Framing of Fisheries in Collapse: A Content Analysis of Two Newspapers

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Abstract

This quantitative content analysis draws from framing theory to examine newspaper coverage of fisheries in collapse. Two groups of newspaper articles formed the population for this census: coverage of the Georges Bank cod fishery by *The Boston Globe* from 1991 to 1996, and coverage of the Yukon River king (Chinook) salmon fishery in *The Anchorage Daily News* from 1997 to 2002. With a coding system rooted in Entman’s (1993) four-part definition of framing, this study identified occurrences of an economy frame and an ecology frame within the population, as manifested by the explicit terminology used in the texts. Contrary to expectations based on precedents in the literature, the newspapers did not overwhelmingly rely upon economic terms to explain fisheries in collapse. When considered as a whole, the population contains a balance of economic and ecological frames, with the proportion of ecological stories increasing throughout the study period. Individual stories displaying a balance between economic and ecological frames were not common, suggesting that readers would receive a balanced appraisal of the topic only after attention to multiple stories over several years.