

Framing Same-Sex Marriage: A Comparative Textual Analysis of Maryland Newspaper

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Abstract

The framing of social issues in media coverage is an important and salient topic. In the 2012 elections, same-sex marriage was not yet Constitutionally protected and was on four states' ballots as a ballot measure. Newspaper coverage of how one state, Maryland, dealt with the ballot referendum concerning same-sex marriage and its framing as a social justice issue warrants study. Studying word choice, inclusion of quotations, and amount and tone of coverage allows for critical analysis of how readers were presented with the choice before them regarding voting on the same-sex marriage ballot referendum.

The present study seeks to understand the differing frames used by two newspapers in Maryland, the *Washington Post* and the *Baltimore Sun*, and how the newspapers presented the issues to Maryland voters. The study also seeks to relate the issue of framing to broader issue pertaining to culture as a result, particularly as the fight for LGBTQ rights expands with the transgender movement.