

Public Abstract

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Title: Representations of Intersectionality and Class Politics in Coverage of National Newspapers: A Textual Analysis of the Housing Crisis in 2006

The housing crisis of the early 2000s led to a number of defaulted loans and housing foreclosures in many areas of the country. Individuals of all socioeconomic classes felt the wrath of high interest rates on their mortgage payments. By 2006, the housing market was in decline and according to The New York Times, home foreclosures hit a peak of 20 percent, and subprime loans were at an all time high. This study employs textual analysis of The New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, the Los Angeles Times and The Washington Post from the year 2006 and discusses the role class politics play in the discourse of the crisis. It also examines the intersection of race, gender and class within the news coverage of the housing crisis. This study finds three themes underscored by the culture of poverty theory. The first theme discusses the representation of the savior/victim dichotomy. Homeowners are characterized as deviant victims while experts are framed as saviors. The second theme emphasizes blame in conversations about the housing crisis and suggests that individuals are to blame for their housing troubles. The final theme highlights a narrative of personal responsibility in media conversations and emphasizes that a homeowner is not only responsible for their circumstances but also for providing solutions to those circumstances.