his almost unidentifiable body, which had been transported from Mississippi to Chicago. Additionally, there were pictures of the funeral, where thousands flooded the streets outside the church to pay their respects to the boy they didn’t know personally but had come to know because of the
publicity of his case. Then there was a picture of Mrs. Carolyn Bryant, the White woman Till was accused of whistling at. Underneath the picture was the caption, “The cause of it all” (Photo of Bryant, 1955, p. 1). All of these photos, when placed side by side evoked a chord of sympathy towards the little Black boy who had been killed for allegedly whistling at a White woman.

A photo of a press table with only Black reporters seated depicted that Jim Crow segregation was present even in the courtroom. Whites were privy to separate and closer seating. Photos of the two men accused sitting and playing with their families as proceedings went on indicated they were not uneasy but rather confident they would be acquitted. This photo in particular seemed to go along with the Defender’s previous assertion that the South’s way of justice could not convict a White for committing a crime against a Black. The more neutral photos were photos of Till’s uncle Moses Wright, of the crowded courtroom, and headshots of the two defendants on trial.

Overall, the Defender’s coverage of the Till trial demonstrated a strong declaration from the paper that the case was unfair and a product of the racism that existed in the South. The paper’s feelings could not be avoided even in its articles as it held the state of Mississippi and its officials responsible for what they called a “miscarriage of justice” (“Disgrace Sumner,” 1955, p. 1). The paper was passionate and enraged from beginning to end of Till’s trial. Therefore, the language used in its articles as well as its editorials provided an extreme pro dominant perspective.

*Chicago Defender*

1956 Desegregation of Alabama buses. The Montgomery Bus Boycott was considered a large part of the Civil Rights movement and is credited with pressuring the
state of Alabama to desegregate their buses. Regarding the noted piece of legislation passed down by the Court, the Defender printed two articles and two editorials. Of the two articles, one was pro dominant perspective and the other was neutral. One article was less than 500 words and the other was a little more than 700 words. Both were placed on the front page with neutral headlines. Both editorials were pro dominant perspectives and were lengthier than the articles; one had about a 1,000 words while the other was more than 2000 words. Unusually, these two editorials were printed on the front page rather than in the section set aside for editorials. Both editorial headlines were pro.

In the neutrally dominant perspective article, a discussion of the meaning of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling is pursued. It tells about Thurgood Marshall’s appeal to the court “to speed up and enforce its ruling as there were four other cases in Alabama regarding the same issue and that the courts should impose its mandate at once to nullify any legal action against the latter” (“Ask U.S.,” 1956, p. 1). In the pro dominant perspective article, the Defender openly advocates/celebrates the Supreme Court decision to desegregate Jim Crow buses. The paper calls the actions of the Blacks and leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King “dignified and disciplined,” to have carried out such a “unified nonviolent stand” against the ideals of segregation. “In the face of the KKK and other displeased citizens, the victory of this boycott certainly victimizes Negroes and proclaims them triumphant in spite of” (Walter, 1956, p. 1), stated the Defender.

In one of their two editorials, the Defender presented the opinions of Southern leaders denouncing the new bus legislation. Appearing in the editorial were opinions of southern governors of Mississippi and Georgia who both stated they would ignore the order and
continue to enforce separation of the races on public convergences, “our attitudes will be
the same as about the school segregation cases” (“South Denounces,” 1956, p. 9),
proclaimed the governors. Although, no language in the article criticized the opinions of
the officials, the presentation of their opinions perpetuated how deep the custom of
segregation was in the South and the efforts willing to be taken to have it maintained.

The other editorial offers a personal look into life in segregated Alabama as it
recounts his/her trip to Montgomery, Alabama. “Since I was there two years ago, the
airport terminal at Montgomery, Alabama has been enlarged. All facilities have been
increased and most noticeable are the rest rooms. There are now four where once there
were only two” (Walter, 1956, p. 9). The editor was referencing the signs that read,
“White men,” “White ladies,” “colored men,” and “colored women.” Also installed was
a separate waiting room for both races. According to the editor, these newly introduced
segregated facilities, were just a desperate last stand by the Jim Crow South to perpetuate
that facilities could be separate but equal. The desegregation of Alabama buses was a
sure sign that those labels would soon be coming down, declared the paper.

Overall, the Defender’s limited amount of coverage on the desegregation of Alabama
buses still managed to reveal the paper’s support for the integration of public buses.
Additionally, the paper expressed gladness that the old signs of segregation posted
preventing the mingling of races on buses and in transit facilities would be coming down
soon as a result of the decision.

Chicago Defender

1957 Little Rock Nine. 15 articles, four editorials, and nine photos were printed by the
Chicago Defender regarding the defiant stand of Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus to
block nine Black students from integrating a Little Rock, Arkansas, high school even though the Supreme Court had declared that public schools in the South should be integrated back in 1954.

Of the 15 articles printed, most had a neutral dominant perspective; while five were pro. All of the articles were placed on the front page and were rather lengthy compared with some of the newspaper’s other articles; four were less than 500 words, while the other 10 were close to 1000 words. There were six characterizations made, six were favorable and three were neutral. Twelve of the 15 headlines were neutral along with three positive ones. In regards to the editorials, all four had pro dominant perspectives but neutral headlines. Two favorable characterizations were made. As for length, two articles were 1001-1500 words while one was less than 500 words and one was more than 500 words. In regards to photos, all had a non-antagonistic sentiment and seemed to be promotions for the cause of the civil rights movement.

Most of the neutrally dominant perspective articles track the progress of the Little Rock situation from the beginning of Gov. Faubus’ National Guard blockade to the end, in which the nine Black students being denied were escorted in by troops sent in by the Federal government. In the articles that uncovered the unfolding events, many showed no criticism or advocating of Gov. Faubus’ position against integration of Little Rock Central High school. Many only detailed Faubus’ feelings about his stance. According to the Defender, the Governor continuously proclaimed that he was not in contempt of the federal court order for immediate desegregation of the high school. He believed that integration would bring violence. Thus, he had no plans to call off the National Guard blockade keeping Black students from entering the school. Other neutral articles reported
about Faubus’ meeting with then President Dwight Eisenhower regarding the situation in which the President warned Faubus that he would uphold the constitution with every legal means at my command. Another article offers an interview with Georgia Governor, Marvin Griffin who shows a great support of Faubus’ position. Unlike its criticism of Mississippi officials during the murder trial of Emmitt Till, this article does not comment on Governor Griffin’s position. “That’s exactly what I would have done in Georgia…I would like to compliment the governor of the great state of Arkansas…I believe his stand is sound—it is American” (“Southern Leaders,” 1957, p. 3), stated Griffin. In the same article entitled, “Southern Leaders Support of Faubus,” Attorney General of Mississippi, General Joe Patterson also weighed in on the situation saying, “Gov. Faubus acted wisely and legally in his refusal to permit Negroes to enter an all White school in Little Rock” (“Southern Leaders,” 1957, p. 3).

In addition to gathering the opinions of White officials about the situation in Little Rock, the Defender did include comments from notable Black figures such as famed baseball player and occasional Chicago Defender columnist, Jackie Robinson, “I can’t say that President Eisenhower has been letting Gov. Faubus run the country, but I do say he has been lacking in leadership” (“Nixes Tour,” 1957, p. 1). Others such as Louis Armstrong (famed Jazz musician) were blunter in their criticism, “The way they are treating my people down South, the government can go to hell” (“Nixes Tour,” 1957, p. 1). Entertainer Lena Horne stated, “If asked by the government to appear in Russia, I would decline for fear of embarrassing questions by the press. How can one spread the good word about the U.S. when this is going on” (“Nixes Tour,” 1957, p 1). The Defender made no additional comment on the statements made by the Black leaders.
However, the newspaper eventually began to use some subjective responses to Gov. Faubus as his actions further defied federal orders to integrate the high school. In one article entitled, “Arkansas Action Threat to Others,” the Defender explicitly denounces the actions of Faubus calling his measures of rebellion, shameful, disgraceful, ill-conceived, and misguided. According to the newspaper, Faubus’ actions were only for political gains. “He had his eyes on a third term in office and needed the support of the White Citizens council, therefore he acted desperately” (1957, p. 1). After opening a plethora of criticism on Gov. Faubus, the Defender goes on to comment on the feelings of other Southern leaders continued support of Faubus, something else the newspaper had not done for the majority of their news coverage of the situation. “Faubus actions along with other Southern Governors of Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, and Virginia, have encouraged segregationists, many of them no more than hoodlums and professional rabble rousers” (1957, p. 1), the article decreed.

When President Eisenhower finally ordered federal troops to escort the nine Black students into Central Little Rock High School, despite Gov. Faubus’ attempt to again blockade the door, the Chicago Defender had three reporters and one photographer there on the scene to describe the moment. Apparently, in addition to telling the news, the reporters and photographer became a part of the news.

One reporter’s first hand account of the event was found on the second page of the newspaper in an article entitled, “Defender Reporter Beaten by Mob, Tells His Story.” In his account of events, Defender reporter, Alex Wilson, tells how he was attacked outside of Little Rock Central High on the day the Little Rock nine finally integrated. “…I was attacked by a shabby, hate-filled mob of segregationists… It was my hope and others in
the group with me, that regardless of color, we would be permitted to perform our duties like others of paler hue” (“Defender Reporter,” 1957, p. 2). The reporter goes on to tell how he was beaten and at one point he lunged forward from impact of a blow. “When I came upright near an auto, I looked into the tear-filled eyes of a White woman. Although there was sorrow in her eyes, I knew there would not be any help” (“Defender Reporter,” 1957, p. 2).

One of Wilson’s colleagues, William Theis, also gave his own account of the experience telling of how he watched Wilson get attacked along with watching a Defender photographer, Earl Davy also get beaten. “I saw the mob lash out like a frustrated dangerous animal outside Little Rock Central High school” (Theis, 1957, p. 2), said Theis. According to Theis (1957),

Wilson did not resist the beating but the crowd wouldn’t let him go. At one point a man screamed, Hang him. The beating was only suspended when a cry came from the high school a block away, “The Niggers are in the school.” Then, the mob angrier than ever, turned and rushed back toward the high school. (p. 2)

Wilson’s account of his experience along with his colleagues were very much pro dominant perspective articles. They painted a vivid picture of violence and revealed the degree of racism and prejudice that existed over the integration of the all White high school. In a larger context, this violence against Wilson and his colleagues provided an example for those crusading the Civil Rights Movement—a reason for their cause. It drew sympathy for Blacks living in the South and was a testament to the fact the South was still willing to stand firm for their way of life despite the 1954 law handed down by the Supreme Court to integrate public schools. In essence, two of the five pro dominant
perspective articles found offered stories in which *Defender* reporters of the Civil Rights movement became newsmakers, victims themselves. The details revealed in their stories made it easy to see which side of the movement they favored.

Recollect, of the four editorials printed by the *Chicago Defender*, all were pro-dominant perspectives. These articles presented criticism of Governor Faubus’ position against integration and applauded the President for sending in federal troops to finally end the standoff. Interestingly, the *Defender* blamed the actions of the Governor on weak Black leadership and too much compromise. In an editorial entitled, “Little Rock: The Fruit of Compromise,” the *Defender* (1957) asserts,

…the Little Rock situation is a disastrous consequence of the unholy compromises made on civil rights by weak—kneed Negro leadership…Negro leaders contributed toward the defeat of a strong all embracing measure that would have safeguarded all our prerogatives as American citizens. There can be no justifiable compromise on the issue of full citizenship. Nor can the logic of temporary expedient be given the aura of substantial accomplishment. (p. 11)

In essence, the *Defender* accuses Black leaders of compromising the opportunity for full citizenship by settling for it in pieces of gradualness; first integration of public schools in 1954, then transportation in 1956. Essentially the *Defender* was acknowledging that Black leaders of the Civil Rights Movement were making strides towards equality and full citizenship. However, the newspaper felt the leaders were compromising too much along the way towards winning the battles rather than trying to win the war and/or entire cause—equality/full citizenship.
In addition to addressing Black leaders and Governor Faubus, the Defender editorials commented on the President’s decision to send in federal troops to decipher the racially tense situation in Little Rock:

The President’s message announcing the arrival of federal troops...had meaning for MS, GA, Ala., as well as AR. The bitter, arrogant, lynch-minded extremists of the White South have been warned that the Constitutional guarantees of all citizens will be protected at the point of an Army rifle if necessary...the time had come to choose between mobocracy and democracy, anarchy and order, fascism and freedom.

(Martin, 1957, p. 10)

Thus, the newspaper openly expressed its agreement with the President’s decision and felt it was a necessary and a strong stand to take. The Defender’s contrast between mobocracy and democracy, anarchy and order; offered a strong correlation with the purpose of the Civil Rights Movement, aimed at seeking order against racism, discrimination, and injustice which at the time was a catalyst to the violence and disorder in not only Little Rock, Arkansas, but most of the South.

The photos that emerged in the Defender regarding the Little Rock incident were reflections of such violence. There were pictures of the nine students’ attempt to integrate the high school, which led to a string of violent behavior. Specifically, the newspaper presented photos of mobs of Whites with angry faces and weapons in hand, derogative signs against integration that read “Keep White Schools White, KKKK”, along with hard hat soldiers carrying guns, and in the forefront unarmed, Black children walking away from the school after being blockaded by the National Guardsmen and the Governor. Those pictures were like pictures of warfare on American soil—the players—
the people versus the people—this was not the view that most Americans wanted to see during this time. Additionally, it was not a view reflective of America’s democracy as pointed out by the paper. As stated by the Defender, the world’s eyes were upon the race relations of the country and pictures such as those were not beneficial to that image.

*Chicago Defender*

*1958 Dr. King stabbed.* Five articles and two photos detailed the Defender’s coverage of the stabbing of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. No editorials were found. All appearing on the front page, all five articles had neutral headlines accept one. Two had pro dominant perspectives and the other three were neutral. Three articles were less than 500 words, one was 501-1000 words, and one article was almost 2,000 words. The two photos printed were both non-antagonistic in sentiment and were placed on the front page.

The Defender’s coverage of this incident was mostly neutral but was favorable towards Dr. King. One article calls the attack on the civil rights leader “crazed” (Burley, 1958, p. 1). The article points out that police and civil rights groups were studying the possibility that the Black woman, Izola Curry, who stabbed Dr. King might have been “put up” to an attempt to kill him by White segregationists and White Citizens Council groups in the South, considering she was a former resident of Adrian, Georgia, and had only been in New York one month prior to the stabbing (Burley, 1958, p. 1). The article went on further to link Dr. King’s stabbing with chains of violence against other famous Blacks such as Lieut. James Reese Europe, the pioneer jazz bandleader; Booker T. Washington, Marcus Garvey and Battling Siki, the former world light heavyweight champion. “Assaults, intimidations, beatings, stabbings, and outright murder have cut
down many noted Negroes in the East” (Burley, 1958, p. 1), stated the Defender. It seems here that the Defender was adamant about linking the attack on Dr. King to Whites, even though the stabbing was committed by a Black woman. Perhaps, it was easier for this Northern, Black newspaper to lay blame on the staunch White segregationists who had in the past threatened Dr. King’s life than accept the fact that a Black woman could commit an act of violence against a prominent Black civil rights leader. This blaming was also a testament to how strongly this Northern, Black newspaper felt about racial situations in the South; the idea that if an act of violence against a Black occurred, it had to be the work of a White segregationists whether there was evidence of such or not.

Recollect, the photos about this topic were both non-antagonistic and appeared on the front page. One picture was an image of Dr. King immediately after he had been stabbed by Ms. Curry. The letter opener, which he was stabbed with, was still lodged in his chest. The other photo shows a recovering Dr. King lying in a hospital bed. Interestingly, under different circumstances, if Dr. King was stabbed by a White segregationist, these photos could easily be viewed as non-antagonistic towards the movement. There was some hesitancy to categorize this stabbing by a Black woman as non-antagonistic towards the movement. However, because Ms. Curry openly expressed a dislike for Dr. King and his ideals of integration, Ms. Curry was an exact fit into the same category as White segregationists because being a segregationist was not predisposed to only the White race. There were Blacks during that time who also shared the same ideals. Thus, the photos of Dr. King drew sympathy and compassion for the man himself and the
movement because of the reasons he was allegedly stabbed for—being an
integrationist/accused Communist.

In the end, the few articles gathered by the Defender regarding King’s stabbing
proved to be narrowly more neutral than pro dominant despite some insertions of opinion
and favor shown to the integrationist.

*Chicago Defender*

*1960 Sit-in demonstrations.* During the Defender’s coverage of the sit-in
demonstrations in Greensboro, North Carolina, three articles and four photos were
printed. All of the articles were neutral in perspective and appeared on the front page.
The lengths of the articles were all under 500 words. All headlines were neutral. The
photos taken of the sit in demonstrations were non-antagonistic in sentiment.

The majority of the coverage during this time period explored and merely reported
about the demonstration. Throughout its coverage, the Defender did not openly support
or condemn the sit in protests. The articles found plainly identified the happenings of the
moment as they unfolded. Specifically, the text revealed that “a group of Black students
from North Carolina A&T College came together to protest in the form of a mass sit
down. The group sought to desegregate a lunch counter that served Whites only at F.W.
Woolworth store” (“Whites Aid,” 1960, p. 2). The sit ins were so high profile they
spread to other cities. The paper offered up information about some of the mimic sit in
demonstrations taking place in other cities in the U.S. Eventually, the picture of peace
would turn to some violent outbreaks as a result of the demonstrations. Yet, the Defender
would make no comments for or against the violence.
As for the few photos printed, they showed the peaceful demonstration of the Black students against segregation even though they experienced continued ignoring by waitresses to serve them. Photos also revealed the students talking, some studying, and smoking while waiting. There were no photos taken regarding the violent outbreaks—at least during the time frame of analysis studied.

Without any editorial standpoint and the absence of its usual opinion inserted into its articles, the Defender’s coverage of this event was considered to be neutral.

*Chicago Defender*

*1961 Freedom riders.* Nine articles and one editorial described the coverage of the freedom riders by the *Chicago Defender*. There were no photos found. All of the news articles regarding the matter were neutral in perspective, with neutral headlines, and were found on the front page. Most of the articles were less than 500 words, with one being more than 500 but less than 1000 words. One editorial was included and written by a CORE (Congress of Racial Equality), field secretary, Genevieve Hughes, who was on the Greyhound bus burned just outside of Anniston, Alabama. Genevieve was White. The editorial provided a pro perspective and was more than 2000 words in length.

All articles explored the details of the ride by Black and White passengers who planned to test interstate travel laws which prohibited racial segregation. The racially integrated passengers’ greyhound buses were destined for New Orleans, LA, when violence against them halted their progress. Articles contained no condemning or commending language when describing the details of what happened. The subject matter of the articles was about the bombing of one bus rode by the freedom riders and the beating of some of its passengers by angry Whites on the other bus. Some articles also
discussed the arrests of the passengers and their leaders such as the Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, Alabama’s chief voice in the desegregation struggle and contact man for the Freedom Riders.

Only the news editorial headlined, “Victim’s Story of Alabama Hatred, Horror Scores Police Indifference,” offers a hint of condemnation of the acts committed against the Freedom Riders. In fact, first hand account of a White man who was on the burned greyhound bus criticized the police and the FBI involved. According to the White man, “state troopers arrived on the scene before the bomb was thrown. However, the troopers were quite friendly with the mob leaders. They did not stop the bomb from being thrown, although they could clearly see that it was being prepared” (“Victims Story,” 1961, p. 15). Because this editorial was not in the words of a Defender reporter and/or editor, one can only assume that it may be a reflection of how the Defender felt about the situation because it was included in its editorial section rather than as a news article.

Overall, the coverage of the Freedom Riders by the Chicago Defender offered a very objective picture of what occurred during that time that was free from bias and without comment. Again, the absence of opinion being inserted in their news article coverage was different than the paper’s initial coverage of events during the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement.

Chicago Defender

1962 James Meredith enters all White Ole Miss. There were eight news articles, three editorials, and five photos printed by the Defender on the court forced integration of all White Ole Miss in Oxford, MS, by a Black, James Meredith. All of the eight news articles found were neutrally written and placed on the front page. Five of the articles
were less than 500 words. Two were almost a 1000 words and one was slightly less than 1500 words in length. All news article headlines except one were neutral, that one was positive. One favorable characterization was found in one article. All three editorials were pro perspective. Two of the three were less than 500 words and one editorial was a little less than a 1000 words in length. Headlines were evenly split, with each falling under a separate category—positive, negative, and neutral. All five of the photos depicted the attempted/eventual integration of Ole Miss by Meredith. All of the photos were found to be non-antagonistic to the Civil Rights movement.

As previously stated, most of the news articles provided an objective perspective and offered detailed reports of the happenings in Oxford, MS, as Governor, Ross Barnett, attempted to defy court orders and pleas by the President to allow the entrance of James Meredith.

However, some contents of the articles were rather un-objective such as one which declared the situation, the greatest threat to federal authority since the Civil War. The one pro perspective news article entitled, “Ross Barnett: One of a Fading Breed,” heavily criticized the governor and his actions. “A rabble-rouser who has made his state an international disgrace” (1962, p. 3), is how the article described him. The write up also points out that Barnett campaigned for governor on a segregation platform that many of his speeches were prepared with the help of White Citizens council leaders, which never failed to win applause in Mississippi when they promised a continuance of “their way of life.” Finally, the article closed with a clear statement of how they saw the Governor and his actions, “Barnett is one of the last of a breed that has seen the likes of such men as Faubus, Thurmond and others who hold their segregationist beliefs in greater reverence.
than the constitution. Fortunately, it is a breed that is fast fading from the public scene” (“Ross Barnett,” 1962, p. 3). Thus, seven of the eight articles were neutral in perspective. Yet, the one article with its pro perspective almost seemed to shatter the neutrality of all the other articles because of its bold stand against Governor Ross Barnett.

“Never in the history of the United States had such collective shame been brought to it as during this week of chaos and near-riots at the University of Mississippi” (“Ole Miss,” 1962, p. 1), that was the opening statement of one editorial during the ongoing court proceedings and campus blockades surrounding James Meredith’s entrance into Ole Miss. “Right will Prevail,” headlined another Defender editorial, which pointed to Mississippi as one of three states which had not yet complied with the 1954 school desegregation ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court. “They may delay, but cannot escape the inevitable” (“Right Prevail,” 1962, p. 9), stated the editorial. The Defender also called the case: Mississippi vs. James Meredith and the United States. This is a strong indication of how the newspaper positioned the case: It appears the newspaper depicts the law on the side of Meredith (and the U.S.) in the face of a state the newspaper also calls the ‘most southern’ of the southern states—Mississippi (“Right Prevail,” 1962, p. 9). ‘The most southern’ of the southern states seems to have a negative connotation. Perhaps the Defender’s reference is calling Mississippi the lowest lying physically, the most prejudiced, and/or the most racially segregated of all the southern states. This reference to Mississippi was held by many Blacks, their leaders and/or organizations fighting to gain civil rights during this time. The notion that Mississippi was the root of the South’s stronghold on segregation and if this area could be shaken, then the South would
certainly have a chance to change. In essence, that is why many campaigns to test and/or to promote the Civil Rights Movement ran through Mississippi.

Recall, the photos printed were all non-antagonistic. Visuals of patrolmen wearing gas mask, soldiers in full gear with rifles on their backs, a blockade lining the streets of a university, as a Black is escorted by guards; that was the scene provided in the Defender. The visual created a dramatization of a huge showdown between a single Black student and an entire state. These photos certainly helped the cause of the movement providing evidence that if a Black still needed to be escorted into an all White university that had already been mandated by the highest court to integrate, there was still a need for the Civil Rights Movement. School integration was like a ship and Mississippi was indeed an iceberg, attempting to sink the cause.

Overall, the news articles about Meredith’s enrollment into Ole Miss were neutral and objective. However, the Defender offered a clear stance in its editorials as to whose side it was on—Meredith’s. The newspaper condemned the actions of Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett referencing him as a ‘Fading Breed,’ attempting to uphold segregation; but right would prevail whether delayed or not. Additionally, the photos printed provided a provoking picture of why Blacks were fighting for their civil rights: One Black man required an army just to get into an all White university. Altogether, the coverage of the Defender during this incident can be seen as about even it was definitely in support of the ideals of the Civil Rights Movement—seven neutral articles, one pro perspective article, three pro perspective editorials, and five non-antagonistic photos.
Chicago Defender

1963 Murder of Medgar Evers. There were 11 articles printed by the Defender about the murder of Medgar Evers, Mississippi’s NAACP chapter secretary. Seven of those articles had a neutral perspective and four were pro. Over half were printed on the front page with about three found in the middle of the newspaper. All of the articles were 500 words or less. Six had neutral headlines and five had positive headlines. There were three favorable characterizations throughout the articles. No editorials or photos were found during this specific time period.

The entire state of Mississippi stands guilty of the cold-blooded murder of Medgar Evers. No matter how high the rewards posted by state and local officials, its police and its citizens attempt to wash the blood off their hands, the murder of the NAACP leader was inspired and perpetrated by decades of racist ideology that finally resulted in one addle-brained brute ending the life of a dedicated man. (“That He,” 1963, p. 1)

That was the opening declaration by the Chicago Defender in its first article covering the murder of Evers. This statement proved to be a clear prelude to how the newspaper felt this murder impacted the country. Anger and a feeling of obligation to Evers’ fight and the cause of the Civil Rights Movement would be further revealed in the articles that followed.

The Defender appeared very passionate towards Medgar Evers’ widow who spoke at a civil rights rally in Jackson, MS, shortly after the slaying of her husband Evers. In an article entitled, “Do Not Let His Death Be in Vain—Mrs. Evers,” the Defender (1963) opens with a praising introduction of the widow:
There have been many Black rallies and hundred of speeches in the long civil rights effort but seldom had the words stabbed so poignantly at human emotions. A woman was gently assisted to the pulpit of a church. She spoke to a sorrowing crowd of her friends. This was Mrs. Medgar Evers, widow of a slain integration leader, who appeared before them a few numbing hours after she found her husband sprawled outside their home—the victim of a sniper’s bullet. Her face was masked against the reality of her grief, but her voice told the story of a wife and mother near the breaking point. Her voice, punctuated by audible sobs of those who understood her anguish. (p. 7)

The article goes on to print Mrs. Evers entire speech proclaiming that her husband’s death should be used to draw strength, courage, and determination to finish the fight of the Civil Rights Movement.

The Defender’s introduction of Mrs. Evers and the printing of her entire speech coupled together to demonstrate a strong condemnation of the murder of Evers. In fact, to pull from Mrs. Evers speech the line, “Do not let his death be in vain,” and include it as a headline, could be seen as an indication into the Defender’s thoughts towards the murder and how it could be used to further fuel the cause of the Civil Rights Movement. In another article entitled, “Evers Spoke Like ‘Prophet’ When Few Dared in Mississippi,” the Defender is more direct about its stand for Evers and his ideals of integration.

“Medgar Evers was speaking out for integration back in the mid 50s at a time when most Blacks in Mississippi wouldn’t have ventured to breathe the word. Despite threats and harassment he continued to campaign for Negroes’ rights virtually up to the moment a snipers bullet snuffed out his life” (1963, p. 8), stated the Defender.
In an article entitled, “Remember Evers Children, Donate To School Fund,” the newspaper advocates setting up a donation fund for Evers’ children. In fact the Defender itself founded the Medgar Evers Memorial Fund. In the brief article, the newspaper asserts,

Evers survived the invasion of Europe, but became a casualty on June 12, of the ‘war for human dignity’…Because of their father’s supreme sacrifice, the three children of the late Medgar Evers stand on the brink of an era of unlimited opportunity—unhampered by racial bars. But an era where a good education will be an ever increasing need…Recognizing this, the Chicago Defender has founded a Medgar Evers Memorial Fund. We urge you to join this worthwhile drive to help insure the full fruits of democracy—a thorough education of the Evers children.

(“Remember Evers,” 1963, p. 1)

Funds collected were to be personally mailed to the Defender’s address. This article alone speaks volumes as to how strongly the newspaper felt about the murder of Evers. The article also equates the Civil Rights Movement as the ‘war for human dignity’.

Thus, the newspaper recognized Evers as a war hero, who died sacrificing his life for the cause of the Black.

Recall, there were also some neutral articles printed by the Defender about Evers. With the murder of Evers as the central topic, some of the articles revealed how the foreign press felt about the murder, “Foreign Press Condemns Murder of Medgar Evers.”

Other neutral articles covered the investigation, specifically trying to trace the gun found on the scene to a suspect. Eventually, Mississippi authorities charged a member of the segregationist White Citizens Council with murdering Evers—Byron De La Beckwith.
Some other neutral articles provided kind words from those who knew Evers and his work and even from the Vice President of the U.S., Lyndon B. Johnson who said, “we will leave no stone unturned until the slayer of Medgar W. Evers is found” (“Johnson Vows,” 1963, p. 6). Although the time frame of analysis for this study does not cover the trial of Byron De La Beckwith, it is interesting to note there was a mistrial and it would be some 30 plus years before he would be convicted of Evers’ death.

Overall, the Defender’s coverage of the murder of Evers has to be seen as unbalanced. Although, there were slightly more neutral perspective articles, the stance of the Defender regarding the murder of Evers and the Civil Rights Movement were clear and precise without the presence of a single editorial: we are angry, sympathetic and we share in the cry of Mrs. Evers that her husband’s death will not be in vain. Also the Defender’s actions of setting up an Evers Memorial fund solidified that stand.

Chicago Defender

1963 March on Washington. 12 articles, two editorials and five photos discussed the 1963 March on Washington. All articles had a neutral dominant perspective with the exception of one pro perspective one. All articles appeared on the front page except one found in the middle. Additionally, all articles were 500 words or less except two 700 word articles. 10 headlines were neutral and two were positive. There were two positive characterizations observed. Both of the two editorials found offered pro dominant perspectives, were less than 500 words, with neutral headlines. All five non-antagonistic photos printed depicted the march, its participants, and its leaders.

Most of the neutral dominant perspective articles covered the planning, carrying out, and aftermath of the march. Subject of most articles presented the goals of the
march—freedom from discrimination in the areas of jobs, housing, education, etc. for Blacks. Other articles explored the conscious of the international community regarding the march and the plight of Black people in the United States. The Defender reported there were many international supporters of the March and the advancement of Blacks. In fact, there were many who flew in to attend the march or posed their own demonstrations in their respective countries. “Americans living, working, studying or vacationing abroad filed petitions of support for the march” (“Citizen Abroad,” 1963, p. 5), stated one Defender article. According to the newspaper, there was also much support from states across the U.S. such as Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, and New Mexico. Many citizens chartered buses to attend the march in Washington. From the picture painted by the Defender, there was wide spread support of the March among Blacks and Whites, nationally, and internationally. In the articles printed after the March took place, the Defender proceeded with neutrally dominant perspective articles. One article entitled, “I Rode the Freedom Train,” the newspaper offers the accounts of March participants. "And I witnessed a demonstration in democracy which must take its place among the top events to the founding and development of our country. It was an hour of triumph, not only for Blacks, but for all the American people” (General, 1963, p. 1), remarked one March participant. “I do not think that it will have immediate effect, but the whole world was looking at us. They know what we want” (General, 1963, p. 1), shared another participant. Thus, that was the content of most of the news articles after the march—reporting on what participants’ views were.

In another article, a Defender reporter offers a personal account of his experience at the March:
I stood on the gleaming, White steps of the Lincoln Memorial Wednesday, August 28, 1963 and saw an American Revolution come of age…Black Americans could finally proclaim to the world, “Yes, we ARE in charge of our revolution and because it has happened, American democracy breathes a fiercer red, White, and blue…I know where we must go. We must have some more Marches. We must march every day right down to City Hall and register to become voters…We must march every day for more jobs, hammering away at the iron curtain of racial exclusion…And we must raise very kind of legitimate and Constitutional hell we can until America—including the city of Chicago recognizes that all of America’s 20,000,000 Black men, women, and children, created in the eyes of God, are equal to their White brothers and sisters. (Stone, 1963, p. 1)

Although, not printed in the editorial section of the newspaper, this personal account given by a Defender reporter, offered a very pro dominant perspective about the March and its impact on American society. The tone was very proud and supportive of the outcome of the March and it gave instructions on what the March and demonstrations like it should lead to in the future of Black equality.

As previously acknowledged, both editorials also had pro dominant perspectives. One editorial gave a direct viewpoint of the March and the other praised Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his I Have a Dream speech. In fact, the Defender was very adamant in its support of the march declaring it one of the greatest moments in American life:

After a hundred years of watchful awaiting, our people are tired of empty promises. They demand their full freedom NOW. They want a civil rights bill that removes
all obstacles to complete equality. They are tired of the second-class citizen tag that keeps them in segregated housing, segregated schools. It is high time that democratic teachings become a reality. The American Black man has demonstrated his loyalty to America beyond the shadow of a doubt. He has participated in every war this country has had. He has spilled his blood willingly in the defense of principles and ideals for which this nation stands…This March on Washington is a march for full freedom, for equality, of opportunity, for social justice, for full and free participation in every phase of the American culture. (“On Washington,” 1963, p. 8)

In the other editorial, the Defender put its support behind Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his now infamous “I Have a Dream” speech given on that day. In fact, in its opening statement the editorial proclaimed:

Rarely has history witnessed a more moving, dramatic or eloquent moment than the hour when America’s foremost civil rights leader, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his brilliant address on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial with the brooding countenance of the Great Emancipator looking down on the 300,000 people assembled…The Chicago Defender is proud to be able to print Rev. King’s entire speech. It is a historical document. It is a declaration of brotherhood and hope you will want to save forever. (“Rev. Martin,” 1963, p. 4)

Such a statement was evidence the newspaper showed no restraint against their support for the march and/or its leader.

As for the photos, many were non-antagonistic in sentiment depicting a large and peaceful demonstration by the thousands of March participants and leaders. The
perpetuation of a peaceful march was a very beneficial image for the march considering the assumption by March opponents that it would be a very disruptive demonstration.

Overall, the coverage by the Defender regarding the March revealed more neutral news articles. However, the editorials presented gave a very clear picture as to how the newspaper felt about the March and its impact. One can conclude that the newspaper was neutral in its news coverage and only implemented their opinions in the section designated for such, the editorials.

The Chicago Defender

1963 Birmingham church bomb. Four news articles and five photos revealed the Defender’s coverage of the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama, which killed four little Black girls. There were no editorials printed regarding the incident. However, three of the articles had pro dominant perspectives and one was neutral. All four of the news articles were printed on the front page of the paper and all were 500 words or less in length. Additionally, all four had neutral headlines. No characterizations were made. All five photos found were non-antagonistic in sentiment.

So, the Defender printed no editorials regarding this incident. Nonetheless, there was a clear perspective offered by the newspaper in its news articles. The paper called the act, racist and shameful. Additionally, it put together several news editorials from various newspapers across the U.S. which condemned the act. Thus, the Defender itself did not print any words about the incident. However, all of the editorials gathered called the act monstrous, shocking, racist, and lunatic. Perhaps this was a tactful way to say how the newspaper felt, without having to include its own words.
The photographic sentiments of the four photos found were extremely non-antagonistic. One photo showed the mother of one of the victimized little girls sobbing uncontrollably, being held up by loved ones outside the funeral and another mother being held in the arms of her husband. A different photo showed Dr. King giving the eulogy before a mass of people inside the church where the funeral was held. Together, these photos seemed to draw sympathy for the victims, who ultimately were the newest victims of the cause of the Civil Rights Movement. Recipients of previous bomb threats made by segregationists, finally this church had seen the wrath of the threats come to surface. The agonized faces of the victims’ parents seemed to tell a compelling story of the pain and struggle of the cause. The Defender offered no personal viewpoints because it didn’t write any editorials during this time period. However, the pictures spoke volumes about the effects of this event on the Black community.

Overall, the Defender’s coverage of the Birmingham bombing had a pro dominant perspective citing the incident as a clear indication of the extreme that those opposing the Movement would go to in order to stall things. The newspaper openly called the act racist and shameful—an evident condemnation and disapproval of such violence and at the same time an unspoken approval of the cause of the movement against such hatred and violence.

The Chicago Defender

1964 Freedom summer. Only one article and one editorial were printed during the designated time period about the voter registration drives which took place during Freedom Summer. No photos were found. The article had a neutral dominant perspective and headline, was placed on the front page and was 500 words or less. There
were no characterizations found. The editorial found offered a pro dominant perspective, was printed on the front page and was also 500 words or less with a neutral headline.

In its neutrally dominant perspective article, the Defender reveals the plans of those participating in Freedom Summer, many of whom were northern volunteers who would be working in Southern states such as Mississippi. According to the newspaper, the SNCC spearheaded the drive for voter registration but was joined by other civil rights and community groups such as the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) (“SNCC Fete,” 1964, p. 1).

In its editorial, the Defender supports the importance of the Black vote calling it “a powerful lever in prying open the doors of racial equality” (“The Vote,” 1964, p. 1). Additionally, the editorial referenced the ability to vote as the first and most important tool for Blacks to use in order to unlock the bastions separating the races. In essence, editorially, the paper was very much in support of the voter registration drives and other protests that were being planned by the Black leaders and activists groups for that particular summer. Yet, the paper offered objective coverage of the demonstrators and their plans in its one article.

*The Chicago Defender*

*Civil Rights Act of 1964.* Two articles, one editorial, and three photos examined the Defender’s coverage of the signing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Both news articles had a neutrally dominant perspective, were on the front page, and had positive headlines. One article was 500 words or less while the other was between 1001-1500 words. As for the editorial, it offered a pro dominant perspective, was less than 500 words and had a neutral headline. All three photos had non-antagonistic sentiments.
The first headline by the *Defender* read, “July 2, 1964: Freedom Day II.” The headline implied how the newspaper felt about the signing of the Civil Rights Act—they saw it as a second Freedom celebration; the first being the Independence of our country, the second being the final independence of Blacks. In the neutrally written article, the *Defender* asserted that the bill was “born in the violence of the Negro protest movement against discrimination, completed its congressional journey and was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson into the law of the land” (“July 1964,” 1964, p. 1).

In the *Defender’s* second article, there were specific details about the legislation which provided a 1000 word plus summary of what the bill meant in the areas of public accommodations, employment, voting, and any other areas in which Blacks had been discriminated in over the years. No insight on the layout of the bill was provided by the paper.

The one editorial printed during this time period was rather brief but addressed the newspaper’s concern that with all the amendments being made to the Senate Civil Rights bill, that a watered down bill would emerge that would at best be, “a bill strong enough to meet most of the constitutional requirements for first-class American citizenship” (“Will They,” 1964, p. 8). There is danger of compromise on some key points asserted the *Defender*. Printed prior to the passage of the bill, surprisingly, there were no other editorials found to address the feelings of the newspaper regarding the passage of the bill.

The photos printed during this time period were non-antagonistic in sentiment. Pictures of civil rights leaders such as Dr. King standing behind President Lyndon B. Johnson as he signed the 1964 Civil Rights Bill into law appeared to be beneficial and a celebration to the movement. In essence, the picture depicting the signing of the bill
seemed to represent a culmination of the struggles of Blacks just to reach such a day of compromise.

The Chicago Defender

1964 Three Civil Rights workers murdered. Four news articles, no editorials or photos were printed in the Defender about the murder of three civil rights workers in Mississippi in 1964. All four news articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and all four were on the front page. Half were 500 words or less in length while the other two were less than a 1000 words. Three of the four had neutral headlines with a single positive one.

Much of the coverage during this time period was about the investigation into the missing three civil rights workers and the discovery of their bodies near Philadelphia, MS. In one article, the Defender reveals President Johnson’s ordered search into the swamps of Mississippi to find the bodies (“Massive Search,” 1964, p. 1). Another article follows the claims of comedian, activist Dick Gregory that the FBI was moving too slowly in its investigation of the matter (“Gregory Raps,” 1964, p. 1). In the paper, the article points out that Gregory presented a letter and a tape from an informant that revealed the whereabouts of the bodies. This information provided by Gregory led to the finding of the missing workers’ bodies in a pond on a farm in Philadelphia, MS. According to Gregory, the FBI did not move immediately on his tip. Gregory was very critical and expressed his lack of trust in the FBI’s handling of the case. The paper provided no comment regarding Gregory’s revelation about the FBI. In its other articles, the Defender again talked about the case and the ongoing investigation to find out what led up to the three workers disappearance and murder.
Thus, surprisingly, the Defender offered a very balanced picture regarding the murder of the three civil rights workers presenting information about the investigation only. At the beginning of this event’s analysis, it was assumed that the paper would inject its opinion into this crime considering the paper’s previous coverage of violence against Blacks. However, the paper diverted from its usual pattern of coverage for whatever reasons and reported on this event without any editorials or photos.

Clarion Ledger

1954 Brown vs. Board of Education. There were nine articles and two editorials printed about the Brown vs. Board of Education case. No photos were found. Eight of the articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and only one was anti. All nine articles were found in the front section of the newspaper. Three of the nine articles were less than 500 words while six were 501-1000 words. All article headlines were neutral. As for editorials, both were anti dominant with neutral headlines. One of the editorials was 500 words or less and the other was 1001-1500 words in length. One positive characterization was made by the paper towards an opponent of segregation and the Supreme Court’s decision.

As stated the majority of the news articles by the Ledger were neutral in their coverage of the Supreme Court decision. One article detailed the exact words of the court ruling but many of the articles examined the take of Southern leaders on the decision. For example, one article discussed Governor Hugh White’s plans to “receive advice from his legal educational advisory committee with the hope of learning how to maintain equal but separate schools despite the Court’s ruling” (“Segregation Reaction,” 1954, p. 7). By continuing to invest money in upgrading and equalizing Black schools,
Governor White hoped to encourage Blacks to continue to attend their own schools. The paper did not offer comment in favor or against Governor White’s obvious stance for segregation nor his opposition to the Court’s decision.

Another neutral article revealed a Mississippi representative’s plans to introduce to the House of Representatives an amendment to legalize separate, but equal schools in the U.S. constitution (“Anti-Segregation Edict,” 1954, p. 1). Apparently, this amendment was proposed to spite the Supreme Court’s outlaw of segregation. Again, the paper offered no comment regarding the proposed amendment.

However, in yet another article, the *Ledger* reported the condemnation of the Court’s decision by yet another leader of Mississippi—a senator. Then, Senator James Eastland declared that, “The opinion by the Supreme Court would not change public opinion…that the decision is opposed by the vast majority…and that it would take force for compliance with the decision of the Supreme Court.” (“Eastland Declares,” 1954, p. 1). The language in the article provided no support and/or condemnation of Senator Eastland’s viewpoint.

In fact there was only one article that presented the paper’s viewpoint on the Supreme Court’s decision and even that was a bit indirect. In an article headlined, “Southern Governors are Caught Unready,” the *Ledger* called most southern leaders unprepared for the Supreme Court’s decision outlawing segregation. According to the paper, many Southern leaders were not willing to make a statement on what they would do in regards to the Court’s decisions. However, in another article, the paper praised Governor Herman Talmadge of Georgia and his stance against segregation and his courage to actually take a stance. “Governor Talmadge is prepared. He offers a plan,
like it or not” (Henry, 1954, p. 2), said the paper. Of course Talmadge’s plan was not to comply with the Court’s decision but to instead let the legislature convert public schools into private institutions. Although the paper did not voice an agreement with the Governor’s declaration to privatize public schools as an answer to avoid desegregation; the Ledger’s applauding of Talmadge’s stance was an open condemnation of the Supreme Court’s decision to outlaw segregation.

Unlike its news articles, in its editorials, the Ledger’s response to the Supreme Court’s decision was completely anti. The paper seemed very displeased with the court’s decision and seemed appalled that the outlawing of segregation in the public schools had taken place even when equal facilities for Blacks had been provided. The paper also criticized the government and called the Court’s decision a betrayal of people’s trust that could never be punished or forgiven:

There are disloyalties and there are crimes which shock our sensibilities which may bring suffering upon those who are touched by their immediate results, but there is no disloyalty and no crime in all the category of human weakness which compares with the failure of probability in the conduct of public trust. The breaking down of the faith of the people in the honesty of their government and in the integrity of their institutions, the lowering of the respect for standards of honor which prevail in high places, are crimes for which punishment can never atone.

(“Significant News,” 1954, p. 12)

Additionally, the editorial called the Court’s decision “depressing” and “ominous.” The paper also pointed out that the announcement that it would be a long time before the
Court’s decision could be made effective was good news for people in the South—apparently more time to resist or adjust.

The Ledger’s second editorial did not discuss directly the results of the Brown case. However, the piece was about a prominent Northern politician’s visit to a local Mississippi Black High School—Lanier High, after the Supreme Court’s decision outlawing segregation had been made. Although the editorial offered mostly direct comments made by the politician, the Ledger acknowledges that a member of the paper staff witnesses the politician’s visit to Lanier. According to the account, the politician as well as the reporter is astonished to see that the facilities there are better than the all-White Central High School. “Here we see, in the new Negro high school cafeteria and kitchen, equipment, that would make a chef drool. Even Central High School for the Whites here can’t hold a candle to the new Lanier school,” (Hills, 1954, p. 6), stated the Ledger reporter about the visit. The paper reported that the Northern politician oh’d and ah’d over the Black facilities. The Ledger then bragged that the Northern politician could go to practically any of the larger cities in Mississippi and see the same thing. The state, according to the paper had made extreme efforts to equalize facilities and educational opportunities for the Black race. Thus, the Ledger’s statements show that the paper was very much in support of continued segregation and believed that separate but equal facilities for Blacks and Whites was working in the state and could continue to work. With that belief, this made the paper in direct offense to the Brown vs. Board of Education decision outlawing segregation.

Overall, the news coverage of the Ledger in regards to the Brown vs. Board of Education must be viewed as anti dominant in its perspective. Although, most of the
language of its news articles were determined to be neutral, the paper’s single presentation of Southern leaders in opposition of the decision was a one sided approach to the story. Only views of Southern leaders for segregation and against the Supreme Court’s decision to outlaw segregation were present in the Ledger’s articles. Thus, the absence of other perspectives such as the opinions of Black leaders and officials in favor of the court’s decision made the paper look biased. Of course, the editorials presented, left no guessing in whose side the Ledger was on—not the Court’s and ultimately not on the side of the Blacks at least in regards to the equalization of Blacks and Whites in public schools.

The Clarion Ledger

1955 Rosa Parks. There were no articles, editorials, or photos printed by the Ledger regarding Rosa Parks’ arrest for refusing to give up her sit to a White on a Montgomery, Alabama bus. Absence of coverage during this time period suggests the event may not have been of importance to the Ledger.

The Clarion Ledger

1955 Murder of Emmett Till. The Ledger devoted an enormous amount of media coverage to the murder/trial of Emmett Till. Approximately 28 articles, four editorials and 18 photos were found on the event. All 28 articles had neutrally dominant perspectives, although a few offered some questionably anti language. All 28 article headlines were neutral and all were placed in the front section of the newspaper. As for article lengths, 20 were 500 words or less, seven were 501-1000 words, and only one was 1001-1500 words. In regards to editorials, three had anti dominant perspectives and one was pro. Three of the editorial headlines were neutral. Three editorials were less than
500 words while one was 501-1000 words. 10 of the photos were non-antagonistic and five were neutral in sentiment.

As previously stated, all of the news articles printed by the *Ledger* regarding the murder/trial of Till were neutrally dominant in perspective. The paper gave an extreme amount of media coverage to the whole affair. Most news articles not only appeared in the front section of the newspaper but on the front page. The specifics of areas covered by the paper included the events that happened prior to the trial, such as the discovery of Till’s body, timeline accounts of what led to the murder, details of the crime scene, transportation of Till’s body back to Chicago, the mourning of his mother, previews of the trial and the lawyers that would be involved for the prosecution and the defendant, jury selection, as well as comments from members of Till’s family, and Sheriff Strider (official over the county where the two White men were tried). Of course the *Ledger* also covered the proceedings of the trial up until the verdict. The paper presented each specific subject with neutrality even after the verdict was delivered. When the not guilty verdict was delivered the paper provided the reactions of Till’s mother Mamie Till as well as the NAACP. In one article, the paper reported that Mrs. Till had expected an acquittal of the two White men and didn’t want to be there when it happened. In another article headlined, “NAACP Is Pleased With All Parties At Sumner But Jury,” the paper provides the opinion of the Black led group as they assert how “shameful” and “shocking” the verdict was (1955, p. 1). At no point does the *Ledger* offer opinion condemning or advocating the feelings of Mrs. Till or the NAACP or any proponents for or against the defendants and/or the verdict rendered to them. One of the latter articles
printed about the Till incident indicated that the two defendants would have to face kidnap charges in another county (Everett, 1955, p.8).

Despite its large number of news articles, only four editorials were printed by the Ledger—three were anti dominant and one was pro. In regards to the kidnapping and murder of Till, in its first editorial, the Ledger joined with Governor Hugh White and declared that it could not condone killing and that it regretted the occurrence. The paper cited that it felt that most Mississippians felt the same way and that it hoped for a fair and prompt trial to be rendered.

In its second editorial, written during the Till trial, the paper shifts its focus from condemning the murder to persecuting others for the negative media being given to the state of Mississippi. Specifically, the paper criticizes the appearance of Representative Carl D. Diggs, Black Democratic Michigan Congressman at the Sumner, Mississippi, trial. The Ledger accuses the congressman of trying to capitalize on Till’s death to win a few more Black votes. The paper called his presence “shameless…and an unwarranted intrusion” and wondered if taxpayers of Michigan had to pay the costs of his visit since neither his state nor Congress were concerned with the case. The paper continued their attack on Diggs calling him a “shrewd politician and a headline hunter, who could smell personal publicity farther than he could smell pork chops or catfish frying” (Ethridge, 1955, p. 10). The reason for the paper’s attack on the Black politician and their reference to him as an “outsider” is not explained by the paper (Ethridge, 1955, p. 10). Their “sizing up” of the congressman is not based on any remarks or actions taken by him (Ethridge, 1955, p. 10). Instead the only conclusion that can be drawn or assumed as to the reason for the paper’s opinion is that Diggs was not from Mississippi, but a northerner
sticking his nose in a Southern state’s business. This type of mentality and reference to Northerners as agitators or instigators can be considered anti and was very much in keeping with a Segregationist mentality.

In its third editorial, the Ledger focuses its attention on the negative publicity being brought to Mississippi as a result of the Till trial. The paper accuses the NAACP of capitalizing on the case and spreading propaganda against the state. Additionally, there is accusation that slanted/biased writing from the media is also taking place. “Biased judges have already found our entire state guilty—even that overwhelming majority of us who condemn the tragic kidnap-slaying” (Milner, 1955, p. 10), petitioned the Ledger. In essence, the Ledger offers its condemnation of the kidnapping and murder of Till. But rather than focus on the victimization of young Till, the paper shifts its focus towards the state of Mississippi being the true “victim” of the whole scenario (Milner, 1955, p. 10). This shift by the Ledger can be viewed as anti because it shows more concern for the state of Mississippi than the Black boy murdered.

In its final editorial, printed after the Till trial verdict, the paper kept on the defense as it proclaimed that the “not guilty” verdict rendered by the court was the right call because the case had not been proven beyond a reasonable doubt. The Ledger also slammed the NAACP for their remarks against the Mississippi Court’s verdict. An atrocious miscarriage of justice, is what the NAACP called the case. The paper called the NAACP leaders who promoted such a lie, “loud-mouts” because the only evidence against the defendants was circumstantial. “Guilt must be proven, not assumed” (“Verdict Sumner,” 1955, p. 8), stated the Ledger in response to the NAACP allegations.
As for its photographical coverage, some of the same pictures that appeared in other papers in the study were present in the Ledger—only in a larger quantity. There were photos that were taken at the funeral and wake of Till that seemed to be recycled among different papers. For example the picture of Mamie Till collapsing in the arms of family after seeing her son’s battered and bruised body was a photo that appeared in many of the papers. Again the pictured showed her in a very sorrowful state which probably evoked sympathy on behalf of the reader.

Particularly, a lot of photos were taken at the murder trial of Till, such as: pictures of the defendants and their wives sitting and listening to the ongoing proceedings, pictures of Moses Till and Mamie Till preparing to go onto the witness stand, and pictures of the defendants once the verdict was read rejoicing and all smiles. Together the photos created a non-antagonistic sentiment about the murder of Till. Whether guilty or not, the idea that a Black could be kidnapped from his home and disappear because of a wolf whistle was an abhorring thought for those fighting for the cause of the Civil Rights Movement at that time.

Overall, the Ledger kept its opinions separate from its news articles when it came to its news coverage of the murder of Emmett Till. Respectively, all 28 articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and included the opinions of critics who were against the verdict and the way the case was handled. Thus, extreme neutrality was executed on behalf of the paper in covering the story. The four editorials presented by the Ledger do not overshadow the neutrality of the articles in number nor opinion because even though three of the editorials were anti, it was not due to any advocating of the murder of Till but rather to its condemnation of outsiders and dislike of the way Mississippi was being
portrayed due to the case. Only one editorial condemned the murder of Till and this condemnation was a piggyback off of the Governor’s condemnation of the act. Thus, the Ledger’s coverage must be rendered overall to be neutral and its true stance is editorially on the murder itself was elusive.

*The Clarion Ledger*

**1956 Desegregation of Alabama buses.** There were five articles but no editorials and photos printed by the Ledger in regards to the Supreme Court’s desegregation of Alabama Buses. All of the articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. Additionally, all five articles appeared in the front section of the newspaper and were less than 500 words.

The paper’s articles were all geared towards covering Mississippi’s response to the ruling of desegregation. Although the case had originated out of Alabama, Mississippi who also practiced segregation was obviously concerned with how the decision may affect them. According to the articles presented by the Ledger, Mississippi wasn’t about to change anything about its segregated lifestyle in regards to transportation. One headline entitled, “Bus Officials to Ignore Edict of Supreme Court,” the paper points out that bus lines in Mississippi said that no new instructions were given to bus drivers as to how to conduct desegregation following the ruling by the Court. In another article, headlined, “Promises to Enforce Our Segregation Laws,” the Ledger also reports that Mississippi’s Attorney General Joe Patterson and Governor J.P. Coleman said, “That so long as the state’s segregation laws stay on the books he will hold that they shall be enforced against integration in schools or on buses” (“Promises Enforce,” 1956, p. 1).
Although the *Ledger’s* coverage of the Court’s decision and the reactions of the state officials offered no language condemning or advocating the new desegregation laws, the paper’s selection of only those officials vowing that Mississippi’s policy towards segregation would go unchanged and the elimination of any other viewpoints gave a one sided viewpoint to the paper’s coverage and hinted towards whether or not the strong words against integration voiced by the Attorney General and the Governor of Mississippi were words felt by the paper also. Of course, that can only be seen as an assumption since no abstract words in their articles nor any editorials offer the paper’s exact stance on the matter. Yet, the absence of other opinions in its news articles presented some evidence towards biasness.

*The Clarion Ledger*

1957 Little Rock Nine. Approximately 23 articles, two editorials, and three photos represented the *Ledger’s* coverage of the forced integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. All 23 articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines and were placed in the front section of the newspaper. Seventeen of the articles were less than 500 words and six were 501-1000 words in length. As for editorials, both had anti dominant perspectives and were less than 500 words in length. One editorial had a negative headline and the other was neutral. Two of the three photos were neutral and one was non-antagonistic.

The *Ledger’s* coverage of the Little Rock incident did like most of the articles printed by the newspapers in this study, it reported on the events as they unfolded in Faubus’ standoff with the federal government. Despite the papers obvious stance against desegregation presented in its editorials, its news articles were free from biasness and
language in support and/or condemnation of Governor Faubus’ defiance of the federal
government. Additionally, the Federal government was not celebrated for its stand
against Faubus. All neutral, there were only a few standouts in the papers large amount
of articles on the matter. One article headlined, “Inside and Outside Integration Story,”
gave the Ledger’s account of events the day the nine students were finally military
escorted into Central High. The paper gathered viewpoints from a few of the nine
Blacks. One young girl admitted that when she got scared during the ordeal she kept
reciting the 28th Psalm of the bible “The Lord is my strength and my shield…” Another
girl admitted that she was hit by a White girl but simply said, “Thank you very much”
(Cooper, 1957, p. 4) even though the white girl was expecting her to stop and fight. In
addition to the quotes of the young Black girls, the paper provided a striking description
of the crowd outside of the all-White high school. “On the outside, the crowd was in an
ugly mood and ready to go to any lengths to prevent mingling of Negroes and Whites in
the classroom” (Cooper, 1957, p. 1), reported the paper. Although the Ledger again,
provided no distinctive language in favor or against the Little Rock Nine, its description
of the girls’ experiences at the high school painted a soft, innocent picture of them which
clashed with the angry mob outside trying everything to keep them out simply because of
their skin color. Thus, inadvertently, a piece of this article portrayed the Black students
in a positive light. Nonetheless, the majority of their news articles included this one were
neutral.

However, in its initial editorials, the Ledger criticized the attempts to integrate the
all White Central High School citing the 10th amendment to the constitution which
reserves for the states certain powers, “If the 10th amendment means what it plainly says,
then the operation of public schools is a function reserved for each separate state, without interference, supervisions or dictation by the federal government” (“Americans Want,” 1957, p. 6). In essence, the paper was in agreement with Governor Faubus’ stand against the government and its attempt to do away with segregation and openly condemned the federal government for trying to do otherwise. The paper went on to ask the American people to decide if they preferred “constitutional government” to “federal dictatorship” and if so, they should demand that the 10th Amendment be respected and upheld by the federal government (“Americans Want,” 1957, p. 6).

In its second editorial which celebrated Constitution Week, the Ledger uses the occasion to point out that the regulations of the constitution should be followed by citizens. The paper called the week a timely reminder and opportunity in light of the situation that was occurring in Little Rock and that following the constitution was of extreme importance. The Ledger stated:

Current trends have caused the original spirit of the Constitution to be largely lost. That venerable basic law propounded by the Founding Fathers has been distorted and twisted almost beyond recognition, allowing it to sanction creeping socialism and might-makes-right despotism. Many of America’s present ills could be eliminated if all public officials would study and be actively loyal to the Constitution. (“Timely Reminder,” 1957, p. 6)

Again, the paper was alluding to the issue in Little Rock—the case of state law versus federal law and the idea that if the Constitution was actually followed, then the state law of segregation in Arkansas would need not to be challenged by the Federal government.
In regards to photos, the two neutral photos were simply headshots of Governor Faubus and President Eisenhower. The picture of a Black reporter being beaten outside of Central High School was non-antagonistic as it showed a member of the press being beaten by an angry White mob while in the backdrop a group of Blacks tried to integrate an all White school.

Overall, the coverage by the *Ledger* must be viewed as neutral as its news articles were without bias. Although its opinions against segregation were presented in its editorials, the amount and content of the pieces were not enough to warrant overwhelming bias and/or the promotion of anti integration ideals.

*The Clarion Ledger*

1958 Stabbing of Dr. King. There were only three articles printed in the *Ledger* about the stabbing of Dr. King. No editorials or photos were found. All three articles had a neutral dominant perspective, were less than 500 words and appeared on the front page. All three article headlines were neutral. There were two neutral characterizations made about Dr. King.

The *Ledger* explained how the stabbing occurred to Dr. King while he was signing one of his newly published books. The paper did not condone or condemn the stabbing of Dr. King. However, there was some descriptive language used by the paper in its description of Dr. King. The *Ledger* referenced him as the “Negro leader who stresses nonviolence in racial issues” and as a “Southern integration leader” (“King’s Status,” 1958, p. 1). Both were neutral references that were also favorable in the sense they did not criticize Dr. King’s character and what he represented.
There was one photo which showed Dr. King’s assailant stabbing him in the chest. This picture was determined to be non-antagonistic as it showed violence being committed against a civil rights activist. Overall, there were very few articles about the stabbing of Dr. King. Nonetheless, with the exception of the favorable portrayal of Dr. King, the reporting by the Ledger was fairly neutral.

*The Clarion Ledger*

*1960 Sit-in demonstrations.* There were eight articles, no editorials, or photos which appeared in the Ledger regarding the 1960s sit-in demonstrations. Overall, the articles had neutrally dominant perspectives. Additionally, all of them were 500 words or less, appeared in the front section of the newspaper, and had neutral headlines. Both favorable and unfavorable characterizations were made towards the Black demonstrators.

Headlined, “White Girls Join Negroes In Picketing Cafeterias,” the Ledger is objective and without judgment as it detailed how 150 Black students from North Carolina A&T College and a few White students worked in shifts together to occupy lunch counter stools at the F.W. Woolworth store (in North Carolina). The paper stated that three White girls from another local North Carolina college joined the blockade to emphasize their opposition to racial segregation.

In another article which described another day of the demonstrations in another city, the Ledger describes the demonstrators as sitting quietly at the counters, some reading books and others talking amongst themselves. In essence, the paper’s portrayal of the demonstrators was not that of rioters or peace breakers or agitators.

However, in their coverage of another Woolworth sit-in in which violence ensued, the paper states that the Black efforts to gain admission to White only lunch counters had
triggered the racial tensions. In this light, the same demonstrators who had sat peacefully were now seen as agitators and peace breakers—two very different portrayals of the demonstrators. Thus, portrayal of the demonstrators was favorable as long as no violence occurred. But, when violence was present, rather than blame the hate of the onlooker, the paper chose to indict the Black demonstrator. So, overall, the paper’s coverage detailing the sit in demonstrations was neutral. However, the only instance of favor and/or discontent was in the paper’s comments made towards the demonstrators.

*The Clarion Ledger*

1961 Freedom riders. Four articles, no editorials, and one photo depicted the Ledger’s coverage of the attacks against the Freedom Riders in 1961. All of the articles had neutrally dominant perspectives, appeared in the front section of the newspaper, and were less than 500 words in length. Three of the article headlines were neutral while one was positive. As for the single photo, it was non-antagonistic. Approximately two neutral characterizations were made in regards to the Freedom Riders.

Although, one headline entitled, “CORE Integration Drive Fires Alabama Violence,” gave the undertone that violence in Alabama was caused by Blacks’ efforts to test segregation, the paper did not make elaborate attempts to tear down or condemn the Freedom Riders in their articles. Instead, the *Ledger* covered the events of violence against the Freedom Riders with objectivity. Only two of the four articles actually provided detail as to the violence committed against the Riders. The other articles provided the reactions of Mississippi and Alabama’s top leaders as well as the United States Attorney General as the Riders requested protection in the aftermath of the
violence that occurred in Birmingham and Anniston, Alabama as they were in route to New Orleans, LA.

In the articles which discussed the violence committed against the Riders, the paper provided details of Whites waiting to attack the Blacks. The Ledger described the Whites as angry. No blame or condemnation was used to describe the Riders even though one headline suggested such. The comments of one the Riders who had been attacked were also included in the paper. The Rider called their efforts, “the most significant thing done in race relations in years” (“FBI Agents,” 1961, p. 1).

In its other articles, the Ledger reported that Mississippi’s Lt. Governor Paul Johnson was refusing to give help to the “outside agitators” as they wanted to pass through the state to get to New Orleans (“No Help,” 1961, p. 1). Yet, the paper did not refer to the demonstrators as anything outside of their name of Freedom Riders. The paper even outlined the Riders’ cause. When Alabama’s Governor criticized the Freedom Riders attempts calling them “rabble rousers”, still, the paper referenced them as Freedom Riders (“Alabama Warns,” 1961, p. 1).

In regards to the single photo, the picture showed a police dog being used to disperse the crowd at the Birmingham, Alabama bus terminal. This non-antagonistic photo again displays the disorder and violence that often occurred when a peaceful attempt to challenge the South’s segregated way of life was made by Blacks and their proponents.

Overall, although there was an instance of reference to the Riders as catalysts to the violence rendered them in a single headline, the paper’s handful of articles about the
Freedom Riders and the violence inflicted upon them was very neutral and did not portray them in that light.

*The Clarion Ledger*

1962 *Medgar Evers enters Ole Miss.* The Ledger dedicated an enormous amount of coverage to the forced entrance of Medgar Evers into the all White Ole Miss. Approximately 58 articles, 10 editorials and 19 photos were featured in the paper. All 58 articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. However, nine of the 10 editorials had anti dominant perspectives and one was neutral. All 58 articles were placed in the front section of the newspaper. All but one of the 58 articles was 500 words or less in length. One article was 501-1000 words. In regards to editorials, all 10 were 500 words or less. The editorial headlines were mostly neutral—eight, only two were negative. Two negative characterizations and a positive one were made. Sixteen of the 19 photos were non-antagonistic while three were neutral.

In terms of language descriptions and references to Meredith’s case, the Ledger was undoubtedly neutral. There was never an instance outside of what newsmakers reportedly said about the Meredith case in which the Ledger took sides for or against integration in its news articles. However, the selection of certain topics by the paper seemed to indict support for some of the ideals that would be expressed in its editorials. In essence, the paper never openly defied, commended the actions of Governor Barnett in resisting against the federal government, yet it put together a string of articles from various members of the community and the Deep South who seemed to be in support of the Governor’s actions. By selected only supportive sources for Barnett, the paper’s coverage seemed a little one sided. From headlines to articles, several of the 58 articles
were from Barnett’s supporters. This truly was the only standout of the articles printed by the *Ledger*.

One article reported that Barnett’s stance was backed by the President of Mississippi’s Sheriffs’ Association, a prominent female organization called Daughters of the American Revolution, a well known White church, the Governors of Alabama and Arkansas, as well as some other Deep South states. In fact, in an article headlined, “Faubus Hopes That Ross’ Efforts Will Succeed,” the *Ledger* reported on Faubus’ advice to Ross, who was walking down the same path he (Faubus) had been about five years prior. In the article Faubus expressed that his sympathy was with Barnett in resisting the usurpation of the right that belongs to the states.

The paper even gathered supportive opinions from some Black leaders in the Jackson, Mississippi area such as ministers of local churches. The Black leaders requested prayers and a halt to Meredith’s entry into Ole Miss citing, that the actions of Meredith would hurt relations in Mississippi between the Negro and Whites. The presentation of Blacks with such viewpoint seemed like double support for the Governor.

Additionally, the paper printed articles that discussed the alternatives to allowing James Meredith to enter into Ole Miss. One option discussed in the paper was the option to close Ole Miss down entirely rather than allow a Black to integrate it—the paper made no comments however about the matter.

Thus, again, the *Ledger* didn’t use language in favor of the Faubus’ stand off and resistance against Meredith and the federal government. Nonetheless, the selection of news that was chosen for the paper seemed to build a very supportive and one sided case for the Governor’s actions. Had there been some articles from the opposite perspectives
out of the 58, which did so, this assumption would not have to be made. But in its editorial coverage, no assumptions would need to be proclaimed because the paper was very frank about its stance regarding integration, James Meredith, and Governor Barnett’s defiance.

One editorial entitled, “United We Stand,” boldly declared that the people of Mississippi should stand firmly behind Governor Ross Barnett in his assertion of States’ Rights in handling public education matters. The paper went on to point out that in the past, there had been a “sorry” record of states being successful in their fight against the outside interference from the federal government (this may have been a reference to Little Rock’s showdown and loss to the federal government over the same issue) (“United Stand,” 1962, p. 1). However, the Ledger declared that even so, the College Board and the citizens should still stand in resistance to the integration of the all White Ole Miss. The short editorial was unusually featured on the front page of the newspaper. Normally the paper’s editorials were placed in their prospective sections of the paper which did not include the front page. By doing so, the paper seemed to provide an exclamation to its stance for segregation.

Another Ledger editorial called Governor Barnett’s stand “courageous” and suggested that the Governor must stand behind his promise that no Black would enter University of Mississippi so long as he was Governor or else, he would lose face. Right next to that editorial supporting Barnett, the paper featured a song with lyrics written by a Mississippi songwriter, Houston Davis entitled, “The Kennedy Administration.” The song criticized the efforts of President Kennedy, his brother Robert Kennedy and others fighting for integration such as Meredith and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. “…All you so-
called freedom riders sitter-ins and hounds of hate Go on back to Martin Luther, We ain’t gonna integrate…” (Hills, 1962, p. 6), read an excerpt from the song featured in the *Ledger*. The newspaper applauded the lyrics and the songwriter for creatively expressing what many Southerners were feeling about the “Yankee Agitators.”

As if the title and words of the song wasn’t enough criticism geared towards the Kennedy administration, the *Ledger* took another aim at Attorney General Robert Kennedy. Specifically, the paper heavily criticized RFK’s book “Just Friends and Brave Enemies.” According to the editorial, “Mr. Kennedy’s book has it all wrong if he thinks that the Ole Miss situation and the civil rights crusade in Mississippi and the South is responsible for the United States’ negative image abroad from other countries” (Hills, 1962, p. 6). Additionally, the paper said that it was a shame that the South even had to be forced to abandon its customs and traditions in deference to “world opinion” of countries such as Africa and Asia. “Africans are semi-savages not far removed from cannibalism and Asians are cow-worshipers” (Hills, 1962, p. 6), ranted the editorial. The *Ledger’s* remarks about Kennedy’s book seem to perspire in defense that the South was in no way responsible for the bad light in which the world viewed the United States and that “colored viewpoints” did not matter anyway.

Rather than acknowledge that the world view of the United States was at stake in the entrance of a single Black into the all White Ole Miss, the *Ledger* declared in another editorial that state’s rights above federal rights was the more crucial issue in the whole matter. The paper stated that, the right to operate public schools according to state law was a right reserved to the states by the plain wording of the 10th amendment to the federal constitution. In essence, the paper said that Mississippi had a right to fight
against the federal government in Meredith’s case because segregation was a law of the state and by admitting him to Ole Miss—a state law was being broken.

In one of its last two editorials printed prior to Meredith’s integration victory, the paper turned its focus to what the future may bring as it warned that the usually heavy Democratic voters in Mississippi and the South would probably be brought to a halt if the Kennedy administration (of Democrats) was to succeed at integrating Ole Miss.

Of course when integrate he did Ole Miss; it was not surprising that the Ledger was upset considering their editorial rhetoric of disapproval prior to and during Meredith’s uphill fight. Headlined, “Placing the Blame,” the paper did just that to everyone except the state of Mississippi and the Governor, whom they said would lose face if he went back on his word and allowed a Black to integrate Ole Miss. The editorial proclaimed:

Blame for the violence and bloodshed on the campus of University of Mississippi must rest, we believe, squarely on the doorstep of federal courts, the NAACP, James Meredith, and the President of the United States. This arrogant and ruthless combination apparently would kill everybody in Mississippi if necessary to force integration at Ole Miss—against the wishes of the great majority of people who maintain the University. (Ethridge, 1962, p. 6)

The piece was one of only two editorials written after Meredith had gained entrance into the university.

In its final editorial, the paper continued its angry venting about Meredith’s achievement as it once again blamed the Kennedy’s. “Well, they got their way. They enrolled a Negro in Ole Miss” (Hill, 1962, p. 7), said the Ledger. The final comments
from the paper seemed to summarize their resentment. The idea that a single Black’s entrance into the all White institution was the breakdown to the entire way of Southern life—the statement made the incident seem like a war lost rather than just a battle.

As for the 19 photos, the non-antagonistic ones reflected many of the same images presented in the other papers but with more numbers—soldiers carrying their guns, angry crowds of Whites—some being arrested walking with hands over their heads, a highway patrolmen lying on a stretcher as he’s rolled into the hospital after being injured by a tear gas shell, a picture of the street lined with United States Marshalls as debris of bricks, bottles, and tear gas canisters sprinkled the ground around them, and a picture of the Mississippi’s flag flying at half staff in response to the riot torn city of Oxford, the home of Ole Miss, after Meredith’s successful entrance. These photos created a war like scene, images of tension, unrest, and desperation—again all as a consequence to last ditch efforts to try and maintain segregation and the Southern way of life even though the federal government had already said that change must take place. Only three of the 19 photos were neutral as they were simply headshots of Barnett.

Overall, the media coverage by the Ledger revealed that the paper was definitely against the entrance of Meredith into Ole Miss. This conclusion was drawn from the one sidedness of its news articles as well as the open support of Barnett and states’ rights in its editorials.

*The Clarion Ledger*

*1963 Murder of Medgar Evers.* The Ledger printed 15 news articles, four editorials, and included five photos in their coverage of the murder of Medgar Evers. All 15 news articles had neutrally dominant perspectives, appeared in the front section of the
newspaper, and were less than 500 words in length. All 15 articles headlines were neutral. As for the editorials, three had pro dominant perspectives and one was anti. All four editorials were less than 500 words. Three of the four editorial headlines were neutral, while one was positive. One positive characterization was made towards Evers. All five photos were non-antagonistic.

As previously stated, the Ledger offered several articles about the slain Jackson NAACP leader. Although all of them were neutrally dominant in perspective, they covered several different topics regarding Evers’ murder. The views/comments of city and state leaders such as the Mayor of Jackson and the Governor of Mississippi were printed—both sympathized and criticized the murder. The majority of the other coverage, like many of the other papers in this study followed the investigation of the case closely up until a suspect was arrested for the murder. Thus, there were no standouts or unique stories present and no favor or condemnation towards the murderer or Evers in its news articles.

However, in its first editorial, the Ledger opened up as it called the death of Medgar Evers “most regrettable.” “The shooting of Evers is not representative of White Citizens’ feelings toward the colored citizens of Jackson, said the paper. Such lawlessness must not go unpunished” (“Slaying Here,” 1963, p. 1). Apparently so moved by the murder, the newspaper joined forces with another local newspaper, the Jackson Daily News and offered a $1,000.00 reward for any information leading to the arrest and conviction of the guilty person or persons.

Additionally the editorial, the paper called the murder a “senseless crime” and proclaimed that “no civilized community could allow murder to go unpunished--No life,
White or Colored, is safe otherwise” (“Slaying Here,” 1963, p. 1). In addition to the paper’s criticism and obvious disagreement with the murder of Evers, the Ledger also expressed outrage at the murder for causing yet again more unwanted attention to the state of Mississippi and for providing assistance to Blacks’ civil rights cause:

The brutal slaying is a decided boost for “civil rights” legislation being proposed in Washington. The already feeble “non-violent” movement was losing force and just about to play out entirely here, it seemed. Then suddenly, a key leader is shot to death and the nationwide movement has a tailor made Cause for accelerated fund-raising and volunteer recruitment to carry on the fight in Mississippi.

(Ethridge, 1963, p. 6)

The paper went on to declare that Evers had been a “martyr” to the cause he espoused and that perhaps desperately ruthless forces may have used him as a sacrificial offering to rekindle the flames of unrest and spur their drive for “victory” everywhere (Ethridge, 1963, p. 6). It appears that the paper’s statement was against Blacks and proponents of the civil rights cause. Its accusations stated that the activists used Evers’ murder to enflame the movement. Such a conspiracy goes against the entire ideals of the civil rights movement cause, that the assassination of one of their leaders would be organized and executed went against the movement’s ideals of nonviolence.

After a suspect was found and arrested as a result of the fingerprints found on the rifle at the scene of Evers’ murder, a final Ledger editorial applauded the local law enforcement agency as well as the FBI for their work on the case. “And so it is that we come to congratulate the Jackson Police Department and the FBI for effective work on
the case and for working together” ("Congratulate Police,” 1963, p. 6), stated the paper. The Ledger printed no other editorials regarding the matter.

As for the photogaphical coverage, all of the non-antagonistic photos depicted scenes regarding the investigation of the case as well as Evers’ funeral. Specifically, a photo of where the murder weapon was found was shown along with a picture of the rifle used in the slaying. Another photo showed mourning marchers after Evers’ funeral hand in hand marching in the street close by where his funeral was officiate in the city of Jackson, Mississippi. A final photo depicted a headshot of the suspect charged in Evers’ murder, Byron de La Beckwith. All of the photos were considered to be non-antagonistic as they revealed an act of violence committed against a civil rights activist.

Overall, the media coverage of Evers’ murder by the Ledger was neutral in terms of its news articles. However, the paper expressed its condemnation and disapproval of the murder in its editorials and even applauded law officials for apprehending the accused suspect. At the same time, the paper was not hesitant about insinuating the murder may have been planned and executed by proponents of the civil rights cause. Again, this image propelled by the paper was against the ideals of the movement’s idea of peace and nonviolence.

The Clarion Ledger

1963 March on Washington. Approximately nine articles, two editorials, and one photo detailed the Ledger’s coverage of the March on Washington. All nine editorials had neutrally dominant perspectives, appeared in the front section of the newspaper, and had neutral headlines. Also, eight of the articles were 500 words or less while one was 501-1000 words. Both editorials had anti dominant perspectives and negative headlines.
Additionally, both editorials were 500 words or less. A negative characterization was made towards President John F. Kennedy.

Although the news articles’ language used was neutral in its description of the March, the paper’s selection of certain topics made it appear the paper was only concerned about covering the viewpoints of those who opposed the March and its purpose—to influence civil rights legislation to be passed by Congress. For example, one article featured the comments of former President Harry Truman citing that he said that the proposed civil rights march to Washington was “silly” and made “no sense” (“Truman Says,” 1963, p. 1). Another article revealed the results of a nationwide Gallup Poll which declared that there was a widespread disapproval for Blacks’ D.C. March (“Gallup Poll,” 1963, p. 1). In an article headlined, “Senators Reject Invitations to Participate in March,” one of the Black leaders over the March is criticized and accused of having communist ties. Specifically, the article mentions that Bayard Rustin, deputy coordinator for the March, served for 28 months in prison for evading the draft; was convicted of a sex perversion charge; and belonged to the Young Communist League and attended a Communist Party rally in 1956 (“Senators Reject,” 1963, p. 1). In essence, the words and accusations to discredit the March leader and ultimately the March itself are not those of the *Ledger* but of the Senators. However, the selection of this story which calls into question the character of a vital Black figure in the march along with the other articles which all included negative opinions against the march creates a biasness in the paper’s viewpoint/perspective because only sources who were opponents of the march/integration and the Civil Rights Movement were used to gather information about the march.
So, all the coverage prior to the march provided viewpoints of individuals against the march. Nonetheless, in the article printed immediately after the march, the paper’s headline cited that the demonstration was “orderly” and “quiet” (“Demonstration Orderly,” 1963, p. 1). The article detailed some information about the march citing that many speeches, songs, and spirituals were heard, all in demand that President Kennedy pass the civil rights bill. Interestingly, there was no mention of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech—a speech that was either printed in its entirety or excerpted in all of the other newspapers in this study. Each time the speech was mentioned in the other papers it was referenced as a climax and as a verbal representation of the march’s purpose as well as it was seen as a symbol of the civil rights cause and the hope that Civil Rights legislation would be passed on behalf of Blacks. The omission of the speech combined with the Ledger’s one sided inclusion of only march/civil rights legislation opponents’ views created an opposing viewpoint on behalf of the paper regarding the issue but without the opposing/condemning language.

However, the editorials written by the paper were very clear on the stance against the march. Headlined, “No Guarantee Against Mob Violence,” the first of two Ledger editorials questioned and simultaneously doubted whether or not the March on Washington could truly be a demonstration of peace. “Can Negro Leaders and Black organizations really control the planned “mass march on Washington” August 28, by which demonstrators from every part of the country hope to pressure Congress into enacting President Kennedy’s dictatorial “civil rights” legislation?” (Ethridge, 1963, p. 6), asked the paper. The Ledger also expressed worry that communist agitators would somehow infiltrate the Black ranks and do their best to incite rioting and bloodshed—in
attempt to create unrest and discredit America in the eyes of the world. Thus, the paper had extreme fears and doubts that Black leaders and their proponents would be successful at pulling off “the impossible”—a peaceful march (Ethridge, 1963, p. 6). So confident that the marchers would fail, the editorial suggested that the President order at least one division of troops to be on hand in Washington that day. The Ledger’s reference to President Kennedy as a “dictator” over civil rights legislation acknowledged the paper’s obvious disapproval of the bill and in turn this demonstrated a disapproval of the march itself which was being launched to inspire its approval (Ethridge, 1963, p. 6).

On the day prior to the March on Washington, the Ledger printed an editorial which shifted its focus from discussing the actual March to attacking the purpose for the march—the Civil Rights Act. In the editorial, the paper announces its support for a movement created to defeat President Kennedy’s Civil Rights legislation—Operation Freedom Writers. According to the Ledger, “Mississippians who were members of the organization should write to their friends, relatives and business associates in other areas of the United States to try and enlist their help” (“South Must,” 1964, p. 1). The paper said that the hope of it all would be to let the non-Southerners know that “the proposed Civil Rights tyranny would destroy far more rights than they could allegedly protect and enough non-Southerners could be enlisted to write their senators and congressmen in protest of the Kennedy legislation, it can be defeated” (“South Must,” 1964, p. 1) declared the Ledger.

As for the photographic coverage of the March on Washington, the Ledger only included one photo of discarded signs and other debris littered on the ground in the aftermath of the March. Along with the photo was a small article of less than 50 words
headline, “Washington is Clean Again With Negro Trash Removed.” Of all the photos available to include as a reflection of the massive March, the Ledger selected a picture of all the trash that was left behind as a result of the 200,000 mass of Blacks and Whites. The Ledger was the only newspaper that did not include at least an aerial view of the mass of demonstrators. Perhaps, the paper’s disapproval of the March and disbelief that the event could be anything but peaceful and orderly deterred them from including any photos that would depict the March as being successful of such a feat.

Overall, the Ledger’s news coverage of the March propelled an anti dominant undertone even though the news articles were neutrally dominant in perspective. Additionally, the two anti dominant editorials verbalized essentially what the paper may have been suggesting by its article topic selections of March opponents’ views, which undermined the actual purpose of the March and focused on the what-ifs of an outbreak of violence.

*The Clarion Ledger*

**1963 Birmingham church bombing.** There were 10 articles, one editorial and four photos featured in the Ledger about the Birmingham, Alabama church bombing. Like the majority of its other news articles, the dominant perspective of the articles was neutral. Additionally, all 10 articles appeared in the front section of the newspaper, were 500 words or less, and had neutral headlines. The one editorial found had a pro dominant perspective, was 501-1000 words, and had a positive headline. All four photos had a non-antagonistic sentiment.

As for its articles, the paper’s report included comments of sympathy about the bombing released from Alabama Governor George Wallace. According to the article
Wallace called the bombing, “a tragic event which has saddened the hearts of all Alabamians” (“Four Children,” 1963, p. 1). The governor also declared that every law enforcement agency of the state would be used to apprehend the bombers. Other condolences appeared in the Ledger as “sorrowful” Black leaders and indignant senators appealed for a nationwide day of mourning and protest for the children killed in the church bombing.

In a shift from sympathy articles, the Ledger printed an article which told of Birmingham Blacks’ plan to stage a march on the state capitol in Montgomery as a protest against racial violence in the city. The violence in Birmingham was believed to be incited by the anger over the bombing. Another article along those lines indicated that President Kennedy was to meet with Dr. Martin Luther King among other Black leaders to try and discuss also how to improve race relations in Birmingham in the aftermath of the bombing.

When the funeral services arrived for the four victims, the paper talked about the large number of people at one of the victim’s funeral services. The article was about 100 words. Another small passage was written about the other three teenage Black girls whose funerals were officiated separately. The last neutral article regarding the blast revealed that eight men had been indicted by a jury in Birmingham for the bombing. No language condemning and/or advocating the men, who were all White, some members of the Klu Klux Klan.

In its only editorial, the Ledger blamed Governor George Wallace’s leadership style for the Birmingham tragedy citing that his pattern of opposition had given rabble-rousers including the White Citizens Councils and all Klu Klux Klan members in
Alabama a hunting license for violence. The paper even said that the deaths of the four Black girls would probably hunt him causing him to suffer sleepless nights. The writer of the editorial also indicated that he himself as he was writing the column found it difficult to get out of his mind the mental picture of those four little girls who had gone to church in their neatly ironed White dresses and pigtails tied in ribbons only to have those same dresses crumpled, their bodies bloodied, one with her head blown off, being carried away on stretchers.

The *Ledger* photos of the Birmingham bombing provided pictures of the debris referenced by the paper in its editorial—a picture of a man holding a shoe picked out of the remains of the blast; firemen walking through the debris; a man covering his dusty Black face from the smoke in the air; and grieving relatives on the scene—these were the depictions of the impact of the bombing and they all worked together to create a non-antagonistic sentiment. In essence, the pictures were reflective of violence committed against ordinary Blacks, who were not activists themselves but were members of a church who had held civil rights activities.

Thus, overall, the *Ledger* was neutral in its article coverage and provided a pro-dominant editorial which sympathized with the young victims. The paper even blamed Governor Wallace, a staunch segregationist for inspiring the crime. Recall, the *Ledger* was very much in support of segregationist ideals and maintaining segregation in the South. However, with the murder of these Black girls, the paper seemed taken aback with such violence and sided against the Governor on this incident.
The Clarion Ledger

1964 Freedom summer. There were only two articles printed in the Ledger in regards to Freedom Summer. No editorials or photos were found. Both articles had neutral perspectives and headlines. Additionally, both articles were printed in the front section of the paper, and were 500 words or less.

One of the two articles tells of a letter written to President Lyndon Johnson asking him to send U.S. Marshals to Mississippi during the summer to protect northern college students engaged in civil rights activities in the state (“Ask Lyndon,” 1964, p. 1). The paper made no comments regarding the letter.

Another article details the violence that erupted in Florida and Alabama as demonstrations took place—protest marches against segregation. The article stated that the Blacks were “angry” and began throwing bottles, rocks, and chairs at the officers and that restoration had to be gained with fire hoses and tear gas. When the article told of the violence inflicted by White men and youth, interestingly the White men were not referenced as “angry.” This portrayal of the Black youth as angry perpetuates previous Ledger coverage of Black protestors as “agitators” and as disturbers of the peace. However, no editorial comment was provided to offer more insight into the paper’s particular stance regarding these demonstrators (“Florida Violence,” 1964 p. 1).

The Clarion Ledger

Civil Rights Act of 1964. Eleven articles, two editorials, and one photo detailed the Ledger’s coverage of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. All 11 articles had neutrally dominant perspectives as well as neutral headlines. Additionally, all 11 articles appeared in the front section of the newspaper and were 500 words or less. Both
editorials had anti-dominant perspectives, negative headlines, and were 500 words or less. The single photo found was non-antagonistic in sentiment.

All 11 of the articles printed in the Ledger appeared after the civil rights legislation was signed, none were printed prior. Therefore, the majority of the news coverage was devoted to gathering the varying opinions in regards to the law. One headline read, “Negroes, Whites Across US Hail Rights Bill’s Passing.” The article stated that Black leaders and Whites across the nation generally supported the passage of the Bill including Black organizations, such as CORE, who promised early testing of the bill and most Senate and House leaders, although southerners generally opposed its passing. Additionally, a statement from then President Lyndon B. Johnson justified what the bill would mean to the nation—for Blacks and Whites as he suggested that it would take more than a piece of legislation to change things but that people of both races would have to work together. “We have come now to a kind of testing…We must not fail” (“Negroes, Whites,” 1964, p. 1), stated the President. Other opposing views regarding the bill were also presented by the paper. In one article, Jackson Mayor, Allen Thompson, said that the new civil rights law made the city “sick all over” but urged compliance. “We’ll go along with it, though we don’t like it” (Chaze, 1964, p. 1), said Thompson. However, Mississippi’s Governor Paul Johnson pledged that the new civil rights law would be challenged. In addition to those city leaders, the Ledger included in its pages the Jackson, Mississippi’s White Citizens’ Councils viewpoints regarding the bill. According to the paper, the Council was very much against the bill and was calling upon White Americans “to make known their opposition to the so-called ‘Civil Rights’ act by refusing to eat, swim, or sleep under integrated conditions” (“Jackson CC,” 1964, p. 1).
Another report by the paper regarding a longtime hotel revealed opposition to the bill. In the article, the *Ledger* reported that the Civil Rights Act was blamed for causing one of Jackson’s second largest hotels to close its doors after over 30 years. The *Ledger* did not offer support for or against any group’s and/or individual’s stance of the bill. However, the paper did offer more opinions that were against the law rather than for the law. Thus, their news articles provided an off-balance of viewpoints.

As for the editorials, the *Ledger* seemed very concerned about the act being implemented too quickly and the danger in testing the law too soon. In its initial editorial printed after the passage of the Civil Rights Act, the paper expressed a concern for the demonstrations and testing of the civil rights law that was being planned by Black leaders and organizations. The paper went on to say that there was really no need for the invasion by northern students and other activists due to the passing of the law. The *Ledger* felt that such a move would only incite violence no matter how peacefully the protests were planned to be.

The second editorial further elaborated on the paper’s feelings towards early testing of the law. Specifically, the other editorial proclaimed that time was needed to adjust to the new civil rights legislation and that it was unfair and unjust to not give the South the opportunity to adjust before sending an army of students into Mississippi to test the laws.

As for its photographic coverage, the *Ledger* included only one photo and that was of President Johnson signing the historic legislation into law. Surrounding him were members of the Congress. The photo was non-antagonistic as it symbolized a victory for
Blacks across the nation who had marched and demonstrated on the very steps of Washington to finally see the piece of legislation signed into law.

Overall, the Ledger’s news articles were neutral but a bit unbalanced in terms of the number of opinions presented from the opponents versus the proponents of the Civil Rights Act, meaning there were more negative views than positive views presented. As for its editorials, the paper did not express a blatant disapproval of the Bill but did express concern that the implementation of the bill and testing of the bill would lead to violence, which still was an anti dominant perspective towards the act. This perception by the paper was considered to be anti dominant because it focused on the idea that the Civil Rights Bill would lead to violence, the exact same approach it took each time it covered a march/protest/demonstration by Blacks. The same type of perception was initiated prior to the March on Washington also. It almost seemed that anytime something positive was granted for or towards Blacks, the Ledger found a way to focus on the negative or initiate the negative possibilities surrounding the issue; that is what was achieved by the paper’s two editorials.

*The Clarion Ledger*

1964 Civil Rights workers murdered. Only 10 articles and three photos revealed the Ledger’s news coverage of the murder of three civil rights workers volunteering to help Blacks in Mississippi with voter registration. Much like many of the Ledger’s news articles, all 10 articles had neutral perspectives and neutral headlines and all appeared in the front section of the newspaper. Nine of the 10 articles were 500 words or less while only one was 501-1000 words. All three photos were non-antagonistic in sentiment. There were no editorials printed in regards to the murdered workers.
As previously stated, the neutrally dominant articles provided no language indicating favor or disfavor for the murderer of the workers. The focus of the articles was mainly FBI updates on the ongoing investigation to find out who was behind the murders. J. Edgar Hoover, then United States Attorney General was in charge of the case and reported findings to the President. There were no standout articles outside of that realm. Additionally there were no articles on the funerals of the victims—which were included by many of the other papers in the study. Also, there were no comments condemning or applauding the murder from Blacks or Whites.

As for photos, the three found were coupled together; they were head shots of the three victims. Of course, because the workers were victims of racial violence, their faces were considered non-antagonistic as they probably drew sympathy from those who were made aware of the case and how they had been brutally murdered. No further photos surrounding the investigation were printed.

Thus, the Ledger’s news coverage of the murder of the three civil rights workers was neutral but was lacking in many areas in which the paper had previously reported from when covering the Birmingham Church Bombing and the murder of young Emmett Till. The paper seemed more sympathetic to children being killed than the civil rights workers; their funerals were at least mentioned however brief the articles. Why then were the workers’ not covered? Recall that on several occasions the Ledger disapproved of “outsiders” be they Blacks or Whites who initiated protests/marches/demonstrations citing they only caused chaos to the Southern way of life. The three workers were helping with voter registration in Mississippi and were from up North—obviously the kind of activists the paper did not approve of. Perhaps this influenced the lack of
coverage of the murdered workers’ funeral and the exclusion of opinions from mourners and other leaders.

*Jackson Advocate*

1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education.* There were a total of 13 items printed by the *Advocate* about the Supreme Court’s decision to outlaw segregation. Eleven of the items were news articles, only two were editorials. No photos were found. In addition to the perspectives of the *Advocate’s* news coverage, headlines, placement and article length were examined. Results reveal that all headlines were neutral and that most news items were found on the front page. The length of the articles averaged between 500 to a 1000 words. Three articles had less than 500 words. Only one article was 2,000 plus words. Both editorials had pro dominant perspectives, were less than 500 words, with neutral headlines.

All 10 of the news articles printed by the *Advocate* regarding the Brown vs. Board of Education decision were neutral. Most of the coverage seemed to detail the specifics of what the court’s decision meant in laymen terms. One article offered the actual text of the decision. Other articles described the reactions of various state and school officials, Black leaders and educators, as well as ordinary citizens. One article explored the role played by Thurgood Marshall, leading lawyer for the NAACP, in the case. Thus, the *Advocate* merely reported on the proceedings before and after the court decision and the initial responses of the surrounding community. According to the examination of the language of the articles, no stance was taken in favor or against the court’s decision in the articles printed. However, the Jackson Advocate’s selection of integrationist—only
opinions from citizens and leaders gave a one sidedness to their article reporting. Selection of those types of sources made the paper’s editorial stance unsurprising.

Throughout its two editorials, the Advocate presented a strong support for the decision by the Court to integrate public schools, “…the Supreme Court decision is one of the best things that could have happened for the future of Mississippi and its people” (“Segregation Decision,” 1954, p. 4). The editorial also criticizes the South for their “Unwritten Compromise” that allowed them to use its “extra-legal” segregation laws, to disenfranchise its Black citizens and subdue them into submission by Ku Klux Klan terror, night riders. The editorial refers to the unwritten compromise a monstrous ill effect on the development of Southern life and progress. “If an equal school, both in curricular and surroundings could be provided to Black communities, there would be no rush for Negro parents to send their children to the so-called White schools just to have their children going to school with White folks” (“Segregation Decision,” 1954, p. 4). Thus, the Advocate seems to believe it was necessary for this decision to be passed by the courts for the South and Blacks to progress. This belief was further supported by the Advocate’s second editorial in support of Mississippi Governor White’s handling of the court’s decision. Renown as a staunch segregationist, Governor White refrained from his usual rhetoric against integration and had little to no comment about the decision. The Advocate points out this in its editorial:

The fact that Governor White has refrained from the old line of appealing to the emotions so easily aroused in dealing with questions regarding Black -White relations is readily apparent to every intelligent observer in the state…Congratulations for the manner in which he has approached the subject.
This is a reflection of every intelligent Black citizen, and every other intelligent
citizen of the state. (“Governor White,” 1954, p. 4)

In an editorial cartoon printed before the decision was handed down by the
Supreme Court, the Advocate offered its support for desegregation and lack of support for
another governor’s stance on segregation in an editorial cartoon with the heading, “Is this
the plan to stop integration in the schools.” The cartoon is a depiction of the Governor of
Georgia, Talmadge and his stance against integration. Talmadge is standing in front of
the mirror looking at himself. However, instead of his own reflection appearing in the
mirror, he sees Adolf Hitler. Additionally, there is a word written on the pants leg of
Talmadge, “Dictatorship” (p. 4). Thus, the cartoon is comparing Talmadge’s resistance
to integration to a dictatorship. In another article, which offered a neutral perspective, the
newspaper reported Talmadge’s comments about the Supreme Court’s decision.
Talmadge expressed that he would “close down public schools before allowing Whites
and Blacks to go to school together. Georgians will not tolerate the mixing of the races in
public schools or any of its public, tax supported institutions” (“Decision Reaction,”
1954, p. 1). The printing of this editorial cartoon could be viewed as the Advocate’s
response to Talmadge’s comments—although, within the articles there was no open
criticism of Talmadge’s stance.

Thus, overall, the Advocate’s coverage of the Brown decision included very
neutral articles. However, their editorial views were very much in support of the Brown
decision.


*Jackson Advocate*

1955 Rosa Parks. Only two articles were printed during the specified time frame of analysis regarding Rosa Parks. The articles mentioned Parks as the catalyst to the boycott. However, the articles were not focused on reporting about Parks refusal to move to the back of the bus and/or her arrest. Since the articles did reference Parks, they were included in the analysis. Both articles offered neutral perspectives and headlines. With less than 500 words, neither article was lengthy. Yet, both were found on the front page of their respective editions.

The articles gave the specifics of what Blacks were demanding in their boycott: 1) fair treatment by bus operators on the local buses, 2) a first come, first served seating arrangement and the employment of Black bus drivers on buses going to areas heavily populated by Black citizens. The articles’ reference to Parks indicates her connection with the Montgomery boycott, “city buses have been boycotted since Dec. 5 when Blacks began demonstrations against the arrest and conviction of a Negro seamstress who refused to move to a seat in the rear of the bus” (“Bus Strike,” 1955, p. 1).

The *Advocate* does not show favor or support for Mrs. Parks’ individual protest nor does it express its concurrence with the Montgomery boycott and its goals in either of the two articles analyzed.

*Jackson Advocate*

1955 Murder of Emmet Till. There were a total of 24 items printed by the *Advocate* about the murder of Emmet Till. Seventeen of the items were news articles, five were editorials, and two were photos. Sixteen of the articles had neutral perspectives and one was anti. Thirteen of the articles were placed on the front page, three in the
middle, and one in the back of the paper. As for their headlines, all were neutral except one. Twelve articles were 500 words or less, three were 501-1000 words, and two were between 1501—2000 words. Three of the editorials had pro perspectives, one was anti, and one was neutral. Additionally all five editorial headlines were neutral and were less than 500 words. Both photos revealed neutral sentiments.

As previously stated, there were 17 articles printed about the murder of Emmet Till and the trial of his alleged murders. Sixteen articles had neutral perspectives and only one was anti. The content of the neutral articles detailed the time leading up to the Till trial proceedings and the trial itself. The headlines during this period were a strong indication of topics discussed, “Indict two for murder in Till slaying,” “Prosecution may not ask death penalty in Till slaying,” “Mother of Till boy still in doubt about attending trial,” and “United States Department of justice official tells NAACP group federal government has no jurisdiction in Till kidnap murder case.” Each of those articles and others presented were like investigative pieces gathering information from witnesses, and the police department about the circumstances leading to the trial such as the kidnapping of Till from his Uncle Mose Wright’s home in the middle of the night. Some of the articles also detailed how the Chicago born Till came to arrive in Mississippi to begin with only to meet his fate for allegedly “wolf-whistling” at a White woman.

There were no photos printed together with any of the news articles. However, there were two photos that appeared separately. These photos were neutral and were pictures of courtroom scenes from the Till trial. Specifically, there was a picture of Moses Wright and Till’s cousins, called to testify in the trial, sitting awaiting their turn on
the stand. In the other photo, Till’s mother, Mamie Bradley, converses with the first Black elected congressman, Charles Diggs, during a court recess.

Although the expressions made by some of the newsmakers in the stories could be said to support the ideals of the CRM and condemn the Till murder, these expressions were not direct expressions of the Advocate. Thus, the newspaper reported the happenings of the moment without showing support for or against the trial of acquittal of two White men for allegedly killing a young Black boy. However, the editorials written by the Advocate demonstrated a different perspective.

In a September 10, 1955 article, the Advocate reprinted an editorial made by the White daily newspaper, the Atlanta Constitution. The Advocate referenced the Atlanta Constitution as “one of the great among the greatest of White southern daily newspapers,” and went on to print several quotes from the Constitution regarding the murder. One of the quotes asserted,

The brutal murder is grist in the mill of those who picture the entire South as a region of violence. It assists the communist propagandist. It delivers us into the hands of our enemies. Unless the officials of Mississippi vigorously follow up this murder and bring the guilty to justice, all of us will be smeared by it.

(“Lynch-Murder,” 1955, p. 1)

Although the Advocate reprinted the Constitution’s editorial, the paper did not give comment about the piece. Nonetheless, reprinting of an editorial written by another paper was a strong indication of its salience. Indeed the Advocate found it noteworthy to point out the condemnation of this act of violence given by the most prestigious of White newspapers.
In a neutrally written editorial, the Advocate also reprinted the comments of William Faulkner, a famous Mississippi novelist and Nobel Prize winner, written in Rome, Italy for the United Press about the Till slaying. In the editorial Faulkner calls the Till slaying,

A test of the survival of the White man and the United States…Perhaps the purpose of this sorry and tragic error committed in my native Mississippi by two White adults on an afflicted Negro child is to prove to us whether or not we deserve to survive… if we in America have reached that point in our desperate culture when we must murder children, no matter for what reason, or what color, we do not deserve to survive and probably will not. (“Mississippi Novelist,” 1955, p. 2)

The Advocate made no comment regarding Faulkner’s statement.

In its next editorial entitled “On the Emmet Till Incident,” the Advocate presents its own position regarding the murder without stepping behind the comments of another asserting that the “disheartening” murder of this young boy may very well influence whether or not Blacks move forward with or without the friendship and goodwill of Whites (1955, p. 4). Additionally, the editorial clearly acknowledged that the murder of Till added to the already stressed relations between Blacks and Whites but that the incident added more of a reason for Blacks and Whites to continue to work together for the “preservation and continuance of interracial goodwill in the state” (1955, p. 4).

In response to a Black physician who took out advertisements in leading magazine and newspapers across the nation regarding the Till murder, the Advocate dismissed his statement, “If this slaughtering of Negroes is allowed to continue,
Mississippi will have a civil war. Negroes are going to take only so much…” (“Till Incident,” 1955, p. 4). The paper also called some of the news reporting by some Black publications “quite flamboyant” and “full of declarations calculated more to rally indifferent Negroes than to calm troubled waters” (“Till Incident,” 1955, p. 4).

The editorial goes on to criticize the comments made by Roy Wilkins, NAACP Executive Secretary. Although Wilkins exact comments are not printed in this specific editorial, they were found in a news article printed on the same date:

It would appear from this lynching that the state of Mississippi has decided to maintain White supremacy by murdering children. The killers of the boy felt free to lynch him because there is in the entire state no restraining influence of decency, not in the state capital, among the daily newspapers, the clergy nor any segment of the so called better citizens. (“Murder Case,” 1955, p. 1)

In its editorial, the Advocate calls Wilkins comments, “bitter in regard to the people of Mississippi” and probably “just an emotional response to the shock of the incident” (“Till Incident,” 1955, p. 4). In further response to the comments, the editorial says:

Not withstanding Wilkins statement, the Negro who lives in Mississippi knows that there are thousands of fine White people in the state who whole-heartedly condemn the slaying of the Till boy, who still are friendly towards the Blacks’ desire and right to equality under the law, while at the same time totally rejecting the NAACP drive for integration of the races in the state. (“Till Incident,” 1955, p. 4)

Thus, the editorial does condemn the slaying of young Till, however, it disagrees that this is an ongoing act of violence that happens on a consistent basis in Mississippi and
stresses the unfairness of such a belief. Finally, it also points out that despite what race
one is and their stance on Blacks fight for equality, this act of violence “touches at the
very heart of everyone” (“Till Incident,” 1955, p. 4).

In another editorial written by The New York Times but reprinted in the Advocate, the paper agrees with the northern paper’s comments about the Till incident and the
indictment (by an all-White jury) brought against his alleged killers and responds:

Over a long term of years Mississippi stood at the head of the shameful list of the
states in which lynchings had occurred. There are few or no lynchings now in any
state in an ordinary year. The prompt action of the grand jury in the Till case
indicates that the people of contemporary Mississippi are against this form of
murder as against other forms of murder. (“Indictment Mississippi,” 1955, p. 4)
The Advocate’s reprinting of this article continues with their attempt to note that the Till
murder does not categorize what Mississippi race relations are about but that Mississippi
is a place where Blacks are moving towards racial progress rather than following in its
notorious history as lynch city.

In an editorial written immediately after the return of a “not guilty” verdict by the
all White jury in the Till trial, The Advocate doesn’t withdraw its comments declaring
that the times and the people of Mississippi have changed although, the all White jury
freeing Whites whom had exuded violence against a Black was very much in keeping
with the times of old. However, the paper does point out that the “not guilty” verdict did
not give way to “justice, morality, right, nor Christianity” (“Till Case,” 1955, p. 4). Thus,
the paper didn’t agree with the verdict but felt, “despite the not guilty verdict, the lack of
justice may adversely help rather than hurt the Negroes in Mississippi” (“Till Case,”
Those feelings by the Advocate supposes that because the eyes of the world had witnessed the Till incident and how Mississippi justice had responded, this drew sympathy to the Blacks’ cause and may actually fuel their fight for equality.

Thus, overall, the coverage by the Advocate presented the murder/trial of Till from a neutral perspective in its articles, but from a pro dominant perspective within its editorials. Rather than lean on the pattern of the South in its’ dealing with past crimes committed against Blacks at the hands of Whites, the paper focuses totally on the trial at hand but does acknowledge that justice had not been achieved with the not guilty verdict.

Jackson Advocate

1956 Desegregation of Alabama buses. Only one article was printed during the selected time frame by the Advocate regarding the decision handed down by the Supreme Court, which struck down Alabama law requiring racial segregation on interstate buses. The headline was neutral and no pictures accompanied the article. The newspaper was unbiased in its reporting of the court’s decision, showing no favor or dislike at all in its 75 word explanation, “Today’s brief order upheld the June 5 decision of a special three-judge federal panel in Montgomery that bus segregation requirements of both the city and the state are unconstitutional” (“Supreme Court,” 1956, p. 1), reported the Advocate. No other articles were printed to capture public opinion regarding the matter.

Jackson Advocate

1957 Little Rock Nine. There were seven Advocate articles and three editorials that depicted the forced integration of the Little Rock Nine. All seven articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. Also, all seven articles were 500 words or less and appeared in the front section of the newspaper. As for the editorials, all
three had pro dominant perspectives but neutral headlines. Two editorials were 500 words or less while the other one was 501-1000 words. Nophotographical coverage was found.

The neutrally dominant articles presented by the Advocate avoided presenting a step-by-step unfolding of the events in Little Rock. Instead, the paper printed a handful of articles with newsmakers in opposition to Faubus’ stance against the federal government. Specifically, there were articles depicting the pleading of Clergy for order in Arkansas as well as an article or two stating that the World position regarding the saga was that the integration crisis was hurting America’s stand in the world. Few articles gave attention to the back and forth standoff between Faubus and President Eisenhower. Perhaps avoidance of these viewpoints was an effort by the paper to downplay the tensions created by the saga. Additionally, unlike other papers in this study the Advocate also avoided including any photos depicting the standoff perhaps for the same reasons.

Despite its avoidance of the issue of violence and racial unrest in Little Rock, together all three Advocate editorials spoke out against the until then unspoken about violence and asserted that the sisterly state of Mississippi should take heed from the tensions in Little Rock and do everything within its power to avoid unrest between its own people both Blacks and Whites. The paper uses its editorials to acknowledge that Mississippi also has a similar problem with inequality in all aspects of the Black life just as in Little Rock but that the state should seek to maintain an atmosphere of goodwill and in such an atmosphere be ready to join with responsible White people in seeking a less painful solution to the same problem in the state. The paper went on to point out that the
mere fact that the sending of federal troops was a necessary action for the President to
take was a clear indication of stressed relations in the South.

At all costs, the Advocate editorials asserted that Southerners could not afford to
uphold lawlessness and work in agreement with the aims of the mob. In further
inadvertent condemnation of Faubus’ defiance of the federal government, the Advocate
also pointed out that “hate solves nothing and resorting to lawlessness is a detour from
the road to just settlements” (“No Cause,” 1956, p. 4). In essence, avoidance of violence
and abiding by the law was the approach the paper felt was most appropriate to take for
Faubus as well as the state of Mississippi, if faced with the same predicament. Of course,
in 1962, the state of Mississippi would undergo a very similar incident of rebellion
against integration at the University of Mississippi.

So, overall, the Advocate’s news articles were neutral in accordance with the
language used to describe the incident in Little Rock. However, there was some biasness
in terms of the salient perspectives which emerged in its articles. Finally, in its editorials,
the paper was adamant that Mississippi should take a lesson from the state and avoid such
violence and tension at all costs if placed in the same situation.

Jackson Advocate

1958 Stabbing of Dr. King. Four articles were printed about the stabbing of Dr.
Martin Luther King, Jr., prominent civil rights leader/activist. All of the articles had
neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. All of the articles were printed on
the front page. The length of the articles were half and half—two were less than 500
words and two were between 501-1000 words. No editorials or photos were included by
the Advocate.
The neutrally written content of the four articles only provided details as to what happened to Dr. King and how he was stabbed by a possible mentally ill woman, Izola Ware Curry, who accused him of being a “communist” (“King’s Attacker,” 1958, p. 6). The Advocate did not glorify or praise Dr. King nor did it condemn or glorify the stabbing of the civil rights leader. Additionally, the paper did not entertain the accusations from Curry that King was a communist—an important point to note since the literature review proclaimed that the Black newspaper might have been a mouthpiece for the Jackson, Mississippi’s White Citizens’ Council. The opportunity to tap in on those accusations would have been a perfect opportunity for the paper to do so if indeed it chose to speak out on the issue. However, the paper did not as it practiced objectivity instead.

Jackson Advocate

1960 Sit-in demonstrations. Two articles were found for this period. Both had neutrally dominant perspectives with neutral headlines and were less than 500 words. Additionally, both articles were found on the front page of their prospective edition. There were no editorials or photos printed.

Once again, the Advocate did not speak out in favor or against the sit-in in either of the articles. Additionally, there were no editorials printed expressing the point of view of the paper regarding the sit-ins. Content of the articles merely revealed that a store in Greensboro, North Carolina, called F.W. Woolworth Co., was the scene of a week-long protest by Black students seeking an end to segregated lunch facilities. The paper did not provide support for or against the demonstrators nor their purpose.
1961 Freedom riders. There were six articles printed about the Freedom Riders. No editorials or photos were found. Of the six articles printed, five offered neutral perspectives and one was anti. Also a negative portrayal of the Freedom Riders was described in the anti perspective article. All six articles were placed on the front page, were less than 500 words, and had neutral headlines.

Interestingly, there were no photos that accompanied the articles even though there were images available of the fire damage done to the bus. Other papers included in this study carried at least those photos as well as pictures of those who attacked the Freedom Riders. Although it didn’t carry photos of the bus or its’ battered and bruised riders, in one article, the Advocate did describe some of the violence that took place, “during the violence in Alabama, a bus in which the group was riding was set afire and destroyed, one Negro and several White members of the group were badly beaten” (“Freedom Rider,” 1961, p. 1). The paper made no comment about the acts of violence committed against the Black Riders.

However, in another article headlined, “King Announces ‘Freedom Riders’ to Continue,” the article offers its perspective about the Freedom Riders group:

With the eyes of the nation turned anxiously toward this riot torn city and the communist propaganda machine taking every advantage of the opportunity to discredit the nation in the eyes of the world, a group of Black leaders said here Tuesday that the Freedom Riders, which brought about the south’s most serious race rioting in many years and left some 20 persons hurt…and brought some 600
National Guard troops and a declaration of martial law by the Governor, should and must continue. (1961, p.1)

Analysis of that statement reveals that the Advocate saw the Freedom Riders as outside agitators causing trouble to already stressed race relations. Additionally, the article called the leaders behind the Freedom Riders “communists” asserting they were seeking any means necessary to discredit the national image of the United States to the rest of the world by hastening such riots.

Thus, overall, the Advocate presented its news article coverage of the Freedom Riders from a neutral perspective. However, as the only newspaper that did not provide any editorial viewpoint on the event, one can only make assumptions as to why no comments were made. In one article, the Advocate also made it perfectly clear that they felt the Freedom Riders had served as catalyst for the violence inflicted upon them. If the paper viewed the Riders as such, perhaps exclusion from photographic coverage of the matter as well as editorial comment lessened the attention on what the paper had already referenced in its one anti dominant article as a “means to discredit” the South (“King Announces,” 1961, p. 1).

Jackson Advocate

1962 James Meredith enters all-White Ole Miss. 10 articles and two editorials were printed by the Advocate in regards to the forced integration of Meredith into the all White Ole Miss. Unlike, the other papers in this study, absolutely no photos depicted the happenings of this event. All 10 articles held neutrally dominant perspectives as well as neutral headlines. Additionally, all 10 articles were 500 words or less and appeared in the front section of the newspaper. All article references made to Meredith were neutral.
As for the editorials, both had pro dominant perspectives but neutral headlines. In regards to editorial length, one was 500 words or less and the other one was 501-1000 words. Both editorials appeared in its regularly placed section.

The neutrally dominant articles of the *Advocate* regarding Meredith’s entrance into Ole Miss offered no language that distinctively supported or condemned the former Jackson State College student’s efforts. He was not referenced as a hero, an instigator, or any such title as given by some other papers in this study. The only indication of biasness in the *Advocate*’s coverage was its inclusion of only the opinions of officials and/or Black leaders in favor of Meredith’s efforts and the constitutional rights of his admittance.

For example, in one article written about the newspaper—*Atlanta Constitution*’s famed editor and publisher, Ralph McGill, the *Advocate* chooses to tell about how McGill blamed the power structure in Mississippi for the crisis, racial tension and the clash of federal and state power over the enrollment of Meredith. The power structure, according to McGill, included the editors of leading newspapers, leading White ministers, political leaders, and leading businessmen. The *Constitution* editor believed that with greater efforts, the leaders could have brought about better race relations and greater justice for Blacks in the state and the crisis might have been avoided. Although the *Advocate* printed McGill’s comments, the paper made no comment. Yet, again the continued perpetuation of only favorable perspectives of newsmakers turned out to be the salience of the *Advocate*’s coverage of the entire Meredith event—which showed some biasness by the paper.

The majority of the other articles included a presentation of the international perception of other countries regarding the Oxford, Mississippi saga and other positive
comments from the NAACP, and other leading newspaper editors in the state. In its respective article, all of the international opinions included by the Advocate condemned the state’s opposition to the federal government and referenced the racial tensions as “sad” (“Meredith Crisis,” 1962, p. 1). In a separate article, the NAACP called Meredith’s case absolutely worth the $30,000 that had been invested into it and called for more support from the community to offset costs. “Freedom is not free...We must work and pay for it” (“Meredith Cost,” 1962, p. 1), the Advocate reported Aaron Henry, state president of the NAACP as saying. Finally, Hodding Carter, editor and outspoken critic of racial prejudice of Greenville newspaper, Mississippi’s Delta Democrat Times, referred to the Meredith incident as “the turning point in the history of the South” (“Meredith Cost,” 1962, p. 1). Again, no comments were made by the Advocate regarding the newsmakers’ comments included in its paper. Only an assumption can be made that the inclusion of so many favorable viewpoints regarding Meredith’s entrance into Ole Miss may have been the biased opinion shared by the paper itself. However, the paper would offer certainty of its stance in its news editorials.

In regards to the two pro dominant Advocate editorials, one was written directly from the perspective of the Advocate and the other was the reprint of an editorial written by another media publication, The Christian Science Monitor. Although, the Advocate did not write the editorial, the inclusion of the piece in its normal position of self opinion was concluded to be a shared opinion of the Advocate’s.

In the first editorial entitled, “The Ole Miss Crisis and History’s Challenge to Mississippi Negroes,” the paper warned against the repetition of history. Specifically, it pointed out that after the Post Reconstruction of the South (some 10 years after the Civil
War had been fought and lost by the South, federal troops were also sent to the South just as was being done in the Meredith case. The result of the troops then being sent to the South to safeguard Black freedoms and protect the newly emancipated Black slaves was a violent one. The Advocate asserted that people from the North who really didn’t care about the situation of Blacks came to instigate the situation. Ultimately, according to the paper, the violent actions of the Blacks during that era saw the removal of troops made and brought about the “ill handicaps of segregation and discrimination” (“Ole Miss,” 1962, p. 6). Thus, the paper said that Blacks could not react the same way following the removal of troops and conduct themselves in a violent manner in attitude or relations with their White neighbors. So, once again the paper urged avoidance of violence in yet another Civil Rights Movement event and expressed its fear that violence would be a setback for Blacks’ progression in the South.

In its second editorial, taken from the Christian Science Monitor, written in the midst of the unfolding of the Meredith saga before he was finally escorted into the university, the editorial asserts that the constitution would emerge from the tragic happenings in Mississippi stronger than ever. The Monitor also stated that the showdown between the federal and state government had to happen in order for the progression of the ideals of the constitution to take place. “Pressure and persuasion, trends of public opinion, court decisions, and actions by the administrative branch of government all help to influence the standoff” (“Pressure Governor,” 1962, p. 4), proclaimed the editorial. Thus, the perspective of the editorial was very much in favor of the federal government winning the standoff and the upholding of the constitution in the matter. If this perspective can be shared by the Advocate, which it is equated as such due to its
placement in its usual editorial section, then the paper’s stance was also pro dominant about the matter.

As stated, unlike other newspapers in this study, no photographic coverage was included by the Advocate depicting the protestors blocking Meredith’s entrance nor was there any shots taken of his victorious entrance into Ole Miss or the riots that ensued. An absence of photos depicting the riots and the tension was not surprising considering the papers stance against any sort of violence be it on the part of Black protestors or Whites. Additionally, during some other time periods of their coverage of racially tense protests, the paper chose not to include any photos. The assumed reason for this lack of photographic coverage is that the Advocate was attempting to avoid the visual representation of the story for fear that certain images of violence may stir further unrest and tensions in the city of Jackson as well as other places in Mississippi.

Overall, the Advocate was neutral in its presentation of its news articles but included some one sided opinions regarding Meredith’s efforts and final admittance into Ole Miss. However, the paper was totally clear in its editorials as it acknowledged through its own words and the words of another newspaper that the entrance of Meredith was confirmation of the constitution and its meaning but warned that violence should not erupt once the troops were removed from Oxford.

Jackson Advocate

1963 Murder of Medgar Evers. There were a total of six items printed about the murder of Medgar Evers. Five items were articles and one was an editorial. Three articles had a pro perspective while two were neutral. Four of the articles were less than 500 words while one was 1001-1500 words in length. All articles appeared in the front
section of the newspaper and all four offered positive character portrayals of Evers. Three of the article headlines were neutral, one was positive, and one was negative. As for the editorial, its dominant perspective was pro, it was less than 500 words, and had a neutral headline. There were no photos found during this time period.

As for the articles that offered a neutral dominant perspective, their content mostly presented information about the police investigation surrounding the assassination and efforts to find Evers’ killer and the announcement that Evers’ brother Charles would be his successor (secretary of the NAACP).

The three pro dominant perspective articles asserted that in light of Evers’ assassination, interracial cooperation and peace between Blacks and Whites should be practiced. Although urging peaceful relations, the newspaper however, openly disagreed that the march/demonstrations that took place on the day of Evers’ funeral was their idea of peace. In an article entitled, *Rowdy Demonstrations Mar the Solemn Funeral Rites for Medgar Evers*, the Advocate offers specific details of policeman allegedly being hit by flying bottles and bricks thrown at them by marchers, specifically—Black ministers, representatives of the Justice Department, and newsmen. According to the Advocate, such rowdy demonstrations did little to uplift relations and truly blemished a day meant to recognize “one of the outstanding heroes of the nation” (“Rowdy Demonstrations,” 1963, p. 4). The Advocate seemed to favor the works of Evers throughout its articles decorating him, “the leader of the drive for Negro civil rights in Mississippi where he heroically presented the case for Negro rights at every opportunity his life being snuffed out by a hidden assailant as he returned home…from a civil rights rally” (“Rowdy Demonstrations,” 1963, p. 4).
The one editorial printed by the Advocate regarding the murder of Evers had a predominant perspective but offered a neutral portrayal of Evers. With only a single reference to the slaying of Medgar Evers, the editorial is an effort to use the assassination of the NAACP leader as a catalyst to begin working on the broken relations between Blacks and Whites in Mississippi. Entitled “Mississippi and Mississippians as History Repeats Itself,” the editorial states:

We think the time has come for the responsible White and Black citizens of the state to find the courage and spirit to link ourselves together as Mississippians and as American citizens to begin working towards a new era of inter-racial progress and goodwill; acting not because of the prodding of any kind of civil rights organization; or because of any kind of threatened or actual demonstrations; but because of a new vision of the future; a new kind of magnanimity, and a new purpose toward inter-racial cooperation. (1963, p. 4)

In essence the editorial supported the ideals of the civil rights movement of peace and unity among the Black and White race. It pointed towards the assassination of Evers as more of a reason to strive towards unifying Mississippi across the boundaries of race.

Thus, overall, the Advocate’s coverage seemed a call for peace despite the murder of Evers. The paper strongly believed that retaliation/violence was not the answer to helping Black/White relations, which had already taken so many blows.

Jackson Advocate

1963 March on Washington. A total of 14 items were printed about the March on Washington. 12 of the 14 items were news articles and two were editorials. The dominant perspectives of the news articles were all neutral. The two editorials’ dominant
perspectives were split, one was pro and the other was anti. Most articles were printed on the front page, 11 to be exact. Only one article appeared in the middle of the newspaper. 11 of the articles were 500 words or less. Only one article was 501-1000 words. Most of the headlines were neutral. However, there was one positive editorial headline and one negative news article headline. There was at least four times in which a March leader was specifically focused on in the articles. Only one instance revealed a March leader in a negative way, and the other three had neutral characterizations. Interestingly, there were no photos printed by the Advocate regarding the March. It was the only paper in the study that did not carry a single photo.

The neutrally dominant perspectives of the articles mostly examined the specific details about the March such as the date and time of the march, some names of speakers who would be presenting, the availability of transportation of March participants from all across the nation. Some of the neutral articles also suggested tips that participants should follow to avoid heat exhaustion. With all of the information provided for March participants, the Advocate did not make any comments regarding the plans and/or schedule of events.

Recall, the dominant perspectives of the editorials were split—one was pro and the other was anti. The anti editorial, simply entitled “The March on Washington,” questioned the motivation of the March and whether it will have a positive affect on Congress to pass a civil rights law giving equality to Blacks. Additionally, the editorial pointed out that the Advocate along with two other leading Black newspapers, including the Atlanta Daily World and the Pittsburg Courier held a concern over the breakout of
violence during the March. The *Advocate* goes on to make a stronger claim for its opposition to the March and most demonstrations:

Our opposition to all kinds of demonstrations and marches from their very first beginning as a means of obtaining Black rights primarily for the reason, that is now becoming daily increasingly evident, that they prevent, rather than help, the development of public opinion, and public support, in the White community where the real power lies, in support of the Negro cause. Having said that, it is hardly necessary for us to state here our wholehearted opposition to the March on Washington. (“March Washington,” 1963, p.4)

In essence, this editorial was not in support of the March because it felt there would be an outbreak of violence that would emerge (as in many of the other demonstrations) and such violence would be a distraction away from the ultimate cause and may set the progress of Blacks backwards instead of forward. That editorial was printed four days prior to the March on Washington which took place on August 28, 1963.

The next and only editorial printed about the March on Washington projected a different and more positive perspective. Entitled, “A March of Self-Respect,” this editorial praised the March for eluding violence and disruption and maintaining peace:

The organizers of the March, backed by the cooperation of the Washington police force, deserve great credit for having maintained order and dignity throughout an affair charged with dangerous emotional possibilities…the fact that so many turned out, some covering considerable distances, has a significance that will long be appreciated by Negroes and most somewhat thoughtful White people. (1963, p. 4)
The editorial went on to express that the March was good for the self-respect of Blacks. Because of the March, the editorial proclaimed, Blacks were able to verbalize their unhappiness with the progress of Blacks and express they were no longer content with being inferior.

Finally, the pro perspective editorial acknowledged that although marchers had returned home and the problems addressed were still basically untouched, the March provided a “…quiet persuasion that America cannot afford to ignore the talents or the feelings of any within its bounds” (“March Respect,” 1963, p. 4).

In regards to characterization portrayals—Bayard Rustin, selected by March leader, A. Phillip Randolph to plan, organize, and direct the March on Washington was negatively portrayed by the Advocate. The news article referenced him as a “former communist” and as a “militant pacifist” (“Former Communist,” 1963, p. 1). Also, the article asserted that Rustin was “certainly controversial and an agitator” (p. 1). This negative focus on Rustin was a distraction and contradiction from the ideals of the March.

The negative portrayal of Rustin seemed to go along with the Advocate’s anti editorial which boasted a predisposed belief that the March would be violent like other protests/demonstrations of the past. It is also important to note the print date of the anti editorial and the article with a negative portrayal of Rustin were the same, four days prior to the March. However, as explained in the examination of the editorial, the Advocate expressed such a negative viewpoint because it was afraid violence would erupt at the March. After the peaceful demonstration, the newspaper failed to specifically retract its
statement about Rustin, but did praise the leaders of the march for a job well done. In its praise of the leaders, it did not again mention Rustin separately or in a negative way.

So, overall, the Advocate’s coverage of the March was neutral in terms of its articles. However, in its two editorials, the paper was a bit apprehensive about supporting the March because of its fear that violence may erupt. Nonetheless, when the March was successfully peaceful and orderly, the paper jumped on the bandwagon and submitted its support towards it and what had been accomplished by the demonstrators as well as the Black leaders. As for the lack of photographic coverage by the Advocate, the effort to exclude even the one photo (carried by all papers) showing the massive number of protestors in front of the Lincoln Memorial, only more assumptions can be made. Since the paper was always about not aggravating the already tense relations between Blacks and Whites in the South, perhaps the avoidance of printing photos regarding the success of the March was to avoid giving a slap in the face to those in opposition to marches/demonstrations of any kind by Blacks who said the March would be unruly and disruptive.

Jackson Advocate

1963 Birmingham church bomb. Only three items were printed regarding the Birmingham Church Bomb in Birmingham, Alabama. Two were news articles and one was an editorial. Neutrally dominant perspectives emerged from the two articles while an anti perspective seemed to drive the editorial. Both news articles were found on the front page and were 501-1000 words in length. Both news article and editorial headlines were neutral. The one editorial printed was less than 500 words and provided a negative characterization of Black leaders.
The dominant subject matter of the two news articles focused by and large on the details of the bombing such as the location, the names of victims, the reactions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., President Kennedy, and Alabama Governor George Wallace. Although the Advocate included some strong comments from Dr. King, who blamed Governor Wallace for the bombing, “the blood of four little children is on your hands. Your irresponsible and misguided actions have created in Birmingham and Alabama the atmosphere that has induced continued violence and now murder,” the newspaper offered no response to King’s comments, at least not in this news article.

However, in the editorial headlined, “A Look at the Recent Birmingham Church Bombing,” the Advocate does openly express its disapproval of Black race leaders. The anti editorial asserted that:

The tragedy of the Birmingham Bombing will prove to be just the beginning of sorrow for Negroes throughout the south particularly if the Negro church members of the south, continue to allow their preachers to use these churches as meeting places for civil rights crusaders/leaders, and centers for planning boycotts, sit-ins, marches, and other forms of public demonstrations. (1963, p. 4)

Thus, the Advocate blamed Black leaders use of the bombed church as a planning ground as the motivation for the bombing. Furthermore, the newspaper declared that the NAACP’s demand for integration rather than separate but equal schools caused extra tension to an already racially stressed situation in the south and specifically in Birmingham, Alabama. So Black leaders such as Dr. King blamed the racist authority of Governor Wallace for the bombing but the Advocate blamed the Black leaders and their overly zealous need for integration. Such perspective by the Advocate reveals its support
for the civil rights movement but not necessarily its means to achievement of full citizenship.

Jackson Advocate

1964 Freedom summer. Two items—one news article and one editorial, were found on the subject of the 1964 Freedom Summer. There were no photos found. In regards to frequency, the article was less than 500 words and appeared in the front section of the newspaper. Overall, a neutrally dominant perspective and headline materialized from the news article. However, an anti dominant perspective emerged from the editorial, which was 501-1000 words, with a neutral headline.

The one news article interviewed several participants and asked why they were intent on coming to Mississippi to conduct voter registration drives and classes. The article also sarcastically stated about the students, “they felt they were about to perform a service to others and none seemed to be intimidated by the disappearance of three of their vanguard near Philadelphia, Mississippi” (“Sumner Project,” 1964, p. 1). The Advocate’s reference to the missing civil rights workers—James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner who had journeyed to Philadelphia, MS, to participate in freedom summer offered a glimpse of their feelings about the college students coming to the South. The statement seemed to be an indication that the newspaper wasn’t too keen on the students walking into an already dangerous situation. Although some may view this statement as being opposed to the summer project; with no other comments made in the article towards the movement, it can be seen as simply concern for the safety of the young students.
However, after reviewing the editorial printed regarding the freedom summer, the *Advocate* offers a clear anti stance about the movement and is very frank:

We are of the opinion that any Negro in the state should be able to see that his best course as an individual, and the best for the future of the Blacks of the state is for all of us to ignore completely the presence of the new force of carpet-baggers, to take no part whatever in their so called “summer project”, and let our White neighbors and friends know that we look to a better future through working with them, without the coercion of any federal law or force for the progress and advancement of all the people of the state. (“The Race,” 1964, p. 4)

Thus, the *Advocate* openly disagrees with the Freedom Summer project citing it as too forceful a means of obtaining equality for Blacks. Proclaiming that force only stagnated the progress of Blacks; the editorial asserted that because of continued demonstrations and “big talk” of Black civil rights leaders, a “White Backlash”—the resentment among White people throughout the nation, is rapidly spreading and causing an extreme amount of chaos.

Entitled, “Time for Mississippi Negroes to Start Thinking for Ourselves,” it appears this editorial is clearly against the Freedom Summer project because of the violence that has already occurred as a result of such demonstrations. Editor, Percy Greene asserts that open discussions between Blacks and Whites is a better means of negotiation than listening to outsiders (people from the north) and Black leaders who want to force their way into equality rather than wait on a hospitable invitation.

So, once again, the *Advocate’s* media coverage of another era of demonstrations reveals the paper’s disagreement with the means taken by Black leaders and
demonstrators in order to gain equality. In fact, the limited coverage shown to the demonstrations was also again a probable testament to its disagreement with the demonstrations.

*Jackson Advocate*

*Civil Rights Act of 1964.* Three articles and one editorial summarized the Advocate’s coverage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. All three articles presented both neutrally dominant perspectives and headlines. Also, the articles were less than 500 words each and were all printed in the front section of the newspaper. As for the single editorial, it had a pro dominant perspective, a neutral headline and was 501-1000 words in length.

The news articles during this time only outlined the legislative process of the Act, detailing the journey of the Civil Rights Bill from the desk of the Senate to the House, to the desk of President Lyndon B. Johnson. The neutral articles also offered the comments of those opposed to and for the bill. One senator worried that the bill would destroy not only the life of the South but the life of the republic while another asserted that at long last the time had come to enact into law this legislation which has been so long needed. Considerations of the bill to be signed on Independence Day were opposed because many officials thought signing the bill on Independence Day would be a desecration reported the Advocate. Instead the bill was signed on July 2, 1964.

Therefore, the Advocate offered no comment regarding the process. It offered only balanced coverage of what was being said regarding the passage of the Civil Rights legislation.
As for the one editorial about the Civil Rights Act of 1964, it offered a reprint of an editorial printed in the *Wall Street Journal* from New York City. Thus the *Advocate* did not offer any words of its own in support or opposition to the passage of the Civil Rights Act. However, including this entire editorial from the *Wall Street Journal* can be viewed as an offering of the *Advocate’s* viewpoint considering it was printed in the *Advocate’s* editorial column.

Specifically, *The Wall Street Journal* editorial seems to see the passage of the Civil Rights Act as a positive but warns that no law will give instant gratification for Blacks. Also the editorial warns that demonstrations and violence are the poorest possible ways to force the acceptance of the mandates of the Civil Rights Act. “A Long Summer Begins,” as the editorial is entitled, but no one wants a long hot summer of disorder as a result of the Act, as some of the leaders have threatened, rather a long cooling-off period is needed.

So, the editorial supports the passage of the Civil Rights Act but does not want to force the Act upon the citizens in the South. Rather, a more gradual adoption of the Act should be followed for fear of violence that may occur as a result of demonstrations and or protests. Again, because of the reprint of this editorial by the *Advocate*, the viewpoint expressed in the *Wall Street Journal’s* editorial is viewed as congruent to the perspective of the *Advocate*.

*Jackson Advocate*

1964 Three Civil Rights workers murdered. Just one article and one editorial were printed about the finding of the bodies of the three murdered Civil Rights workers discussed above in the section on Freedom Summer.
Recall the workers—James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner, came from the north to Mississippi to participate in Freedom Summer and went missing around June of 1964. Their slain bodies were not found until around August of 1964—this is the month in which the articles about the subject matter were retrieved. When found, all three workers had been shot execution style.

In the one news article printed, the Advocate offered no opinion about the incident resulting in a neutrally dominant perspective. Additionally, the headline for the article was neutral. With less than 500 words, approximately 60 to be exact, the article appeared on the front page and only detailed where the bodies were found:

The FBI early Tuesday night announced the finding of the bodies of the missing “Summer Project” workers at Philadelphia Mississippi. The bodies were found in shallow greaves at the site of a newly created pond six miles from the town of Philadelphia, and some 20 miles from the place where their burned out station wagon was found on June 21st. (“Find Bodies,” 1964, p. 1)

In the one news editorial found during the two week time period regarding the murder of the civil rights workers, the 2000 plus word perspective does not express specific feelings about the finding of the workers’ bodies. Instead the piece examines “Precautions against Violence,” as it is entitled, and how to avoid demonstrating and/or rioting which results in violence. It seems the editorial may be indirectly speaking about the murdered workers at the accused hands of the Philadelphia, MS police officers and the Klu Klux Klan, when it does acknowledge that police brutality does exist and destroys the confidence of the public in law enforcement. However, the editorial spent
most of its time laying the blame on demonstrators/rioters for instigating some of the police brutality against them,

Special care, we think, should be used with the recurring charge of police brutality. Instances of cruelty can occur, either deliberately or through hasty judgment, but “police brutality” has become a standard refrain whenever agitators set off a riot. It’s one thing after all, to apply the term brutality to beating a suspect—whatever the grounds of suspicion in a jailhouse, and quite another to apply it to actions of the police when they are faced with a riot and have a duty to do whatever they can to restore order quickly and uphold the law. With knives, bricks, Molotov cocktails and guns coming at them, what are they supposed to do? ("Against Violence," 1964, p. 4)

Consequently, the only thing that can be drawn from the editorial regarding the murder of the workers is that the newspaper is in agreement that at times police officers do act brutally when they are violent against a few Blacks (like the three workers who were jailed for no other reason than they were Black and participating in the Freedom Summer). In other words, the Advocate expressed that those demonstrations that turn into riots often give officers no other choice but to retaliate—an opinion that at the time was probably not shared by many Blacks.

Birmingham News

1954 Brown vs. Board of Education. An even amount of articles and editorials were printed about this period of the Civil Rights Movement. Specifically, there were six articles and six editorials found. No photos appeared. The articles were all neutral in perspective and were 500 words or less in length. The editorials found were
overwhelmingly anti in perspective and were also 500 words or less. Both news and editorial headlines were neutral.

As stated, the news articles appearing in *The News* were neutral in perspective. The articles explored the details of the Supreme Court’s decision to end segregation in public schools. Particularly, *The News* dedicated an article outlining how Birmingham’s city commissioner felt about the decision—“Commissioners to Oppose Ending of Segregation.” In the article, the commissioner’s opening remarks revealed that he wanted to go on record as being “unalterably opposed” to the abolishment of segregation in the city’s schools despite the court’s decision (1954, p. 1). In congruence with this article, *The News* printed a rather calming article for its readers explaining to them that because the Supreme Court did not set a specific time for compliance of the new law; it may indeed be a couple of years before actual compliance must take place. Although the article used no suggestive or favorable language, the article seemed to feature how much time was left to experience segregation before being forced out of the Southern way of life.

Like the aforementioned articles, the remaining news stories also seemed to be stories to provide a blanket for the impact of the court’s decision on the South’s way of life, specifically in Birmingham. Some of the other topics appearing were of then Alabama Governor Gordon Person’s segregation study, which was a committee created to study an official copy of the high court’s decision. Apparently, the governor was considering calling a special session of the legislature if necessary to consider problems expected to arise from the decision. Another talked about Black Leaders and their prediction that “members of the Negro race will make no concentrated effort to enroll in
White schools just for the sake of going to White schools” (“Negro Leader,” 1954, p. 2). Thus, overall, all the articles were neutral in perspective, with no suggestive language. However, the subject of the articles alluded to the content that appeared in the editorials.

In contrast to their news articles, *The News* editorials were very revealing of how they felt about the court’s ruling. Immediately following the court’s decision, the newspaper expressed its discontent:

This newspaper deeply regrets that the Supreme Court has come to a decision that segregation of Negro and White students in the public schools is unconstitutional…*The News* believes that the considerations of public interest and state rights which underlay the superseded decision still apply and would better serve progress in racial relations and education. (“Segregation Decision,” 1954, p. 14)

Therefore, the paper was against the ruling, against desegregation, and it declared that segregation was more beneficial to the South’s way of life. It was also concerned that although segregation had produced emotional reactions, the ending of segregation may produce feelings and problems far more difficult to deal with. In other editorials, the paper even expressed gratitude that the court decided to delay immediate implication of the ruling until after further discussion of the time and application of the law.

In further support of its stance against the court’s decision, another editorial entitled, “Mounting Crisis in Education,” explored how difficult *The News* felt it would be for the South to meet the financial need of this new combining of the races:

We shall find, when we sit down to the hard realities, that the task of ending segregation will become merged with, will aggravate and will precipitate, what is
already a grave and mounting crisis in American education. Unless ending segregation is to mean lowering the level of the White schools, very large expenditures will be required. It is hard to see how the poorer Southern states will be able to afford it. (1954, p. 14)

Added to its argument that it would be too expensive to desegregate schools, the newspaper talked about how much things had progressed under segregation for Blacks and that there was no need to disrupt the flow of things:

The Plessey vs. Ferguson decision (the case that legalized segregation as long as there were equal facilities available for both Blacks and Whites) set a practical standard which eventually produced large practical reforms…A general movement got under way to equalize in fact the educational opportunities of Negroes and Whites. Much has been done to reduce the gap. (“Mounting Crisis,” 1954, p. 14)

Consequently the paper felt that the Supreme Court’s undoing of the Plessey vs. Ferguson doctrine brought much of the work of the South to close the gap in terms of the equalization of separate but equal facilities to a halt.

So, in regards to its news articles, The News didn’t truly express their heart on the matter of the historic Supreme Court’s decision. Yet, the newspaper’s editorials were very much in contempt of the Supreme Court’s unanimous decision to overthrow segregation in public schools.

_Birmingham News_

1955 Rosa Parks. There were no articles printed by The News regarding Rosa Parks during the time frame of analysis described in this study. The absence of coverage
regarding this topic revealed that the matter may not have been relevant to the newspaper during the time.

*Birmingham News*

*1955 Murder of Emmett Till.* The News coverage of the murder of Emmett Till yielded six news articles, no editorials and two photos. All of the articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and headlines and appeared in the front section of the paper. Three of the articles were 500 words or less, while the other three were 501-1000 words in length. Both photos were non-antagonistic in sentiment.

The coverage by The News began with an article that presented insight from the Sheriff of the Mississippi town in which Till was allegedly murdered—Sumner. Sheriff H.C. Strider claimed that the mutilated body found in the Tallahatchie River was more like the body of a grown man instead of a young boy. The article included a few comments from Till’s family members professing their disagreement with that claim. However, the majority of the article was dedicated to the Sheriff’s viewpoint. According to the Sheriff, “Even the boy’s uncle wasn’t sure the body was that of Emmett Till” (“Chicago Boy,” 1955, p. 2). Although this article was presented neutrally with no opinions or suggestive language, the idea that the first article printed about the murder examined a very crucial part of the case—whether or not the body was that of Till’s was a different perspective taken than other newspapers in this study covering the murder. Some of the other papers focused on finding out about Till’s family and focusing on the funeral services held in his honor. The News did not take this route.

The second article printed during this time revealed that mob violence had been threatened in Mississippi as a result of the murder. According to the article, Sheriff
Strider had received calls and letters threatening the defendants—Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam. Most of the letters which the sheriff described as “filthy and vicious,” were postmarked in Chicago—Till’s native state from which he was visiting from when he was murdered down in Mississippi (“Mob Violence,” 1955, p. 2). The threats were enough that the sheriff saw fit to call out the National Guardsmen and deputies to join police in patrolling the courthouse area. In fact, the article pointed out that Mississippi’s Governor Hugh White had given the authority to do so. Finally, the article did not close without mentioning again that Sheriff Strider said the body found may not be that of Till and that he thought Till was still alive.

It almost seemed The News was putting together its own undercover investigation of the case, perhaps, utilizing the role players of the case to do so. In essence, the opinions of individuals such as Sheriff Strider may indeed have been the viewpoint of the paper also.

Three of the other news articles regarding Till’s murder, spoke about the trial of Bryant and Milam. The News headline, “Nation’s Eyes on Mississippi as Till Case Nears Climax,” indicated the relevance the case had gained on a nationwide level. The article pointed out that no Blacks would serve on the jury, a customary action in Tallahatchie County. Additionally, The News said that the Sheriff expected no incident during the trial. In fact the Sheriff took off for a week-end trip to Atlanta to see the Mississippi Georgia football game. This laid back approach by the Sheriff was not reported in any other newspaper. Therefore, its inclusion in The News may have been an indication that the paper wasn’t worried either in regards to the verdict and that the people in the Mississippi community should not be worried either.
Another article headlined, “Both Sides Doubt Conviction: Lawyers argue Mississippi kidnap-murder case before jury,” *The News* references Till as a Negro “molester and whistler” (1955, p. 22). The paper calls him this as it discusses Mrs. Carolyn Bryant’s (wife of defendant Roy Bryant) testimony as to what happened in her store when Till came to buy bubble gum. Recall, Till’s wolf-whistle at Mrs. Bryant is what prompted Mr. Bryant and his half brother J.W. Milam to kidnap young Till in the middle of the night. The defendants testified they did kidnap Till to talk to him about the incident, but denies that they killed him.

The two photos that appeared in *The News* were of the smiling faces of defendants, Bryant and Milam after their not guilty verdict was rendered. Smiling pictures of the defendants rather than a photo of Till’s battered body or the famous picture of his mother Mamie Till crying over his body brought to Chicago in a pine box;—interestingly, that was the choice of *The News*’s picture selection in regards to this murder trial instead. The absence of those photos speaks volumes about the focus of the News. Perhaps, on purpose the paper was trying to take the focus off of the victim and redirect it towards the victory of the White men. In essence, the pictures were upholding the usual alleged system of victory experienced by Whites when it came to violence against Blacks. Together the two photos offered a non-antagonistic photo as the laugh in your face poses seemed to demonstrate the Black in a disadvantageous situation in the South.

Nonetheless, overall, there was no language in support of or condemnation of the murder of Emmett Till in the news articles. However, the focus of *The News*’ coverage of the trial provided innuendo’s about what was important to the paper—Sheriff Strider’s
comments that he felt the body found was not Till’s; that the two men would be acquitted of the murder charges; and reference to Till’s actions as a “molester.” Additionally, the papers lack of focus and/or inclusion of information in its articles about Till’s family, the funeral ceremony, views and viewpoints of those opposite the opinion of Sheriff Strider correlated an even stronger indication of what was important to the newspaper. What was that focus? It can only be assumed. However, the absence of the information above showed the newspaper seemed a bit one sided; unconcerned about telling Till’s story from the perspective of his loved ones and unconcerned about telling the impact of the young boy’s murder on the state of Mississippi and the nation. The photos of Bryant and Milam smiling after their not guilty verdict was rendered seemed like a smile and nod from the newspaper. These are indeed all assumptions. The News offered no editorial comments to dispel or advocate such viewpoint. However, as the literature review of this study reveals, the absence of certain information from media coverage as well as its presence can provide insight into what a newspaper renders as important and unimportant.

Birmingham News

1956 Desegregation of Alabama buses. The News coverage of the desegregation of Alabama buses produced three articles. There were no editorials written and no photos found. Two of the articles appeared in the front of the newspaper, while the third one was printed in the back. All three articles were 500 words or less. The dominant perspectives of the articles were all neutral.

The subject of the news articles revealed the court’s decision banning segregation on Alabama buses. One article in particular focused on Alabama legislators and their
quest to preserve bus segregation despite the court’s ruling. The article read like a platform for those against the court’s decision. Some lawmakers discussed ways in which the city may be able to maintain separation of the races; two reasons suggested was to prevent violence and keep down disorder and for the convenience of the passengers on crowded buses. The article also explored legislators’ introduction of an actual bill they felt favored Whites and Blacks. The bill would allow women passengers to occupy an entire seat and refuse to share it with another rider, without mention of race or segregation. Thus, a woman could prevent another passenger of either race from sitting next to her. Their justification of this bill, “Bus drivers frequently get complaints from women about men of their same race annoying them. This plan would give the drivers a way to stop that” (“Bus Segregation,” 1956, p. 24), an Alabama representative stated.

The next article printed during this era again stated that Montgomery city authorities intended to employ, every legal means available to continue separate seating arrangements for White and Black passengers on buses. And again city officials said this policy was based upon preserving public safety and promoting order in the city.

In contrast to the other two articles, the final article showed that four Black lawyers representing the Montgomery boycotters requested that the court speed up the effective date of its mandate ending state and local laws requiring segregation on buses. The rendering of that request was not discussed in the article.

Although no photos appeared regarding the desegregation of Alabama school buses, interestingly, there was one cartoon which depicted the decision. The cartoon pictured a Black and a White citizen in a boat together paddling across a river. Up ahead
of them were the following words written in the water, “rough seas of tense problems ahead” (Editorial cartoon of black, 1956, p. 24). The cartoon seemed to be antagonistic to the movement and to the decision to desegregate Alabama buses. The cartoon seemed to be alluding to the court’s decision as being more of a disturbance to the races rather than as a victory against unfairness and equality experienced by Blacks. Hence, its reference to “rough seas of tense problems ahead.”

Overall, the news coverage by The News was similar to its previous news coverage—all of the articles were neutral in presentation. However, the focus of the articles seemed to be one sided as it presented mostly the opinions of those against Blacks and their quest for equality but this time in the realm of transportation.

*Birmingham News*

*1957 Little Rock Nine.* The News’s coverage of the Little Rock Nine involved many more articles than the Civil Rights Movement topics discussed thus far. Distinctively, there were 12 news articles and six editorials written about the matter. Surprisingly, only five photos were included in the coverage. All of the 12 articles hoisted a neutrally dominant perspective as well as their headlines. In contrast, all of the editorials had anti dominant perspectives. About half of the articles were 500 words or less while the other half were 501-1000 words in length. All of the 12 articles appeared in the front part of the newspaper. All six editorials had neutral headlines and were 500 words in length. As for photos, three were neutral in sentiment and the other two were non-antagonistic.

In its news articles, The News presented the unfolding of the Little Rock saga with neutrality. From the first attempt to enter into the high school, the blockade attempt by Governor Faubus, his meeting with President Eisenhower to discuss his actions, to the
order rendered by the President to have National paratroopers escort the students into the school; there was neutral reporting. *The News* characterization of Faubus was neutral. However, the only comments of Faubus included in the paper reflected that he was only trying to maintain peace and order not cause chaos by his decision to surround the school with his National Guardsmen and bar Blacks from entering.

In stark contrast, in its editorials, *The News* was extremely critical of the Supreme Court’s decision to allow Nine Black students to enter into the all White high school in Little Rock Arkansas. “The question of education and community life are matters of the states and local government—not for the federal government in far-off Washington to regulate” (1957, p. 14), stated one editorial. In the same editorial, entitled, “How Can the Court Alter Mental Attitudes?” the newspaper questions how can the Supreme Court control the thoughts and attitudes of any individual in regards to “inferiority” and “superiority” (1957, p. 14). Additionally, how could providing Blacks with the opportunity to share a classroom with Whites actually equalize their way of thinking towards one another argued the editorial? In essence, *The News* believed that White and Black students in the South should not have to alter their mental attitudes towards one another on the playgrounds or in the classrooms.

The other editorials printed by the newspaper followed suit with the same mindset as the initial one—questioning the power of the federal government to impose desegregation in the South’s public schools. “Are we witnessing the beginning of the end of state government in America, and the emergence of a supreme dictatorship over the states by the federal government in Washington?” (1957, p. 22), said an editorial headlined, “Is State Government Ending: Events in Arkansas Raise Questions About Extension of
Federal Powers.” So again, The News was angry with the decision of the court and felt like the federal government was overstepping its boundaries. In fact, by imposing on the state of Arkansas, the newspaper felt the federal government was defying the very Constitution by which our country operates—which guarantees to every state of this Union a republican form of government.

In addition to expressing its anger in regards to the court’s decision, The News expressed their support of Arkansas Governor Faubus’ retaliation to the orders of the federal government and offered sympathy to the way he was being demonized by the media and others for his actions. Chiefly, the paper disagreed and found it unthinkable that Faubus acted improperly or defiantly in the Little Rock situation. Instead, The News proclaimed their belief that the governor acted to preserve peace and not against integration. The newspaper also expressed discontent at the President’s decision to send troops to Little Rock to help keep order and escort the students in.

Despite The News’s feelings towards maintaining school segregation and their support of Governor Faubus’ stand against the federal government’s attempt to integrate Central Little Rock High School; in one of its last editorials about the matter, the newspaper urged that neither violence nor closing down public schools were viable solutions to the crucial school situation. “Violence in opposition to school integration leads only toward a dark and bloody dead-end. It could accelerate rather than slow down racial mixing in our schools” (“School Situation,” 1957, p. 10), stated the editorial.

As previously mentioned, surprisingly, there were few photos found during the prescribed time frame of analysis for this newspaper. An event, which yielded a high percentage of media coverage all over the world—yet, there were very few photos of the
event printed in *The News*. Many assumptions can be made about this decision of omission but they would merely be hypotheses. Perhaps, their photos would’ve been the same as the others in regards to this matter—pictures of soldiers with guns and signs with racial slurs on them in protest to the Blacks trying to enter unwelcomed into the school. Perhaps, their photos would’ve revealed a Governor and his National Guardsmen standing before young Black children blockading their way to what they saw as equal opportunity despite their race. Of course, these types of photos were really all that could be taken if capturing the happenings of the moment. Thus, these photos would’ve contradicted the newspaper’s argument that Governor Faubus’ actions were seeking to maintain peace and order rather than prevention of integration. In this case, exclusion of such photos was in the best interest of *The News*.

Two of the five photos that were printed were non-antagonistic providing a preview into the force and violence that happened while trying to get the students into the school. Specifically, a photo of the troopers escorting the Black students into the school was taken and a picture of a man who had been clubbed during the scuffle appeared in *The News*. Such photos were really a bonus to those fighting in the Civil Rights Movement because they evoked sympathy on behalf of the Black students trying to enter the all White high school. The other three photos were headshots of Faubus, one of the Judges in the case, and a Little Rock representative.

*Birmingham News*

*1958 Stabbing of Dr. King.* Like most of the newspapers included in this study, there was little coverage about the stabbing of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Only three articles were found in *The News* in regards to the almost fatal stabbing. No editorials
were present in the paper. There was one photo of Dr. King with the weapon sticking out of his chest taken immediately after he was stabbed. All three of the articles found appeared in the front of the newspaper, two were on the front page. Also, the articles were all 500 words or less in length. The dominant perspectives of the articles were neutral as were their headlines.

One article told of the well wishers who were “sending messages to the 29 year old integration leader from Montgomery, Alabama” (“Rev. King’s,” 1958, p. 5). The same article also exposed details of telephoned bomb threats made to the hospital in which King was staying—“vowing to succeed in taking his life next time” (p. 5). Another article discussed the mental unstableness of the Black woman, Izola Curry, who stabbed him (“King Still,” 1958, p. 1). Additionally, the stableness and progress of Dr. King’s recovery was reported in another article (“Montgomery Leader,” 1958, p. 1). No favorable or unfavorable characterizations were made against or for Dr. King. The newspaper referenced Dr. King as an “integration leader” and as a “boycott leader” (“Montgomery Leader,” 1958, p. 1).

*Birmingham News*

*1960 Sit-in demonstrations.* There were no articles, editorials, or photos found in the *Birmingham News* during the time frame of analysis for this study. The absence of coverage suggests that this event may not have been relevant to the newspaper at the time.

*Birmingham News*

*1961 Freedom riders.* Nine articles, five editorials, and 11 photos constituted the amount of coverage *The News* dedicated to the reporting of the Freedom Riders. Recall,
the majority of the news articles printed by the newspaper thus far have had a neutrally dominant perspective. The same was true for the nine articles printed about this era of the Civil Rights Movement. Additionally, all of the article headlines were neutral. Seven of the articles were 500 words or less while two of the articles were 501-1000 words in length. All nine articles appeared on the front page of the newspaper. In regards to the editorials, all five read from an anti dominant perspective. However, all five headlines were neutral. Two of the editorials were 501-1000 words and the other three were 500 words or less. As for the photos, four were non-antagonistic in sentiment, while seven were neutral.

One of the initial news articles covering the violence against Freedom Riders in Alabama featured a statement from then Birmingham Police Commissioner Eugene (Bull) Connor. The article covered nothing else surrounding the events only the statement of Connor. “Our people of Birmingham are a peaceful people and we never have any trouble here unless some people come into our city looking for trouble. And I’ve never seen anyone yet look for trouble who wasn’t able to find it” (“Trouble Blamed,” 1961, p. 1), stated Connor. The News provided no comment on Connor’s remarks but would later condemn the lack of immediate response by the Birmingham Police department in one of its editorials.

Another initial article gave a breakdown of those injured, which included some Blacks and Whites. The article gave eyewitness accounts of the Freedom Riders being beaten as well as some news reporters and cameramen being abused while attempting to record and/or report about the incident. In fact, two of The News’s own cameramen were mobbed and their film torn out of their cameras. In one article, George Huddleston, an
Alabama Congressman told the House of Representatives what he thought of the violence, “The so-called freedom riders got just what they asked for. Their sole purpose in trespassing upon the South and its well-established and understood customs was to create a deplorable and disturbing situation. This they have done” (“Huddleston Says,” 1961, p. 6), he said.

In another news article, *The News* revealed that David Lowe, Columbia Broadcasting Station (CBS) producer disagreed with how CBS had been portrayed in one of *The News*’ editorials. Apparently, in its editorial, *The News* criticized and accused the people at CBS of being a part of a set up—asserting that the news broadcast station had prior knowledge that something was going to take place at the Trailways station in Birmingham, Alabama. Lowe called the criticism an injustice to CBS and proclaimed the station didn’t receive information from the integrationists that instead their tip came from someone else. In fact, Lowe felt that the newspaper singled CBS out when other newsmen who did have advance knowledge as to what might happen including national wire service reporters were also present. Thus, in the article, *The News* gave full and detailed reference to Lowe’s entire complaint about the paper’s editorial. However, the newspaper made no apologies for calling out CBS.

Finally, *The News* article coverage was rounded out by an article headlined, “Leaders Seek Way to Ease Race Tension.” Also neutral, this article revealed that a study committee was being put together by leaders of the city of Birmingham in hopes of helping deal with the tension created in Birmingham and around the nation as a result of the violence against the Freedom Riders.
“Thugs Must Not Take Over Our City,” was the headline of one of the first editorials written about the violence committed against the Freedom Riders in Alabama. In this editorial, The News provided mixed feelings about a group of Whites who attacked both Black and White Freedom Riders riding a greyhound bus outside of Anniston, Alabama in hopes of testing the segregation laws/practices of intrastate travel in the South. On the one hand, the newspaper stated that it was important to Birmingham and Birmingham people that those participating in the violence committed against the Freedom Riders be found and vigorously prosecuted. Additionally, the editorial pointed towards many problems that led to the violence such as the refusal of then Alabama, Governor John Patterson to guarantee protection to the Freedom Riders. The News called the governor’s actions “inexcusable” (“Our City,” 1961, p. 1).

On the other hand, within the same editorial, the newspaper criticized the Riders, recognizing them as the “cause of the violence” (“Our City,” 1961, p. 1). “The aim of these invading integrationists from elsewhere is to antagonize to create riot or other trouble. They feed upon the ugly news which inevitably must be channeled out of any community where disturbance occurs” (“Our City,” 1961, p. 1), stated the editorial. Thus, The News blamed the Riders or whom they called “agitators” and “troublemakers” for smearing the good name of Birmingham and Alabama (“Our City,” 1961, p. 1). By the end of the editorial, it was difficult to determine which thugs the headline was referencing. However, it did state “The News has no brief for anyone or any group, White or Black that incites violence” (“Our City,” 1961, p. 1). Therefore, the “thugs” referenced were probably both the Whites committing the violence and the Black Freedom Riders; but mostly the Riders for being catalyst to the violence. Either way, The
News was not in support of the “so-called” Freedom Riders as their editorial suggested. In another editorial, The News again clearly states that it felt the two forces responsible for the incident were the integrationists and the hoodlums who took the law into their hands.

One editorial was a reprint of an editorial originally ran in a Georgia newspaper—The Atlanta Journal. Although the words of the editorial were not the words of The News, because it was reprinted and placed in the editorial section of the newspaper; it can be viewed as a reflection of the perspective of The Birmingham News. Headlined, “Everybody Loses,” this editorial like The News previous editorials criticized the Freedom Riders and accused them of being outside agitators:

The Freedom Riders knew the tenseness of the situation. They knew a lot of people were working for better race relations, having to overcome the handicap of such incidents. They knew they could cause an incident, as pointed out by one of their leaders’ comment that he would be surprised if there were not one. (1961, p. 14)

The editorial went on to say, “It is unfortunate that they put chips on their shoulders and came looking for someone to knock them off; for they did come seeking trouble, inviting violence” (1961, p. 14).

Evidence of the violence committed against the Freedom Riders was apparent in the photos taken of the greyhound bus set on fire by a mob of Whites. The bus was near Anniston, Alabama when a group of Whites threw an incendiary bomb through a rear window. The picture was non-antagonistic because it depicted violence against the Freedom Riders, whose message was a part of the Civil Rights Movement. The violence
committed against them helped to solidify the conditions of the South in regards to race and the need for racial equality to become the law of the land—of course, this was the ultimate goal of the movement.

Another photo which fell into that same non-antagonistic sentiment was a photo of the racial fighting which occurred at the Birmingham Trailways Bus Depot in Birmingham, Alabama. The picture showed a gang of 30 Whites attacking a bus load of the Freedom Riders. Recall, this was the second group of Freedom Riders to come to the area after the first group of Riders bus was burned. From the looks of the photo, those Riders received even more violence than the first group. The visual impact/sentiment of this photo is the same as the first one. The rest of the photos were determined to be neutral as they were mere headshots of those who had allegedly participated in the violence against the Freedom Riders. There was an apparent plea to the Birmingham community to identify those who had beaten—both Blacks and Whites at the greyhound terminal.

Overall, The News presented its news articles with objectivity and/or neutrality. Nonetheless, the newspaper didn’t bite its tongue in its editorials when blaming the Freedom Riders for the trouble that came their way. Even though, the newspaper condemned the actions of those who committed such violence against the Riders and even questioned the presence of the police in the matter; it seemed it was only because of the negative light in which the South was placed because of that violence, not necessarily because the beatings and violence themselves were wrong.
1962 James Meredith enters all White Ole Miss. A large amount of attention was given by The News to the efforts of James Meredith to enter into the all White University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) and the attempts of Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett to block him. Particularly, there were 16 news articles, 11 editorials and 17 photos detailing the incident. An overwhelming 14 of the articles were from a neutrally dominant perspective and only two were anti. In stark contrast, only one editorial had a neutral perspective, while the other 10 were anti. All 17 photos provided for non-antagonistic sentiments. Eleven of the news articles were 500 words or less and five were 501-1000 words. Seven of the editorials were less than 500 words while four were 501-1000 words in length. As usual, the majority of The News’s coverage of the Civil Rights events was found on the front page. Specifically, 12 of the news articles were found on the front page and 4 were found in the middle. Both the article and editorial headlines were neutral with the exception of one anti editorial headline. All 17 photos were non-antagonistic in tone.

In the news articles printed by The News regarding the Meredith/Ole Miss saga, the newspaper detailed the unfolding of the situation. In one article headlined, “Patterson backs Barnett,” the paper told of the Alabama governor’s stance on the matter, “Governor John Patterson today put the Alabama state government squarely behind Mississippi Gov. Ross Barnett’s defiance of a federal integration order and said flatly “the time for compromise has passed” (1962, p. 1). The News offered no comment in this article about Gov. Barnett’s defiance of court orders to admit Meredith into Ole Miss but would do so in its editorial.
Other articles explored the legislative hustle and bustle going on behind the scenes as a result of Meredith’s attempt to integrate Ole Miss. One article explored the question whether or not the university would go so far as to shut down to avoid admitting a Black. The article revealed closing the university was a preference of Gov. Barnett, but not necessarily the united opinion of the university’s board. However, the board did agree with Barnett’s desire to keep Meredith out of the university. Thus, the board did meet with the governor in attempts of devising a plan to keep Meredith from registering. Although, the board may have had some differing opinions, they also allowed Gov. Barnett to run the show and act as a registrar on behalf of the University. As one of the latter articles revealed, the board had been threatened of being in violation of Mississippi law by admitting Meredith and in violation of federal law by not admitting him.

According to The News reports, Gov. Barnett urged the members of the board to go to jail rather than allow Meredith’s entrance. The News made no comment for or against the actions of the board or Gov. Barnett.

As the court battles went back and forth between the unyielding Mississippi Governor and the federal government, The News gathered opinions of other newspapers and their editorial feelings about the situation. In general, the newspaper found that the majority of the press backed the government in the Ole Miss struggle although some disagreed with integration and it being forced. One paper which is included in this study—The Clarion Ledger said the issue was not the entry of one Black to Ole Miss, but state’s rights. The News again offered no comment on the positions taken by the editorials. However, in a series of anti dominant editorials, the newspaper did reveal their stance on the matter.
The News editorials took issue with the constitutional basis of the federal government sending troops to Mississippi and Ole Miss. In an editorial headlined, “No Constitutional Basis for Troops,” the only negative headline among editorials; the paper spoke against the federal government and for the Mississippi governor speaking out against the sending of federal troops:

There is nothing in the constitution of the U.S. or in the laws passed by Congress which authorizes the use of federal troops to compel any public educational institution to admit a certain student just because he demands that he be enrolled.

There is nothing in the Constitution which denies the governor of a state an opportunity to be heard by the full membership of the Supreme Court of the United States in a dispute between state and federal authority. (Lawrence, 1962, p. 14)

However, when the decision was finally handed down by the courts to allow Meredith into Ole Miss and Governor Barnett had exhausted his appeals; The News believed it futile for the governor to continue to fight the federal government. “The News sees no future in Gov. Ross Barnett’s course in Mississippi. It would similarly see no future to Gov. Patterson or Gov. Nominate Wallace leading an equivalent interposition or parallel effort in Alabama” (“Race Reality,” 1962, p. 14), said the editorial. In essence the newspaper questioned the actions of the federal government to impose on state’s rights and it believed in the right of the governor to protest this. However, once the high court had spoken, The News believed the Governor should have yielded.

Even after its stance against Gov. Barnett’s continued fight against the federal government, The News was not hesitant to express its continued disagreement that integration was the answer to reaching harmony between Blacks and Whites. In fact in a
series of three editorials entitled, “Race and Reality,” *The News* asserted that the feelings by Whites against integration were similar throughout the nation—“Be they North, East, West, or South, Whites choose to live with other Whites and resist desegregated schools, housing or other mixing. That is a fact of life” (1962, p. 14).

The editorial series went on to explore possible solutions to the desegregation of public schools—defying court orders was not one of them. Instead the paper said, “When resistance to desegregated schools has been carried the limit in the courts, there is no alternative for Whites except to try to close schools. And it may be increasingly dubious that closing long will be a solution” (“Race Reality,” 1962, p. 14). Thus, the editorials on this topic was deemed anti because they spoke against the ideals of integration and disagreed with it as a way of life the South should be made to take. Nonetheless, *The News* did take a small stand against the continued defiance of Governor Barnett against the federal government.

The photographic news coverage of *The News* regarding the entrance of Meredith was a story in itself. There were pictures of soldiers armed and dressed in full gear as in preparation for war but in actuality just to escort one man, a Black into an all White University. The pictures showed that he was met with rebellion: crowds were held back by the soldiers, bottles were thrown, rioting of vehicles was taking place, gas mask were worn by soldiers, and students were arrested. The photos depicted violence and anger in this Southern tow and from this southern university against the idea of integration. The photos depicted a people willing to fight, to go to jail, just as Gov. Barnett had suggested they do. Together these photos created a non-antagonistic sentiment because like the force against the Little Rock Nine, they drew sympathy to the civil rights cause. The idea
that such resistance could take place at the entrance of one Black was perhaps an indication of the resentment that must be felt against many other Blacks in the South in many other facets of life in which equality did not exist.

Overall, the news coverage of The News revealed neutral reporting in its articles and opinions against the ideals of the Civil Rights Movement in its editorials regarding the enrollment of James Meredith into the all White university. The newspaper was very much against integration and believed the governor of Mississippi had a right to protest. Only when the inevitability of Meredith being enrolled at Ole Miss was realized, did The News say the governor should bow out.

Birmingham News

1963 Murder of Medgar Evers. There were 12 articles, and five editorials printed about the murder of Medgar Evers. Nine of the articles had neutral dominant perspectives and three were anti. Four of the five editorials had anti perspectives while one was pro. Five of the articles were 501-1000 words in length and the others were less than 500 words. Each of the editorials was 500 words or less in length. Out of the 12 article headlines, only one was deemed positive, while the others were neutral. Among the editorial headlines, one was negative and four neutral. There was one positive characterization of Medgar Evers presented and one negative characterization made about President JF Kennedy. No photos were found.

The news articles surrounding the murder of Evers explored his life, his survivors, the emergence of his brother Charles Evers as his predecessor, and the increase in protests and demonstrations as a result of his murder. In one article, the newspaper half heartedly posed a compliment to the slain NAACP secretary referring to him as perhaps
the most hated Black by White segregationists in Mississippi but what one might term a “moderate integrationist” (Metz, 1963, p. 3). *The News* applauded Evers for adopting a ‘go-slow’ program, a strong belief held by the newspaper in regards to integration. In essence, the paper felt that unlike other Black leaders, Evers’ slow progression ideals was better for the South. In fact, the paper said that segregationists owed a debt of gratitude to the moderate integrationist (Metz, 1963, p. 3).

The paper covered the funeral of Evers and provided comments from the Black leaders speaking words of kindness about the fallen activist. Towards the end of the same article, the newspaper stated that after the funeral, a procession escorted the body from the Masonic Temple back to the funeral home. After that statement, the newspaper completely shifted its focus to mention that a 19 year old White youth was shot in the back as he rode in the car with several other White teenagers on the same street where the Masonic Temple was located. The article then went on to discuss the fact that Evers’ killer had not been found. Interrupting the article about Evers funeral to talk about a White youth who had been shot on the same street where Evers funeral took place and the same street where Blacks were posing demonstrations was an interesting interjection and seemed a diversion from mourning and a shift on the potential violence and chaos that demonstrations could have according to *The News* view on them and their effect on the South (see editorial summary).

Thus, the topics of the latter articles began to focus on the demonstrations and arrests made as a result of the mourning protests that took place in the city of Jackson. Finally, *The News* reported that a protest ban was issued by the courts to halt racial demonstrations and after about a week, things died down and Blacks agreed to end
demonstrations. The newspaper referenced their actions as a “glimmer of hope” for the city of Jackson in regards to racial peace (Hall, 1963, p. 6). This was just one article comment which stated the newspaper’s clear attitude against demonstrations of any kind by Blacks. The paper would further convey their feelings about demonstrations and protests in its editorials.

In one of its initial editorials regarding the murder of Evers, The News made clear as it spoke on behalf of the state that, “Mississippi does not condone murder and will do its uttermost to bring the guilty to bar” (“Medgar Evers,” 1963, p. 14). However, the paper spent the majority of its editorials expressing its displeasure towards the demonstrations that followed the murder of Evers and the harm it would cause to the city of Jackson, Mississippi, to the South, and the Nation. The News expressed that the murder “threw the switch for another high-voltage charge of unrest and racial provocation” (“Medgar Evers,” 1963, p. 14).

In an editorial response to the demonstrations taking place across the nation, The News articulated its disapproval. One of its editorials entitled, “Demonstrations Hurt,” the paper opened the flood gates of dissatisfaction:

Nationwide public demonstration already has alerted sensible Americans to the fact that there is a new stage in Negro complaint. More such demonstrating now creates only turmoil. The gravest Negro error is in failing to see, apparently, that this kind of program makes very difficult, and could make impossible, responsible White attention to new understanding. (1973, p. 14)
Thus, the newspaper felt the actions of Blacks were counterproductive to achieving their goals and would cause more problems than provide solution. Demonstrations do not provide progress but causes chaos, *The News* proclaimed.

The newspaper furthered its attack on Black demonstrations as a result of Evers’ murder. The paper turned to the words of James Reston, whom it called a well balanced writer, and head of *The New York Times*’ Washington Bureau. The paper reprinted some comments of Reston’s made in regards to how to deal with the race relation problems in the U.S. *The News* revealed its agreement with Reston who stated:

> Before laws and regulations can be changed, attitudes and assumptions have to be changed…it is not in their (administration) power to eliminate discrimination at a stroke. They have to handle the revolt of the Negro in such a way as to avoid counter revolt of the White extremists, and this will be the most delicate operation of the President’s entire administration. (“Race Realism,” 1963, p. 14)

Change in some degree is certain agreed the newspaper, but how change comes is the question.

In another editorial headlined, “The President’s Plea,” *The News* called President JF Kennedy’s speech, appealing to Black organizations to stop demonstrations as a result of Evers’ murder--eloquent but criticized him and his administration for thinking that passing legislation in favor of equality for Blacks could change the hearts and minds of those living in the South. The paper asserted that if change was voluntarily wrought in people’s hearts, it would last longer than by forced law. Agreeing that Black appeals for justice under the law would eventually have to be answered, *The News* stated that, “If we
try too swiftly, indelicately, to meet that need, unity and the very objective are lost”

Overall, the newspaper provided neutral news coverage of the murder of Evers. Although, the paper did express the wrongness of his murder, the articles and editorials spoke little about the events surrounding it. But, much was said about The News displeasure of the demonstrations and protests that were launched consequently after his murder. In fact, the editorials were bold in their stance against the concept of integration, a belief upheld and fought for by Evers and even commended him for being a “moderate integrationist” (Metz, 1963, p. 3).

_Birmingham News_

1963 March on Washington. The News printed seven news articles, four editorials, and one photo detailing the March on Washington. Six of the articles were neutral in perspective and one was anti. All four of the editorials had anti dominant perspectives and were 500 words or less. Five articles were printed in the front of the newspaper and two in the middle. All articles were 500 words or less except one that was 501-1000 words. Every one of the article headlines was neutral. One of the four editorial headlines was negative. Only one photo was found which had a non-antagonistic tone.

The majority of the articles written about the March provided comment from its leaders about their expected turnout and their purpose. The expected numbers grew from 100,000 to 250,000 according to The News. The paper presented both pro and con opinions to the success and peacefulness of the march. For every comment made by the leaders that the march for jobs and freedom would be peaceful, the newspaper was careful to place an anti perspective. For example, one article included a remark from
Malcolm X, a Black Muslim leader who attacks civil rights officials as “Uncle Tom’s.” According to the paper, Malcolm X viewed the Washington march as a protest that “will solve nothing and might provoke some very serious race explosions” (“March Predicted,” 1963, p. 3).

After the march had ended, another article said the March would “unlikely impress Congress much although it will leave imprints on Whites and Negroes…The march itself, and the demands of the speakers, won’t dent the prejudices built up over lifetimes and generations” (“Big March,” 1963, p. 15), stated the article. In essence, the article clearly stated that the March could serve no real purpose towards changing the hearts of Whites in regards to race. The purpose of the March was further questioned in the editorials that followed.

In its opening editorial leading up to the March on Washington, The News printed an editorial column headlined the “Voice of Reason,” written by a Washington columnist. The column seemed to ask Blacks everywhere, what the hell are you marching for? You don’t have it that bad. In the column, the editorial offers up an interview with a successful Black businessman, S. B. Fuller, who rose from a sixth-grade education to be a prominently rich man. The reporter asked several questions of Fuller regarding the condition of segregated schools in Chicago, whether or not racial demonstrations were doing any good, and if there was any justification for Black complaints about their lot in life. The Black businessman said that Black facilities were about the same as White schools, that demonstrations had done harm in the picture they give to Blacks, and that Blacks had some legitimate complaints, but not very many. He also said:

You cannot sue a man and make him want to live next door to you. You’ve got to
sell him the idea that you are just as good as he is by performance. You must perform well in your job. You must keep your community as clean as the White man’s community. You must keep up the home as well as he does. (“Negro Says,” 1963, p. 12)

The editorial concluded that Fuller’s story ought to be told through the ‘Voice of America’ to the peoples of other lands who were wondering about the Black problem in America and who had heard about it only in the terms of events in Little Rock or Birmingham or demonstrations in other areas. In essence, this editorial makes light of the fact that Blacks had reason enough to be posing a massive march on Washington to present any claim. It states that instead, Blacks might consider that they need to do more to ease their way into the grace of Whites rather than force their way in or ask for favor in the areas of education, employment, and/or other areas. The same editorial offered praise to President Kennedy for telling some “Negro agitators” that they had gone too far in their demands and that a quota system in employment was not practicable.

A second editorial written by the same Washington columnist—David Lawrence was openly endorsed by The News (after the march had taken place) as it referenced the march as a blasphemy against the constitution. Specifically, the opening statement of the editorial said:

It was a peaceful piece of nonsense affronting sober consideration of senators, representatives and thoughtful Americans everywhere…It is a fool who denies that something more must be done to meet the obviously strong and in some part justifiable Negro claim for better opportunities…but how these needs are to be met, whether by responsible stewardship of elected officers, by rank and file of decent
citizens, or by circuses such as the extravaganza of whoop up speeches offered by
Blacks and Whites before the symbol of quiet dignity, the Lincoln Memorial, is a
very great issue. (“Washington March,” 1963, p. 14)

The newspaper stated that Lawrence was absolutely correct and that the march was
indeed an echoing disgrace. The march offered biased, one-sided, and malicious
propaganda to the American people, complained the editorial. Another editorial written
by Lawrence stated “the only thing proved by the big demonstration was that in free
America only the mob can get laws passed covering the issue of civil rights” (“Day

In the fourth and final editorial about the March on Washington, Lawrence
questioned Blacks’ decision to stand at the shrine of Abraham Lincoln, the U.S. President
who signed the Emancipation Proclamation freeing slaves. “Do they really know what he
said about the race problem?” (Lawrence, 1963, p. 14), asked the editorial. Indeed
Lincoln was against slavery and he believed that Blacks should be entitled to all the
natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the right of life, liberty,
and the pursuit of happiness. However, according to Lawrence, Lincoln did not believe
in social equity between Whites and Blacks that instead Whites should be deemed
superior to Blacks. Additionally, Lincoln said there was a physical difference between
the two that will forever forbid their living together upon the footing of perfect equality.
After presenting his analogy of Lincoln’s previous thoughts on race relations, Lawrence
said that most people in America probably share the same views. Thus, the symbol of
emancipation seen by Blacks by standing at the foot of Lincoln’s Memorial at the March
on Washington was in Lawrence’s opinion a direct contradiction to how Lincoln really
felt about Blacks and Whites sharing the blanket of equality. “Would Negro leaders venture to quote what Lincoln actually said?” (Lawrence, 1963, p. 14), stated Lawrence.

The one photo printed during this time showed a mass of people of all races standing at the Lincoln Memorial. The photo was deemed non-antagonistic as it showed the peaceful protest of Blacks and others marching for the cause of the Civil Rights Movement.

Overall, The News again emerged with neutral news coverage in its articles about the March on Washington. However, the underlying perspective of each editorial was that the March was unnecessary and more hurtful than helpful to Blacks and their civil rights’ cause.

Birmingham News

1963 Birmingham church bomb. Having taken place in the city of Birmingham, Alabama, it was not surprising to see that the Birmingham News dedicated an enormous amount of attention to the Sixteenth Street Baptist church bombing. The paper produced 14 articles, six editorials, and 15 photos. Twelve of the articles had neutrally dominant perspectives but two were pro. The editorials were half and half in terms of perspective—three pro and three anti dominant. All articles appeared in the front section of the newspaper. There were three positive and nine neutral article headlines. There were three positive and three neutral editorial headlines. Eleven articles were 500 words or less and 3 were 501-1000 words. Four editorials were 500 words or less and two were 501-1000 words. All 15 photos were non-antagonistic in sentiment.

On September 16, 1963, the day immediately following the Sixteenth Street church bombing, the front section of The News was saturated with coverage of the act.
Approximately nine of the 14 articles printed about the bombing appeared in the front section of the newspaper on that day. The article topics presented the reactions of family, community, church members, specifically the pastor, city leaders and even the President of the United States—J.F. Kennedy. One of the initial articles called for prayer all over the city:

The bells tolled and Birmingham prayed—prayed for forgiveness on this, the city’s Blackest day. Blacker even than the days of the cholera plague—shortly after Birmingham’s birth, when hundreds fell. For this day of wrath and warning followed a day of murder: murder most Black, most reprehensible, and most sickening. Four innocent children lay dead, mangled by 10 sticks of dynamite.

(“Saddened City,” 1963, p. 1)

In another article, the paper called the act ruthless. The language used by the newspaper to describe the bombing revealed strong anger towards what happened and showed that despite the children being Blacks, their murders were still unacceptable. Black, reprehensible, sickening, and ruthless—these were feelings equivalent to what an actual parent of one the four girls were probably feeling themselves as well as the Black community.

One article headlined, “Victim by Victim, Scream by Scream,” gave a heart wrenching account of eye witnessing the parents and grandparents having to identify the remains of their daughters at the local hospital after the bombing:

Victim by victim, scream by scream, the bomber’s toll mounted at University Hospital. In a makeshift morgue an old Black identified gruesome remains as his granddaughter…The bodies of three more girls were identified by broken, wailing
Anguish was a living nightmare as 15 injured Blacks were rushed in by ambulances. (1963, p. 6)

The language used by the newspaper to describe the happenings of the moment showed sympathy and compassion towards the victims and their families as it offered specific imagery and revelation to the feelings and emotions being felt by the victims’ family members.

Another dramatic description of the bombing came in an article headlined, “The Day a Church Became a Tomb.” Although the majority of the article was neutrally dominant in perspective; the opening sentence along with the headline created a powerful account of the bombing. “A church became a tomb as 10 sticks of dynamite dug a grave for four children” (1963, p. 6). The idea that the newspaper was comparing the church with a tomb was a momentous metaphor. A place of worship versus a place of death—it offered a deep insight into how the paper saw this tragedy. Once again, The News proclaimed, “this city has been blasted to the brink of disaster” (1963, p.6).

Other neutral articles detailed the investigation being performed by the FBI to find the church bombers. The News reported that the hunt was being called by the Justice Department one of the most intense operations since the John Dillinger manhunt of the 1930s. The other coverage by the paper detailed the funeral services held for the four children. Although, the comments of those in attendance expressed their sorrows, the newspaper offered no commentary on the services themselves.

In regards to editorials, “The Shock and Shame,” was the headline of the first editorial printed regarding the bombing. The editorial expressed strong feelings of conviction of the act which killed four Black girls. “Not one word or a million makes up
for death of four innocent children in the Sunday school bombing yesterday morning. Not one or a million could” (1963, p. 14). The editorial furthered its sympathy towards the bombing when it exclaimed that the Blacks of Birmingham had a right to ask why bombings of the past had not been solved, for it was their flesh and blood, their property which had been the target of dynamite planters. How would a White man feel if his wife, his children, his home, or his church had been the object of such hatred asked the editorial. The editorial went on to dictate that the solution to ending such tensions that had led to such tragedies was for both Blacks and Whites to follow the law. “Despite the continuing struggle, neither race could hope for any peace unless law is the umbrella sheltering us all. No matter how slowly law may move, as seen by Blacks, no matter how resentful any Whites at a final judgment of courts; failure to honor law and disaster strikes us all just as it did yesterday morning” (“The Shock,” 1963, p. 14), said the editorial.

One editorial seemingly lessened its sympathy for the Birmingham bombing as it criticized President Kennedy for asking members of Congress to proclaim a day of mourning for the four Black children killed. The editorial declared that it would be more befitting if the President also asked the American people to mourn for all the victims, White or Black, who had died as a result of racial demonstrations in recent months.

In another editorial, The News accused the bombing of helping the efforts to pass civil rights legislation. Headlined, “Rights Bill Drive Help,” the editorial specifically stated that the jobs of Southern congressmen was made more difficult by the racial turmoil and defiance and disorder, capped with violent death that occurred in recent months. The fight to keep things within reason is made more difficult contended The
News by events such as the bombing as they draw sympathy and urgency to the passing of the legislation.

The photos found during this time period displayed the massive effects the bombing had on the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. There were pictures of rubble and busted bricks, church members covered in dust, injured but still with life being taken to the hospital. There were officers who had been called to the scene after the church blast standing with their bayonet helping to maintain order in the midst of chaos. And then there were the photos showing a crowd of 2,000 mourners inside the Sixth Avenue Church for the funeral. Perpendicular to that photo was the article detailing the accounts of well wishers and beside that were the photos of the four young Black girls killed in the blast—all of them smiling, youthful, and innocent. All photos were non-antagonistic and drew sympathy for the act and for the purpose of the movement. Premeditated, murdered because they were Blacks—a symbol of racial hatred—which was an opponent to the movement and the cause.

Overall, the news articles regarding the bombing were mostly neutral. However, with the combination of pro dominant editorials and non-antagonistic photos, the papers coverage condemned the bombing and those responsible. Although, the paper sometimes diverted in their editorials focusing on other victims such as Whites and they accused the bombers of playing into the hands of those promoting the passing of the Civil Rights Bill, which would grant equality to Blacks in many facets of life; The News was more genuine than anti in its reaction—which is different than its previous coverage of other Civil Rights Movement happenings.
1964 Freedom summer. Only one article and one photo was dedicated to the Freedom Summer crusade through the south—a large scale attempt to register Black voters across the nation, specifically in the staunch segregationist state of Mississippi. There were no editorials written. The article had a neutrally dominant perspective and headline, was printed on the front page, and was 501-1000 words in length. The accompanying photo was non-antagonistic as it showed water being turned on the Black demonstrators. The article detailed a disturbance between Tuscaloosa, Alabama police and Black marchers which had turned violent—fists, rocks, church furniture, and tear gas were used between the two. The article mentioned the demonstration started when Blacks began pouring out of the First African Baptist Church after a session of singing and clapping. Although, the paper had previously expressed in its editorials, its feelings about Black demonstrations; it did not interject its opinion in this article. Yet, recall, the paper said that the more publicity given to the demonstrations the more Blacks feel the need to launch them. Perhaps, that was a reason for so little coverage dedicated to the other happenings of the Freedom Summer. In fact, the only article printed by the News regarding the matter was an incident that happened on Alabama soil.

Civil Rights Act of 1964. Although the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the most momentous piece of legislation passed in favor of Blacks since the Emancipation Proclamation, The News coverage of the event was minute compared to some of its previous coverage of other civil rights events. Only five articles, two editorials, and three photos prevailed. All five articles had neutrally dominant
perspectives and headlines, and appeared in the front section of the newspaper. Three of the articles were 500 words or less and two were 501-1000 words. Both editorials had anti-dominant perspectives, were 500 words or less, and had neutral headlines. All three photos found were considered to be non-antagonistic.

The news articles presented details of the Civil Rights Act and the reactions of people, specifically across the South in Mississippi and Alabama. The paper also told of the testing of the law launched by Blacks in various places across the nation. Some attention was given to Birmingham’s businesses and organizations as they expressed whether or not they would comply with the law which now made it illegal to discriminate service and/or accommodation to Blacks. Other attention was given to the reactions of others across the nation. The accompanying photos to the articles complimented some of those comments.

A photo of a White Jackson, a Mississippi hotel owner posting up a sign that read “Closed in Despair Civil Rights Bill Unconstitutional” was printed (Photograph of Kelly, 1964, p. 1). Another photo showed a White Charlottesville, Virginia, restaurant owner posting a sign that read, “Closed to the Public this 2nd day of July, 1964, at 6:57 p.m. Passage of the Civil Rights Bill forced us to take this unfortunate action” (Photograph of Glover,” 1964, p. 20). Both photos were considered non-antagonistic to the movement as they provided insight into the resistance being held against Blacks and the Civil Rights Movement.

In an editorial printed on the very day the act was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson, the newspaper expressed its feelings about the bill which was very
similar to the White business owners mentioned above, “...It is much disapproved, of course; its constitutionality is in some serious question” (“Fourth Rights,” 1964, p. 8).

And because the President had considered signing the bill on the fourth of July, the paper had this to say, “The President should not tie in the signature of the bill with the day commemorating establishment of this as a free nation. The two events, signing of a civil rights bill and Independence Day, have nothing in common” (“Fourth Rights,” 1964, p. 8). In essence, a day that had provided legal freedom/justice and equality to Blacks should not be equivalent to the freedom granted this nation, even though both shared the common ideal of “freedom” (“Fourth Rights,” 1964, p. 8).

In the second and only other editorial written, the newspaper calls into question the constitutionality of the Civil Rights Act. The paper cites that the law and preceding civil rights legislation were passed based on the 14th amendment—the doctrine of equal protection of the laws. However, the editorial brings claims that the 14th amendment was never legally adopted and therefore should not have been used as means for passage of the bills. “Laws and edicts based on measures of doubtful constitutionality stir bitterness” (“Fourth Rights,” 1964, p. 8), defended the editorial.

The overall news articles presented by The News regarding the signing of the Civil Rights Act were neutral in terms of description and language used to report the event. However, the absence of Black reaction, the overwhelming presence and promotion of White reaction against the legislation coupled with the editorials’ obvious disagreement with the Act can be viewed as one sided and in essence unfavorable towards the movement and its final victory to its cause.
1964 Three Civil Rights workers murdered. Four articles and two editorials were printed about the murder of the three civil rights workers in Philadelphia, MS. All four articles had a neutrally dominant perspective and neutral headlines. Additionally, all of the articles were 501-1000 words in length and found in the front section of the newspaper. As for the editorials—one was anti and one was neutral. Both were 500 words or less with neutral headlines. Only one neutral photo was found—a head shot of J. Edgar Hoover, then U.S. Attorney General and overseer to the investigation of the case.

The news articles during this time period were very much neutral and stuck to the ongoing investigation being done by the FBI. Comments were released by J. Edgar Hoover and then President L.B. Johnson as to the status of the case. After a tip from an informant, the remains of the three bodies were dug up in a pond dam not far from Philadelphia, MS reported the newspaper. One article looked into whether an arrest would be made for the triple slaying.

In regards to the editorials, one was anti in regards to the workers’ murder stating that the event should not be called a tragedy as a tragedy is something that is defined as the pitting of finite against infinite odds. “Were these three men tragedy-bound…was their death the necessary result of their idealistic challenge of the encrusted ways of Mississippi?” (“Thoughts Mississippi,” 1964, p. 14), asked the editorial. “Almost certainly someone, out of the horde who have gone down into Mississippi, was bound to be hurt—their own leaders solemnly assured them of this almost certain eventuality. And so the question was less whether some of them would be hurt, than how many, and how
grievously?” (“Thoughts Mississippi,” 1964, p. 14), the paper went on. So, once again

_The News_ situated the Blacks who were from up North and had come down South to register voters, as agitators to the situation and the way of life in the South. Bluntly, if they had not butted in, their murder would’ve never happened.

The other editorial was neutral as it painted the scene in Philadelphia, Mississippi as the FBI and Neshoba County officers searched for the missing workers. _The News_ did note that few Mississippi officials seemed to be doing as much searching as the FBI and the 400 sailors pushing through dust, weeds, branches, mud and water 11 hours a day hunting for clues of the three missing men. Thus, the paper seemed to reference a lack of cooperation by the state of Mississippi in regards to the investigation. Nonetheless, no comments in favor or condemnation of the way the state was handling the murders were given by the _News_.

_Birmingham World_

1954 _Brown vs. Board of Education_. There were four news articles, four editorials, and one photo about the landmark Supreme Court decision regarding segregation in public schools. All four news articles were neutral in their dominant perspective. All editorials featured pro perspectives. All articles were found on the front page and had neutral headlines. Both article and editorial lengths were 500 words or less. Three of the editorial heads were positive and one was neutral. The photo printed was neutral in its sentiment.

As for the news coverage, the _World’s_ neutrally perspective articles explored the details of the Court’s decision providing a transcript of the Justice’s ruling, “We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of ‘separate but equal’ has no place.
Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal” (“Chief Justice,” 1954, p. 1), reported the *World*. Another article presented comments by other newspapers regarding the Court’s decision, “Comments of some of the White newspapers of the South on the recent Supreme Court decision vary from mild acceptance to out-right opposition. None we have seen so far has actually praised the decision” (“White Press,” 1954, p. 2), stated the newspaper. That was the only comment the newspaper provided in the article entitled, “White Press Comment on Segregation Rules.” Thus, the *World* showed no favor in terms of language towards the comments made by some of the prominent White newspapers such as, *The Atlanta Constitution*, *The Macon Telegraph*, and its fellow newspaper the *Birmingham News*, which all disagreed with the Supreme Court’s decision. So again, a very neutral approach was taken in the news articles printed on the Court’s decision by the *World*. However, the two editorials found offered different perspectives.

The *World* called the 54’ decision by the Supreme Court, “The Decision of a Century” (“Decision Century,” 1954, p. 1). In one of four editorials, the newspaper offered a very approving assessment of the court’s decision. *The World* declared the decision historic because it marked a “long-sought perfecting of American democracy” (“Decision Century,” 1954, p. 1). The editorial also expressed that the court’s decision was not a catalyst to ending segregation but a confirmation of what the South and the American people were feeling—that segregation was no longer acceptable to the nation. The *World* also pointed out that three of the Supreme Court justices rendering the decision were from the South. The paper called this another strong indication of the basic readiness of the American people to take a step ahead. In fact, the paper stated that the
decision was not merely in the interest of Blacks; but the best interest of all of the
American people:

   It puts to rest those who have persisted through the years, a policy of
discrimination, with segregation laws set up as implements to effect regulatory
barriers, restricting the movements and opportunities, of individuals purely upon
the basis of color. This case has attracted world attention; its import will be of
great significance in these trying times when democracy itself is struggling to
envision a free world. It will strengthen the position of our nation in carrying out
the imposed duties of world leadership…the decision serves as a boost to the
spirit of democracy, it accelerates the faith of intense devoutness in minorities,
who have long believed in and trusted the courts. (“Decision Century,” 1954, p. 1)

   In another editorial, the newspaper saw the decision as not a radical decision but
merely a reaffirmation of the fundamental principles of the United States Constitution.
“The decision has given further proof that the principles of equality are inherent in the
fundamental document of our land and that all along; we have been working to remove
the stigma of second-class citizenship” (“For Negro,” 1954, p. 6). So, it was extremely
obvious through its editorials, the level of appreciation The World had for the court’s
decision to eliminate segregation from public schools.

   The only photo pictured in the newspaper was of Chief Justice Earl Warren, who
read the Court’s unanimous decision. The photo was a yearbook type picture of the
Justice in his robe.

   Overall, the news coverage regarding this landmark court decision was neutral.
Only in the editorials, does the World provide a clear stance regarding their views about
the ruling. Therefore, the news coverage about this particular occurrence should be viewed as neutral and/or objective.

*The Birmingham World*

**1955 Rosa Parks.** Rosa Parks’ refusal to move to the back of a Montgomery city bus sparked the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott which eventually led to the declaration of the U.S. Supreme court that segregation on intrastate buses was unconstitutional. *The World’s* coverage or mention of Mrs. Parks was more substantive than the other newspapers in this study. However, in comparison with some other civil rights stories it was not a lot of coverage. Nonetheless, there were three news articles and three editorials written about Rosa Parks and her inspiration towards the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

All of the articles found appeared on the front page and had neutral dominant perspectives. However, there were two positive character portrayals of Mrs. Parks within those same pieces. Two articles were 500 words or less and one was 501-1000 words. One article’s headline was positive while two were neutral. All three editorials had pro dominant perspectives and were 500 words or less. Two editorial headlines were neutral and one was positive. There were three positive character portrayals of Mrs. Parks within those commentaries.

The news articles were neutral and addressed the organization of Blacks and Civic leaders in preparation of the boycott. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who was the main leader of the organization leading the boycott, had several comments sprinkled throughout one article headlined, “Leaders Hit Injustices On Montgomery City Bus Lines.” Throughout a speech to Black followers, Dr. King emphasized that, “peaceful
action, orderly protest, and a Christian approach should be taken throughout the boycott” (Leaders Hit,” 1955, p. 1).

Only the characterization in the article written by World editor, Emory Jackson, can be viewed outside of neutral. In the article, Jackson shows favor towards Mrs. Parks, referencing her as a “fine Christian woman of integrity and character, arrested and carried to jail” (“Leaders Hit,” 1955, p. 1).

_Birmingham World_ Editor, Emory Jackson called the Montgomery Bus Boycott a result of, “…pent up resentment over the recurring, unceasing and unrelenting abuse, humiliation and disrespect accorded Negro passengers especially the lady folk…” (1955, p. 1). The editor went on to criticize the Montgomery segregation/Jim Crow laws which called for a separation of Black and White patrons. “Segregation is a blockade to fairness. Segregation laws can no longer find constitutional support in the federal courts. Until a legal attack is made, however, city and state segregation laws will continue, we believe, to be used as excuses for mistreatment of Negroes” (Jackson, 1955, p. 6), stated Jackson in his editorial headlined, “Blockade to Fairness.”

Jackson’s continual reference to Mrs. Parks as a “victim of the new revulsion over segregation laws,” “a woman in whom one can find nothing to question,” “an outstanding woman,” and “an upstanding, civic-minded, church working woman of attractive character” (Jackson, 1955, p. 1), seemed to further push the idea that Mrs. Parks and Blacks were experiencing injustice at the hands of the segregation laws. “Eventually right rule will replace that other kind of rule. The doctrine of “White rule” offends the declaration of the democratic rule” (Jackson, 1955, p. 1), contended Jackson.
Overall, the news articles’ coverage by *The World* was neutral. However, the editorials showed clear favor towards Mrs. Parks and the Montgomery Boycott. Thus, from an editorial stance the newspaper was extremely critical of the existence of segregation on Alabama buses and the fact that Blacks up until that point had no great success against such injustice.

*The Birmingham World*

1955 Murder of Emmett Till. There was a large amount of coverage by the *Birmingham World* regarding the murder of Emmett Till and the trial of his accused murderers. Specifically, there were 13 articles, 10 editorials and 14 photos printed. Two of the 13 articles had a pro dominant perspective and the rest were neutral. All articles were placed on the front page. Three of the 13 article headlines were positive while the other 10 were neutral. As for their length, eight articles were 500 words or less, four were 501-1000 words, and one was 1001-1500 words. All 10 of the editorials had pro dominant perspectives and were consistently 500 words or less. Four editorial headlines were positive while the other six were neutral. Most of the photos were neutral in sentiment. However, three of the 14 were non-antagonistic.

Most of the news articles spanned the detailed discovery of Till’s body in the Tallahatchie River in Sumner, Miss, up until the weeklong trial of his accused murderers—J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant. In between, articles explored the life of Till, his family and what led him to spend a summer in Mississippi to begin with. There was also coverage of the funeral of the young Black boy. Headlined, “50,000 View Body of 14-year-old Boy Found Slain In Mississippi,” the title and content of the article was a testament to the massive amount of attention given to the incident. The paper provided
the comments of others such as relatives and Black leaders and dignitaries attending the funeral. According to the article, more than 10,000 persons crowded streets near the church where Till’s funeral was held and all 1800 seats were filled inside the church. Even more people had viewed the battered and bruised body of Till because his mother, Mamie Till insisted that the world “see what happened to my boy” (“View Body,” 1955, p. 1). One Bishop, Louis Ford, told mourners: “Our country is spending millions trying to win the good will of colored people in Africa and India…Our president and vice president ought to be seeking the good will of colored people in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia” (“View Body,” 1955, p. 1), reported The World. However, the newspaper offered no comments or suggestive language about their feelings about the murder or alleged murderers.

News articles surrounding the trial covered opening and closing arguments by the defense lawyer and the testimonies of key witnesses such as Till’s uncle, Moses Wright, Sheriff George Smith, and Mrs. Carolyn Bryant—wife of one of the men on trial and the victim of the alleged wolf whistle given by Emmet Till, which allegedly sparked the kidnapping and murder of Till by Milam and Bryant. Most of those articles offered neutral dominant perspectives. However, when a “not guilty” verdict was handed down, there were two World articles which presented a different tone.

Particularly, one article headlined, “Mockery of Justice Seen by Writer at Miss. Lynch Trial” opened as follows:

An all White male jury of sharecroppers demonstrated here Friday that the constitutional guarantees of ‘life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness do not apply to the colored citizens of their state. The mockery of the sacred constitutional
guarantees was made by these sharecroppers in 65 short minutes of deliberation in the outmoded, antiquated Sumner, Miss court room where they returned a verdict of not guilty against two White men charged with the Aug. 28 killing of 14 year old Emmett Till. (Hicks, 1955, p.1)

In essence, the newspaper offered a clear stance of how it felt about the “not guilty verdict” –by calling the decision a mockery of the justice system and the constitution itself a lie!

A separate article headlined, “World Shocked by Till Trial; Old, Young leave Mississippi” revealed that the aftermath of the Emmett Till Lynch-murder trial was being reverberated all over the globe. “The world is watchful and is unanimous in its condemnation of Mississippi” (Hampton, 1955, p. 6), stated the article, which offered these sentiments as The World’s own words and not as a direct quote from anyone commenting about their feelings towards the verdict. The paper’s reactions criticizing the verdict were continued in all ten of the editorials written about the murder.

In one of its initial editorials about Till, The World proclaimed that the lynch-murder of Emmet Till was an old story. “The murder of the young teenager is a story that’s been told over and over again. Enactments of orgies of rape and fagot, the ugly head of lynching has risen again. There is a new order meant to obtain the same objectives of old” (“Mississippi Lynch-Murder,” 1955, p. 4), stated the editorial. In essence, the newspaper pointed out the South was historically a place where such violence had occurred before. The paper further asserted that time may have progressed but the objectives of the South to violate Blacks was still the same. Till’s lynch-murder was a prime example of it.
In another editorial entitled, “The Case of Emmett Till,” the *World* again bluntly asserted that the highly charged racist atmosphere in the deep South was certainly to blame for the incident of Till’s murder. “Let the Mississippi murder be probed to the bottom. The wound in the breast of this poor mother, who happened to take her child on a peaceful mission down in Mississippi, can never be healed” (1955, p. 6), the article went on.

The paper offers a bit of sarcasm along with its anger in the editorial headlined, “Disgrace in Mississippi.” “The sovereign state of Mississippi has just suffered a disgrace. Down in the Delta country a visiting Black boy from Chicago is supposed to have insulted a White woman by making “ugly remarks” and for that heinous offense was kidnapped, shot in the head and dumped into the Tallahatchie River” (1955, p. 4), mocked the paper. Calling the wolf whistle a heinous offense and contrasting the consequence of being shot and dumped in the river was sarcastic and revealing that the newspaper certainly agreed that the violence against Till was unbefitting of his alleged wolf whistle.

*The World* was evidently angry about the murder of young Till and openly blamed the atmosphere of the South for the crime, “The White supremacists in Mississippi are quick to say that this murder on the Tallahatchie cannot rightly be blamed on their resistance to desegregation. Of course, they do not condone even the approximation of lynching, but it is hard to see how calculated inflammation—politically and economically—can fail to feed the fires” (“Disgrace Mississippi,” 1955, p. 4).
In one editorial, the *World* focused on the innocence of young Till and painted a further intriguing picture of the South. The editorial contrasted Till’s northern upbringing with the southern way of life and did not hold back on words to describe it:

He (Till) had grown up where there was no unwritten law that a Negro to be acceptable to Whites must be a fawning, servile, hat-in-hand Uncle Tom. He had grown up where there were no segregation ordinances surrounding him like a cage and limiting his freedom as an individual and a human being. He didn’t know about the kind of people he was likely to see and come in contact with in a little country town in Mississippi—people who are poor, uneducated, coarse and dirty. The social inferiors of the better class Whites—the crackers, hill-billies, clay eaters, red-necks, peckerwoods, wool hats, and the low-down and no counts…Emmet was just a 14 year old boy, probably putting on a show for his country cousins. Just at the age when he was trying to find himself to test himself. (Bryant, 1955, p. 8)

Interestingly, when a verdict of not guilty was rendered to Till’s accusers, the *World* chose to print editorials from two other newspapers, *The Montgomery Advertiser* and *The New York Herald Tribune* instead of providing their own viewpoints. Both editorials offered the respective newspaper’s opinions regarding the not guilty verdict and proclaimed they were impartial as to whether or not the verdict was fair. However, the *Advertiser* proclaimed, “We did not hear the evidence, though we had formed the opinion that the accused were guilty. But it is another thing to sit oath bound on a jury, solemnly committed to free the accused unless convince beyond reasonable doubt of his guilt. That is a terrible responsibility” (“Mississippi Verdict,” 1955, p. 4). The *Tribune* went on to say:
Some people will now say that the state of Mississippi, rife with political and economic inflammation over the desegregation issue, has hereby condoned lynching. That, however, is an unfair and intemperate judgment. The case was one of murder, an individual crime, not lynching, a community crime. All must admit that indictments were swiftly returned, that Governor White assigned a competent special prosecutor, and that Judge Swango’s conduct of the case was irreproachable. This is commendable. But the offense nevertheless remains. The boy Emmett Till was abducted from his uncle’s home, and if he was not murdered, where is he? (“Aquittal Mississippi,” 1955, p. 4)

Although the opinions of those editorials are viewed as reflective of the World’s, there were no comments made by the newspaper which can be attributed as its direct editorial response to the verdict.

In regards to photos, most of the 14 photos found were neutral and were mere depictions of the key players in the Till murder trial, the defendants, and those testifying such as Till’s uncle and mother. The photos deemed non-antagonistic were images of Till’s mother crying. There were three photos depicting Till’s mother crying as his body was being unloaded in a pine box from a truck and at the funeral. These images seemed to draw sympathy towards Till and his family and to the South. Additionally, these images drew yet more attention towards the South and the crimes being committed against Blacks.

When analyzing the news coverage by the World regarding Till, it is easy to see that their overall coverage was neutral and objective. The paper presented information from the viewpoints of those involved in the matter. Only after the not guilty verdict was
passed down did the paper seem to inject their opinions into the articles. Otherwise, *The World* appeared to save its open condemnation of Till’s murder and the not guilty verdict for its editorial section. As the remarks above reflect, the newspaper was angry at the men on trial and the entire South for letting them off so easy. As far as the paper was concerned, this was just another senseless act of violence against an innocent Black conjured up by the backward thinking of White southerners. The powerful stands of the editorials were so assertive they made the news articles seem even the more neutral.

*The Birmingham World*

1956 Desegregation of Alabama buses. Eight articles and six editorials were printed by *The World* regarding the desegregation of Alabama buses. There were no photos included. All eight of the news articles appeared on the front page, were 500 words or less, had neutral headlines, and neutral dominant perspectives. Only one characterization appeared about Dr. King and it was neutral. All six of the editorials were 500 words or less, had neutral headlines, and pro dominant perspectives.

The desegregation of Alabama buses was a tremendous victory for Blacks in light of their sacrifice made during their almost year long boycott. Recall, Blacks had refrained from using buses since December 1955 due to racial segregation. *The Birmingham World’s* news coverage of the historic achievement was present but did not show favor or disapproval for the decision. In fact, *The World’s* news articles were neutral in their treatment of the high court’s decision.

The content of some news articles provided details of the Supreme Court’s decision as well as highlighted the opinion of the boycott’s key leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. “We are deeply grateful to hear of the momentous decision of the Supreme Court. If we
will seek with understanding and good will, and the deep spirit of Christian love to work out the new opportunity, we will be able to integrate buses without violence or friction” (“King Decision,” 1956, p. 1), stated Dr. King.

Other topics included an article dedicated to revealing how some southern states were looking for ways to maneuver around the Supreme Court’s decision. “Immediately after the decision was handed down, several states indicated their laws against racial mixing on public transportation would have to be tested in separate court action and pending such tests, segregation could be continued on buses” (“New Tests,” 1956, p. 1), reported The World. Thus, the neutral news articles about the desegregation of Alabama buses were a conflicting comparison to what its editorial coverage was. In fact, the positive editorial comments made by the World about Mrs. Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus boycott in 1955 were a clear prelude to how the newspaper responded editorially to the desegregation of Alabama Buses. The paper’s editorials were adamant that it was constitutionally wrong for separation of races to exist on buses or in any way of the southern life for that matter.

The World proclaimed that current segregation signs on buses would become ignominious symbols of dead law because of the United States Supreme Court’s decision declaring that segregation laws in the area of human transportation was unconstitutional.

The World went on further to express its celebration and defense of the court’s decision in several comments about the dangers of racial segregation and its influence on society. “Racial segregation is a commodity which is too expensive in terms of human rights, dignity of man, and cost of life and liberty to be required by law. Now that the buses have unloaded their extra baggage of Jim Crow they will be able to pick up the
passengers of freedom” (“Bus Decision,” 1956, p. 8), stated The World in its justification of the matter. Thus, the newspaper’s editorial comments established a very pro dominant perspective regarding the desegregation of Alabama buses and ultimately felt it was a great victory for Blacks.

So the newspaper’s overall coverage of this topic was neutral in regards to the news articles. Only in its editorials, did The World inject its opinion about the court’s decision and its implications.

The Birmingham World

1957 Little Rock Nine. Fifteen news articles, six editorials, and 24 photos offered the perspective of The World in regards to the Little Rock Nine. Fourteen of the 15 news articles had neutrally dominant perspectives while one had a pro perspective. Ten were 500 words or less and five were 501-1000 words in length. All 15 headlines were neutral. There were seven neutral characterizations of Governor Faubus. Of the six editorials, all had pro dominant perspectives. Additionally, five of the editorials were 500 words or less and only one editorial was 501-1000 words. There were two positive headlines and four neutral ones. Finally, out of the 24 photos, only four had a non-antagonistic sentiment and the remaining 20 were neutral.

Much like its previous news articles, The World presented their coverage of the Little Rock Nine with neutrality. Nearly all the news articles revealed the back and forth of the Little Rock drama between the tirade of the Governor and the demands of President Eisenhower to end the unlawful blockade of the nine Black students into the all-White high school. No biased language or references to Governor Faubus were initiated; nor were there any special sympathies shown towards the nine Black students by The World.
The same tone of neutrality emerged in the photos taken by the newspaper. Unlike some of the other newspapers included in this study, this paper showed only about 4 photos that revealed soldiers and protestors outside of the all White high school in which the young Blacks were attempting to integrate. Those pictures held a non-antagonistic sentiment. The pictures drew sympathy towards the nine little Blacks who were being blockaded by a power driven governor and an entire gun toting National Guard army. All of this innocence in the face of power—that is the picture it painted. Further, those photos provided evidence of the extremes to which some Whites were willing to go in order to maintain segregation of the races.

Nonetheless, the majority of the remaining 20 photos were neutral. They were mostly headshots of the major players in the drama such as the nine Black students, Governor Faubus and President Eisenhower.

All of the pro dominant editorials written about the Little Rock Nine criticized Governor Faubus for defying the federal government and disagreed with his blockade of the nine Black students from entering Central High School. One editorial entitled, “Governor Faubus Traps Himself”, called Faubus’ actions “ill-advised, mentally delusional, and embarrassing” (“Governor Faubus,” 1957, p. 8). As Faubus continued to put himself and the state above the federal government despite pleading from the President, The World went on to call Faubus’ persistent disobedience, unjustified, untenable, and unsavory.

In another editorial, managing World editor, Emory Jackson called the situation in Little Rock, Arkansas sad days for the South. “Bigotry has gained the upper hand…bigotry is the mother of violence. Troops have been dispatched to Little Rock to
quell violence. But they cannot cure bigotry which is the disease of ignorance. Troops can halt sadistic violence, but they can hardly help brotherhood which is ripened love” (Jackson, 1957, p. 6). Here the editor points out that the South and especially Little Rock has issues of prejudice in which no army has the power to cure. Perhaps only a mind and or change of heart can cure such ignorance suggests Jackson.

A different editorial expressed anger and concern that the situation in Little Rock was having a negative influence on the state of Alabama. Apparently some Alabama politicians decided to use the situation as a platform for their own speeches, which applauded Faubus’ actions and states rights. The World called those politicians “selfish, thought-controlled, and inflaming groups” (“Understand Issues,” 1957, p. 6).

When President Dwight Eisenhower finally sent troops to escort the nine Black students into Central Little Rock High School, The World seemed ecstatic applauding the President’s decision to use force against Faubus:

Now a great wrong is well on the way to be righted, with his (President Eisenhower) action, millions of Americans and people everywhere who believe in human rights will take renewed faith in our form of government of law. We accept the President’s position and action with humility and gratitude. The forthright courage and the vigorous stand taken in behalf of upholding the Constitutional rights of Negro Americans will go a long way in affirming the American doctrine of human rights. (“President’s Historic,” 1957, p. 6)

As for the photographic coverage by the paper, most were headshots of the two key players in the standoff—President Eisenhower and Governor Faubus. Very few photos actually depicted the scene of the blockade and the riot that broke out—of course those
photos like many of the ones depicting violence against Blacks were non-antagonistic and beneficial to the movement as it showed the true likeness of the hate that existed between Blacks and Whites in the South.

So, once again the overall characterization of *The World*’s news coverage in regards to news articles was neutral. The newspaper seemed to present the facts and happenings of that moment with lenses of objectivity. The exception, of course, was the news editorials, which was the place for opinion and a stance to be established if one was to be taken.

*The Birmingham World*

*1958 Stabbing of Dr. King.* There were six articles, one editorial and one photo printed by *The World* about the stabbing of Dr. King in 1958. All six articles had a neutrally dominant perspective and appeared on the front page. Four of the six articles were 500 words or less and two were 501-1000 words. Additionally, all of the articles had neutral headlines. Although Dr. King was the subject of the articles, only the comments of others characterized him. Those comments were not included as characterizations because they were not initiated by *The World.* The one editorial found had a pro dominant perspective, offered a positive characterization of Dr. King, and was less than 500 words, with a neutral headline. The photo found was determined to have a non-antagonistic sentiment.

The news articles neutrally dominant perspectives revealed the details about the stabbing of Dr. King and included a few comments of some Black leaders. Another article examined how Montgomery, Alabama, reacted to the stabbing of Dr. King. Another article examined his recovery process. *The World* also printed an entire
statement released by Dr. King while he was in the hospital. The article was entitled, “Dr. King Bears No Ill Will.” *The World* was the only newspaper to print the statement in its entirety. Although the words belonged to Dr. King and the newspaper made no comments or responses throughout the statement, mere inclusion of it in the newspaper in full length shows it was relevant to *The World* more so than the other papers included in this study.

In the one editorial found, Editor Emory Jackson called the attack on Dr. King, “frightful” and “horrible” and referenced King as being “loved and respected and an example of the Negro community” (1958, p. 6). The editor went on to express how disturbing the attack against King was but rather than focusing on the incident itself or the health and recovery of Dr. King, the editorial used the stabbing to question race relations in Birmingham, Al. “If Dr. King had been stabbed in Birmingham, would he have even received medical attention? Most of the hospitals deny staff privileges to Negro doctors, restrict Negro patients mercilessly, and in some cases there are heart-breaking obstacles” (1958, p. 6), expressed Jackson. In essence, the editor was relieved that the stabbing happened in the North where Dr. King was able to receive immediate medical attention.

The one photo taken for this coverage was a picture of Dr. King lying in the hospital bed with a Dr. hovering over him. The picture was classified as non-antagonistic because it drew sympathy towards the integration leader simply because he was a victim of crime. Particularly, the individual committing the crime accused Dr. King of being a communist—a title used by White segregationists for many Black leaders trying to bring about racial change in the South. In fact, speculation at the time was that Dr. King’s
Black attacker, Iozola Curry, was in cahoots with White Georgia Segregationists when she committed the crime.

*The Birmingham World*

1960 Sit-in demonstrations. There was very little attention given to the sit-in protests by *The World* during the specified time under study. In fact, only two articles were found. There were no editorials or photos. Of those three articles, all were neutral in perspective and less than 500 words. One was found on the front page and the other two articles were in the middle of the paper. This was different considering that most coverage by *The World* on other civil rights issues appeared mostly on the front page. There were no characterizations made about the demonstrators or those who opposed their positions. No biased language was used in the coverage of this non-violent protest.

*The Birmingham World*

1961 Freedom riders. There were no articles, editorials, or photos printed by the *World* during this time period of analysis regarding this topic. The absence of coverage suggests that the events may not have been important to the newspaper. The lack of coverage during this time period was even the more interesting considering its White counterpart; the *News* included at least a small amount of coverage of the events. Whether or not there were other circumstances that prevented the paper from covering the story is unknown.

*The Birmingham World*

1962 James Meredith enters all White Ole Miss. Nine articles, two editorials, and three photos specified *The World’s* coverage of James Meredith’s attempt to get into the all-White University of Mississippi, a.k.a “Ole Miss.” All of the news articles during this
time appeared on the front page and had neutrally dominant perspectives and headlines. All five were 500 words or less and the remaining four were 501-1000 words in length. All four characterizations of Governor Barnett were neutral. The editorials were also neutrally dominant, 500 words or less, and had neutral headlines. All three editorials characterized Governor Barnett with a neutral perspective. There was no clear focus on James Meredith but more on the steps being taken by the Governor to defy court orders to clear Meredith’s entrance.

All of the news articles and editorials had neutrally dominant perspectives. This was surprising considering the pattern of The World’s coverage from 54’ until now was neutral articles but pro editorials. The content of all the news coverage uncovered the drama in Oxford, MS, as Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett pulled the same tactic as Governor Hugh White did in Little Rock, Arkansas. Governor Barnett also disobeyed a Supreme Court order that allowed a Black to enter the all-White University of Mississippi. The only difference being that Governor White’s barricade was made at an all-White high school.

In regards to photos, they too were neutral—simple headshots of Meredith and his lawyers. The typical coverage among the other newspapers in this study included more photo coverage of the Meredith drama. Additionally, those photos were usually non-antagonistic providing images of the army and avid protestors lining the entrance of Ole Miss to chastise the Black as an outsider invading an all-White territory. However, The World’s photo coverage of the same event was very limited and very different. Overall, The World produced very neutral coverage of the forced entrance of Meredith.
The Birmingham World

1963 Murder of Medgar Evers. There were nine articles, one editorial and four photos that revealed the World’s coverage of the murder of Mississippi’s NAACP Field Secretary, Medgar Evers. All nine of the paper’s news articles made headway on the front page. Additionally, all nine hoisted neutrally dominant perspectives as well as neutral headlines. Six of the articles were 500 words or less, while three were 501-1000 words in length. The one editorial printed about Evers revealed a pro dominant perspective regarding his murder as well as a positive headline and was 500 words or less in length. All four photos shot during the Evers coverage was non-antagonistic in sentiment and were shots of his funeral and memorial.

All news articles of Evers detailed the circumstances surrounding his murder such as the effects of his murder on the city of Jackson, Mississippi, the comments of prominent U.S. officials regarding his murder, his funeral and burial, and the search for his murderer. The World’s news coverage of the issues above was indeed neutral. However, the paper didn’t fail to reveal the racially tensed demonstrations sparked by Evers murder such as the anti-segregation march which took place after his funeral in the streets of Jackson, Mississippi as well as in other southern states grieving his death. “Only a small fraction of the marchers took part in violence, hurling rocks and bottles at the officers” (“Evers Funeral,” 1963, p. 1), reported one World article of the Jackson marchers. In another article, the newspaper talked about the scholarships established for Evers children in the aftermath of his death. In the article entitled, “Evers Scholarship Plan is Urged on Publishers’ Group,” the editor-publisher of the Philadelphia Tribune declared that “the Negro Press was aware of the tremendous debt it owed to Evers, who
gave his life in MS for the very cause that triggered the birth of the Negro newspaper” (1963, p. 1).

It seemed, the newspaper was focused on revealing the deep effects of Evers murder through its select topics chosen. Even though, there was no language that revealed favor or lack thereof, the number and varying subjects concerning the uplifting of Evers after his death, the well being of his legacy to be carried on by his family, prominent Black leaders, and his brother, Charles Evers, was perhaps an undertone to the one editorial the newspaper printed regarding Evers’ murder.

The World’s single editorial called Evers’ murder shocking and regrettable; a sacrificial death. In fact, the act was barbaric and cowardice, a reflection of the temper and times of Mississippi the editorial went on to say:

We hope that the killer or killers of Medgar Evers will be found and prosecuted to the letter of the law…Those seriously working to clarify and guarantee civil rights for every citizen in the nation will take the Evers’ murder as the signal for increasing their dedication and zeal for the righteous cause. He must not have died in vain! (“Find Medgar,” 1963, p. 6)

Indeed that statement was a sure declaration that the newspaper was very much saddened and appalled at the murder of Evers calling his death an indication of the cancerous, subhuman sores that existed in his home state of Mississippi. In essence, the World openly embraced Evers’ cause referencing his works with the NAACP as sacrificial work. Even the editorial’s title “Find Medgar Evers’ Slayer, Push the Cause He Represented,” showed the paper’s backing of his work and in turn the ideals of the NAACP and the cause of the Civil Rights Movement.
As previously stated, the photos taken were depictions of family and friends during their time of grievance at both the funeral and memorial services for Medgar. A widowed wife and her children sitting in mourning of a father and husband—this was the scene of one picture. Right below that picture, the one they mourned for was shown speaking to a NAACP rally just prior to his murder. The remaining photo showed community ministers and other civil rights leaders addressing a mass meeting instructing the crowd to wear Black and refrain from shopping for one month in mourning of Evers death.

*The Birmingham World*

*1963 March on Washington.* There were 12 news articles, three editorials, and six photos written about the March on Washington. All 12 news articles had neutrally dominant perspectives with neutral headlines. All were situated on the front page. Eleven of the articles were 500 words or less. Only the article printed immediately after the march boasted almost a 1000 words. No characterizations were found. Of the three editorials; all had pro dominant perspectives but were 500 words or less. Their headlines were neutral and there were no characterizations that appeared. As stated, there were six photos by *The World*. Four of the six were neutral in sentiment but the other two were non-antagonistic.

Once again, the coverage of *The World* was neutral in regards to its news articles but offered pro dominant perspectives about the march in its editorials. The subject content of the news articles examined the views of those in support and opposition to the march mostly.
Additionally, some articles addressed allegations against March leaders, A. Philip Randolph and Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. Accused of being communists utilizing the march to garner support for communism, *The World’s* story about the matter included a quote from another NAACP march leader, Executive Secretary, Roy Wilkins, “The March on Washington has not invited and does not welcome Communist participation in any form or measure. The report attempt of Communists to infiltrate the ranks of the march is totally rejected by the march leadership. They have no role whatsoever in our march” (“Wilkins Rejects,” 1963, p. 1).

Another article revealed how the march brought the country’s three major religious faiths closer than any issue in the nation’s peacetime history—Protestant, Catholic and Jewish groups. Headlined, “Over 200,000 Orderly March in Washington,” one article referenced the march as “the greatest and perhaps most orderly rally ever staged for Negro equality” (1963, p. 1). That was the most revealing opinion printed by *The World* regarding the March but was not its own. Other reactions came from march participants and leaders.

However, *The World* was very clear of their support of the march in its editorials. Leading up to the march one editorial positioned the march with important regards calling it, “the high tide of the American Revolution of 1963—a rally of persons of all races protesting the twin evils of discrimination and economic deprivation,” (“Historic Events,” 1963, p. 8).

An additional editorial called the march orderly and well disciplined without any violence. It also stated that it was a great help in revealing to White Americans the injustices and barriers that still handicapped Blacks and the gap between American
practices and the great American principles. In essence, Editor Jackson proclaimed that America, at that point, was not practicing what it preached.

In the aftermath of the march, Jackson went on to express his hope that the legislative members would “take responsibility and pass the Civil Rights Bill which would rid Blacks of the injustices and discrimination against them, at least make it illegal to do so. By passing the bill, this will give our nation the image it serves as a leader of the free world” (“March Washington,” 1963, p. 6), The World editorial said.

Regarding the six March photos, four were neutral pictures of march participants taking photos of the event. Among the photographers shown was celebrity, Sammy Davis, Jr. However, there were two photos that offered a non-antagonistic sentiment. One was a picture of the Washington Monument, with an overflow of march participants surrounding it (Photograph of Monument, 1963, p. 1). The other photo pictured leaders of the march meeting with then President John F. Kennedy after the march (Photograph of Kennedy, 1963, p.1). These two photos can be viewed as non-antagonistic because they revealed images of acts that were in keeping with the goals of the Civil Rights Movement—they promoted—unity and peace. Additionally, the pictures revealed an overflow of all races joining together for the cause of the movement and a President who was at least open to discussing the cause with the march leaders.

A televised march meant to dramatize support for the civil rights legislation pending in congress that if passed would finally guarantee Blacks equal rights; The World provided some printed coverage of the event. However, The World was neutral in its news articles and printed very few pro dominant editorials and supportive photos of the march.
The Birmingham World

1963 Birmingham church bomb. 10 articles, five editorials, and 11 photos covered the pages of The Birmingham World when four Black girls’ church was bombed in Birmingham, Alabama. All 10 of the articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and were on the front page. Seven of the 10 articles were 500 words or less while three were almost a 1000 words. Three of the headlines were positive and the rest were neutral. Of the five editorials, four were pro dominant perspectives and only one was neutral. Three were 500 words or less with two almost a 1000 words. Two of the headlines were positive and three were neutral. There were four positive characterizations made about the bombing victims and a negative portrayal of Alabama Governor, George Wallace. 10 of the photos had non-antagonistic sentiments and only one was antagonistic.

In keeping with its previous news article coverage, The Birmingham World managed to be objective in its coverage of the Birmingham bombing, which killed four young Black girls in the basement of their church. For the most part, the articles described the reactions of the Birmingham community including family members of the victims, Black leaders, and other newspapers across the nation and within Alabama. Also, there were stories which told of the memorial activities taking place on behalf of the victims. The only inkling of opinion came from some of the news article headlines, “Nation Mourns Birmingham Dead with Grief, Troubled Conscience,” and “Innocent Victims of B’ham’s Daylight Church Bombing at 16th Street Baptist” and “Stars Still Shine in Dark Birmingham.” The headlines seemed to indicate that the bombing was a time of darkness and would have a deep impact on the city of Birmingham as well as the
nation. Also, the newspaper’s reference to the four as innocent was a clear indication of the papers denunciation of the violence against them.

In fact, in its first editorial about the Birmingham bombing the *World* was full of passion and revelation about its feelings regarding the bombing, “When one touches a child with cruelty he hits the heart of humanity. A bomb which is used against innocent children is the lowest kind of depravity. This type of savagery tends to X-Ray the body of the community life in Birmingham” (Jackson, 1963, p. 6), said the newspaper.

Consequently, the content of another *World* editorial extended its sympathy to the families of the bombed victims asserting,

We are angered by the murderous bombing and shocked by the lack of solution. The Birmingham World has been in the struggle against this kind of insanity, intolerance, disrespect of the House of God, defiance of established law, and disregard of human values…We shall try to carry on the struggle, believing in the divine goodness. We have that overcoming faith in a Higher Being to guide us.

(“Killers Innocents,” 1963, p. 1)

The editorial also strongly described the act as a “Day of Sorrow and Shame in Birmingham, Alabama, the world’s chief city of unsolved racial bombings…An unforgettable day in our nation, in world history” (“Killers Innocents,” 1963, p. 1).

Seemingly very angry, the editorial went on to criticize the governor of Alabama, George Wallace, blaming him for playing a role in setting the atmosphere for such a ghastly tragedy to occur. “He says he stands for law and order but he seems to attract the support of the negative forces whose credo inspires less” (“Killers Innocents,” 1963, p. 1), accused *The World*. 
The World continued to openly express its feelings about the bombing in another editorial entitled, “Ye Have Done It Unto Me.” Essentially, the newspaper saw the act of violence as an act against society and the world rather than just against the actual four victims. “The evil hands that set off the bomb which killed the four girls, injured several others, and damaged the House of Worship made a blow against humanity, civilization and the community’s conscience” (“Ye Have,” 1963, p. 6), proclaimed The World.

Another editorial did not offer a specific opinion on behalf of The World about the bombing but included a statement made by a leading civil rights voice. Specifically, it was a statement given by Dr. Robert Spike, then executive director of the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches. Dr. Spike stated,

It is time for White Christian people of Birmingham to arise and speak out openly and forcefully against the madness which has swept their city, a madness which was allowed to take root and grow by their silence and which as been encouraged and inflamed by the reckless and irresponsible statements of open defiance made by their Governor. Let them now acknowledge that the only way to prevent such senseless tragedies is by wholehearted public support of a society where all men both White and Negro, are truly free. (“Church Council,” 1963, p. 4)

Furthermore, Dr. Spike announced in the editorial that the Commission had established a fund to which all Americans were invited to contribute to help ease the expenses of the families of the dead and injured and to rebuild the 16th Street Baptist Church. So, in the editorial The World did not express its own feelings about the bombing. Yet, they included Dr. Spike’s entire comments, which heavily condemned the act of violence against the four little Black girls killed. It was interesting that this whole
statement was included in the editorial section. Because it was a report of what someone else said, it could’ve been included as an article. Perhaps, The World included the words spoken by Dr. Spike because they were a reflection of how The World really felt. If matched with the other editorial comments made by The World; it easy to make a connection between the two.

As for its photos, The World seemed to mirror the passion of its editorials through its photography. Specifically, the newspaper seemed to capture the emotions of the moment offering photos that showed the bodies of the young Black girls being lifted on stretchers out of the rubble of the blast. Additionally, there were headshots printed for each of the young children along with article write ups about them and their lives. Other photos revealed the children’s mourning parents. In contrast, two side by side head shots of a pointing finger, President John F. Kennedy at Alabama Governor, George Wallace were in keeping with the newspapers earlier comments that it would take the actions of the country’s leaders to help change the racial situation which had created the atmosphere for such a tragedy to occur. Finally, there were photos of memorial marchers, marching in memory of the young girls murdered—a photo which appeared to confer a piece of the impact being felt by the city of Birmingham.

After reviewing The World’s entire coverage of the bombing, it’s interesting how the newspaper was able to stay objective in its news articles when it was so very passionate in its editorials more so than in any of its previous editorials regarding other specific civil rights events. Perhaps, the crime committed against the young children was more than the newspaper or the rest of the nation could bear.
The Birmingham World

1964 Freedom summer. There were no articles printed by this paper during the time period of analysis of this study regarding this topic. The absence of coverage suggests that the event may not have been important to the newspaper at the time.

The Birmingham World

Civil Rights Act of 1964. Nine articles but no editorials or photos were found in the World about the Civil Rights Act of 1964. All articles had a neutrally dominant perspective and neutral headlines. Additionally all articles appeared in the front section of the newspaper. As for length, eight of the articles were 500 words or less and only one was 501-1000 words.

The neutrally driven articles addressed the various aspects of the Act that most of the newspapers did in this study such as an outline of the Bill and its implications for the nation, specifically the deep South. Additionally, the paper included stories of Blacks testing the ban at various businesses all over the nation. Reaction comments were also used. However, the interesting thing about the paper’s coverage was the fact that the majority of the comments that were included came only from Black leaders particularly Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, President of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, an organization like the NAACP, compromised of Blacks working towards their equal rights. The World reported Shuttlesworth as saying, “The Civil Rights Bill really means the second Emancipation of the American Negro. It gives the Negro equal status with other Americans and gives him the right to challenge in court any discrimination practiced against him” (“Restaurants Theaters,” 1964, p. 1). The paper made no comment regarding his statement. Nonetheless, the paper’s choice to only include favorable
reaction to the Act was one sided and implicates that perhaps the paper was utilizing the voice of Rev. Shuttlesworth to propel its own viewpoint. With no editorials available to view, only assumptions can be made for the World’s actually stance regarding the Civil Rights Act passage. The only other comment regarding the Act included in the paper was the words of President Johnson, who expressed great approval of the Bill.

Other articles discussed the violence and arrests that resulted from Blacks trying to test the adherence of the new Civil Rights Bill. The paper reported that Birmingham was experiencing cooperation for the most part among businesses by allowing Blacks to successfully integrate their facilities.

Overall, the World was brief in its reporting and unlike any of the other Black newspapers; it did not print a single editorial expressing their support for or against the Bill. Nonetheless, the reaction comments included were all favorable and from proponents of the movement—which may indicative of how the World felt underneath but refrained from speaking out.

The Birmingham World

1964 Three Civil Rights workers murdered. There were five articles, no editorials, and four photos printed about the murder of the three civil rights workers who had been missing for days before showing up in an earthen dam. All five articles had neutrally dominant perspectives and neutral headlines. All articles appeared in the front section of the paper and were 500 words or less. All four photos were non-antagonistic in sentiment.

As the World told about the discovery of the workers bodies, it once again called on a Black leader to provide a viewpoint of the situation at hand. This time around it
was Roy Wilkins, Executive Secretary of the NAACP. “The wanton lynch-murders of Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Chaney by lawless elements in Mississippi have added to the state’s already bloody record, which is being spread this summer before a shocked nation of the world” (“Calls Slaying,” 1964, p. 5). The paper did not openly support this statement nor did it offer any comments that condemned the murders.

As for its four photos, all of them were headshots of the four Ku Klux Klansmen accused of murdering the workers. Although, they were merely headshots, the photos were non-antagonistic because they reflected a picture of the four people who may be responsible for committing violence against the men simply because they were helping to improve the lives of Blacks while they were in Mississippi.

Overall, the newspaper used neutral journalistic practices as it excluded its own viewpoints from the articles. Nonetheless, just as in its previous coverage, the World chose to use only a Black source to comment about the murders that just like before had a pro dominant perspective. Continued selection of individuals with this type of stance is very interesting and may be an indication of how the paper actually felt but did not relay in its own words.

Overview Result Summary

Based upon the results, all three research questions could be answered. In regards to the first research question (RQ1) which analyzed how the Black and White newspapers used the framing techniques headlines, article length and placement, it was determined that the majority of both Black and White news articles utilized the frames
very evenly. Most papers had neutral headlines, placed their articles in the front section of the newspaper, and averaged about 500 words in their description of most events.

The second research question (RQ2) asked what major subject/themes prevailed during the media coverage of the movement. Although many events were examined during the newspapers coverage of the movement, there were specific topics which yielded the majority of the papers’ attention such as the issues of integration, demonstrations/protests that yielded in violence, as well as the coverage of violence committed against Black activists as well as ordinary citizens.

As for the final research question (RQ3), which asked what dominant perspectives, appeared in the article/editorials; a neutrally dominant perspective prevailed overall among Black/White news articles in both the South and North while a pro dominant editorial perspective emerged for Black Southern newspapers and both Black and White Northern newspapers. An anti dominant perspective arose from the editorials presented by the White Southern newspapers.

The following sections will analyze specifically according to the various papers how each fit into the responses to the research questions above.

*Use of Framing Techniques and Subject/Themes.*

As stated, in general, both Black and White-owned newspapers shared neutrally dominant perspectives among their articles as well as neutral headlines. Additionally, mostly all articles were placed in the front sections of the newspapers. The general article lengths among both Black and White papers were approximately 500 words. During certain movement events such as the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education decision outlawing segregation, the 1955 Murder Trial of Emmett Till, the 1957 forced integration
of Central Little Rock High School, the 1962 forced integration of The University of Mississippi, the 1963 March on Washington and the Birmingham Church Bombing, the 1964 Murder of the three civil rights workers, and the signing of the Civil Rights Act in 1964—Black articles in both the North and the South were twice as long. All of those time periods involved the fight against integration and equality for Blacks—the ultimate defeat to the Southern way of life whose laws were centered on segregation. The multiple stories that appeared in both the Northern and Southern newspapers demonstrated an extreme concern for integration and its implications and impressions probably because its adoption would ultimately affect the entire nation.

Overall, the time periods that were covered the least in regards to article length and amount of articles were those events centered on Rosa Parks, the stabbing of Dr. King, the sit-in demonstrations, freedom riders, and freedom summer—all which lacked the violence and/or racial intensity of the other larger events. In fact some of the Northern papers coverage of the lesser events only covered the demonstrations if violence occurred. Perhaps this was because the papers sought to expose the situation of Blacks for the nation to see. Surprisingly, the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 revealed less coverage than other major events also. Perhaps the monumental act received less coverage because the signing of the act “sealed the deal” and legally brought all Blacks’ struggles to an end. Even though the problem definitely did not end there, the small amount of coverage also showed how the Bill was indeed the climax of the movement and the cause that had been worked towards. The legislation spoke volumes for, about, and towards what many of the pro dominant papers had already expressed in their pages leading up to the Rights Bill passage.
In regards to editorials, there were less printed among Black and White-owned newspapers than articles, which is a normal practice of journalism. However, like the news articles the numbers of them seemed to increase during the most racially intense events—integration/segregation and violence against Blacks. *The Pittsburgh Courier* and the *Chicago Defender* editorials stood out as the lengthiest editorials regarding those topics. At times, the two papers were so passionate about some events; they placed some editorials on their front page rather than place them in their perspective locations in the paper.

*Article/Editorial Dominant Perspectives.*

The dominant perspectives of most Southern and Northern Black newspaper editorials were in support of the ideals of the Civil Rights Movement and the White-owned Northern newspapers were also. However, the two Southern White-owned newspapers were against the ideals of the Civil Rights Movement. In terms of placement, both Black and White newspapers placed their editorials in their prospective assigned places in the newspaper. However, the *Chicago Defender* often would place some of their more passionate editorials on the front page of their paper. The paper did so in its coverage of the murder trial of Chicago native, Emmett Till and during the beating of Black reporters covering the entrance of the Little Rock Nine.

In regards to length, Black northern papers produced more editorials and longer editorials. Very few characterizations were made in the articles between Black and White newspapers but more appeared in the editorials. Favor was shown by the *Chicago Defender*, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, and the *Birmingham World* in support of the efforts of
demonstrators/protestors such as the Freedom Riders, the Sit-in Demonstrators, and the participants in the March on Washington.

As for characterizations, they were usually not made in most news articles or editorials in neither the Black or White newspapers. However, some of the Black newspapers such as the Chicago Defender, the Pittsburgh Courier, and the Birmingham World were not timid about throwing their support behind some of the Black leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Thurgood Marshall, whom they felt had made great strides and sacrifices for the Black people and the Civil Rights Movement during the Brown vs. Board of Education victory as well as the passage of the Civil Rights Act. Additionally, favorable characterizations were made towards Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson for their work on passing the Civil Rights Act. The papers’ support of those figures, their increase in article/editorial coverage during certain events would prove to be a great indication of their dominant perspectives towards the ideals of the movement.

As for the photographic coverage of the movement the most relaying of a non-antagonistic sentiment was the Chicago Defender and the Pittsburgh Courier. Both Northern Black papers produced a wealth of pictures revealing the conditions of Blacks in the South, despite their geographic distance to many of the events happening. It’s interesting that the Southern White and Black newspapers included fewer pictures than the Northern Black papers even though they had a firsthand account of events. Perhaps, the controversy that led to the making of the images were so intertwined with the photos, the papers did not want to reignite the racial tensions again by printing such pictures. Fewer photos were also included in the Northern White newspapers. There were no
antagonistic photos—this indicates that the majority of the photos revealed the Black being oppressed, victimized, and at the short end of the stick rather than tyrannizing, preying, and being on the giving end of it all. Outsiders within, the photos presented alone could tell the story of Blacks in the deep South through the eyes of both the Northern and Southern newspapers, be they Black or White. The only way to avoid a non-antagonistic sentiment, was to not include a photo at all which is exactly what was chosen as a practice by the Clarion Ledger and the Jackson Advocate, the Birmingham News and the Birmingham World during many times when covering events that hit close to home such as protests/demonstrations and violence against Blacks. Again, perhaps the photos were too strong of a reminder of the everyday life faced by both Southern cities and states.

Paper-by-Paper Comparison/Contrasts

The Clarion Ledger vs. The Jackson Advocate. Throughout the Civil Rights Movement the news articles that appeared in both the Ledger and the Jackson Advocate were mainly neutral in terms of their dominant perspectives. There were very few occasions in which a news article in any of the two papers held an anti or pro dominant perspective whether the topic was segregation/integration, protests/demonstrations, riots, court decisions, or murder trials. In regards to article length, both the Ledger and the Advocate matched up pretty evenly with a general article length of about 500 words. The articles that seemed the lengthiest were the ones covering the 1957 integration of the Little Rock Nine, the 1962 entrance of James Meredith into Ole Miss, and the Murder Trial of Emmett Till. Additionally, the largest numbers of articles were also those articles surrounding the issue of integration and Till’s trial. Also both Ledger and the
*Advocate* included the majority of their news articles in the front section of the papers throughout the movement. This inclusion in the front section was initially thought to be a practice that would be seen among the Southern papers in this study because most of the civil rights events covered occurred in the South particularly in Mississippi or Alabama. However, after an analysis of the Northern papers, it was discovered that civil rights issues was a very salient topic for both regions. Thus, the Northern papers included the majority of the events in the front sections of its papers also with the exception of certain events. Topics such as the Sit-in demonstrations and Freedom Summer were more salient in the Southern papers. As for news article headlines, the majority were neutral for both the *Ledger* and the *Advocate*. This was probably due to the fact that the majority of the news articles were neutral. Often a headline reflects the tone of what the article will be about (Tankard, 2001).

As previously stated, the reporting in both the *Ledger* and the *Advocate* was very much objective in terms of the type of language utilized to describe each event and/or issue that may have occurred. However, sometimes the selection of certain information/sources made the news presented appear one sided. For example during the paper’s news article coverage of Brown vs. Board of Education, the news articles in the *Ledger* presented only the reaction viewpoints of Southern leaders who were against segregation rather than gathering information from both the proponents and opponents about the situation. In its editorials about the Court’s decision, the *Ledger* was very disapproving of the Court’s decision and was openly against integration. Thus, the one sidedness of the *Ledger*’s articles coupled with the anti dominant editorials against segregation helped to propel the neutrally presented articles into actually being anti
dominant perspectives in a sense. According to framing theory, the selection of sources or affiliations presented in a news article, can help to determine the salience of the topic being presented (Tankard, 2001). Selecting only segregationist quotes and segregated thinking individuals to include in the articles highlighted the paper’s segregationist mentality. The Jackson Advocate used the same mechanism of reporting in its news articles about the Brown vs. Board of Education decision only the Advocate included comments from citizens and leaders who were Blacks and who shared their stance for integration.

Renowned as a staunch segregationist newspaper, dripping with racial hatred, the Ledger’s news article coverage did not live up to the hype built up by the literature review as gathered from other researchers. One may have mistaken the paper as the mouthpiece for the KKK or the White Citizens Councils based upon the research. However, the news articles gathered in this study did not reveal such. Obvious opponents to integration and the Civil Rights Act and the cause of the movement, the newspaper was not distasteful in its stance anymore than the newspapers who were proponents of the movement. According to their stories, they were not some racist entity spewing negativity or wishing bad things upon the Black people in every aspect of life. In their coverage of occurrences such as the murder of Emmett Till and the murder of the three civil rights workers, the paper printed several neutral articles (a positive because they did not openly condone the murders) and several editorials which condemned the murders. The only anti editorials were the ones in which the Ledger seemed very angry and lashed out at the negative image and comments being made against Mississippi based upon those crimes. The paper felt that the state had progressed so much farther than what the
world was giving them credit for and that they should not be judged by those single occurrences. During some occasions such as the Ledger’s coverage of the murder of Emmett Till, the paper’s focus on the state’s image rather than the crime at hand made them appear to be insensitive to the incident.

In its news editorials, the Ledger openly spoke out for separate but equal facilities in all areas of life between Blacks and Whites and presented the viewpoints of those who mirrored the same beliefs. Yet, when it came to murder and violence committed against Blacks, the Ledger did not condone the violence. However, the paper believed that most of the violence could have been avoided if Blacks did not confront their problems of discrimination and injustice with demonstrations and protests. The Ledger strongly felt that such actions only stirred trouble and/or agitated already fragile race conditions and caused lives to be lost that did not have to be. Thus, in opposition to protests/demonstrations of any sort, the Ledger suggested that the only other alternative to gaining Black rights was through the Courts. Thus, the paper’s coverage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964—which gave Blacks all the rights they had been demonstrating and protesting towards, was not very negatively received even though it went against the ideals of the paper’s preference for segregation and separate but equal facilities. Instead, the Ledger’s biggest fears was that early testing by Blacks of the Bill through demonstrations/protests/sit-ins may incite violence no matter how peacefully the protests were planned to be. The paper had the same perspectives against the sit-ins, freedom rides, and the March on Washington. Any event in which a massive amount of Blacks may be confronted by White segregationists and violence may have the opportunity to
erupt—the Ledger was against it, the reason they provided was due to the unrest it caused.

Renowned as a Black newspaper whose editor at times had been paid by the White Citizens Council to speak out against integration and various efforts made by Blacks in the form of protests/demonstrations, the Jackson Advocate did not spend its time speaking from a segregationist platform. In fact, few editorials about the various happenings of the movement were written at all by the paper throughout the movement. Nonetheless, in the editorials it did write, the Advocate did not refrain from expressing discontent when violence was committed against Black activists. The Advocate did not refrain from speaking for integration or for Black rights to vote and to be educated equally even though it did not always agree with the means of obtaining those rights. The Advocate believed in Black progress and that they should work towards equality in a slow manner and through a political arena. Much like the Ledger, it didn’t believe in protests and demonstrations and thought they incited violence and caused more harm than help. Of course, the paper’s “take it slow” mentality was not a viewpoint shared by most who were fighting in the movement—who believed that only by forcing the federal government and the segregationist south to make a move would the Black ever actually be free. Consequently the Advocate’s mentality may have seemed controversial to those who felt it had already been too long of a wait. Nonetheless, to say that the Black newspaper was against the progress of Blacks and stood more on the side of segregationists and served as a mouth piece for the White Citizens Council is an outright lie. An elaborative examination of the paper’s coverage throughout the movement provided little to no evidence to support that claim. The paper was simply a victim of
selective analogy sort of like how a source may be misquoted or his/her words misused out of the context in which they came from.

So, overall both Mississippi papers were very neutral in their news articles and left personal opinions for their editorial pages. The Ledger was for segregation and the Advocate was for integration. The Ledger didn’t believe that the South should be forced to change their way of life in terms of the relationship between Blacks and Whites because they were fine with separate but equal facilities and that way of life. However, the Advocate believed that Blacks deserved to have equal citizenship—although they did not agree with all of the means taken by civil rights activists to achieve that end. Thus, the Advocate stood for the ultimate ending goal.

The Ledger, reported on the constant defeat of the Southern way of life in many cases from 1954-1964 (shut down of segregation was a major blow). Yet, the paper was able to elude direct opinion in its news articles and also refrained from excessive use of its editorial to badger Black rights. Its segregationist mentality still apparent, at times its two or three editorials said more than five in another paper. Yet, the Ledger promoted some good ideals as it always expressed avoidance of violence at all costs. Additionally the paper expressed that gradualness towards equality should take place in order to avoid such violence. But what the paper may have intended for good—gradualness, proved to be a characteristic that was pessimistic to the movement because Blacks were in a hurry to finally gain their equality.

The Birmingham News vs. The Birmingham World. Throughout the Civil Rights Movement, the News and World articles were majority neutral and opinions were saved for their editorials. Only during the World’s coverage of the murder of Emmett Till did
the paper alter from that pattern and interpose its opinion in an article. Apparently murder committed against a child was too much for the Black newspaper to “bite its lip” totally. The World expressed its anger at the not guilty verdict and said it was not surprising coming out of the historically racist Mississippi. In the other civil rights event in which children were the victims of racial violence—the Birmingham Bombing, the World did not interpose its opinions in its coverage. However, the paper expressed its disapproval of the happening in its headlines. In fact, more positive headlines were included during that time than any other. Through its headlines, the World indicated that the bombing was a “time of darkness” and would have a deep impact on the city of Birmingham as well as the nation. “Shameful” was the next best words used by the World to describe the act. Thus, those two instances of violence against children were the only occasions in the World’s news articles in which an opinion was imposed. The neutrality of both papers during such times of racial turmoil showed discipline and a high dedication to objectivity. Although, neutrality was the driving force behind both newspapers, each provided one sided stories occasionally in terms of sources and perspectives from those making comments in their stories. The News selected mostly individuals who shared their segregationist mentality and the World chose integrationists.

In regards to article length, the News provided slightly longer articles and slightly more coverage. Considering that the News was a daily newspaper and the World was a weekly newspaper, the slight edge really did not have much weight. Instead the small edge of the daily over the weekly did more to reveal just how much coverage the weekly World was actually including in its pages. With less printing time and space available for coverage, the World still gave a large amount of attention to the issues of the Civil Rights
Movement. Such saturation of its pages within one week in comparison to a daily newspaper over an entire week made the issues of the Civil Rights Movement seem even the more relevant to the Black-owned *World* than to the White-owned *News*.

The lengthiest articles among the Alabama papers covered about the same issues as the Mississippi papers—the 1954, 1957, and 1962 forced integration cases and the murder of Emmett Till, all topics which challenged the segregationist and racially tense lifestyles shared across both Alabama and Mississippi state lines. Additionally, the *News* and the *World* had lengthy articles about the two civil rights events which occurred in Birmingham, the 1963 violence committed against the freedom riders and the 1963 church bombing. Perhaps because the devastating events took place in the city and were viewed by the nation as some of the most vicious crimes of the movement was the reason for such increase in coverage.

As previously stated, in regards to perspective in its news articles, the *News* and the *World* were neutral in their presentation of the civil rights stories and provided no comment or language in favor or against many events of the movement. However, the two papers disagreed in its editorials about the issues being fought towards by Blacks. Specifically, in regards to segregation, the *News* was a grand cheerleader as it on more than one occasion declared that the way of life in the South was perfectly fine and should be left untouched by Northern “outsiders” and “agitators.” In one school integration case, the paper even offered the perspective of a Black businessman who vouched that the Southern Black was just fine with the living conditions of separate but equal. Satisfied with the way things were, the *News* editorials also took many blows against any proponents of the movement including the NAACP and the President of the United States
himself. In their minds—both were working totally against the ideals of the constitution and the right of the Southern states to practice their own laws. An obvious segregationist newspaper, the White-owned News editorial coverage of the violence against the Freedom Riders was another testimony of its segregationist views. In an event in which Blacks were brutally attacked for riding as racially mixed passengers through Southern cities, disapproving of those policies, the News found a way to overturn the Blacks as being the victims in the situations and instead made them out to be instigators of not only the violence committed against them but the shame brought to the city of Birmingham as a result. The characterization of the Black Riders as such only highlighted the depth of the paper’s stance for segregation and the extreme to which the paper was willing to go to defend its stance and to deny any responsibility of any wrong doing on the part of the city of Birmingham in the matter. It seemed that the same paper which at least had showed some sensitivity to the Black children who had been killed at the hands of racial violence in the movement almost had split personalities. To on the one hand condemn murder and violence and then on the other hand see violence and blame the ones being victimized seemed like two contradictory stances for the News. Nonetheless, the contradiction was the only questionable viewpoint made by the News editorial. All other editorials by the paper were clear in its stance against demonstrations/sit-ins/protests and equality for Blacks of any kind.

Even civil rights events that went without incident of violence, such as the March on Washington, the News was not impressed. Instead, the paper called the March a peaceful piece of nonsense. The News did not even attempt to feed into the ideals and hopes of Blacks in regards to equality. It was as though the paper had signed the fate of
the Black into stone and his/her only destiny was to be whatever was designated by the segregated system of Southern Whites’—inferior, second-class citizens, outsiders, who just happened to be within a democracy but not a part of it.

Contrary to the News’ editorials, the World had a much different perspective, siding with the struggle and the push of the Blacks’ movement towards inclusion and away from exile within the borders of what they called home. The World expressed its belief that Blacks should be allowed to go to school, work alongside, eat, travel, and partake in all places as Whites. Additionally, the World called on the South and the federal government to practice what it preached in regards to democracy. The World presented their stance in fewer editorials than the News, sometimes printing only two or three editorials. The World’s largest and most passionate editorials were printed about the murder/trial of Emmett Till as the paper covered the incident with a select intimacy printing 10 editorials on the matter—more than any other Civil Rights Movement event it covered. Not only did the paper lash out about the not guilty verdict given to Till’s alleged murderers, the World saw the happening in a larger perspective and lashed out at the entire South, but especially Mississippi blaming them for years of continuous lynching and violence against Blacks. The World called the state backwards and stuck in their ways. This accusation was one of the many supporting views that placed the World on the side of the movement rather than against it. Thus, despite being surrounded by a White Citizens Council and the threats faced by Blacks who tried to challenge the system of integration in Birmingham and around the nation, the World found a means to voice their opinion within their editorial pages.
The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette vs. The Pittsburgh Courier. Unlike the Black and White Southern newspapers, both the Gazette and the Courier shared the same overall pro-dominant perspectives regarding the events that occurred during the Civil Rights Movement. So, there were no pro and con views regarding segregation, demonstrations, or any other controversial topics of the movement. The White-owned Gazette seemed to be in full agreement with the Black-owned Courier that Blacks had the right to seek after the same treatment as fellow Whites in all areas of living. Another stark difference between these two papers and the four Southern papers was their insertion of opinion and comment into their news articles. All four Southern newspapers managed to refrain from inputting their opinions into their news articles. Both the Gazette and the Courier however, sought to comment on the happenings of the movement in both their news articles and editorials. Even though both papers agreed and provided opinion mixed in with their articles, in regards to length, the Courier produced more articles and editorials. Additionally, the language utilized by the Courier was more assertive and more intimate at times particularly in its coverage of the murder trial of Chicago born, Emmett Till.

Like the Southern papers, both Illinois papers included the civil rights events, whether small or large, in the front section of the newspaper. Many times the most dramatic stories such as the violence against the Freedom Riders, the Birmingham Church Bombing, and the murder trial of Emmett Till, appeared on the front pages of the Gazette and the Courier. As for news article headlines, there were more positive ones found between these two papers than the other newspapers in this study. However, the majority of both article and editorial headlines were neutral.
As stated, the reporting in both the Gazette and the Courier were pretty synonymous in that the majority of both news articles were neutral with insertions of opinions, whose stance was always pro dominant and on the side of the movement and its ideals. Unlike the southern newspapers, the two papers were geographically removed in terms of the headquarters of their papers from the happenings of the movement. Nonetheless this did not deter their interests or their focus on realizing the impact of integration, demonstrations, or violence against civil rights workers and other Black citizens on the nation as a whole. In essence, the two papers saw the unrest in the South as a contradiction to the constitution of the U.S. and thus utilized their pages, which could have been included with more local news. Yet, the papers chose to give attention to the movement, more so at times than the southern newspapers reporting on the stories. Perhaps, it was the removal from the direct contact of the situations, which prompted the two papers to speak so boldly about many matters. The papers were free from any potential intimidation that some of the southern papers allegedly may have faced whether that was intimidation into omitting certain stories or curtailing one’s story to not offend those citizens who were actual eyewitnesses, and many participants in the movement being reported upon. The Courier’s blunt critique of Mississippi’s past and their justice system when they delivered a not guilty verdict in the Till trial was a perfect example of the freedom from scrutiny experienced. No southern paper in support of the Civil Rights Movement spoke as forward as the northern papers did on the topic.

In regards to their editorials, neither the Gazette nor the Courier spared their support of Black rights. Yet the Courier appeared to be more steadfast and more convicting in their language unafraid to lash out at those in opposition to civil rights
including Governor Faubus’ and Governor Barnett’s attempt to halt integration. The 
*Courier* called the two Governors out as having ties with the White Citizens Councils and 
the Ku Klux Klan. In essence, the *Courier* was very candid in its feelings and support 
towards the progression of Black rights often times printing congratulatory pieces to 
civil rights activists including Thurgood Marshall, Medgar Evers, the murdered civil 
rights workers, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for their contributions to whatever small 
victories made towards the movement. In sync with the *Courier*, the *Gazette* openly 
 disagreed with the opponents of integration calling their rebellion intolerable and 
 unacceptable. Also, the *Gazette* reprimanded both Mississippi and Alabama for their 
history of violence and their continued steps towards trying to maintain segregation 
instead of accepting or attempting change in such a racially tense environment. Thus, 
overall, both the *Gazette* and *Courier* wrote editorials that provided not only a channel 
for reporting about the movement but also a forum to speak out against the challenges 
facing Blacks during that time.

*The Chicago Tribune vs. The Chicago Defender.* These two northern papers were 
similar to both the *Gazette* and the *Courier* in that they both shared some pro dominant 
perspectives in support of the Civil Rights Movement. Specifically, like the *Courier*, the 
Black-owned *Defender* was in support of all the ideals promoted by the movement and 
disapproved of all violence committed against the activists as well as ordinary Black 
citizens during the movement. However, the White-owned *Tribune* only openly 
supported integration. There was no indication of support given to the demonstrations 
held by the Freedom Riders or the Sit-inners. Additionally, there was no editorial 
comment provided by the *Tribune* regarding the murders of Till, Evers, or the three civil
rights workers’ murders. In fact, the paper made no comment on any of the other controversial movement happenings such as the signing of the Civil Rights Bill. Only one editorial was printed on the March on Washington and the Birmingham Bombing—both pro dominant. Thus, the *Tribune’s* style of producing more articles about some events but no editorials was an indication that the paper was willing to devote attention to the issues as they saw them as newsworthy but not as anxious to provide their opinions on the matters. Perhaps, the paper was trying to avoid taking sides in the matter by omitting its editorials—an approach that would seem to be more feasible for a southern paper charged with trying to report in the midst of racially tense surroundings.

In addition to its lack of editorials, the *Tribune* provided mostly neutral articles with little opinion while the *Defender* tended to provide more opinion in its articles. The integration cases in Arkansas and Mississippi influenced the *Tribune* to produce the largest set of articles among all eight newspapers in the study—an incredible 54 Little Rock articles and 35 Ole Miss articles, all of which were neutral. In regards to numbers, the *Defender* produced fewer articles than the *Tribune* but more editorials—a ratio that showed the deep regard held by the *Defender* in regards to providing their viewpoints of the movement. As for length, many of the *Tribune* articles tended to be longer than the *Defender* averaging around 501-1000 words during some periods. The lengthiest topics were centered on the same major subject/themes as the other papers in the study—integration disputes. Additionally, positive characterization and presentation of non-antagonistic photos helped to further support the already pro dominant perspective that emerged from the *Defender*. 
As stated, through a small amount of editorials, the *Tribune* was able to express its support of integration. Specifically, the *Tribune* tended to take a very frustrated approach to the South’s segregated way of life citing that it was merely a waste of time and energy by those in opposition to integration in public schools and universities when so many strides had been made in race relations to integrate in other areas. Thus, when reporting on the integration cases in Arkansas and Mississippi, the paper declared it useless to fight against what was law handed down by the courts. The *Defender* was equally frustrated with the plots made by the South to try and maintain their way of life and openly voiced their opinions that the South needed to be reformed and that it could only come through force not by volunteerism. Attentive to detail, the *Defender* was also the only newspaper to provide more than an article or two about freedom summer and the sit-in demonstrations—another testament to the intricate attention given by the paper to all events under the movements’ cause.

Unsurprisingly, both Chicago based newspapers provided a large amount of news article attention to the murder trial of Chicago native, Emmett Till. However, the *Tribune* did not print any editorials before, during, or after the trial. Additionally, it was the only paper in the study that did not print any comments regarding the highly publicized case. The *Tribune*’s lack of editorial coverage on this case along with its tendency to not include editorials on several other civil rights events put the paper in a category all its own in terms of their dominant editorial perspectives that was neither pro, anti, nor neutral. Rather their stance couldn’t really be gauged on issues other than integration because they did not include editorials. However, again, the absence as well as the presence of key issues is what determines framing tactics (Entman, 2002). In this case,
the *Tribune*’s lack of editorials seems to be a clear indication that they were apprehensive about printing their opinions regarding the movement.

Thus, the *Tribune* and the *Defender* were similar but somewhat different than the other two Northern papers because they did not share the same across the board support of the movement in their articles and editorials as the *Courier* and *Gazette* did. The *Defender* was very forward and adamant in their support of the movement and criticism of any and all opposition and did not shy away from including their opinions in their articles as well as their editorials. So even though both newspapers were geographically removed from the situations in the South on which they were reporting, one still felt the need to be restrained from including their comment—the one contradiction to the way that previous researchers said that most Northern papers openly portrayed the movement.

Below are a few summary tables, which are provided to give a visual to the results found among the newspapers.

*Result Summary Figures*

![Figure 1](image.png)

**Figure 1.** White Newspapers’ Dominant Article Perspective Comparison. This table shows that the majority of the news coverage about the Civil Rights Movement among all four White newspapers was neutral.
Figure 2. Black Newspapers’ Dominant Article Perspective Comparison. This table shows that the majority of the news article coverage about the Civil Rights Movement among all four Black newspapers was also neutral.

Figure 3. White Newspapers’ Dominant Editorial Perspective Comparison. This table shows that the Gazette and the Tribune—the two Northern White newspapers printed more supportive/pro editorials in regards to the Civil Rights Movement than the two Southern White newspapers—the News and the Ledger, who printed more opposing/anti editorials.
Figure 4. Black Newspapers’ Dominant Editorial Perspective Comparison. This shows that all four Black newspapers both Northern and Southern, provided more supportive/pro dominant editorials about the Civil Rights Movement than anti or neutral. The Advocate printed more anti editorials than any of the other Black newspapers.

Figure 5. Dominant Subject/Themes among White Newspapers. The integration cases of 1954, 1957, and 1962 were the mostly highly covered events of the Civil Rights Movement followed by Emmet Till’s Murder, the 1963 March on Washington, Evers’ Murder, and the Bombing.
**Figure 6.** Dominant Subject/Themes among Black Newspapers. The integration cases of 1954, 1957, and 1962 were also the mostly highly covered events of the Civil Rights Movement, followed by the 1963 March on Washington, Till’s Murder trial, Evers’ Murder, and the Bombing.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

Recall the purpose of this study was to examine the portrayal of Black newspapers’ coverage of the Civil Rights Movement in comparison with White-owned newspapers. The basis of the study was grounded in the concept of the framing theory, the idea that the media use specific frames and/or boundaries to organize and deliver the meanings of the events upon which they report news/events to the public. Thus, the way that a story is framed provides insight as to what the newspaper deems as important. Also frames provide the perspective of the newspaper through the use of specific language, catch phrases, headlines, and placement of articles—all items have the potential to present what is salient to the newspaper. In addition, to the manifest items present in the article, the absence of certain information can also lend a thought towards what was not important enough to include which in turn does hint to what was important.

According to the literature review which detailed previous studies that had utilized framing analysis to examine the media’s coverage of Blacks during specific events of the Civil Rights Movement (as well as during other controversial moments) and based upon previous research detailing the presumptions and evidence taken from studies done on some of the newspaper’s utilized in this study; it was found that Northern newspapers whether Black or White were regarded as pro-civil rights and Southern White papers were found to be against the Civil Rights Movement while Black Southern Newspapers were believed to be pro civil rights but apprehensive in their news coverage because of
the outside influences of organizations such as the Whites’ Citizens Councils and/or the Klu Klux Klan.

Specifically, other framing studies such as Grimes (2005) examination of Southern newspapers revealed that often times stories about the happenings of the Civil Rights Movement were avoided all together or limited in details by both Southern Black and White newspapers. The same was true in an analysis of Black Birmingham radio stations which found that many of the controversial issues of integration and voting rights of the Civil Rights Movement were commanded to be excluded from broadcasts for fear of backlash from listeners (Williams, 2005).

Even *Life Magazine*’s coverage of the Black community, which spanned the Civil Rights Movement was limited in comparison to its other stories and did not cover Blacks in the same everyday life as Whites but instead with stereotypical undertones as they promoted Black athletes and celebrities but provided little to no forum for discussion of the issues that Blacks were faced with at the time (Sentman, 1983).

Previous studies of Blacks also revealed that many times when stories about controversies surrounding Blacks were included in the mainstream newspapers, the deviant behavior of Blacks were played upon(such as riots and/or disruptive protests) rather than a focus on the reasons for the protests/marches/demonstrations which may have led to certain altercations.

Thus, the newspapers in this study were in keeping with the stance of previous Northern and Southern Black and White newspapers but mostly only in regards to their editorial perspectives but not in terms of their articles. It was mainly through the papers’
editorials that a perspective about a particular civil rights issue could be seen and those editorials were limited in some papers and excluded from others.

The high level of neutrality among the newspapers’ articles was extreme considering what previous research had maintained about the usual stance of the papers based on their location (North vs. South). The expectation was that there would be high numbers of articles with opinions intertwined that would like their editorials confirm their stance on the issue of civil rights. Yet, that was not the case.

In fact, other studies labeling of a newspaper as an integrationist/pro civil rights or a segregationist/anti civil rights paper based on its entire media coverage was not found in previous studies. Instead, they were usually labeled based on their editorial stances taken. However, by viewing both articles and editorials together and separately, over the span of the entire movement and not just single events, this study was able to examine the patterns of coverage of the articles/editorials. In essence, this study was longitudinal examining over many time periods while previous studies were merely cross-sections taken from the papers during single events. That former approach taken by researchers did not give very much solid evidence to categorize a paper as a pro or anti civil rights paper. However, with the numerous articles and editorials examined from 1954-1964, this study has made a substantial contribution to the existing literature regarding the media coverage of the movement.

Another deterrent from previous studies was the labels placed on the Black/White Southern newspapers—the idea that each were influenced and somewhat controlled and intimidated by the pressures of White Citizens Councils and those with pro segregationist mentalities. Although, that may have been true to a certain extent, it did not saturate the
pages of Black /White Southern newspapers in the way expected. In fact, to maintain such level of objectivity in the midst of the racial tensions occurring in the nation seemed amazing especially among the Southern newspapers located often times in the cities of many of the occurrences being reported upon. Renowned as segregationist versus integrationist papers, both the White and Black Southern papers went to the extreme to be neutral in its articles and included very few editorials speaking out against many of the actions dictating a change in the Southern way of life.

In stark contrast however, the Northern Black papers displaced geographically from many of the events happening in the South still covered the stories very thoroughly and often injected some of their opinions into their news articles but were more vocal in their editorials. This freeness of the North to present their views and opinions did hint to some of the suggestions in the research that those papers in the south may have been influenced by outside forces such as the KKK or the White Citizens Council to eliminate some of the attention towards the racially charged events that were happening around them. However, even the absence rather than the presence of articles/editorial comments could not totally support that claim. Neither the Southern nor Northern papers were overwhelming in their stances for or against the movement except during the controversies surrounding integration.

Another important point made at the beginning of this study was the idea that Blacks would provide a more compelling portrayal of the Civil Rights Movement because it was a movement in which the Black owned newspaper could better identify with being Blacks themselves many subjected to the same racially tense environment as the people they reported upon. That proved to be true for the most part from an editorial
standpoint. However, surprisingly, the news article coverage, the place where objectivity should stand at the forefront, was majority neutral with little opinion expressed.

The difference between some of the White newspapers’ vouch for civil rights and the Black newspapers was the origination of the support. It seemed that the Black papers’ rally for civil rights was because it was a cry out for help in the long struggle for rights that it felt Blacks deserved and needed to have fulfillment of their lives as U.S. citizens. However, the White newspapers’ support of the movement seemed to be because of mandates from the government and the law and the need to avoid unrest and violence. The Black papers seemed to echo a need and a demand for Blacks to be free at all costs. It sounded as a deep yearning in which only an insider who had walked in the shoes of racism and a victim of segregation may feel—an outsider within being mistreated because of the color of their skin. The Defender along with the other Black newspapers seemed to offer personal perspectives that were reflected in the White newspapers in support of the movement. However, the language used in the White newspapers did not resonate as intimately nor as genuinely as the Black papers’ spoken support for the movement.

In essence, in this study it must be reiterated that the newspapers have been situated into the two categories of pro or anti civil rights based solely on their editorials. Otherwise, the news articles on the whole emerged as neutral and could not be classified in favor or against the movement because they were merely recollections of the happenings of the movement usually without opinion or biasness. At best a newspaper in this study can be deemed pro or anti if there was an extreme absence of news coverage or lack of editorial comment made about a particular event. For not reporting about the
Civil Rights Movement was like not covering the 2011 shooting in Tuscan, Arizona or the 2001 terrorist attack on New York City during its respective time period. There are just some things that have such an impact that it deems itself newsworthy. Certainly, the movement had a huge affect on the entire nation not just the South. Yet, many of the Southern newspapers failed to cover certain events or even comment on them for reasons unproven only suggested by the literature review.

As for future research, more studies should examine the movement from the perspective of minority media and use White newspapers to explore the differences. By utilizing all perspectives, a more diverse look at the overall coverage can be detained. A study that only utilizes one or the other is void of the varying combinations that made for the racially tense moments that erupted during the movement. Additionally, more studies should examine the movement from beginning to end, as selecting specific issues limits coverage to the context of that particular situation rather than allowing the varying situations to give insight on an overall pattern of coverage.

The limits of this study include the exclusion of other framing techniques that would have offered an even richer perspective to the papers’ coverage such as the use of editorial cartoons, letters to the editor, as well as the sources used within the articles. Additionally, the omission of contextual factors regarding the cities and/or states in which the study’s newspapers were published are missing from this research. Although some background information regarding the papers was provided, other pertinent contextual information regarding the demographics and psychographics of the cities and/or states and their citizens would have provided a look at the possible environmental influences on the newspapers’ coverage of the Civil Rights Movement. Finally, the
inclusion of a newspaper known for objectivity and distancing themselves from the
stories they cover such as the New York Times would have provided one extra newspaper
(far removed from the happenings and influence of the moment) in which a comparison
could be made outside of the city/state combinations presented in order to further gauge
the differences between Black/White coverage.
APPENDIX

FRAMING CATEGORIES

Newspaper

1. Chicago Defender
2. Chicago Tribune
3. Clarion Ledger
4. Jackson Advocate
5. Birmingham News
6. Birmingham World
7. Pittsburgh Courier
8. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Year the Article/Editorial was printed

Newspaper Unit of Analysis

1. Article
2. Editorial
3. Photograph

Characterization of Leading Figure/Group

1. Favorable
2. Unfavorable
3. Neutral

Article/Editorial Subject/Theme

1. Depictions of civil rights activist groups/leaders
2. Segregation and/or integration of Schools
3. Segregation and/or integration of Public Transportation or other areas of American Society
4. Equal Employment Opportunities for Blacks (Boycotts)
5. Voting rights Issues
6. Civil Rights Legislative Acts
7. Landmark court cases
8. Protests/demonstrations/Marches/Sit-ins
9. Acts of Violence against Civil Rights Activists
10. Acts of Violence against ordinary Black citizens
11. Riots
12. Key Civil rights Leader assassinations
13. Other

**Article/Editorial Dominant Perspective**

1. Pro
2. Anti
3. Neutral

**Article Placement (determined by prospective length of each newspaper)**

1. Front
2. Middle
3. End

**Article Length---Number of words in each article**

1. 0-500
2. 501-1000
3. 1001-1500
4. 1501-2000
5. 2000 plus

**Headline Descriptors**

1. Positive
2. Negative
3. Neutral

**Photographic Sentiment**

1. Antagonistic
2. Non antagonistic
3. Neutral

**Photographic Manifest Image**

1. Depictions of Civil rights activist groups/leaders
2. Segregation and/or integration of Schools
3. Segregation and/or integration of Public Transportation or other areas of
American Society
4. Equal Employment Opportunities for Blacks (Boycotts)
5. Voting rights Issues
6. Civil Rights Legislative Acts
7. Landmark court cases
8. Protests/demonstrations/Marches/Sit-ins
9. Acts of Violence against Civil Rights Activists
10. Acts of Violence against ordinary Black citizens
11. Riots
12. Key Civil rights Leader assassinations
13. Other
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