

Looking at Local Dailies' Election 2004 Online News Coverage

By

Tania H. Cantrell
Graduate Student
School of Journalism
The University of Texas at Austin
I University Station A1000
CMA A6.1444
Austin, TX 78712-0113

Tania.Cantrell@mail.utexas.edu

512.203.6400 (cell)

512.471.7979 (fax)

(Paper and Ideas Copyrighted; Used by Permission of Author, Only)

ABSTRACT:

Political communications studies at the local level are scarce. A content analysis was performed on four local news sites' election section home pages during one October 2004 week to understand how much information is loaded and changed three times a day. Local online election news supplementation with national news, horse face predominance in local political news coverage, amount of focus on local vs. national news and the role of partisanship and media bias in election coverage are also considered. Suggested areas of additional research include the tension between local news' sensationalistic vs. political substance, the relationship between traditional geographic partisanship and newspaper coverage, and dynamism between Internet audiences and the democratic process.

Please Note:

Special thanks goes to Dr. Maxwell McCombs and members of his Fall 2004 Graduate Content Analysis class, in which this researcher participated, for group efforts in providing the data upon which this study is founded. Also, many thanks to UT graduate student Amy Schmitz-Weiss for her assistance with the methods and appendix.

Submitted to the International Symposium on Online Journalism
April 7-8, 2006

“The news media are the public’s major source of information about public affairs, but the public is not an automaton passively waiting to be programmed by the media.”

~ Dr. Max McCombs, *Setting the Agenda* (2004), p. 96

Overview

How often do online local newspapers upload new political information on their sites, and what kind of information do they upload? These are important questions for at least two reasons.

First, next to voting, media are the primary channel by which people actively participate in their own governance and through which governments and other political actors communicate with their publics¹. Online newspapers have been termed “the door to national political news”² because of the breadth, depth and timeliness of their coverage. Campaign eras magnify this. Voter guides, candidate profiles, archived articles, charts, polls, editorials³, streamlined video, hourly updates and research reports, live chats and video discussions⁴, etc., made available through online news sites are luring political junkies and interested others to the Web.⁵

Second, local news media are commercial enterprises that must make a profit in order to survive. They experience intense pressure to meet the interests of their specific target audiences. “Increasingly, it has become the need to capture suburban readers and create a common regional identity that influences how the metropolitan news media cover local policy issues.”⁶ In an effort to peg down fleeing readers, newspapers⁷ are molding a new niche: Politics on the Internet.

Political communication studies at the local level are scarce. Few detailed analyses of local newspapers’ coverage of the constituency campaign or any systemic accounts of local journalists’ attitudes towards election reporting exist.⁸ This study aims

to partially address that need. Through a content analysis of four local newspapers' election sites, it explores local online coverage and newspaper partisanship of the 2004 presidential campaign. Intermedia agenda setting – or “the influence of the news media on each other”⁹ – contextualizes this study.

Current Intermedia Agenda Setting Research and Online Newspapers

Intermedia agenda setting occurs when various media interact with and influence one other, validating and reinforcing the social norms and traditions of journalism.¹⁰ To a certain extent, each news organization acts as a source for the others, and some media are particularly good at setting the agenda for other media.¹¹ The prestige press, for instance, has set the media agenda for how such issues as drug coverage should occur¹², and they have affected media agendas through the stories they have decided *not* to cover¹³. In addition, the public often (re)acts in relation to intermedia situations. For example, international elite press coverage of a *Newsweek* article regarding U.S. mistreatment of the Koran¹⁴ and Danish newspaper political cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammad¹⁵ are said to have tipped off Muslim world riots¹⁶.

Intermedia agenda setting has also been found among other media forms, including advertising. Support for the influence of the major party candidate advertisements on the news agenda was discovered through a study of the 1996 U.S. presidential election. Its analysis of 116 political television advertisements, 817 campaign newspaper stories from three major newspapers and 101 campaign-focused television network newscasts showed some influence of the traditional party challenger (Perot) on the network television newscasts and all three of the major newspapers analyzed.¹⁷ In an international application, during the 1995 local elections in the Spanish

province of Navarra, political advertisements were found to influence the depiction of candidates on TV news (+0.99) and in newspapers (+0.32).¹⁸

Media interdependency is more prevalent as media rely on and compete with each other to get information to their publics. Sometimes, newspapers – referring particularly to those that, in the mid-1990s, decided to venture online in an effort to attract readers – will even compete against themselves; more than 20 percent of newspapers routinely allow their Web sites to scoop their print editions.¹⁹ In addition, online newspapers are still deciding who they are. For example, in a content analysis comparing the use of World Wide Web technologies on six online newspaper sites, researchers noted that some online editions are not much more than electronic versions of the parent newspaper, while others are a hybrid of printed newspaper and original content.²⁰

By Election 2000, about twice as many leading newspapers offered separate online election sections than in 1996. In an exploratory study, a survey of 57 online editors representing 41 states²¹ and from leading U.S. newspaper sites indicates that editors gave primary emphasis to the medium's ability to provide Election 2000 information faster (they prided themselves first and foremost in updating news) and in more detail (through Voter Guides, links, archives, candidate bios, etc.). These findings suggest that journalists are “normalizing” the Internet as a way to further traditional roles and goals.²² Though options for enhancing political discourse — setting up separate real-time chats, live streaming video, online polling and discussion, among other attempts — were employed in the 2000 Iowa Caucus, access to information trumped interactivity and multimedia presentations among audience preferences.²³

Regarding online information updating,

RQ1: *How often do online newspapers upload new political information on their election sites, and what kind of information do they upload? In other words, what percentage of local 2004 election news articles changed over time?*

And, in regard to information uploaded and intermedia agenda-setting,

H1: *Local online newspapers will rely more on national news sources to supplement their online national election coverage.*

Local Election Coverage and Partisanship

Local news providers search for ways in which they can provide local angles on national election campaigns. Local news has been criticized for focusing less on issues and positions and more on “quirky, amusing stories” and where each candidate stands in the “horse race.”²⁴ Use of polls in coverage may be used to explain voter opinion, but more and more, as a recent study found, they are employed to fuel horse-race coverage and to craft images consistent with the candidates’ positions in the race.²⁵ That journalists and readers talk past each other regarding election issues in the pages of the local press was also found in a United Kingdom local election study. The analysis examined local press reporting of the last four general elections (1987, 1992, 1997 and 2001) in the UK, as well as interviews with journalists and editors, and found that journalists and readers are not engaging in political dialogue.²⁶ The trend in local political coverage is the political horse race²⁷, not campaign issues and ideological distinctions between parties.²⁸

This analysis proposes:

H2: *Election 2004 local news coverage will focus on the horse race.*

A Web site’s nature and degree of sophistication are not necessarily dependent upon an audience’s size and composition, nor the power and wealth of the Web site’s developers, but rather its ability to form, maintain and perpetuate itself.²⁹ Outside of the major market national newspaper coverage, most newspapers devote their political

spotlight to regional and local information with little nationwide coverage.³⁰ A recent study that employed eye-tracking technology to study online news reading found that 40 percent of at-least-three-times-per-week online newsreaders started an online news reading session with their local newspaper. Even though national news attracted more attention than local (67 percent compared with 48 percent, respectively), online newsreaders spent twice as long – 46 rather than 20 minutes – with a general news provider, like a local newspaper. The online news trend has been to offer more local news on the Web.³¹ This leads to

***H3:** Local papers will focus more on local elections than the national election.*

A case study on the effect of a local newspaper's candidate endorsements on election outcomes focused on the November 1977 contest in Suffolk County, New York, for the office of County District Attorney. The analysis found obvious limits to the effectiveness of a newspaper's candidate endorsements, even when the contested office is one about which the voter knows or cares little.³² Some public policy analysts believe, however, that in close races, impact of media and newspaper candidate endorsements can be decisive. U.S. presidential candidate endorsements swelled the last week of Election 2000.³³ That newspapers engage in open partisanship is not new. A century ago, newspapers were openly partisan and boldly supported candidates in news stories, as well as on editorial and opinion pages.³⁴ Regarding media endorsements and partisanship bias:

***RQ2:** Does an online paper's candidate endorsement affect its coverage of presidential candidates?*

Method

A content analysis of 308 stories from October 25-29, 2004, of four online newspaper election sections was completed. The Cleveland Plain Dealer (OH),³⁵ Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (NY),³⁶ Syracuse Post-Standard (NY)³⁷ and Lafayette Journal and Courier (IN)³⁸ were systematically sampled. Newspapers were first selected based on media corporations with the highest traffic in 2003 by unique visitors monthly according to the 2004 State of the Media Report.³⁹ Each of the eight media corporations were then analyzed by newspaper from the “Who Owns What” list on Columbia Journalism Review’s Web site.⁴⁰ Systematic sampling to choose a representative list of five newspapers per media corporation followed. The list was later consolidated into two media properties (Advance Publications and Gannett) with two newspapers each. The remaining six media corporations were eliminated from the sample due to technical constraints with the software used to track the news stories.

The election sections of these online newspapers were captured through the use of a software tool called Grab-a-Site.⁴¹ It downloads a complete Web site by the number of levels or directories specified. This tool went to the four Web sites three times a day to record and capture the news stories that appeared on that election section page at that time. The times used for capture are based on a similar methodology used in the 2004 State of the News Media Report from Journalism.org.⁴² The report listed visiting newspaper sites four times a day at 9 a.m., 1 p.m., 5 p.m., and 9 p.m. In this analysis, only 9 a.m., 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. were data capture times since the majority of online studies demonstrate that most online traffic to news sites is between the 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. timeframe.

Each election section had a particular area that was analyzed. The headline and story are the main units of analysis. Associated Press wire stories, photos, graphics, editorials, cartoons, columns, multimedia elements and advertisements were excluded. For details on the specific areas analyzed in this study, see Appendix A.

The coding of this analysis involved several units, date, time, newspaper name, title of headlines, position of story on page, kind of story, geography, topic of the story, President Bush issues mentioned in the story, Senator Kerry's issues mentioned in the story, positive and negative image descriptions of President Bush and Senator Kerry, and overall evaluation of the story. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to carry out the statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics are used to make sense of the nominal and ordinal level data collected.

Intercoder reliability

To ascertain the reliability of the coding for this content analysis, research study coders coded four news stories randomly selected from the election section pages of the four newspapers, Cleveland Plain Dealer (OH), Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (NY), Syracuse Post-Standard (NY) and Layfayette Journal and Courier (NY). The major variables, which included date, time, newspaper name, title of headlines, position of story on page, geography, the third President Bush issue mentioned in the story, and the third Senator Kerry issue mentioned in the story, had a 100 percent level of agreement using Cohen's kappa statistical test.⁴⁵ The level of agreement for the variables of the topic of the story, the first and second President Bush issues mentioned in the story, the first and second Senator Kerry issues mentioned in the story as well as the scaled items (1 to 5) for the positive and negative image descriptions of President Bush and Senator Kerry ranged

from 50 percent to 80 percent. The kind of story and evaluation of the story variables had a low level of agreement (33%). All data were included.

Although some of the variables are slightly below the traditional criterion of 75 percent agreement,⁴⁴ the intercoder reliability level in general is satisfactory for an initial comparison of how major attributes of election news may have changed a week before the election. It also is necessary to take into account the overall research study used 13 different international⁴⁵ coders, a much larger number than used in most content analysis projects.⁴⁶

Analysis and Results

RQ1: *How often do online newspapers upload new political information on their sites, and what kind of information do they upload? In other words, what percentage of local election news articles changed over time?*

A Spearman's rho was calculated to see if the publication and time (9 a.m., 1 p.m., 5 p.m. data captures) variables correlate. A tri-variable crosstab was also run to better understand the relationship (or lack thereof) between the two variables along with the date variable (although, for simplicity, only the crosstab table showing the publication and time variable overlap is discussed). Headlines were recoded, and a new frequency of the condensed headline list was run. A simple percentage of the condensed headline count of nationally-based stories divided by the overall number of stories was computed.

While no relationship was observed between the news site and time of uploading ($p > .05$) or date ($p > .05$), an interesting point surfaced through the crosstab table. For each news site, the majority of uploading occurred by 9 a.m. For all local news sites, 37 percent of presidential coverage for the day was uploaded by 9 a.m.; 33 percent by 1 p.m.; 31 percent by 5 p.m. Overall, 23 percent of stories remained the same over the

course of the sample time frame, or 77 percent of stories changed. Table 1 below indicates these patterns.

TABLE 1: News Site and Uploading Time

<i>Time</i>	<i>Plain Dealer</i>	<i>Post-Standard</i>	<i>Journal and Courier</i>	<i>Democrat and Chronicle</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>9 a.m.</i>	37	38	33	36	37
<i>1 p.m.</i>	34	32	33	32	33
<i>5 p.m.</i>	30	31	33	32	31
<i>(Percent)*</i>	(101)	(101)	(99)	(100)	(101)

**Numbers are rounded up.*

H1: *Local online newspapers will rely more heavily on national news sources to supplement their online national election coverage.*

To test this hypothesis, a Spearman's rho correlation was calculated to see if a significant relationship exists between the local news site and the geographic focus of the news story (whether it was locally- or nationally-based). A crosstab was also calculated to glean more information about the relationship between the two variables.

This hypothesis was supported; a significant relationship exists between local dailies and geographic election orientation ($p < .001$). However, the relationship is reversed; as the Spearman's rho value (-.260) indicates, local news sites rely somewhat more on local news coverage than national. The crosstab table provides additional insight into this relationship. For example, of the local dailies studied, 80 percent of Cleveland Plain Dealer election stories are local or regional, while 16 percent are national. Ninety-one percent of Syracuse Post-Standard stories are local, compared with 9 percent that are national. One hundred percent of Lafayette Journal and Courier as well as Democrat and Chronicle stories have a local focus. Table 2 below shows this.

TABLE 2: Local News Sites and Their Story Geographical Classification

<i>Geographic Focus</i>	<i>Local News Site (in Percentage)</i>			
	<i>Plain Dealer</i>	<i>Post-Standard</i>	<i>Journal and Courier</i>	<i>Democrat and Chronicle</i>
<i>Local or Regional</i>	80	91	100	100
<i>National</i>	16	9	0	0
<i>(Total)</i>	(96)	(100)	(100)	(100)

N= 308; p<.001 (no valid (expected cell count less than 20 percent) Chi square can be provided)

H2: *Election 2004 local news coverage will focus on the horse race election aspects.*

To test this hypothesis, a Spearman’s rho was calculated to see if local news site and the first story designation are related. The First Story variable included the following divisions: Bush Campaign Events, Kerry Campaign Events, Bush Issue Stands, Kerry Issue Stands, Public Opinion Poll, Horse Race Analysis, Candidate-Profile Bush, Candidate-Profile Kerry or Other Aspects of the Election. Other Aspects of the Election was a catch-all category for stories that did not fit into any one of the aforementioned divisions. A crosstab table was also produced to see what publication focused on what story aspect.

Overall, significant differences in the kind of coverage dailies give to the election exist, although the Spearman’s rho value fails to show this (-.032, $p>.05$, $N=130$). The crosstab table provides additional information. At 17 percent overall, Horse Race Analysis trumps other story topics, except for the montage “other aspects of the election” category. Individually, publications give differing amounts of attention. For example, as Table 3 below indicates, the Cleveland Plain Dealer gave most of its attention first to Other (62%), then to Kerry Campaign Events (17%), then to Bush Campaign Events (14%). The Syracuse Post-Standard focused on “Other” aspects (50%), then on the Horse Race Analysis (43%), then to Bush Issue Stands (7%). The Rochester Democrat

and Chronicle focused first on the Horse Race (55%), then Other Aspects of the Election (32%), then Public Opinion Polls (14%; not shown). Table 3 below indicates this pattern.

TABLE 3: Local News Site and First Story Topic

<i>Story Topic</i>	<i>Local News Site*</i>		
	<i>Democrat and Chronicle</i>	<i>Plain Dealer</i>	<i>Post-Standard</i>
<i>Horse Race</i>	55 %	4%	43%
<i>Analysis</i>			
<i>Other</i>	32%	62%	50%
<i>Aspects of the Election</i>			
<i>Kerry</i>	0%	17%	0%
<i>Campaign Events</i>			
<i>Bush</i>	0%	14%	0%
<i>Campaign Events</i>			
<i>(N)</i>	(22)	(94)	(14)

**No information for the Lafayette Journal and Courier surfaced.*

H3: *Local papers will focus more on local elections than the national election.*

A simple frequency revealed that, in general, this hypothesis was supported; 90 percent of the stories in the sample content analyzed is locally or regionally based, while only 9 percent is nationally focused.

RQ2: *Does an online paper's candidate endorsement affect its coverage of presidential candidates?*

Four approaches were taken to address this question. First, through informal interviews with each news site's opinion editor/desk,⁴⁷ the researcher learned which presidential candidate, if any, each news site publicly endorsed. Because the 2004 presidential election included an incumbent, news site partisanship for the 2000 election was also requested. Table 4 below catalogs this information.

TABLE 4: Local News Sites' Declared Partisanship

<i>Online Newspaper</i>	<i>2000 Election</i>	<i>2004 Election</i>
Syracuse Post Standard	Bush	No endorsement
Rochester Democrat and Chronicle	Gore	Kerry
Lafayette Journal and Courier	Bush	Kerry
Cleveland Plain Dealer	Bush	No endorsement

Second, a frequency was run to better understand the evaluation variable, which was classified as Favorable to Bush Only; Favorable to Kerry Only; Favorable to Both; Favorable to Bush, Negative to Kerry; Favorable to Kerry, Negative to Bush; Negative to Bush Only; Negative to Kerry Only; Negative to Both; or Neutral. Most of the stories (66 percent) from the four online local newspapers were judged neutral. Only 22 of 148 articles analyzed (15 percent) were considered negative to both presidential candidates. Overall results of story tone are found in Table 5 below.

TABLE 5: Evaluation Variable Components

<i>Variable Component</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Neutral</i>	97	66
<i>Negative to BOTH</i>	22	15
<i>Favorable to Kerry ONLY</i>	11	7
<i>Favorable to Bush ONLY</i>	7	5
<i>Negative to Bush ONLY</i>	6	4
<i>Negative to Bush</i>	2	1
<i>Negative to Kerry</i>	2	1
<i>Favorable to BOTH</i>	1	.01
(N)	(148)	(100)

Third, a Spearman's rho was tabulated between the publication and the story initial presidential candidate tone variables (positive Bush 1, negative Bush 1, positive

Kerry 1, negative Kerry 1) to see if any of the variables correlate. None do (all p-values >.05; Spearman's rho = .062 and below).

Fourth, the publication variable was pitted against the evaluation or overall story tone variable, revealing a significant moderate, indirect ($p < .000$; Spearman's rho = $-.585$) relationship. A crosstab was calculated to see the relationship among the publication and evaluation variable components. With the exception of the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (Negative to Both, 86%), all the publications were mostly neutral in their overall story evaluations (Cleveland Plain Dealer = 70%, Syracuse Post-Standard = 100% and Lafayette Journal and Courier not listed).

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this paper has been to explore online political news coverage of four local news sites during one Election 2004 week. It is important, because few studies of political online communication at the local level have been conducted. It is interesting for at least the following four reasons.

First, in accordance with general intermedia agenda setting theory, this study demonstrates that an intermedia dependency occurs at the local level. Online news sites do supplement their election coverage with national stories, although the main focus is on local coverage.

To better understand this phenomenon, this study needed to have addressed at least two additional points. One pertains to the bylines and datelines of the election stories counted in the content analysis. A much richer understanding of what reporter, or of what source, was supplying the local news site with political communication would have emerged. How much national information do local sites pull from wire stories

and/or the elite press, then modify with additional research? Do reporter gender and ethnicity affect political coverage? If so, how?⁴⁸

Another element to evaluate is a more precise and individual way of assessing what stories are within the percentage that changes or remains posted. This study was only generally able to determine an overall percentage of change based upon article upload or movement. A greater dynamic must be created to pinpoint how and why political communication stories are moved. Interviews with news site gatekeepers would provide some insights. Is this a gatekeeping phenomenon, or is another variable(s) affecting story longevity, or the length of time it remains posted in its initial position?

Second, it is interesting to note that although the Spearman's rho test failed to show the "horse race" predominance in local coverage, the crosstab table did. A number of reasons may explain this phenomenon. Mainly, one must consider the effect of the larger category – "Other Aspects" – on the relationship. This larger variable division may have skewed the results.

Nonetheless, the "horse race" predominance, as the crosstab shows, introduces at least two thoughts. First, is this prevalence yet another indicator of intermedia agenda setting, with elite press coverage techniques cascading into local political news reporting norms? Second, is this another indicator of a disconnect between media and audience? Previously noted studies have pointed out that local media are known for their sensationalistic qualities. At the same time, other research shows that local media are distinguishing themselves and enticing audiences through their political substance. Additional research regarding this tension is needed.

Third, the relationship between partisanship and media bias raises old and perhaps tautological but also new concerns and trends. Why have two of the four news sites in this study decided *not* to endorse a presidential candidate? Is this lack of opinion among local news sites a new trend? Was this decision unique to this election? Is there a relationship between lack of endorsement and news site sensationalism versus political substance offered? What of geographical traditional partisanship? Is there a relationship between an area's traditional democratic or republican leanings and its local press' candidate endorsements? This area deserves greater attention.

Fourth, this study hints at a series of additional interrelated questions. They range from the role of polls⁹⁹ in online local election coverage to how much local news site visitors learn about elections and politics⁹⁹. Another question regards the role of technology in journalism; what are the relationships among local election or political news sites, blogs and citizen-journalist-politician direct dialogue?⁹⁹ In what direction is political news heading? Will it be more substantive, or will sensationalism escalate? Will there come a time when the non-traditional press – including blogs and other forthcoming media technologies -- will set the elite media agenda?⁹⁹

In the tradition of agenda-setting studies, this uni-method analysis may appear wimpy; agenda-setting studies are generally accompanied at least by surveys. In that this study raises more questions than it answers, it is hoped it contributes to agenda setting evaluations in general and intermedia agenda setting research in particular. Online journalism must be more seriously considered for its role in political discourse, principally in the dynamic democratic process. Local news site political news coverage deserves its opportunity in the media analysis spotlight.

-
- ¹ Boaz, C. (2005, Dec.). War and peace in the media. *Peace Review*, 17 (4), pp. 335-339.
- ² Jalonick, M. C. (1999, Oct/Nov). Online newspapers: The door to national political news. *Campaigns & Elections*, 20 (9), p. 61.
- ³ Jalonick, M.C. (Jan. 2000/Dec. 1999). Newspapers: Researching 2000 local and state elections. *Campaigns & Elections*, 20 (10), p. 46.
- ⁴ Strupp, J. (2000, July 31). Presidential politics as unusual. *Editor & Publisher*, 133 (31), pp. 10-11.
- ⁵ Online News Sites Lure Political Junkies. (2004, June 1). *American Journalism Review*, 26 (3), p. 19.
- ⁶ Kaniss, P. (1991). *Making local news*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 46.
- ⁷ Gloede, B. (2005, Jan. 17). Black and white and read no longer, *MediaWeek*, 15 (3), p. 18.
- ⁸ Franklin, B., & Richardson, J. (2002). A journalist's duty? Continuity and change in local newspaper reporting of recent UK general elections. *Journalism Studies*, 3 (1), pp. 35-52.
- ⁹ McCombs, M. (2005). Research review: A look at agenda-setting: Past, present and future. *Journalism Studies* 6 (4), p. 549.
- ¹⁰ McCombs, M. (2004). *Setting the agenda: The mass media and public opinion*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, p. 99.
- ¹¹ Shoemaker, P. J., & Reese, S. D. (1996). *Mediating the message: Theories of influences on mass media content*. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishers, p. 189.
- ¹² Danielian, L. H., & Reese, S. D. (1989). A closer look at intermediate influences on agenda setting: The cocaine issue of 1986. In P.J. Shoemaker (Ed.), *Communication campaigns about drugs: Government, media, public* (pp. 47-66). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- ¹³ Peterson, S. (1981). International news selection by the elite press: A case study. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 45, pp. 143-163.
- ¹⁴ This refers to the anti-American protests that have flared up in Afghanistan following a story on the Koran being desecrated. More information can be found, for example, in the world/international sections of CNN.com, NYTimes.com, etc., during the week of May 16, 2005.
- ¹⁵ See, for example, Sullivan, A. (2006, Feb. 13). Your taboo, not mine. *Time*, 167 (7), p. 100.
- ¹⁶ This comment, by NO means, is intended to be negative toward or stereotype Muslims in any way. Unfortunately, and very likely due to a post 9-11 media environment, these are two stories that received a phenomenal amount of international news coverage. To say more is beyond the scope of this paper; more research into the why and how of this intermedia situation is needed.
- ¹⁷ Boyle, T. P. (2001, Spring). Intermedia agenda setting in the 1996 presidential election. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 78 (1), pp. 26-45.
- ¹⁸ McCombs, M. (2004). *Setting the agenda: The mass media and public opinion*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, p. 109.
- ¹⁹ Robinson, T. (2000, May). Print discovers Web. *American Spectator*, 33 (4), pp. 58-59.
- ²⁰ Dibeau, W., & Garrison, B. (2001, Spring). How six online newspapers use Web technologies. *Newspaper Research Journal*, 22 (2), pp.79-94.
- ²¹ This study had a response rate of about 71 percent.
- ²² Singer, J. B. (2003, Spring). Campaign contributions: Online newspaper coverage of Election 2000. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 80 (1), pp. 39-56.
- ²³ Singer, J. B. (2002, Fall). Information trumps interaction in local papers' online caucus coverage. *Newspaper Research Journal*, 23 (4), pp. 91-95.
- ²⁴ Kaniss, P. (1991). *Making local news*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 47.
- ²⁵ Patterson, T. E. (2005). Of polls, mountains: U.S. journalists and their use of election surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 69 (5), 716-724.
- ²⁶ Franklin, B. (2004). Talking past each other: Journalists, readers and local newspaper reporting of general election campaigns in the UK. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 4 (4), pp. 338-346.

-
- ²⁷ Boyle, T. P. (2001, Spring). Intermedia agenda setting in the 1996 presidential election. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 78 (1), pp. 26-45.
- ²⁸ Trimble, L., & Sampert, S. (2004, March). Who's in the game? The framing of the Canadian Election 2000 by The Globe and Mail and The National Post. *Canadian Journal of Political Sciences*, 37 (1), pp. 51-71.
- ²⁹ Moore, F. (2002). Telling it like it is: News websites (sic) and online newspapers. *Global Networks*, 2 (2), pp. 171-177.
- ³⁰ Jalonick, M. C. (1999, Oct/Nov). Online newspapers: The door to national political news. *Campaigns & Elections*, 20 (9), p. 61.
- ³¹ Johnson, M. (2001, Jan/Feb). How do we read online? *Quill*, 89 (1), pp. 10-13.
- ³² Scarrow, H. A., & Borman, S. (1979, Fall). The effects of newspaper endorsements on election outcomes: A case study. *Public Opinion Quarterly*; 43 (3), pp. 388-393.
- ³³ Shields, T. (2000, Oct. 30). 'October surprise 2000': Major metros for Bush. *Editor & Publisher*, 133 (44), p. 5.
- ³⁴ Campbell, K. (2000, Nov. 3). In tight election, charges of media bias reign. *Christian Science Monitor*, 92 (241), p. 2.
- ³⁵ <http://www.cleveland.com/election/>, visited Oct., 2004.
- ³⁶ <http://www.democratandchronicle.com/apps/pbcs.dll/section?Category=specials05>, visited Oct., 2004.
- ³⁷ <http://www.syracuse.com/elections/>, visited Oct. 2004.
- ³⁸ <http://www.jconline.com/election/>, visited Oct. 2004.
- ³⁹ This can be found at http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/narrative_online_ownership.asp?cat-5&media=3, Journalism.org; retrieved Sept./Oct. 2004.
- ⁴⁰ <http://cjr.org/tools/owners/>, retrieved Sept./Oct. 2004.
- ⁴¹ <http://bluesquirrel.com/products/grabasite/>, visited Sept./Oct. 2004.
- ⁴² <http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/methodology.asp>, visited Sept./Oct. 2004.
- ⁴³ Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 143, 150, 151, 153-155.
- ⁴⁴ Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 143.
- ⁴⁵ Not all graduate students participating share English as their first/native language.
- ⁴⁶ Again, special thanks first to Dr. Maxwell McCombs for spearheading this project, then to the 13 students, of whom this primary researcher was one, who collected this data during Dr. McCombs' Fall 2004 Content Analysis graduate class.
- ⁴⁷ Conducted May 18, 2005. Please check with author for a complete list of names, positions and information obtained.
- ⁴⁸ Banwart, M.C., Bystrom, D. G., & Robertson, T. (2003, Jan.). From the primary to the general election: A comparative analysis of candidate media coverage in mixed-gender 2000 races for governor and U.S. Senate. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 46 (5), pp. 658-676.
- ⁴⁹ Borrelli, S., Lockerbie, B., & Niemi, R. G. (1987). Why the Democrat-Republican partisanship gap varies from poll to poll. *Political Opinion Quarterly*, 51, pp. 115-119.
- ⁵⁰ Eveland, Jr., W., Seo, M., & Marton, K. (2002). Learning from the news in campaign 2000: An experimental comparison of TV news, newspapers, and online news. *Media Psychology*, 4 (4), pp. 353-379.
- ⁵¹ Scott, D. (2005, Jan/Feb). The Web isn't a newspaper, it's a city. *Econtent*, 28 (1/2), p. 48.
- ⁵² McCombs, M. (2005). Research review: A look at agenda-setting: Past, present and future. *Journalism Studies* 6 (4), pp. 543-557.