

Public Abstract

First Name:Matthew

Middle Name:Wesley

Last Name:Flener

Adviser's First Name:Margaret

Adviser's Last Name:Duffy

Co-Adviser's First Name:

Co-Adviser's Last Name:

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Title:LEFT BEHIND: A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF MEDIA FRAMES FROM NATIONAL
TV JOURNALISTS COVERING HURRICANE KATRINAS EVACUATION
CENTERS

Before and after Hurricane Katrina struck in the fall of 2005, journalists made vital decisions to report on life and death issues. Those decisions framed news coverage in ways, among others, that depicted conflict, human-interest, and a lack of responsibility from local, state, and federal government officials. This study examines those frames through the lens of framing theory using a technique called textual analysis.

The findings show five dominant frames appear in news coverage from nightly network news broadcasts before, during, and after Hurricane Katrina. Journalists included those frames because of socialized news routines. Those frames are discussed and broken down on a sentence structure level in each story. The research will help reporters, editors, news directors, and television management anticipate coverage that will appear before, during, and after disaster situations.