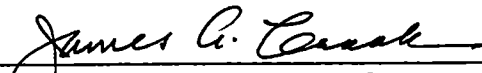
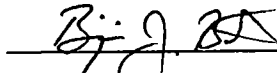


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by David Hefner entitled "The National Print Media and the Million Man March." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Communications.


James Crook, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and
recommend its acceptance:




Accepted for the Council


Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

THE NATIONAL PRINT MEDIA AND
THE MILLION MAN MARCH

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

David Hefner
May 2000

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to all those men and women
who participated in the Million Man March.

It is also dedicated to my high-school love and wife,
Tasha Amina Hefner, who allowed me
time away from the family to complete this work.

Tasha, I thank you for your patience and
for allowing me to finish this project at my own pace.

Finally, the study is dedicated to my parents,
Dr. and Mrs. James A. and Edwina M. Hefner.

Without their love and money,
the completion of the project would have surely been delayed.

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I thank all of my graduate school professors who have helped me understand the mass media in a far broader scope. I especially thank Dr. Dhyana Ziegler, who pushed me to complete this study, refusing to let me take "the easy way out." I thank members of my thesis committee, Dr. James Crook, my thesis chair, and Drs. Barbara Moore and Benjamin Bates. I especially thank Dr. Crook for giving me sound advice.

Abstract

In this study, five leading national publications were reviewed for their treatment of the Million Man March on October 16, 1995. The study examines three newspapers (*The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *USA Today*) and two news magazines (*Time* and *Newsweek*). The analysis considers such factors as when the publications began coverage of the event and such variables as article placement, time frame of coverage, content, element of newsworthiness, tone and type of coverage. The analysis reveals that the five publications gave equal voices to both sides of the issue. No correlation was found between placement and tone, that is, negative articles were not given more or less prominent attention than positive ones. The research also found that the five publications did a fair job of interpreting the news, although not as good as they did reporting it. Newspapers, predictably perhaps, did a poorer job interpreting the news than did news magazines. The five publications did a poor job of situating the news for readers by not including much context surrounding the Million Man March

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I	INTRODUCTION	1
	Statement of the Problem	8
	Objectives of the Study	10
	Significance of the Study	11
	Definitions	13
II	REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	17
	Media Bias and African Americans	17
	The Media and Extraordinary Events	25
	News Suppression during Extraordinary Events	27
	Role of Print Media during Extraordinary Events	29
III	METHODOLOGY	31
	Data Compilation	37
IV.	RESULTS	38
	USA Today	59
	The New York Times	62
	The Washington Post	63
	Time	65
	Newsweek	66

Chapter	Page
V CONCLUSIONS	67
Report the News	67
Interpret the News	68
Situate the News	69
Coverage as Extraordinary Event	70
Limitations of the Research	71
BIBLIOGRAPHY	76
VITA	81

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1 Tone: Percent Positive, Negative, and Neutral	39
2. Newspaper Placement	60
3. Elements of Content	61

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
1	Number of Articles by Tone, Above the Fold	43
2	Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone and Placement Above the Fold	44
3	Number of Articles by Tone, Below the Fold	45
4	Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone and Placement, Below the Fold	46
5	Number of Articles by Tone and Impact as Focus	47
6	Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone and Impact as Focus	48
7	Number of Articles by tone and Leaders as Focus	50
8	Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone and Leaders as Focus	51
9	Number of Articles by Tone and Participants as Focus	53
10	Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone and Participants as Focus ..	54
11	Number of Articles by Tone and Impact as News	56
12	Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone and Impact as News	57

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1969, political scientist Harold Lasswell published an article in *Mass Communications* titled, "The Structure and Function of Communication in Society" (Lasswell, 1969, p. 103). In the article, Lasswell argued that the media have three primary functions: (1) to report ongoing news events, (2) to interpret the meaning of those news events, and (3) to socialize those ongoing news events into the cultural norms of individuals (readers, listeners or viewers).

The first function, reporting ongoing news, or, as Lasswell called it, surveillance, involves highlighting people, organizations and events to the public. In so doing, the public has access to information about people, organizations and events that they cannot witness directly (Graber, 1993, p. 5). This mass media function is extremely important in a democracy because, among other things, it allows citizens to be informed and thus make informed electoral decisions (Entman, 1993, pp. 3-13, 17).

The media's failure to properly report ongoing news events may, as Graber says, "doom people and events to obscurity by inattention." There are, however, a number of reasons why the media fail to report certain ongoing news events. Among the reasons are: limited news hole; time constraints relating to deadlines; lack of newsworthiness; and, perhaps more threatening, conscious attempts by media managers to suppress information for ideological reasons (Graber, p.6-7).

In Lasswell's second function, interpreting news events, he contends that media practitioners not only report news but assess it and filter out what is deemed important and unimportant. Unfortunately, the interpretation is based on the values and experiences of the interpreter--who is, in this case, the reporter or editor. The second function characterizes, in part, the mass media's role as so-called gatekeepers (Graber, 1993, p. 110). In mass communications, the gatekeeper's role is performed when media managers "make the final decisions about which stories will actually be published or aired" (Graber, 1993, p. 110). The role is an all-encompassing responsibility of managing editors, production managers and copy editors. They must constantly determine, sometimes hurriedly, what they think people want to read or watch. This all-encompassing responsibility, Lasswell argues, is based on the values and experiences of the managing editor, production and/or copy editor.

At best, however, interpreting news events helps citizens better understand news, which may be otherwise swarmed with technical and complicated jargon and/or concepts. Needless to say, media practitioners must be careful with this function because their interpretations may shape the perceptions of millions of readers, viewers or listeners (Graber, p. 10).

Lasswell asserts the final major function of the mass media is to situate news events within a context so that audiences may understand how the news affects them and the rest of the world. Lasswell calls this socializing (Lasswell, 1969, p. 103).

Lasswell suggests that the media instill basic values and orientations into individuals, which in turn help them synthesize the news within their cultural framework (Lasswell, 1969, p. 103). Commenting on how news affect young children, Graber had this to say: "[The mass media] teach [young people] which elements produce power, success and dominance in society, and [the mass media] provide [children] with models for behavior" (Graber, 1993, p. 11).

Although it is difficult to factually determine, or quantify, whether the mass media affect adult behavior, Lasswell's socialization function suggests that the mass media provide "ingredients that people use to adjust their existing attitudes and opinions to keep pace with a changing world (Graber, 1993, p. 11).

The third function follows the Westley-MacLean (Westley and MacLean, 1976, pp. 31-38) model, which asserts that journalists sometime construct messages with the intent of modifying the perception of readers, viewers or listeners (Severin, Tankard, 1992, pp. 404-06).

Notwithstanding, journalists are urged to engage in objective journalism, that is, unbiased reporting of news events, that gives equal coverage and respect to both sides of news events. This widely accepted, yet unregulated mandate for journalist is in juxtaposition to Lasswell's second and third functions of the journalist, which are to interpret news events and to help audiences socialize news events into their daily lives.

As aforementioned, how journalists interpret and socialize news events are based, in part, on their personal values and experiences. Thus, pure objectivity from a

journalistic stand point is near impossible to achieve (Kirman, 1992, pp. 47-51). Entman says the very nature of news selection--deciding what is or is not newsworthy, what facts should be or should not be used, what stories should be on the front-or last-page--is based on the interpretation of each individual journalist or news organization (Kirman, 1992, pp. 47-51)

Ziegler (Zieger and Asante, 1992, p. 19) goes a step further by suggesting in her mass media enculturation theory that both journalist and the journalist's news sources bring unique interpretations to news events and situations. Differences in culture, she argues, affect one's processing of news events (Ziegler and Asante, 1992, p. 19).

A number of experiments have demonstrated the effects culture has in processing information (Severin, Tankard, 1992, pp. 71-86). Among the most striking is Bagby's (Bagby, 1957, p. 331-34) research on binocular rivalry whereby he discovered that Hispanics and Americans (whites) each better retained information about their own culture (Severin, Tankard, 1992, pp. P. 75).

How journalists interpret, socialize and process information is perhaps further compromised when covering so-called extraordinary news events, which give media managers little time to prepare their responses. Consider the media's reaction to the Oklahoma City bombing in which early news reports linked the bombing to Islamic fundamentalist groups such as Humas (Agrawal, 1995, p. 35). Or the media's depiction of Richard Jewel in connection with the 1996 Olympic bombing in Atlanta. As these examples indicate, misinformation is sometimes reported during the coverage of

extraordinary events, particularly when journalists begin speculating about potential culprits in such crises (Duffy, 1995, pp. 34-45). Unlike the Oklahoma City bombing or the 1992 Los Angeles riot, some extraordinary events are not unexpected but rather planned and sometimes anxiously anticipated (Graber, 1993, pp. 149-50). Nevertheless, such news events are out of the ordinary and touch the lives of "thousands" of people. Consider the impact of the 1963 March on Washington, or the first South African democratic elections, which abolished apartheid-rule after more than 300 years.

Likewise, the media respond to planned extraordinary events much like they do unexpected ones, minus, perhaps, the rush to judgment due to the often fatal or criminal circumstances surrounding unexpected extraordinary events (Graber, 1993, pp. 148-66). Does the sporadic or often riveting nature of extraordinary news events further comprise a journalist's objectivity, which, as Lasswell theorized, is muffled due to personal interpretations?

Using both Lasswell's model and Ziegler's theory, how do journalists--relying on their personal values, experiences and cultural normalities--make sense out of extraordinary news events, which are, by definition, far from normal and to some extent once-in-a-lifetime novelties? Moreover, how do their interpretations affect their news reports and consequently media audiences' perception of such extraordinary events?

Due to the increasing number of media acquisitions, mergers and buy outs, a considerable amount of debate has been fostered recently surrounding the question, "who

controls the media"? In addition to that oft-mentioned debate, a number of research papers have been written about the lack of minorities in news rooms and in media management positions.

Lasswell's model and Ziegler's enculturation theory are perhaps sound platforms upon which to stand when debating against recent trends regarding concentration in media ownership and the lack of minorities in today's news rooms. As Roefs explains, a non-diversified media--both in its ownership and its practitioners are undesirable in a multicultural, diversified America (Roefs, 1993, pp. 22-27). As Danny Schechter says: "Ownership and interests are usually linked. This goes for the news business too: The concentration of the American media in fewer and fewer hands has had an impact on what does and does not get covered" (Schechter, 1994, pp. 43-45).

In 1994, the American Society of Newspapers & Editors reported that 10.9% of newspaper journalists were minorities (Editor & Publisher, 1995, p. 39), a slim 4% increase since 1983 (E & P, 1995, p. 39). Minorities included African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans and Hispanics (E & P, 1995, p. 39). However in that same year, minorities represented only 8.2% of journalists in newspaper management jobs nationwide, while whites represented 91.8% (E & P, 1995, 39). Moreover, as of 1995, 46% of the country's daily newspapers had no minority employees at all (Anfuso, 1995, pp. 30-38). Takahashi (1992, p. 44) suggests that these media demographics have tremendous consequences in terms of what news events do or do not get covered, as well

as how (what angles) are developed. It is for this reason that Takahashi urges media managers to diversify their news rooms with skilled journalists from minority groups.

The editor's reaction at the *Los Angeles Times* to the so-called Los Angeles "riots" is a good example of one of the effects of few minorities--particularly African Americans--in news rooms (Takahashi, 1992, p 44). According to Takahashi, white reporters at the *LA Times* were told by its editors not to go to riot sites for fear that they may be physically harmed (Takahashi, 1992, p. 44). Consequently, the *LA Times* had to mobilize their minority journalists, who represented 19.6% of the *Times* total editorial staff, which included all of their bureaus. This was a tremendous handicap, not to mention loss of time, because some of the minority reporters--which included African Americans, Latinos and Asian Americans--worked in suburban areas, and of the minorities, a small percentage of them were black (Tharp, 1995, p. 46).

As a result, the *LA Times'* coverage of the uprising was one-sided, focusing primarily on views held by Los Angeles public officials, views that were far different from those espoused by community leaders who lived in riot sites (Graber, 1993, pp. 149-50).

Couple Lasswell's three functions of the media model and Ziegler's mass media enculturation theory with the lack of minorities in news rooms, and again many questions come to mind. Among them: How are news events about African Americans surveyed and interpreted by a media that are almost 90% white? Likewise, how are these news events processed by this homogenous group? How do media managers, most of whom are

white (Anfuso, 1995, pp. 30-38), decide which news events are newsworthy? What impact does a lack of minorities in news rooms have with regards to socializing media audiences?

Statement of the Problem

They came from all over the country, traveling by the tens of thousands in cars, buses, trains and planes to the Million Man March (Cottman, 1995, p. 37). Sixty-two Black men even walked from Philadelphia, more than 60 miles from Washington, D. C. (Cottman, 1995, p. 37). It was a day of opposites attracting on October 16, 1995, at the Million Man March. Fathers and sons were there; uncles and nephews were there; Muslims and Christians were there; old and young were there; rich and poor were there; and educated and uneducated were there (Cottman, 1995, pp. 9, 43).

Between 870,000 and 1.1 million black men (Cottman, 1995, p. 26) were standing peacefully on the mall of the nation's capital for the Million Man March determined to leave Washington, D. C. anew, different than they had come (Cottman, 1995, pp. 6-9). They were vowing to stop blaming others for their problems and "atoning" to God, making commitments to be more responsible fathers, husbands and community builders (Cottman, 1995, pp. 6-9).

However, the Million Man March was not without controversy. Many print and electronic media accounts reported the philosophical divide within the Black community

over Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan (Janofsky, 1995, p. B6). Critics of Minister Farrakhan claimed he was anti-Semitic and sexist and, therefore, should not be followed. Supporters, however, said they were not following him but rather supporting a long awaited event, which at best could become a cornerstone for African Americans (Smolowe, 1995, pp. 40-42, 45-46, 50).

Black organizations and famous religious and political activists took sides on the issue (Janofsky, 1995, B6). Among other people and groups, Jesse Jackson, Coretta Scott King, Rosa Parks, Kwesi Mfume and the SCLC supported the event. However, the NAACP, the black Baptist Convention, Angela Davis and several black preachers did not (Janofsky, 1995, B6). The Million Man March, according to Cottman, was the largest gathering of African Americans ever to assemble on the Mall in the United States (Cottman, 1995, p. 9).

However, the Million Man March stretched far beyond Washington, D. C. (Cottman, 1995, p. 9). Whether on the Capitol grounds or not, African-American men, women and children across the country participated in the "Day of Atonement" by staying home from work or school, praying, fasting and restraining from shopping (Muhammad, 1995, p. 2). Some even celebrated it internationally (Muhammad, 1995, p. 2).

In lieu of controversy, the Million Man March fits Graber's definition of an extraordinary event. It "happens rarely, dramatic and rich in pictures, [and] tugs at human heart strings, touching the lives of millions of peoples" (Graber, 1993, p. 148). Thus, based on Lasswell's model and Ziegler's theory, how did a majority white media report,

interpret, socialize and process the Million Man March, a pre-planned extraordinary event? This research paper seeks to answer this question?

Objectives of the Study

Extensive research has been done on the mass media's coverage of Blacks during so-called extraordinary events (Lester and Smith, 1990, pp. 128-136; Becker, et al., 1992, 124-134). However, most of this research focuses on extraordinary events that are "incidental," that is, based on unexpected incidents that occur which trigger unexpected, emotional outbursts by thousands, sometimes millions of people (e.g. civil disorders such as the Watts Riots of 1965 and the Detroit riots of 1967).

To date, however, little research has been done on the mass media's coverage of planned and organized extraordinary events that center around African Americans. Hence, this study aims to analyze coverage of Blacks during an extraordinary event which was planned and organized.

This study is designed to answer the following research questions:

1. How did the leading national print media survey, interpret and socialize the Million Man March?
2. Did they cover the march like a so-called extraordinary event?

The following variables will be analyzed in order to answer the research questions:

1. First reports. When did each publication begin its coverage of the March?

2. Article placement. Where did each publication place articles about the March?
3. Time frame of coverage. How long did each publication cover the March? Was coverage "short lived"?
4. Content. What did each publication write about the March?
5. Element of newsworthiness. What elements of newsworthiness were explored most in each publication's coverage of the March?
6. Tone. What was the overall tone of March coverage by each publication?
7. Type of Coverage. How did each publication cover the March [e.g. spot news, feature news, side bar, etc.]?

Significance of the Study

In 1967, Lyndon B. Johnson ordered the formation of The National Advisory Commission of Civil Disorders--commonly referred to as the Kerner Commission--to analyze the causes of racial unrest in America (Sentman, 1972, pp. 501-08) Among other things, the commission concluded in 1968 that the media were negatively biased when covering Black life, and the negative coverage had a considerable impact on race relations. The commission said: "By failing to portray the Negro as a matter or routine and in the context of the total society, the news media, we believe, contributed to the black-white schism in the society" (Kerner, 1968, pp. 362-389).

Recent research suggests that imbalanced coverage of African Americans still exists, even decades after the Kerner Commission's report (Lester and Smith 1990, pp. 128-36; Lester, 1994, 380-94; Lule, 1993, pp. 287-99). Consequently, African Americans continue to mistrust the media and even view the media as an agent of those forces they believe are ultimately against them (Becker, et. al. 1992, pp. 124-34). Additionally, as a consequence of continued biased coverage against African Americans, Americans of other ethnicities, particularly white Americans, view African Americans in damagingly stereotypical ways.

Due to recent instances of so-called "hate crimes" and racial unrest, there is a need to re-evaluate how the media currently cover African Americans in order to begin measuring the progress, or lack thereof, of media coverage of Blacks. Lack of substantive changes in coverage of African Americans, might be, as the Kerner Commission asserted decades ago, a reason for today's racial divide.

The Million Man March presents a wonderful opportunity for media research on current coverage of African Americans in an attempt to analyze what role, if any, the media have in promoting racial harmony. Though this research cannot answer the role the media play in the complicated task of creating racial harmony, it is a step towards the end. At best, this study will add to existing research about coverage of minority groups--specifically Blacks--in the United States and will hopefully be a cornerstone study for future research.

In today's ethnically diversified America, the mass media need answers and help in putting to rest the age-old dilemma of imbalanced coverage of minority groups. In spirit, this study seeks to assist in accomplishing that goal

Definitions

The following terms will be used throughout the study in accordance with the definitions specified below:

- prominence** Refers to one of at least seven elements of newsworthiness that suggests an article was published because of the famous and/or influential status of the person about whom the story is written . For the purpose of this paper in chapter four, this element was selected when an article was written and published because a well-known entertainer or a person (or group) of similar status endorsed or opposed the march. (Element 1)
- timeliness** Refers to one of at least seven elements of newsworthiness that suggests an article was published because of its association with an upcoming event. For the purposes of this paper in chapter four, this element was selected when an article had little news value outside the context of the upcoming Million Man March; therefore, it was the event that made the article news. (Element 2)

conflict	Refers to one of at least seven elements of newsworthiness that suggests an article was published primarily because differences of opinion existed between two or more influential and relevant people or groups. For the purpose of this paper in chapter four, this element was selected when the "news" of an article pertained to two or more opposing sides. This element almost always involved a person who openly disagreed with the leadership of march organizer Louis Farrakhan, Ben Chavis or both. (Element 3)
bizarre	Refers to one of at least seven elements of newsworthiness that suggests an article was published because the "news" was extremely unusual. (Element 4)
impact	Refers to one of at least seven elements of newsworthiness that suggests an article was published because the "news" affects a person, group of people, nation, etc. For the purpose of this paper in chapter four, this element answered the question: What does the news mean to me?" These articles generally included some contextual information, using national polls and surveys to weigh the public's sentiment on a particular issue. (Element 5)
spot news	Refers to one of at least seven elements of newsworthiness that suggest an article was published because a publicized event had occurred the day before. The element differs from breaking news in that spot news is a preplanned event. However, it mirrors breaking news in that the article

was written the day the event happened and published the next day. For the purpose of this paper in chapter four, this element was selected , with one exception, when the article ran October 17, 1995, the day after the Million Man March. In this paper, this element applies only to newspapers. (Element 6)

proximity Refers to one of at least seven elements of newsworthiness that suggests an article was published because the "news" affects a nearby location, namely a community, town, city or state. For the purposes of this paper in chapter four, this element was overwhelmingly selected for *Washington Post* articles and, at times, *USA Today* articles, whose local readers faced the direct presence of the march and the impact it had on traffic and local school boards. (Element 7)

extraordinary events

Refers to events that happen rarely, which are dramatic and rich in pictures, that tug at human heart strings. Events that seem salient to the lives of people because they threaten their shared values and peace of mind and often their lives and property, such as natural disasters, wars, man-made disasters, or man-made events.

significant correlation

Significant correlations in this study occurred when each statistical test in the chi-square's "significant" categories was equal to or less than 0.05.

marginal significance.

Marginal significant correlations in this study occurred when some of the statistical test in the chi-square's "significant" categories were equal to or less the 0.05 and others were less than 0.1.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Media Bias and African Americans

After a flurry of fierce racial uprisings in the 1960s, President Lyndon Baines Johnson in August 1967 ordered the formation of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, also known as the Kerner Commission (Kerner, 1968, pp. 1-5). The commission, headed by Otto Kerner, was given the weighty responsibility of analyzing racial unrest and giving potential causes and solutions.

In 1968, the Kerner Commission delivered its reports, concluding--among other things--that the American media played an instrumental role in race relations in the United States. After months of research, the commission concluded that the media presented information from the perspective of a "white man's world" and reflected the biases, in differences and paternalism, white Americans imposed on African Americans (Becker, Kosicki & Jones, 1992, 124-34). Of this bias coverage, the commission said:

If what the white American reads in the newspaper or sees on television conditions his expectations of what is ordinary and normal in the larger society, he will neither understand nor accept the Black American (Kerner, 1968, p. 383).

Furthermore, the commission report concluded that the media distorted the causes and significance of racial uprisings (Schechter, 1994, pp. 43-45, 101-02), saying: "We have found a significant imbalance between what actually happened in our cities [that were riot sites] and what newspapers, radio and television coverage of the riots told us happen" (Kerner, 1968, pp. 362-389). The commission considered this imbalanced coverage a "deficiency]" of the press, which it [the Press] needed to pay "conscientious attention" to in order to rectify it (Abron, 1990, pp. 49-52).

More than 20 years later, on July 28, 1991, the *Chicago Sun-Times* ran an article about raccoons who were toppling over suburban garbage cans in search of food. The author of the article, Tom McNamee, compared the raccoons to inner-city "gang-bangers," saying the raccoons "have got that gang-banger walk" and "grew up in single parent" households where they "smok[ed] crack or something" (Fitzgerald, 1992, pp. 8-9, 34). Additionally, McNamee said that suburban victims find "overturned garbage cans the same way city people find fresh graffiti."

The article sparked staunch protest from Chicago's Black community, who accused the newspaper of being racist. Consequently, a written apology was printed in the *Sun-Times* (Fitzgerald, 1992, pp. 8-9, 34). The *Sun-Times* article received the "Thumbs Down" award by the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) in 1992. The NABJ "Thumbs Down" award is given to the American publication that publishes the most racially demeaning article about African Americans. In a letter to *Sun-Times'* editor and executive vice president, Dennis A. Britton, then NABJ President Sidmel

Estes-Sumpter wrote that this was "one of the most blatant forces of racist, irresponsible, inflammatory writing we have ever seen. This clearly was not a mistake. Even if it were meant to be a joke, it wouldn't be funny, but this is no joke. This is intentional" (Fitzgerald, 1992, pp. 8-9, 34).

Whether the incident was intentional or not--Britton contended vehemently that it was not--is important, but not necessarily most important. For this study, what is more important is the fact that the article was published even after being reviewed and edited by at least two editors prior to being run. At most daily newspapers, particularly as large as the *Chicago Sun-Times*, articles are edited by one or two copy or metro editors and a managing editor (Rucker and Williams, 1965, p. 10). Furthermore, one of the responsibilities of a copy editor is to screen articles for inappropriate words or phrases (Rucker and Williams, 1965, p. 10). Hence, the question becomes: Why did this article seem fit to print by the *Sun-Times'* editors, yet provoked extreme anger by Chicago's Black community and a national journalist association?

Both Lassell's interpretation function and Ziegler's mass media enculturation theory, among other models and theories, present potential answers. Based on Ziegler's mass media enculturation theory, differences in culture affect the way reporters, as well as sources, process information (Ziegler, 1992, p. 19). Hence, due to racial, cultural and historical differences, reporters and editors may "process" the same information differently.

A number of experiments have demonstrated the affects culture has in processing information (Severin , Tankard, 1992, pp. 71-86). Among the most striking is Bagby's (Bagby, 1957, pp. 331-34) research on binocular rivalry whereby he discovered that Hispanics and American (whites) better retained information about their own culture.

There is a considerable body of research that argues that the media, particularly print media, are still biased when reporting about African Americans. In a 1983 study, Sentman concludes that Life magazine "failed to show a linear increase" of Blacks in their magazine from 1937 to 1972. Moreover, Sentman concluded, when *Life* magazine did cover Blacks it did so incidentally--that is, related to some specific incident such as urban uprisings caused by perceived racial injustices. However, portrayals of African Americans in every day life remained "consistently low in proportion to total black coverage" (Sentman, 1983, p. 505). To be sure, in 1937 everyday coverage of blacks in *Life* was .1% (Sentman, 1983, p.505).

Lester (Lester, 1994, pp. 380-94) concludes that *The New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *New Orleans Times-Picayune* and *San Francisco Chronicle* "effectively segregated [blacks] from [their] pages" (Lester, 1994, p. 391). Lester's study analyzes African-American photo coverage in each of the aforementioned newspapers from 1937 to 1990. In order to administer a reliable and credible study, Lester selected the newspapers based on their locations and their circulation numbers. Although the study suggests that the amount of African-American coverage significantly increased during these years, the increased coverage did not translate into positive coverage and images of

Blacks. In fact, "stereotypical images [were] high and news of special interest to African Americans [were] low" (Lester, 1994, p.391). Of the stereotypical images, crime, sports and entertainment were the primary subjects in which African-American pictures were used (Lester, 1994, p.392).

Additionally, a 1993 study of newspapers' coverage of the assassination of Black Panther Party co-founder Huey P. Newton concludes again that the media are biased when covering African Americans. Lule (Lule, 1992, pp. 287-99) analyzes the assassination coverage of eight newspapers: *The Kansas City Star*, *The New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, the *Houston Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post* and *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. He concludes the following:

The reports depicted Newton's death in terms that degraded and devalued his life and work. Through irony, the reports disavowed the importance of his life. Through incongruity, the reports built descriptive contrast that emphasized the sordidness of his demise. Through citation of his criminal record, the reports portrayed him as a cheap thug, a gangster. They omitted sources and events that might refute or balance the portrayal (Lule, 1992, p. 293).

Approximately three-weeks after the Million Man March, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, a march supporter and panelist, was asked to address 220 newspaper executives gathered in Indianapolis, Ind., for the Associated Press Managing Editors convention (Fitzgerald,

1995, p. 11) Jackson was asked to speak on race relations and give his opinion regarding the media's coverage of the Million Man March. According to the Fitzgerald, "[Jackson] may have never been as biting and angry [with] the press" (Fitzgerald, 1995, p. 11).

"The whole phenomenon of putting a black face on a white body is imposed [by] an uncritical media," Jackson said, referring to how the media "incorrectly" portray most welfare recipients and affirmative action beneficiaries as African American (Fitzgerald, 1995, p. 11). "Media have allowed the Big Lie to be perpetuated" (Fitzgerald, 1995, p. 11). Jackson said the media's coverage of the Million Man March focused too much on March organizer Louis Farrakhan, "rather than exploring the more important issues of the demonstration" (Fitzgerald, 1995, p. 11).

John Seigenthaler, former president of American Society of Newspaper Editors and current chairman emeritus of *The Tennessean*, agrees with Jackson, saying "[The media] didn't give us any valuable information on the overall goals of the March" (Hefner, 1996, 2A). About this perceived lopsided coverage, Rev. Jackson said: "If you [the media] can only see one person out of a million, you must have a pea for a brain" (Fitzgerald, 1995, p. 11). Moreover, Jackson said the American press portray Blacks as "less intelligent, less patriotic, less disciplined and more violent" than they do other ethnic groups (Fitzgerald, 1995, p. 11). "You cheapen our lives by the way you twist and distort our [African Americans'] story," Jackson concluded (Fitzgerald, 1995, p. 11).

Jackson's accusations against the majority press echo the sentiments of many African Americans in America. Research suggest that African Americans generally do not trust the media for news about them (Graber, 1993, pp. 148-67), particularly in newspapers. Becker, Kosicki and Jones state that African Americans "are less likely than whites to feel that newspapers can be trusted" (Becker, et. al., 1992, pp. 125-26). In addition, Becker, Kosicki and Jones indicate that Blacks are less likely to feel that newspapers are concerned about the "well being" of their communities and the public interest:

African Americans are much more likely than whites to say newspapers do not provide favorable enough coverage of a wide range of groups in society (Becker, et. al., 1992, p. 125).

One of the primary reasons that Blacks do not trust the media is because of what Danny Schechter refers to as helicopter journalism (Schechter, 1994, pp 43-45, 101-02) Schechter says helicopter journalism takes place when journalists report about the Black community from an outsiders' perspective yet never come into the Black community and interact with its residents. Accordingly, in the Becker study (Becker, et. al., 1992, pp. 124-34), Blacks did not feel newspapers are concerned about their communities.

The Becker study (Becker, et. a., 1992, pp. 124-34), which analyzes the differences in how blacks and whites evaluate the media, concludes that a large segment of the African-American population believe the media are biased against them in news coverage (Becker, et. al., 1992, p.133). In fact, to a large extent, Blacks see the media as

an agent in the perpetuation of society's mistreatment of Blacks (Becker, et. al., 1992, pp. 133-34).

The mistrust of the media by Blacks was demonstrated in 1993 at a Nov. 16 rally in New Haven, Conn. Disenchanted by the New Haven Register's coverage of Blacks, "30 marchers dumped copies of the newspaper at the Register offices" (Giobbe, 1994, p. 15). The protesters were protesting "unbalanced" and "uneven" coverage of New Haven's Black community (Giobbe, 1994, p.15).

According to Abron (Abron, 1990, p. 51), reporters fail to report "the truths behind the facts" in news accounts about or affecting African Americans. Instead, the media give superficial and distorted images of black life (Abron, 1990, p. 51). She says: "The media's failure to adequately explore the issues affecting black life and culture in America....contributes to furthering racist stereotypes and beliefs about Black people" (Abron, 1990, p.51).

Kirman (Kirman, 1992, pp. 47-51) contends that media bias should not be tolerated. He does admit, however, that being biased is a consequence of being human (Kirman, 1992, pp. 47-51). In attempt to curtail bias reporting, reporters are expected to be objective, giving equal coverage and respect to both sides of a story or situation (Entman, 1989, p. 30).

The Kerner Commission's report in 1968 exclaimed that this notion of imbalanced coverage of Blacks was true and consequently had a negative impact on race relations. The research outlined in this literature review suggests that imbalanced coverage of

African Americans still exists, even after the Kerner Commission report. Consequently, Blacks mistrust the media and even view the media as an agent of those forces that are against them. Among those media that are mistrusted the most are the print media (Becker, et. al., 1992, pp. 124-34). This research provides the backdrop upon which Million Man March coverage in print media can be situated and analyzed.

The Media and Extraordinary Events

Wars, uprisings, natural and man-made disasters and events are all extraordinary. They happen rarely and usually have great consequences in the lives of thousands, sometimes millions, of people. As Graber put it, "they seem salient to the lives of media audiences because they threaten their shared values and peace of mind and often their lives and property" (Graber, 1993, pp. 148-49). Consider the impact that the Oklahoma City bombing, or the Los Angeles riots or the Vietnam War had on Americans. Because extraordinary events are rare and sometimes riveting, they get an "extraordinary amount of sustained media coverage and extraordinary amount of audience attention" (Graber, 1993, p. 148). Following Lasswell's socialization function, people need information in order to readjust their "existing attitudes and opinions" (Lasswell, 1969, p. 103).

In response, the media act aggressively to gather all relevant information about the extraordinary news event (Query, 1996, pp. 12-14). The media know they are "the only institution equipped to collect this massive amount of information and disseminate it

quickly" (Graber, 1993, p. 167). Behaviors of the media during coverage of extraordinary events can be divided into three "stages and patterns:"

Stage One. The crisis or event strikes or is announced as impending. . . .

Media people, officials, and onlookers rush to the scene. This immediately produces a flood of uncoordinated messages, largely transmitted over the airwaves. Radio and television stations interrupt regularly scheduled programming with bulletins announcing the extra-ordinary event, or they may preempt the entire program for reporters from the scene (Graber, 1993, p. 152)

During this stage, the media are charged with the responsibility of not only informing the public but in so doing coordinating public activities and calming the public. The chief problem for journalists during the first stage is getting accurate information, particularly if the crisis involves complicated and technical information (Graber, 1993, pp. 152-53).

The pressure for answers, coupled with the anxiety of media competition, encourages reporters to speculate about what happened, who are the perpetrators and why. As a result, socially outcast groups are sometimes speculated to have involvement in the disaster (Peretz, 1995, p. 47). Radio and televisions stations are most effective during this stage because of their spontaneous electronic broadcasting (Petrozello, 1995, pp 10-12).

Stage Two. During the second stage, the media try to make sense out of the situation. At this point enough time generally has elapsed so that the chief dimensions of the crisis have emerged (Graber, 1993, p. 155).

During the second stage, the media have more accurate information and have had more time to organize the information in an understandable way. Print media are best equipped to offer the kind of thorough coverage needed during this stage (Graber, 1993, p. 153). Print media have larger staffs and more room to present background details (Graber, 1993, pp. 155-56).

Stage Three. The third stage overlaps with the other two. It involves attempts by media personnel to place the crisis into a large, long-range perspective and to prepare people to cope with the aftermath. Steps toward restoration of normal conditions may be discussed (Graber, 1993, p. 156).

If necessary during this stage, the media announce alterations that will occur as a result of the extraordinary event, such as clean-up efforts in the case of natural or man-made disasters (Graber, 1993, p. 156).

News Suppression during Extraordinary Events

Suppressing news during extraordinary events, either temporarily or permanently, raises major ethical concerns (Graber, 1993, p. 162). Nevertheless, in an attempt to

withhold inaccurate information, or smother civil disorders, or prevent "enemies" from getting government strategies during wars, journalists sometime withhold information. In fact,

eighty percent of news people in [a] sample of radio and television stations . . . said that they would temporarily withhold information that might provoke troublesome reactions. Many would go further, indicating that they would withhold live coverage entirely, particularly in civil disturbances (Graber, 1993, p. 163).

However, based on Lasswell's model and Ziegler's theory, what is interpreted or processed as "troublesome" is based on the cultural values and beliefs of the individual news person.

In the Los Angeles uprisings, for example, initial news stories were not about African Americans who supported the uprising as a social protest against injustices safeguarded by the judicial system. To the contrary, instead of the media reporting about the feelings and ideas of community activists in the affected Los Angeles communities, the media reported on minorities who supported the policies of the local governing elites (Graber, 1993, pp. 162-64).

News suppression remains a debated topic, particularly in a society where free speech, which sometimes translates into having access to the media, is a paramount value.

Role of Print Media During Extraordinary Events

Due to the nature of the print media, even the most extraordinary events usually must wait until print publications are published. Thus, during the first stage of crisis reporting, radio and television stations are better equipped to disseminate the breaking news information (Graber, 1993, p. 152).

Nevertheless, because radio and television stations have smaller staffs and less time in which to convey information, they are not as equipped in giving complete and in-depth information (Graber, 1993, p. 152). By contrast, newspapers and news magazines do an excellent job giving complete analyses of developing events. Citing Davis and Robinson, Graber writes:

Print media excel in conveying abstract ideas and factual details. Since most tests of learning from the media focus on abstract knowledge or rote memory, print media are generally credited with conveying more knowledge than audio-visual media do (Graber, 1993, p. 202).

Based on Graber's definition, the Million Man March was a man-made extraordinary event. Accordingly, one would expect media coverage of the March to in some way differ from coverage of ordinary events. However, because research suggests that print media focuses on situational coverage of blacks--i.e. crime, sports and entertainment (Lester, 1994, pp. 380-94)--rather than "the every day, ordinary lives" of

Blacks, the extraordinary event variable becomes extremely significant for an analysis of Million Man March coverage, particularly because of the role the print media have during such events.

Nevertheless, news suppression during extraordinary events does occur for various reasons, some of which are objective, while others are subjective. Among the reasons are: 1. to withhold inaccurate information, 2. to attempt to smother civil disorders or perceived "troublesome" events, and 3. to prevent security risk during wars (Graber, 1993, pp. 162-65). For this study, the second reason is significant when analyzing print media's coverage of the Million Man March, particularly because research suggests that reporters interpret and process news events based on their experiences and culture. Hence, a peaceful march to some might be a "troublesome" civil disorder to others.

Finally, the role of print media during extraordinary events is to present in-depth information to their audiences, as opposed to quick, split-second summaries, as in the case of radio and television broadcasts (Graber, 1993, pp. 148-67). Hence, print media generally convey the most informative and comprehensive coverage of extraordinary events. Therefore, print media will be analyzed, as opposed to electronic (television, radio, Internet) media, since print media have the ability to convey more detailed information.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Fundamentally, the purpose of this study is to determine how five majority-owned, national newspapers and news magazines reported on the Million Man March. Towards that end, both qualitative and quantitative research will be conducted. The study employs a textual content analysis of three newspapers and two news magazines. This method allows the researcher to measure what this study seeks to examine: the coverage of the March by five national print media.

Through textual analysis, special attention is given to choices of titles, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, qualifiers, etc. Additionally, the study examines symbols and metaphors. For example, one political cartoon depicted a tombstone bearing the name, Martin Luther King Jr., and besides the King illustration was a cartoon of Louis Farrakhan. Above Dr. King's tomb were the words, "I have a dream," and above Mr Farrakhan's image were the words, "I have a scheme." Hence, literary devices such as symbols, signs, metaphors, similes, synecdoche and others will be analyzed in news articles, not cartoons.

After identifying various titles, adjectives, adverbs, etc.--coupled with analyzing article placement and length, as well as related photographs--categories will be formulated to measure the findings. In addition, interpretational analyses will be made.

This study will be a content analysis of the coverage of three newspapers and two news magazines. The following print media are analyzed: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *Newsweek* and *Time* magazines. These were selected, in part, because of their large circulation sizes and their preeminence as national news sources. The study examines is from October 9 to October 23, which is one week before and one week after the Million Man March. For news magazines, publications during the month of October 1995, the month and year of the march, were analyzed. Only articles whose central focus is about aspects of the march will be analyzed within the stated time frame. For example, a *New York Times* article (October 23, 1995) about the newly appointed NAACP executive director mentions former executive Ben Chavis and his involvement with the Million Man March. However, the focus in the story is neither the march nor Chavis' involvement in it but rather the newly appointed executive director. This article, therefore, was not analyzed in this study.

In an attempt to narrow the paper's scope, electronic media--to include radio, television and the Internet--were not be evaluated in this study. Though the three major networks provide perhaps the worst coverage of the Million Man March (Hefner, 1996, p. 2A), this researcher wants to focus on national print media, to include newspaper and magazines, not books.

The interpretative textual analysis is based on the work of literary and social critic Kenneth Burke (Lule, 1993, pp. 287-99) and sociologist Joseph M. Kirman (Kirman,

1992, pp. 47-51). Citing Burke, Lule notes that all language is symbolic action; that is, represents "an attitude toward" whatever being spoken or written about (Lule, 1993, p. 289). As early as 1954, psycholinguist C. E. Osgood had asserted that symbols have meaning (Osgood, 1954, pp.2-3). Burke's strategies for situation theory suggests that language "sizes up the situations, name their structure and outstanding ingredients, and name them in a way that contains an attitude toward them" (Lule, 1993, p. 289). Consequently, by categorizing various strategies and assembling them in groups, researchers can begin to measure the media's "attitudes toward" a situation--in this case the March Man March..

Perhaps complementary, Kirman suggests that one can measure newspaper bias on a particular subject through careful analysis of 15 variables: 1. Headlines, 2. Placement, 3. Length of stories, 4. Number of related stories, 5. Tone of article, 6. Use of photographs, 7. Size of photographs, 8. Content of photograph, 9. Appropriateness of photograph, 10. Other illustrations, 11. Editorials, 12. Columnists' comments, 13. Letters to the editor, 14. Treatment of topic in other newspapers, and 15. Treatment of topic in previous and subsequent issues of the same newspaper (Kirman, 1992, p.50). Depending on the research topic, some variables are useful, while others are not (Kirman, 1992, p.50). For this study the following variables will be analyzed: headlines; placement; number of related stories; tone of articles; use of photographs; other illustrations; and treatment of topic in other newspapers. Because this study focuses on media bias,

Kirman's model for testing media bias is viable. It helped formulate quantifiable categories as well as interpretative assertions.

Following Burke and Kirman's argument that the media make subtle opinions about a news event based on where they print news stories, what type of language they choose and what angles they explore, codes were assigned to the variables that Kirman suggested were relevant. This study included an analysis of the article placement, number of related stories, tone of articles, use of photographs, other illustrations and treatment in other newspapers.

For example, if a story ran with photographs, a rating of "1" was given for the variable asking whether a photograph accompanied the article. If there was no photograph, a rating of "0" was given for that variable. The rating No. 1, therefore, means "yes" and the No. 0 means "no".

For each article reviewed, the variable categories for newspapers answered the following questions: Did the article jump from one page to another; Did a head shot run with the article; Did any other photograph run with the article; did a graphic run with the article; Did the article run above the fold of the newspaper; did the article run below the fold of the newspaper; what element of news worthiness made the story news, (the seven news elements were listed on each coding sheet and the one that was employed was given the rating "1" and the others received ratings of "0".) Only one element of newsworthiness was chosen for each article.

Additionally, ratings of "1" or "0" were given to indicate whether an article focused on the march's "leaders," "participants," "logistical" matters, such as expected traffic problems and closed public institutions, and/or the march's broad "impact" on society. A small number of articles under review may have received two or more "1" rating under this category. Some articles, therefore, may have focused on "leaders" organizing or commenting about the march, and the "impact" the march may have on those leaders future. For example, in a front-page story in *The New York Times* (October 17, 1995) titled, "For Hundreds of Thousands, A heartfelt Joining of Hands," the news articles focused on the event's "participants," "leaders" and possible "impact." This article was among only a few stories that had three "focuses" and most of them were breaking news stories. In such stories, each focus was accounted for quantifiably.

Where an article ran--1A, 1B, etc--was tallied for each article reviewed. Kirman also noted in his article, "Using Newspapers to Study Media Bias," that the tone of an article can be derived through analysis of a reporters use of adjectives, adverbs, etc. in a news story. Those variables, however, are only applied in this paper when a more quantitative variable was used that in some way helped to punctuate the articles' tone.

In this case, the quantitative variables used are the use of quotes. That is, the number of times a pro-March person was quoted vs. the number of times an anti-march person was quoted. If, for example, the reporter quoted pro-marchers one time more than anti-marchers, the article received a rating of "1," which would mean the coverage was "slightly positive." If the pro side was quoted two or more times more than the other side,

then a "positive" rating of "2" was given. Additionally, when the reporter used adjectives that portrayed the march, its leaders or its participants positively, coupled with just one more pro-march quotes, then the article received the rating "2" which would mean the coverage was also "positive."

By contrast, when one more anti-marcher was quoted, the article under review received a rating of "-1," meaning the coverage was "slightly negative." If, for example, two or more anti- marchers were quoted more than pro-marchers, a "negative" rating of "-2" was given. Additionally, when adjectives or adverbs that portrayed the march, its leaders or its participants negatively, coupled with one more anti-march quotes, the article received the rating "-2," meaning the coverage was "negative."

Anyone quoted who was affiliated with the Million Man March was considered a "pro-marcher." In most other cases, a quote or paraphrase of the person quoted determined whether he or she was classified as a "pro" or "anti" marcher. For example, in an October 9 *Washington Post* article titled, "Farrakhan Invites Powell to Speak at D. C. March" (Loury, 1995, p. A12), Glen C. Loury, "a conservative black professor at Boston University, criticized the march was an exercise in racialist, if not racist, chauvinism." Loury, who was quoted, was tallied as an "anti-marcher." Quotes from people who embraced the march's goals but not the organizers, namely quotes from the Clinton administration, were considered "neutral."

A rating of "0" meant an article received the same number of quotes from both sides and had no loaded language that influenced the tone.

Magazines received the same analytical treatment. However, whether articles jumped and were above or below-the fold could not be applied to magazines. For magazines, the number of pages of an article was tallied.

Data Compilation

Coded data were collected in a database for data manipulation. The database was exported to SPSS, a statistical analysis software package. Crosstabs were run to generate counts, percents and chi-square values to determine whether numbers supported various correlations. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for placements, above or below the fold.. Crosstabs were run to generate counts for tone by placement and tone by page. Pearson, Likelihood Ratio, and Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association correlations and crosstabs were calculated between tone and date in magazines.

Simple descriptives and frequencies were calculated for focus (impact, leaders, logistics and participants). Pearson, Likelihood Ratio, and Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association correlations were calculated for newsworthiness elements and tone. Exploratory statistics were used to examine other areas, including graphics, head shots and other-than-head shot photographs. Summary data were formatted for presentation in Microsoft Excel and/or Power Point.

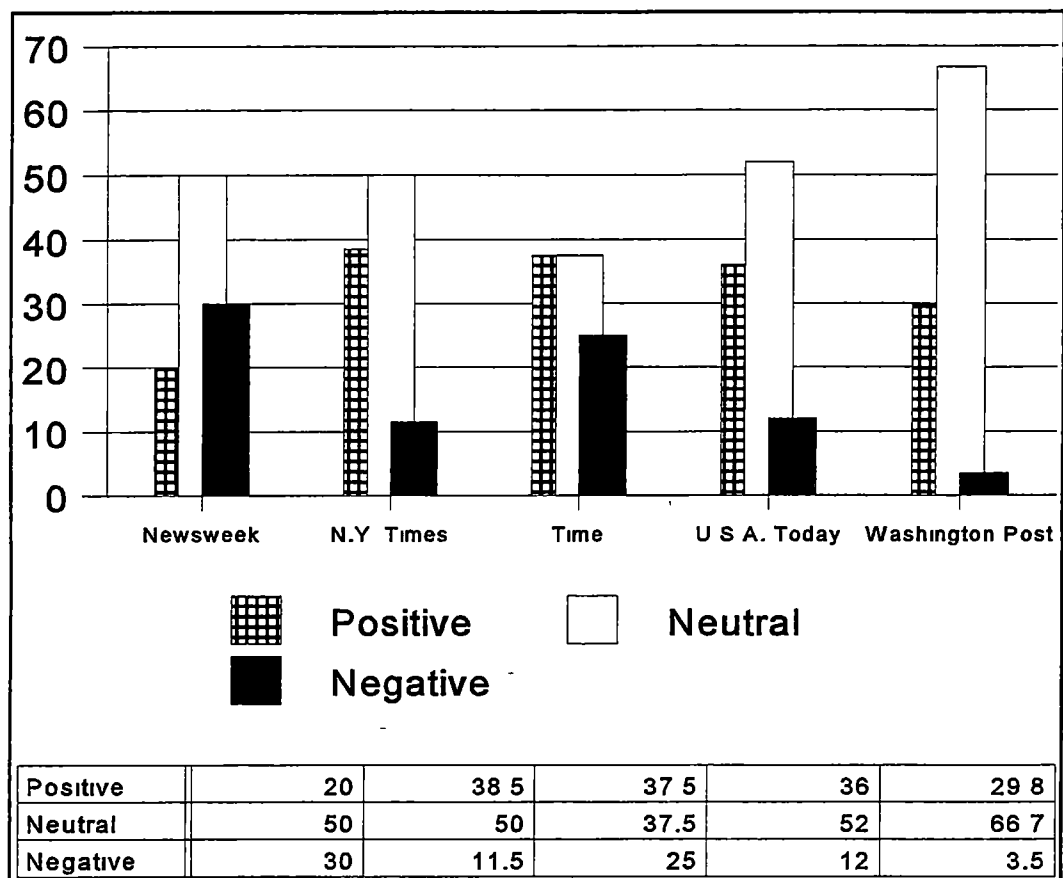
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

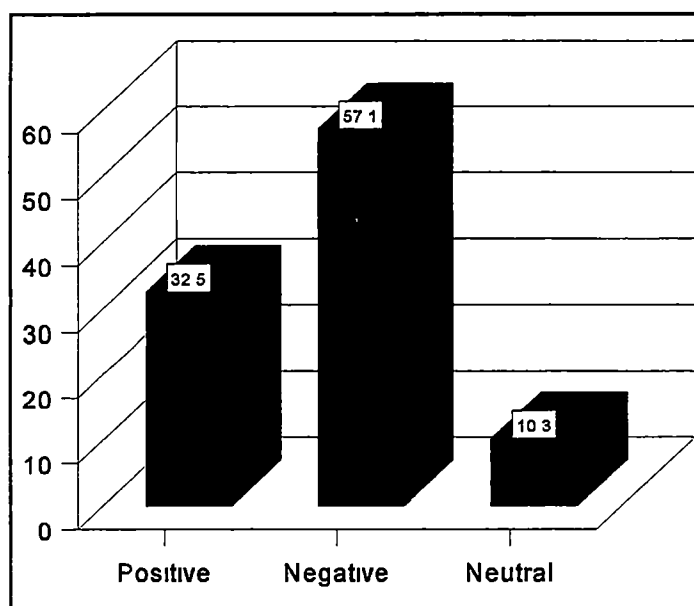
Among other things, the data suggest the following things about the five publications:

Coverage of the Million Man March by *Newsweek* magazine was, on average, quantifiably balanced but included a significant number of articles with negative tones. Half of *Newsweek's* 10 articles were quantifiably balanced, meaning they quoted both pro- and anti-marchers the same number of times. About thirty percent (30%) *Newsweek* articles, were either slightly negative or negative. In these articles, research indicated that people against the march were quoted more frequently than people for it. Two *Newsweek* articles, or 20%, were positive (See Figure 1-A and 1-B).

Moreover, six of 10 *Newsweek* articles focused on march leaders. Overall numbers suggest that most articles that focused on pro-and/or anti-march leaders were negative in tone. An example of a negative article was a four-page October 30, 1995, article titled, "An Angry Charmer," written by Howard Fineman and Vern E. Smith. A pullout, not a quote, describes Louis Farrakhan as "a man of many faces...[who] wants to move into the mainstream." (Fineman and Smith, 1995, p. 32). The pullout, used similarly to a deck, gave readers a snapshot of the article's focus, which was an exploration of the theme of Farrakhan as an "angry ...clever...spellbinding" charmer who's "king of an angry carnival" (Fineman and Smith, 1995, pp 32-35, 38).



(a) By Publication



(b) Summary

Figure 1. Tone: Percent Positive, Negative and Neutral

However, the reporters neither attributed those words to a source nor validated them through quotes in the story. The closest the article came to attributing the "mainstream" statement to an outside source was saying that Farrakhan said things during an interview that "sounded like mainstream plans" (Fineman and Smith, 1995, p. 33)

Such loaded and un-attributed language continued throughout the article, which was coded as "negative," based on quoting more anti-marchers than pro-marchers and using explosive, unsubstantiated language. The article quoted Farrakhan and used at least two quotes from people who said things that supported that reporters' hypothesis of Farrakhan as "an angry charmer."

Coverage of the march by *The New York Times* was, on average, balanced or tended to be positive in tone (See Figure 1-a). The *New York Times* generally quoted both sides the same number of times. In fact, 50% (or 13 out of 26 articles) were balanced, while 38.5% (or 10 articles) were positive and only 11.5% (or 3 articles) were negative.

For example, in an October 14, 1995, article titled "Black Women are Split Over All-Male March on Washington," written by Michel Marriott, the story focused on differences of opinion among black women (Marriott, 1995, p. 8). Though the focus of the article, which ran on page 8 of the A-section, was "conflict," the reporter quoted both pro- and anti-marchers three times apiece.

Coverage of the march by *The Washington Post* was, on average, balanced or tended to be more positive in tone (See Figure 1-a). Its coverage generally quoted both sides equally and did not use loaded language without attribution. In fact, 66.7% (or 38 out of 57 articles) were balanced, while 29.8% were positive and only 3.5% were negative in balance.

For example, in a front page October 15, 1995, article titled "March's Direction: Unifying or Divisive?", reported by Michael A. Fletcher and Hamil R. Harris, the "conflict" between pro- and anti-marchers was explored. However, the tone of the article was quantifiably "slightly positive" because four (4) pro-marchers were quoted and only three (3) anti-marchers were quoted. Moreover, when reporters referred to march organizer Louis Farrakhan, they were careful not to use pejorative language. Here's an example: "Farrakhan, who has for years been accused of racism and anti-Semitism...." Other publications were not always as careful in their phrasing.

Coverage of the march by *Time* magazine was, in general, balanced or tended to be more positive in tone. Out of the eight (8) articles published during the three issues, the tone of three (3) of them was neutral, three (3) were either slightly positive or positive and two (2) either slightly negative or negative. For example, in an October 16, 1995, report by David van Biema titled, "Marching to Farrakhan's tune," five (5) pro-marchers were quoted vs. only two (2) anti-marchers (Biema, 1995, pp. 74-75).

Coverage of the march by *USA Today* was, on average, balanced or tended to be more positive in tone (See Figure 1-a). More than half (13) of *USA Today's* 25 articles explored angles surrounding march participants rather than march leaders. The study showed that newspaper articles that explored angles surrounding march participants tended to be slightly positive or positive. Also, out of the 25 articles, about a fourth of them (6) had overall tones that were positive, quoting more march supporters than non supporters.

The data also suggest the following:

1. Data from the study found no strong evidence supporting correlations when cross tabulations of the following were done: above-the-fold and tone (Tables 1 and 2); and below-the-fold and tone (Tables 3 and 4).
2. When *USA Today* and *Time* magazine focused on the Impact of the march, there is a marginal correlation between that focus and a positive tone (See Tables 5 and 6). Evidence is not strong enough to make that conclusion with regards to the other publications.
3. When the focus of a story centered around march leaders, articles in *The Washington Post* and *USA Today* tended to be positive (Tables 7 and 8). Evidence is not strong enough to make that conclusion with regards to the other publications.
4. When participants were the focus of newspaper articles and *Time* magazine, the tone was generally positive . Evidence is not strong enough to make that conclusion with regard to *Newsweek* magazine (See Tables 9 and 10).
5. When *The New York Times* covered the Impact of the march as a news element, its coverage tended to be positive (See Tables 11 and 12). Evidence is not strong enough to make that conclusion with regards to the other publications.

Table 1
Number of Articles by Tone
Above the Fold

Newspaper	Placement	Number of Articles by Tone					Raw Total
		-2	-1	0	1	2	
New York Times	Not Above Fold	0	1	6	2	1	10 (38.5%)
	Above Fold	0	2	7	1	6	16 (61.5%)
Washington Post	Not Above Fold	0	0	18	3	5	26 (45.6%)
	Above Fold	1	1	20	5	4	31 (54.4%)
USA Today	Not Above Fold	0	0	5	1	2	8 (32.0%)
	Above Fold	2	1	8	1	5	17 (68.0%)

Table 2
Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone and Placement
Above the Fold

New York Times			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	3.09524	3	.37717
Likelihood Ratio	3.32185	3	.34461
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.87300	1	.35013
Minimum Expected Frequency = 1.154 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5 = 6 of 8 (75.0%)			
Washington Post			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	2.29544	4	.68160
Likelihood Ratio	3.05542	4	.54859
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.62755	1	.42826
Minimum Expected Frequency = 0.456 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5 = 8 of 10 (80.0%)			
USA Today			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	1.99681	4	.73635
Likelihood Ratio	2.87187	4	.57949
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.28289	1	.59481
Minimum Expected Frequency = 0.320 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5 = 9 of 10 (90.0%)			

Table 3
Number of Articles by Tone
Below the Fold

Newspaper	Placement	Number of Articles by Tone					Raw Total
		-2	-1	0	1	2	
New York Times	Not Below Fold	0	2	7	1	6	16 (61.5%)
	Below Fold	0	1	6	2	1	10 (38.5%)
Washington Post	Not Below Fold	1	1	20	5	4	31 (54.4%)
	Below Fold	0	0	18	3	5	26 (45.6%)
USA Today	Not Below Fold	2	1	9	1	5	18 (72.0%)
	Below Fold	0	0	4	1	2	7 (28.0%)

Table 4
Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone and Placement
Below the Fold

New York Times			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	3.09524	3	.37717
Likelihood Ratio	3.32185	3	.34461
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.87300	1	.35013
Minimum Expected Frequency = 1.154 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 6 of 8 (75.0%)			
Washington Post			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	2.29544	4	.68160
Likelihood Ratio	3.05542	4	.54859
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.62755	1	.42826
Minimum Expected Frequency = 0.456 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 8 of 10 (80.0%)			
USA Today			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	1.69741	4	.79119
Likelihood Ratio	2.45102	4	.65343
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.51388	1	.47346
Minimum Expected Frequency = 0.320 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 9 of 10 (90.0%)			

Table 5
Number of Articles by Tone
and Impact as Focus

Newspaper	Impact as Focus	Number of Articles by Tone					Raw Total
		-2	-1	0	1	2	
New York Times	Impact Not Focus	0	2	8	3	4	17 (65.4%)
	Impact Focus	0	1	5	0	3	9 (34.6%)
Washington Post	Impact Not Focus	1	1	26	7	6	41 (71.9%)
	Impact Focus	0	0	12	1	3	16 (28.1%)
USA Today	Impact Not Focus	0	1	12	2	2	17 (68.0%)
	Impact Focus	2	0	1	0	5	8 (32.0%)
Newsweek	Impact Not Focus	2	0	2	1	0	5 (50.0%)
	Impact Focus	0	1	3	0	1	5 (50.0%)
Time	Impact Not Focus	0	2	1	0	0	3 (37.5%)
	Impact Focus	0	0	2	1	2	5 (62.5%)

Table 6
Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone
and Impact as Focus

New York Times			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	1.88547	3	.59652
Likelihood Ratio	2.83869	3	.41717
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.00380	1	.95085
Minimum Expected Frequency = 1.038 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 7 of 8 (87.5%)			
Washington Post			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	2.09623	4	.71807
Likelihood Ratio	2.78875	4	.59378
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.03624	1	.84903
Minimum Expected Frequency = .281 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 6 of 10 (60.0%)			
USA Today			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	14.19279	4	.00670
Likelihood Ratio	15.91677	4	.00313
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.79432	1	.37281
Minimum Expected Frequency = .320 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 9 of 10 (90.0%)			

Table 6
Continued

Newsweek			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	5.20000	4	.26738
Likelihood Ratio	7.13283	4	.12903
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	1.05882	1	.30348
Minimum Expected Frequency = .500 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 10 of 10 (100.0%)			
Time			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	5.15556	3	.16075
Likelihood Ratio	6.76593	3	.07974
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	3.69198	1	.05467
Minimum Expected Frequency = .375 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 8 of 8 (100.0%)			

Table 7
Number of Articles by Tone
and Leaders as Focus

Newspaper	Leaders as Focus	Number of Articles by Tone					Raw Total
		-2	-1	0	1	2	
New York Times	Leaders not Focus	0	1	6	1	6	14 (53.8%)
	Leaders Focus	0	2	7	2	1	12 (46.2%)
Washington Post	Leaders not Focus	0	1	22	5	9	37 (64.9%)
	Leaders Focus	1	0	16	3	0	20 (35.1%)
USA Today	Leaders not Focus	0	0	3	1	6	10 (40.0%)
	Leaders Focus	2	1	10	1	1	15 (60.0%)
Newsweek	Leaders not Focus	0	1	2	0	1	4 (40.0%)
	Leaders Focus	2	0	3	1	0	6 (60.0%)
Time	Leaders not Focus	0	0	1	1	1	3 (37.5%)
	Leaders Focus	0	2	2	0	1	5 (62.5%)

Table 8
Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone
and Leaders as Focus

New York Times			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	4.18594	3	.24207
Likelihood Ratio	4.56503	3	.20656
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	2.91044	1	.08801
Minimum Expected Frequency = 1.385 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 6 of 8 (75.0%)			
Washington Post			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	8.09747	4	.08807
Likelihood Ratio	11.55778	4	.02096
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	5.42863	1	.01981
Minimum Expected Frequency = .351 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 6 of 10 (60.0%)			
USA Today			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	9.72985	4	.04523
Likelihood Ratio	11.09106	4	.02556
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	8.66042	1	.00325
Minimum Expected Frequency = .400 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 8 of 10 (80.0%)			

Table 8
Continued

Newsweek			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	5.00000	4	.28730
Likelihood Ratio	6.73012	4	.15086
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.89338	1	.34456
Minimum Expected Frequency = .400 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 10 of 10 (100.0%)			
Time			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	3.02222	3	.38821
Likelihood Ratio	3.99334	3	.26218
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	1.32911	1	.24896
Minimum Expected Frequency = .375 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 8 of 8 (100.0%)			

Table 9
Number of Articles by Tone
and Participants as Focus

Newspaper	Participants as Focus	Number of Articles by Tone					Raw Total
		-2	-1	0	1	2	
New York Times	Participants not Focus	0	2	9	2	0	13 (50.0%)
	Participants Focus	0	1	4	1	7	13 (50.0%)
Washington Post	Participants not Focus	1	0	28	2	1	32 (56.1%)
	Participants Focus	0	1	10	6	8	25 (43.9%)
USA Today	Participants not Focus	2	1	9	0	0	12 (48.0%)
	Participants Focus	0	0	4	2	7	13 (52.0%)
Newsweek	Participants not Focus	2	0	3	1	0	6 (60.0%)
	Participants Focus	0	1	2	0	1	4 (40.0%)
Time	Participants not Focus	0	2	2	0	0	4 (50.0%)
	Participants Focus	0	0	1	1	2	4 (50.0%)

Table 10
Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone
and Participants as Focus

New York Times			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	9.58974	3	.02240
Likelihood Ratio	12.35720	3	.00625
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	7.12209	1	.00761
Minimum Expected Frequency = 1.500 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 6 of 8 (75.0%)			
Washington Post			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	17.37313	4	.00164
Likelihood Ratio	19.07922	4	.00076
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	11.96196	1	.00054
Minimum Expected Frequency = .439 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 7 of 10 (70.0%)			
USA Today			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	13.90533	4	.00760
Likelihood Ratio	18.56906	4	.00095
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	11.89858	1	.00056
Minimum Expected Frequency = .480 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 8 of 10 (80.0%)			

Table 10
Continued

Newsweek			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	5.00000	4	.28730
Likelihood Ratio	6.73012	4	.15086
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.89338	1	.34456
Minimum Expected Frequency = .400 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 10 of 10 (100.0%)			
Time			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	5.33333	3	.14895
Likelihood Ratio	7.27127	3	.06374
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	4.34177	1	.03719
Minimum Expected Frequency = .500 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 8 OF 8 (100.0%)			

Table 11
Number of Articles by Tone
and Impact as News

Newspaper	Impact as News	Number of Articles by Tone					Raw Total
		-2	-1	0	1	2	
New York Times	Conflict not News	0	2	13	3	4	22 (84.6%)
	Conflict News	0	1	0	0	3	4 (15.4%)
Washington Post	Conflict not News	1	1	28	7	7	44 (77.2%)
	Conflict News	0	0	10	1	2	13 (22.8%)
USA Today	Conflict not News	2	1	12	2	4	21 (84.0%)
	Conflict News	0	0	1	0	3	4 (16.0%)
Newsweek	Conflict not News	2	1	4	1	0	8 (80.0%)
	Conflict News	0	0	1	0	1	2 (20.0%)
Time	Conflict not News	0	2	3	0	1	6 (75.0%)
	Conflict News	0	0	0	1	1	2 (25.0%)

Table 12
Test of Significance for Correlation between Tone
and Impact as News

New York Times			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	7.70996	3	.05240
Likelihood Ratio	8.94500	3	.03003
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	2.26117	1	.13265
Minimum Expected Frequency = .462 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 6 of 8 (75.0%)			
Washington Post			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	1.34113	4	.85436
Likelihood Ratio	1.84605	4	.76405
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	0.00848	1	.92665
Minimum Expected Frequency = .228 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 6 of 10 (60.0%)			
USA Today			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	5.37677	4	.25078
Likelihood Ratio	5.37186	4	.25123
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	3.75912	1	.05252
Minimum Expected Frequency = .160 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 8 of 10 (80.0%)			

Table 12
Continued

Newsweek			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	5.0000	4	.28730
Likelihood Ratio	5.00402	4	.28688
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	2.38235	1	.12271
Minimum Expected Frequency = .250 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 10 of 10 (100.0%)			
Time			
Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	5.33333	3	.14895
Likelihood Ratio	6.22477	3	.10117
Mantel-Haenzel Test for Linear Association	2.39241	1	.12193
Minimum Expected Frequency = .250 Cells with Expected Frequency < 5: 8 of 8 (100.0%)			

USA Today

Research suggests that *USA Today* did a balanced job covering the Million Man March, and the articles even tended to be slightly positive in tone. Out of 25 articles, nine (9) were spot news stories, nine (9) were published primarily because of the upcoming event's timeliness, four (4) because of conflicts between pro- and anti-marchers and three (3) because of the march's potential impact. Data indicated that 13 of the 25 articles were balanced in their coverage, meaning the reports quoted pro- and anti-marchers equally; nine (9) articles cast a slightly positive or positive tone on the march and three (3) cast a slightly negative or negative tone.

Of the nine (9) spot news stories, which were reported the day of the march and published the next, five (5) focused on how the march had impacted or could potentially impact the lives of march participants. Also of the nine spot news stories, three (3) were positive, one (1) slightly positive, three (3) balanced and two (2) negative.

Six articles ran on the newspaper's front page. Four of those six ran above-the-fold of the newspaper. Twenty-two (22) of the articles ran in the A-section, two (2) in the B-section and one (1) in the D-Section. In all, seventeen (17) articles ran above the fold, seven (7) below and one crossed the fold. (See Figure 2.)

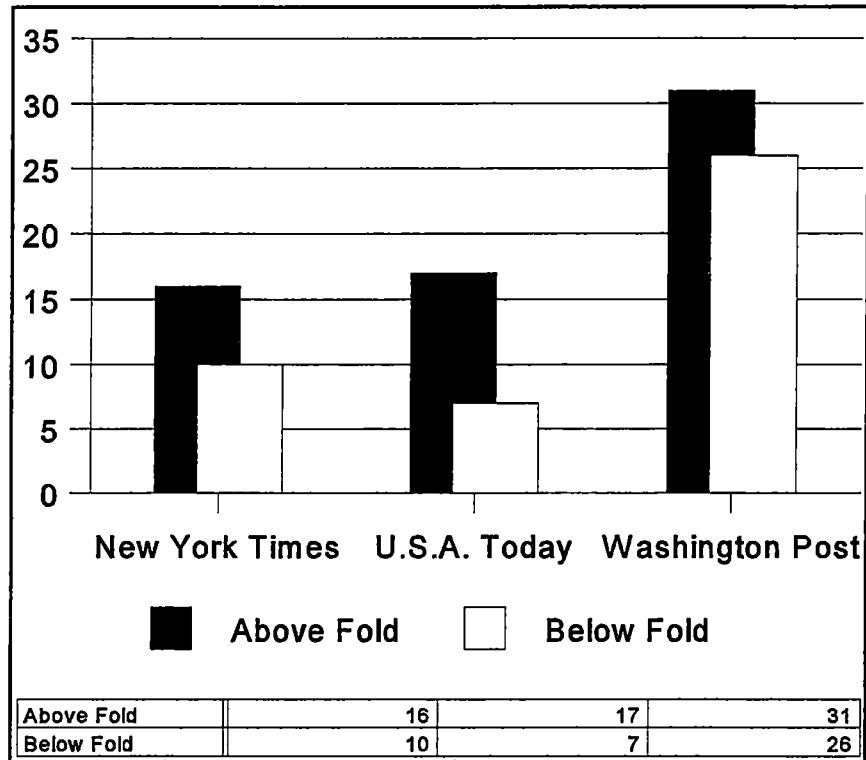


Figure 2 Newspaper Placement: Number above the Fold and Below the Fold

About half of the articles focused on march and other leaders and the other half focused on participants. There was, however, some overlapping between the two. In total, 15 articles focused on the march and other leaders; 13 on march participants; three (3) on logistical matters such as expected traffic problems or school/job closings; and eight (8) on the march's impact. (Note: "Impact " here is a different coding category than the "impact" employed as an element of newsworthiness. "Impact" here refers to how well the report explained to readers how the news affects them and/or things around them.

Four (4) *USA Today* articles focused on the impact that the march had or could potentially have on participants. Three (3) articles focused equally on the pro- and anti-march leaders and march participants, meaning the researcher coded both "leader" and "participants" when quantifying this category. Two (2) articles equally explored the impact the march could have on leaders or the national political landscape. One (1) article focused on both march leaders and participants, as well as the logistics of the march, while another (1) focused equally on march leaders, march participants and the march's impact. (See Figure 3.)

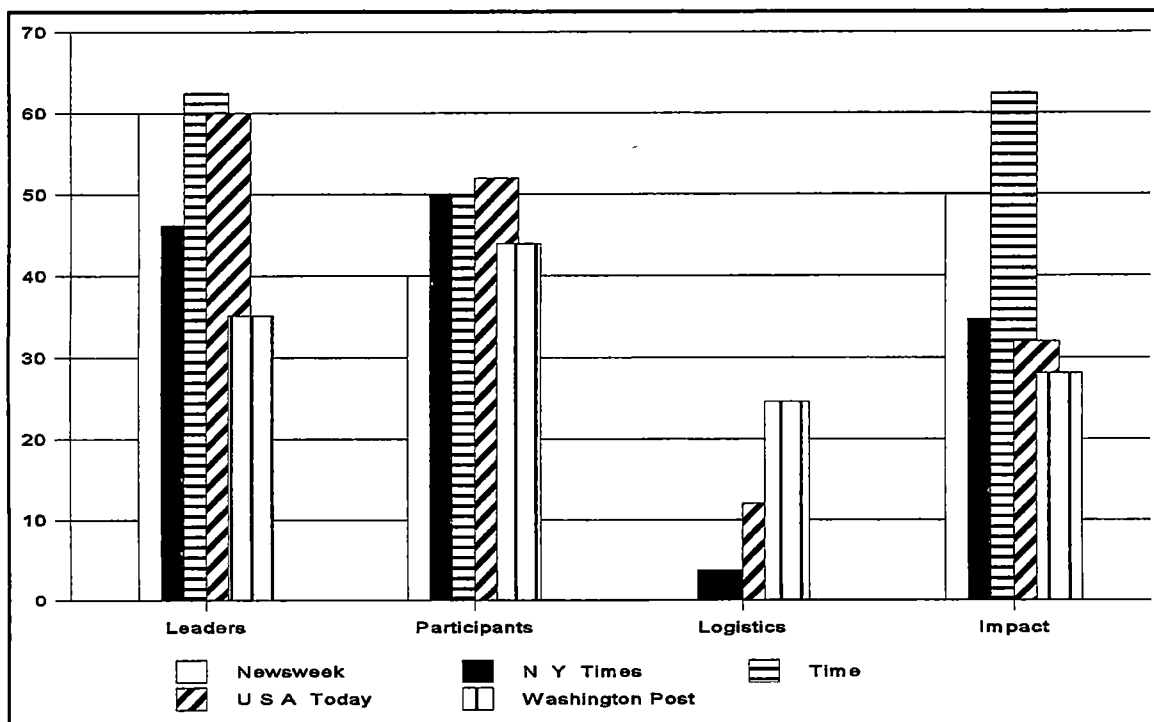


Figure 3 Elements of Content: Percent of Articles Focusing on the Identified Issue

USA Today articles tended to be slightly positive or positive in tone when the focus of an article was march participants or the march's potential impact. Fifty-two percent (52%) of *USA Today* articles covering the march focused on participants and 32% explored the march's impact on society. For example, in an October 13-15, 1995 article titled, "A million men, a single message," reported by Karen Peterson, the lead read:

Five of eight members of USA Today's Black Dads Panel hope to join the Million Man March on Washington Monday and most would agree with Eric Way Powell, 41...'This will revive the spirit of the African American male, be a catalyst to help him take his rightful place as a leader of his family, community and his church" (Peterson, 1995, 5D).

The New York Times

Research indicated that the *New York Times* did, in general, a balanced job covering the Million Man March and tended to report more positive stories on the march than negative. Data showed that 13 of the 26 *New York Times* articles were balanced; 10 were either slightly positive or positive; and three (3) were slightly negative or negative. Moreover, research indicated that stories became more positive after the march. Out of 26 articles, six (6) were reported and published primarily because the march was upcoming or had occurred within days; five (5) were news because of a brewing conflict

between pro- and anti-marchers. Additionally, there were nine (9) spot news articles; four were news because of the march's potential impact; and two were news because the involved some prominent national figure.

Of the 26 articles, 12 of them focused on march and other leaders; 13 focused on march participants; nine (9) focused on the march's impact. As these numbers indicate, some of the articles focused and were coded for two of the three coding categories: leaders, participants and impact.

Out of the nine spot news articles, four (4) focused on march leaders, five on march participants and three (3) on the march's potential impact. One spot news article focused equally on leaders and participants; one equally on participants and impact; and one equally on leaders, participants and the march's impact.

Twenty-two (22) *New York Times*' articles ran in the A-section, four (4) in the B-section and one in the E-section. Sixteen (16) of the articles ran above the fold and 10 ran below the fold. Eight (8) articles ran on the front pages, half of which were above the fold.

The Washington Post

Research suggests that *The Washington Post* did a balanced job covering the Million Man March and reported more positive stories on the march than negative ones.

Out of 57 news articles, the compelling news in five (5) of them was conflict, while 20 articles were compelling primarily because of the upcoming news event (timeliness). Another 13 were news because of the march's potential impact. There were 10 spot news articles and six (6) stories, almost all of which focused on potential traffic problems that were germane to Washington, D.C. and Maryland readers (proximity). Three (3) articles covered prominent Washington Redskins and Georgetown University athletes and/or coaches.

Data show that 38 of the 57 articles were balanced, while two were slightly negative and 17 were either slightly positive or positive. *The Washington Post*, however, bucked the prevailing trend that statistically befell the other publications. Examination of each of the other publications showed slight correlations between negative tones and coverage that focused on pro- and anti-march leaders. However, 14 of the *Post's* 57 news articles focused solely on the march and other leaders yet only one (1) of them was either balanced or slightly positive. Another nine (9) articles focused equally on march and other leaders yet each of them was balanced in coverage.

With some overlapping, 25 *Post* articles focused on march participants, 20 on march or protest leaders, 16 on the march's potential impact and 14 on logistical concerns like traffic, school and job closings. Of the five (5) *Post's* articles whose news involved conflicts, three were balanced, one (1) was slightly positive and one (1) was negative.

Research on *Washington Post* articles showed correlations between its 25 articles that focused or partially focused on march participants and positive coverage. Of the 10 spot news stories, five of them were slightly positive, while three (3) were balanced. Five of the six (6) slightly positive stories focused on march participants and one (1) focused on march and other leaders.

Of the 10 spot news stories, three (3) ran on the front page (1A), two of which were above the fold. In all, 30 *Washington Post* articles ran on section fronts of the newspaper, 15 of which ran on the front page (1A). Three articles ran on the B-front--all below the fold--four (4) ran on the C-front--two apiece above and below the fold--and five (5) on the D-front--three above and two below the fold. One article ran above the fold on the front page of the E-section and another (1) below the fold in a special "district" section. The study found no correlation between the placement of articles and their tone. Additionally, 36 of the 57 news stories ran in the A-section, eight (8) in the B-section, five (5) in both the C- and D-sections and one (1) in a special section.

Time

Research suggests that *Time* magazine's coverage of the Million Man March was balanced. Out of the eight (8) *Time* articles, the news in four (4) of them was the march itself (timeliness); in two (2), the conflict between opposing sides; and in the two (2) remaining articles, the march's potential impact. With some overlapping, five (5) of the eight (8) *Time* articles focused in part on pro- and anti-march leaders. Four (4) articles -

including the cover story - focused in part on march participants. Five (5) articles focused on how leaders, participants and/or American politics could be impacted by the march. Three (3) of the eight (8) articles were balanced. Three cast the march in a slightly positive or positive tone, and two (2) cast the march in a negative tone.

Newsweek

Research suggests that coverage of the Million Man March by *Newsweek* was, in large part, balanced but tended to be, at times, more negative in tone. Out of the 10 *Newsweek* articles, the compelling news elements in eight (8) of them were timeliness. The remaining two (2) were, in large part, focused on the march's impact or potential impact. Six (6) of the *Newsweek* articles focused on the pro- and anti-march leaders, the majority of which zeroed in on march organizer Louis Farrakhan. One (1) article focused equally on march leaders and participants. Three (3) articles focused equally on march participants and the march's potential impact. One (1) other article focused almost solely on the march's impact in spreading the religion of Islam.

Research found that five (5) of the articles were balanced in tone. Three (3) were either slightly negative or negative.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The results must be analyzed in four different categories, based on Lasswell's three (3) functions of the media and, finally, how the print media covered a so-called extraordinary event.

Report the News

Research found that the five publications under review in general did a balanced job reporting the news. Again, balanced is defined here as giving equal voice to both sides of an issue and is not synonymous with "fair and accurate" reporting. It should also be clearly stated that the research did not support a correlation between placement and tone. That is, negative articles, for example, were not given more prominent attention than positive ones.

With the exception of *Time* magazine, 50% or more of the march coverage by the other four publications was considered balanced. For *Newsweek*, 50% of its articles were balanced; *New York Times*, 50%; *Washington Post*, 66.7%, *Time*, 37.5%; and *USA Today*, 52%.

However, the fact that any report, albeit a minority number, is not balanced possibly makes a statement about journalism. Generally speaking, some articles focus

solely on a positive angle in a story, while others on a negative angle. Though both reports may be fairly and accurately reported, they both may also purposely leave out the "other side of the coin" for a number of legitimate or illegitimate reasons.

Moreover, the fact that *The Washington Post* and *Newsweek* are owned by the same company, and yet the tones of their coverage of the Million Man March represented the two extremes in this study, may suggest that media ownership does not necessarily influence editorial autonomy and voice. As mentioned in this study, there is considerable concern about a few companies owning a large percentage of media outlets. Researchers fear that this will lead to less information for readers and more power to media owners to control how news is packaged. *The Washington Post-Newsweek* dynamic, at least in this study, refutes such fear.

Interpret the News

Research found that the five publications did a fair job interpreting the news but not as good as they did reporting it. Interpreting here is measured by the percentage of times the publications explored the march's impact.

Newspapers, perhaps understandably, did a poorer job interpreting the news than news magazines. Thirty-percent of the *New York Times'* articles explored the march's broader impact on society. That compared with 28.1% of *Washington Post's* reports, and 32% of *USA Today*

By contrast, both *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines discussed the march's impact in at least 50% of their articles. *Time*, in fact, discussed it 62.5% of its news reports. This, of course, is one of the primary functions of the weekly news magazines: to answer, in much greater frequency, the question, "what the news means to you (readers)."

However, what was discussed in great detail by each of the publications was the fact that a successful march did not necessarily mean blanket support of march organizer Louis Farrakhan. This issue seemed to be a fundamental emphasis by most of the publications. In some ways, at least in the case of newspapers, this issue, which was often coded as focusing on march "leaders," seemed to take the place of giving readers the march's broader purpose and implications to society.

Situate the News

As in the case of interpreting the news, an articles' focus on the march's impact best situates the news for readers, giving them some understanding of how the news may potentially affect their lives from day to day. Lasswell called this stage "socializing."

As stated above, the news magazines, in general, did a better job giving the march's impact than newspapers. However, in exploring the impact, at least three themes were primarily analyzed. 1. What the march could mean for American politics; 2. How the march could help march participants; and 3. How Louis Farrakhan's role in a "successful" march does not mean all Blacks embrace his ideas.

These were the three themes primarily explored by the five publications reviewed that helped situate the news in the lives of readers. Less than five articles, out of 126 total, discussed the march in relationship to general socio-economic factors, such as increased homicides among young black males, single-parent household numbers and how these things and more are affecting young black males. This was the backdrop (context) that Million Man March participants said fueled their involvement in the March.

In this respect, the five publications did a poor job situating the news for readers. What came across from the reports seemed to further polarize the march participants from those who were not allowed to participate.

Coverage as Extraordinary Event

The publications under review treated the march as an extraordinary event, albeit one that was essentially a spot news story. By this I mean, each of the publications gave extended coverage of the Million Man March, far more than they would have an ordinary news event. *The New York Times* printed 26 articles on the march, starting from October 9, 1995 to October 22, 1995. *The Washington Post* printed 57 articles in the two-weeks span, and *USA Today* 25 articles in two-weeks, even though *USA Today* does not print on

weekends. Both October 30, 1995, issues of *Time* and *Newsweek* were focused almost entirely on the march and both had cover stories reflecting that focus.

Limitations of the Research

Though research showed that the five publications, in general, did a balanced job reporting the event, it did not address the isolated coverage of march organizer Louis Farrakhan. Such research is needed because it addresses how mainstream media cover so-called "militant" black leaders. In Jack Lule's 1993 paper titled "News Strategies and the Death of Huey Newton," he suggests that the media insinuated that Newton died in the same way he lived: violently. Lule's research suggests that the media he analyzed used negative language when referring to Newton, thereby subtly justifying his murder in an area in California that was known for selling drugs.

Similar comments have been made about how other black leaders have been covered by mainstream media: Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, etc. Research needs to be done on how mainstream media portrayed King during his lifetime vs after his death. In most of the publications examined, Louis Farrakhan was referred to as anti-Semitic. Reporters usually attributed such labels to "critics" of Farrakhan. However, reporters didn't counter-balance those labels with ones by supporters of Farrakhan. The assumption, therefore, is that most readers of national publications accept these negative labels to describe the Nation of Islam and march leader. Moreover, this

point may speak to media ownership and the fact that newsrooms and media managers are still disproportionately white.

Additionally, the study didn't take into account the race of the writers and editors of the articles that were examined. Such information could shine some light on why coverage of each publication was balanced yet tended to be slightly positive or negative. However, the lack of such information makes it impossible to make any sweeping racial accusations against the large white-owned companies examined in this study.

Though the numbers tell much of the story, there are some observations beyond the numbers. Without doing extensive research, a reader of *Time* magazine and *Newsweek* would have probably known which of the publications' coverage was more positive than negative by simply looking at their October 30, 1995 covers. The covers of both publications, each on the Million Man March, told the story. *Time's* cover depicted a family of black males, from grandfather to grandchild, and the words "I, Too, Sing America," an allusion to Langston Hughes' poem bearing the same title. *Newsweek's* cover depicted March organizer Louis Farrakhan, in what appeared to be a digitally altered photograph of the black Muslim leader. One side of Farrakhan's face was darkened. Perhaps not surprising, though both publications' coverage was mostly balanced, *Time's* coverage gave a great deal of focus to march participants and was more positive, while *Newsweek's* gave a great deal of focus on Farrakhan and was more negative, based on this study. In this case, the covers did tell the story.

Another striking observation centers around the difference between "balanced" and "fair" coverage. The goals of the Million Man March were overwhelming positive: black fathers taking responsibility for themselves, their communities and their children; black men being more responsible to black women; blacks registering to vote; blacks "atoning" to God for past wrongdoings; blacks no longer blaming whites for their problems.

So why did such a seemingly positive event get such controversial coverage? That is to say, was the media's "balanced" coverage "fair"? In giving equal voice to the pros and cons of the march (balance), did the media overlook the march's real purpose in potentially helping millions of people? Of course, media managers would say Louis Farrakhan's involvement in the march made the march controversial, regardless of its intent. That's true, but the question becomes how much space and time do managers give to Farrakhan, particularly when surveys and quotes from participants suggested that Farrakhan was less important than the march's push for personal reflection. So, did the media do a "fair" job in reporting the participants' point of view.

And this may explain why none of the publications gave adequate attention to why the march was needed in the first place -- the context surrounding the march. The social ills that created the need for the march were scarcely mentioned, if at all: the black-male incarceration rate; the teen-pregnancy rate among blacks; the high school drop-out rate among black males; the homicide rate among black males; the number of single-parent, female-headed black households.

These were the things that participants continued to allude to when reporters quoted them. Participants continued saying that they were participating in the march because of its goals, and what it meant to black men. They mentioned that the march was a chance to show the world a true depiction of black men instead the negative images portrayed by the media.. Participants said Farrakhan simply made the call for a long overdue event. But, the media's coverage continued focusing on Farrakhan..

Though numbers from this study suggest that the five publications quantifiably did a balanced job covering the Million Man March, it doesn't consider whether overall coverage was fair. Was the amount of space and time the media spent on Farrakhan justified at the expense of more informative coverage? More research is needed in this area, particularly examining how a "controversial" figure within a news event affects news coverage.

Additionally, a study of how electronic media covered the Million Man March is needed, particularly since most people get their news from television. Did the network stations interrupt normal programming to air the march live? When did national network news organizations begin covering the event?

Similar studies are needed on how media have covered similar marches or protests in Washington. How was the March on Washington covered? Has there been an all-male march with a racially mixed crowd? Has there been an all-female march? How did the media cover those events?

Each of these studies will complement this one and give a fuller picture of how majority-owned media cover mass gatherings. And by comparing the findings of these studies, one will be able to determine, based on research, if the race, gender or political view points of the participants affect the media's coverage of the gatherings.

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