The Priming Effects Of Media Frames In Regard To News Images And Stereotypes Held By Hispanic Audiences

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THE PRIMING EFFECTS OF MEDIA FRAMES IN REGARD TO NEWS IMAGES AND STEREOTYPES HELD BY HISPANIC AUDIENCES

by

MEREDITH JEAN MORRIS
B.S. J. University of Florida, 2006

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Nicholson School of Communication in the College of Sciences at the University of Central Florida Orlando, Florida

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ABSTRACT

This study applies priming, framing, and exemplification theories to examine the ways in which photos published with a news story influenced readers’ judgments about the ethnicities of the people receiving emergency hunger services. Of particular interest were the perceptions of Caucasian respondents about minorities, and Hispanic perceptions about African Americans and other Hispanics. A sample of 506 college students was randomly assigned to read one of three versions of an online news article about emergency hunger services in Central Florida. One version included two photographs of African American adults receiving food at a food bank. The second version included two photographs of Hispanic adults receiving food at a food bank. The third version was text-only and included no photographs. All three articles included base-rate statistics of ethnicities using emergency hunger services. Results showed images influence the way Caucasians and Hispanics perceive those people suffering from hunger. Key findings included that Caucasians in the study were susceptible to Hispanic primes, which altered their views on their perceptions about the number of Hispanics receiving emergency food services. However, Caucasians’ perceptions of African Americans did not change. Additionally, Hispanic participants were affected by primes in such a way that limitations on societal advancement were perceived more strongly than those of the Caucasian participants. The difference between Caucasians’ stereotypes regarding African Americans and Hispanics is an interesting development. The role of priming stereotype in relation to social issues is discussed.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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I also would like to recognize my other committee members, Dr. Tim Brown and Dr. Kimberly Voss for their guidance throughout the research and writing processes. Additional thanks go to all the instructors who aided me in participant recruitment by distributing my surveys to students in their classes.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In the digital age in which we live, news is pervasive. We live in a society where we constantly are bombarded by news via smartphones, tablets, laptops, and 24-7 television news outlets. With the constant connection to the news, consumers also are exposed to the images in the news. The news is becoming more visual, as consumers look for more entertainment and attraction in their mass media (Knobloch, Hastall, Zillmann, & Callison, 2003; Zillmann, Knobloch, & Yu, 2001; Newhagen, 1998). With this emphasis on visual appearance, news editors are turning to photos and videos to take a larger role in news storytelling. The last two decades have seen a shift in the way news is presented to readers. With the introduction of newspapers like USA Today in 1982, editors have put large, color photos above the fold on the front of the paper to attract readers’ attention to purchase as they walk by newspaper racks (Zillmann, Knobloch, & Yu, 2001). Magazine editors choose the most attention-grabbing images for their covers so consumers will be attracted to pick them up as they stand at the checkout counter of convenience stores, supermarkets, and discount stores. However, images appear in more than just print news. Large photos often greet an online news consumer when he or she uses a smartphone, tablet, or computer to access a news outlet’s website. Such portable devices allow consumers to not just access the news and news images when they are home, but rather these devices allow the news and news images to travel with consumers. Additionally, the availability of web-based news allows consumers to choose the news articles they will view (Arpan & Tuzunkan, 2011). Articles with photos to accompany the text are more appealing to the news audience.

Having constant access to the news allows consumers to be exposed to it when they are waiting in line at the bank, taking a break from work, or even waiting for a red light to change to
green at an intersection. We no longer live in a society where people do nothing as they wait. People constantly must be entertained, and one popular way this occurs is by viewing news. Constantly viewing these news stories and their accompanying images has some effect on our society. The images are doing more than merely attracting readers and illustrating the story. By virtue of their high visibility, even to people who never even read the story, the news images have the potential to perpetuate, create, or activate stereotypes.

Stereotypes are described as “pictures in our heads” and come into being through shared knowledge and experiences received in a given society, (Wang, 2009, p. 748). These stereotypes can be developed regarding race, culture, gender, disability, age, socioeconomic status, and sexuality. Media are effective at perpetuating stereotypes. The way the media portrays people can effect how consumers perceive those around them. Stereotypes influence the direction of political policies, advancement in professional realms, and simply how people treat others on a day-to-day basis. Understanding how the media perpetuate stereotypes among various ethnicities is crucial to help create a society of equality.

Much research exists on the stereotypes held by Caucasians concerning other races — particularly African Americans. However, according to the United States Census Bureau, the largest and fastest-growing minority group in America is Hispanics, who reached 46.9 million in 2008, up by 3.2 percent from 2007. In 2008, nearly one in six U.S. residents was Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). Additionally, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates found that nearly half (47 percent) of the nation's children younger than five were a minority in 2008, with 25 percent being Hispanic. For all children under 18, 44 percent were a minority and 22 percent were Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). In recent years, some research has been conducted on the stereotypes held by Caucasians concerning Hispanics (e.g., Mastro, Behm-Morawitz, & Ortiz,
As Hispanics become a larger percentage of the United States population, it becomes important to understand their stereotypes concerning other minority groups, such as African Americans. To truly understand how the news impacts today’s United States population, it is crucial to study the stereotypes held by growing ethnic groups. In the 2012 presidential election, an unprecedented number of Hispanic voters turned out to vote, influencing the election results (Foley, 2012). This rise in both population and voter turnout indicate that Hispanics not only have a voice in politics, but that they are using it. For communication researchers, it is crucial to understand what this voice is, how it influences policies, and what beliefs, stereotypes, and agendas might be driving it. With the changes in America’s population, it is important to know how the media might encourage one group to regard the other.

The purpose of this research is to study how images can prime stereotypes among readers of news, and to determine the effects on the perceptions of a social issue and limitations on societal advancement. The particular areas of interest are Hispanics’ stereotypes regarding African Americans, as well as Hispanics and ingroup stereotypes.

Such a social issue might be government and non-profit hunger programs. A record number of Americans are using food stamps, known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Enrollment in the food stamp program has increased by 70 percent since 2008, to 47.8 million people as of December 2012 (United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2013). The biggest factor driving the increase is the stagnating job market and a rising poverty rate. This means that 15 percent of the United States population receives food stamp benefits, nearly double the rate of 1975 (USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, 2013). In opposition to the stereotype that minorities are primary recipients of food stamps, actually in the United States, Caucasians receive 49 percent of food stamps, African Americans receive 26
percent, and Hispanics receive 20 percent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Understanding what stereotypes exist among Hispanics concerning this issue can have an impact on social policy and interracial relations. To understand these effects, one first must consider theory and existing research.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This study will examine the extent to which news images can prime stereotypes among news readers and the effects of those primes on the perceptions of a social issue limitation on societal advancement. Of particular interest are the stereotypes held by Hispanics toward African Americans, and Hispanics’ ingroup stereotypes. The following sections will look at research concerning media and stereotypes, with regard to findings about news images’ effects on stereotype and social issue perceptions. Prior research concerning stereotypes of African Americans and Hispanics will be explored. Additionally, the media effects theories of priming, framing, and exemplification will be examined to provide a theoretical foundation for the study.

Media and Stereotypes

Media play an important role in the portrayal of any community, political leaders or people. Navasky said that: “It is based largely on journalism that we make up our national mind” (Navasky, from the foreword in Zelizer & Allen, 2002). The images of race, caste, community, and religion as they are presented in the media have long been of interest to researchers as they signify the attitude of majority communities toward smaller groups (Narayana & Kapur, 2011). The cognitive categories that people use when thinking about such groups and about individuals from those groups are referred to by social psychologists as social stereotypes (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1981; Hamilton & Trolier, 1986). Lippmann (1922) argued that stereotypes are necessary for efficient communication among humans because “to attempt to see all things freshly and in detail, rather than as types and generalities, is exhausting” (p. 88). Several researchers have studied the complicated issue of stereotype and the way stereotypes are viewed in the news.

The portrayal of minorities in the news has been explored through content analyses (Dixon & Linz, 2000a, 2000b; Entman, 1992; Romer, Jamieson, & de Coteau, 1998), finding
that race and stereotype play a key role in how news is processed by readers. This also can affect how the topic of the news story is viewed by the news audience (Dixon & Azocar, 2007; Mastro & Tukachinsky, 2011). Field and experimental studies have investigated the effects of minority portrayals (Oliver, 1999; Oliver & Fonash, 2002), and several theories have been identified to explain stereotyping effects. These theories include framing, priming, and exemplification.

**Priming**

Priming can be used in conjunction with stereotype because of the way people process messages in the news. Mass media content can have temporary effects on the way audience members process messages for a short time after exposure (Berkowitz, 1986; Devine, 1989). Priming theory suggests that when people see, hear, or read about something, other ideas in memory that have similar meaning are activated for a short time afterward. Those thoughts then activate other thoughts and action tendencies related to the words associated with what was read, seen, or heard, causing a spreading activation (Jo & Berkowitz, 1994). This cognitive process is thought to be unconscious and/or automatic. Therefore, connections to these related ideas are activated whether or not the individual believes them, provided that they exist in the person’s associative network. The individual does not necessarily control the cognitive process; the connections to related ideas are automatic. Thus, priming theory can be used in conjunction with stereotype activation. Individuals effected by the prime will be more likely to apply these stereotypes in their interactions with the target group, even when the task at hand should be irrelevant to the priming experience (Sherman, Mackie & Driskoll, 1990). Essentially, the prime is related to the task, but the individual may be unaware of the connection. This theory will be elaborated upon in a later section.
Stereotypes

Many studies have shown that political viewpoints on crime and other race-related political issues (e.g., immigration and welfare) can be linked to the ability of the news to prime its viewers (Domke, 2001; Domke, McCoy, & Torres, 1999; Gilens, 1996, 1999; Jefferies, 2002; Valentino, 1999). Domke and colleagues contend that “through the selection and framing of news and opinion, [the media] are crucial to establishing the range of criteria for constructing, debating and resolving social issues” (Domke, McCoy, & Torres 2003: 574). The mass media are the source from which the majority of Americans obtain public affairs information (Delli-Carpini & Keeter, 1996). Numerous studies have demonstrated the impact of media representations of race, and the often negative and stereotypical representations of minorities (e.g. Dixon & Linz 2000; Valentino 1999). Stereotypes regarding race are apt to be activated in news audience members who view a negative portrayal of a minority character, resulting in a change or stronger attitude in the viewer’s perception and reported beliefs about issues typically considered related to minorities (Dixon et al, 2005).

These racial stereotypes as primed by the media have been studied from a variety of perspectives, including Muslim stereotypes (e.g. Narayana & Kapur, 2011; Andersen, Brinson, & Stohl, 2011) and Hispanic/Latino stereotypes (e.g. Mastro & Tukachinsky, 2011). In these cases, it was found that if an ethnicity was portrayed favorably in the media, people of that ethnicity were afforded a more positive evaluation (Mastro & Tukachinsky, 2011). Similarly, when an ethnic group is framed in a negative news story, not only do negative attitudes toward the ethnicity (e.g. Muslims) surface in the viewers, but also those viewers are more likely to approve restrictions on civil liberties (Andersen, Brinson, & Stohl, 2011). While these studies do
assess the stereotypes of Muslims and Hispanics/Latinos, the wealth of stereotype research centers on African American-Caucasian relations.

**African Americans**

Stereotypes of African Americans often are studied in regard to their portrayal in the news. Many researchers analyze the representation of African Americans as criminals and the stereotypes that are held by news audience members. While much of this research does support hypotheses that stereotypes are primed in participants, these findings are one-sided, with Caucasians comprising the majority of research participants.

In their study assessing the impact of local news misrepresentation of African Americans as criminal suspects, Dixon et al (2005) found that participants primed with a number of African American suspects were more likely to judge a race unidentified suspect as guilty compared to participants who viewed a non-crime control. Additionally, Caucasian participants were less likely than people of color to view the world as dangerous, but they were more likely to support law enforcement. Dixon et al (2005) added to the literature base regarding priming by adding local television news coverage as a potential prime for guilt assessments. Individuals who view minority groups being visually portrayed on local television news as criminals more often than Caucasians may readily assign guilt in instances where they should not, reacting similarly to Dixon’s (2005) participants. A societal impact of these findings would be the effects on potential jurors. However, these effects also could extend into daily life in regard to personal conflicts (Dixon et al, 2005). Dixon’s research did have some limitations that must be addressed. The study participants included 117 Caucasians, 20 African Americans, 16 Hispanics, 14 Asian Americans, and 13 others (Dixon et al, 2005). Thus, the most studied group in this research was Caucasians, leaving a hole in the research regarding priming effects on other ethnic groups.
Dixon and Azocar (2007) conducted a study to see the extent to which U.S. viewers’ perceptions that African Americans face structural limitations to success, support for the death penalty, and culpability judgments could be influenced by exposure to racialized crime news. They found that racialized portrayals prime the African American criminal stereotype. As a result of this activation, participants use this stereotype to make social judgments about race and crime. In the study limitations, the researchers acknowledge the lack of participants of color, noting that a lack of research exists on the views of ingroup stereotypes. One such area that is missing in the research is the area of Hispanic perceptions, in both their ingroup and outgroup stereotypes.

In the fields of sociology and social psychology, a social group to which a person psychologically identifies as being a member is called an ingroup. By contrast, an outgroup is a social group to which an individual does not identify. For example, people may find it psychologically meaningful to view themselves according to their race, culture, gender or religion. It has been found that the psychological membership of social groups and categories is associated with a wide variety of phenomena. Some researchers have attempted to analyze ingroup stereotype (e.g. Carter, 2004), acknowledging the prevalence of research regarding the impact of the news on priming stereotypes in Caucasians about African Americans.

Acknowledging the importance of studying stereotype from the perspective of minority ethnic groups, Carter (2004) quotes Winant’s 2000 study, Race and Race Theory (p. 169):

To tackle the themes of race and racism once again in the new millennium, sociology must develop more effective racial theory... The key tasks are the formulation of a more adequate comparative historical sociology of race, the development of a deeper understanding of the micro-macro linkages that shape racial issues, and the recognition of
the pervasiveness of racial politics in contemporary society. This is a challenging but also exciting agenda. The field must not shrink from addressing it.

To borrow Winant’s words, it is crucial to understand that “micro-macro linkages” and “racial politics” are pervasive throughout society — not simply in regard to the Caucasian-African American relationships most commonly studied.

Hispanic- African American relations

Although most existing stereotype research centers on the Caucasian-African American relationships, some researchers have looked at the relationships between African Americans and Hispanics. While both races are minorities in the United States, there are some differing stereotypes associated with each group. They do not exist in one cohesive minority ingroup.

In a study about competition, conflict, and coalitions concerning African American-Hispanic relations at a public university, Literte (2011) found from her interviews with students of both races that while the students do recognize that they share similar educational and socioeconomic obstacles, they have some tensions stemming from conflict in the surrounding communities (Literte, 2011). The African American-Hispanic relationship is one of increasing significance, given the recent displacement of African Americans by Hispanics as the largest racial minority in the United States and the increase in Hispanics political and economic power (Brewer & Suchan, 2001; McClain, 1993; West & Klor de Alva, 1996). Additionally, there has been an increase in competition between African Americans and Hispanics within urban areas across the country for scarce resources, including housing, health care, social services, employment, and educational opportunities (Kaufmann, 2003). Additionally, Literte (2011) recognized that this “conflict has often overshadowed the two groups’ similar histories of racial
oppression and contemporary socioeconomic struggles, impeding positive relations and the prospect of coalition building” (p. 477).

African Americans and Hispanics have a complicated relationship, and Literte (2011), looked at the relationship on a college campus. The researcher found that African Americans and Hispanics often have similar political, social, and economic interests that are based on quality of life concerns. Often, African Americans and Hispanics organize and mobilize together because they share the same neighborhoods and desire more political power, better education, quality healthcare, and less crime (Literte, 2011). The two races often possess similar ideologies of anti-racism that contest any efforts on the part of U.S. society and government to disenfranchise non-Whites. Such an example would be the Hispanic immigrant rights movement that was inspired by and tied to African-American civil rights (Dzidzienyo & Oboler, 2005).

There are three traditional areas of conflict concerning African American-Hispanic relations: politics, economy, and culture. Hispanics have moved into traditionally African-American urban areas, making each group concerned with obtaining and maintaining political and electoral power. Political and economic conflicts are exacerbated by cultural stereotypes that African Americans and Hispanics apply to one another. Hispanics’ stereotypes of African Americans invoke images long-embedded in the American consciousness by White supremacy. Research has found that Hispanics tend to view African Americans as violent, lazy, untrustworthy, and sexually promiscuous (McClain et al, 2006; Mindiola, Neimann, & Rodriguez, 2003). Hispanics see themselves as more similar to Caucasians than to African Americans. Additionally, some research suggests that if interracial coalitions are built, they will be Hispanics and Caucasians, instead of Hispanics and African Americans (Meier & Stewart, 1991). Hispanics carry prejudices when they immigrate that darker skinned Hispanics are
accorded the lowest social prejudices, which is compounded by the U.S.-based anti-African American sentiment. Essentially, in America, it is preferred to be lighter skinned, and darker-skinned Hispanics and African Americans are more likely to be socially looked down upon. To a lesser degree, African Americans also possess some Caucasian-created stereotypes of Hispanics, including beliefs that Hispanics are unwilling to learn English, and assimilate and that they are taking jobs away from “American” workers (Camarillo, 2005). Hispanics and African Americans often perceive one another through the lens of Caucasian-originated stereotypes gives credence to the argument that Caucasian dominance involves not only subjugating minority groups, but also pitting them against one another (Literte, 2011).

Domke, McCoy, and Torres (1999) found that news coverage of a political issue not only influences people’s thinking about issues, but also activates related racial or ethnic stereotypes held by individuals. This activation could influence whether the stereotypical perceptions are applied in politically meaningful ways. Additionally, these applications could be the formations of positions on the issue or evaluations of whether certain political, economic, or legal outcomes are positive in society (Domke, McCoy, & Torres, 1999).

In an experiment, Domke, McCoy, and Torres (1999) altered the textual news frame of immigration, within controlled political information environments to explore how people process, interpret, and use issue information in forming political judgments. The researchers’ findings supported the theory that news coverage of issues can prime audiences to hone in on some relationships and considerations and not others, thus influencing the strength of the associations between people’s racial perceptions and their political decisions. With Domke, McCoy, and Torres’ (1999) study focusing on the issue of immigration, stereotypes about Latino immigrants were activated in the participants. While some analysis of news content about
immigration has been conducted (Hufker & Cavender, 1990; J. Miller, 1994; Simon & Alexander, 1993), little attention has been given to how media coverage of this issue affects the public (Domke, McCoy, & Torres, 1999).

As has been discussed in the previous sections, nearly all framing and priming research involves the stereotype effects found with Caucasian participants – few studies look at race from the perspective of a minority group. One group especially lacking in representation is Hispanics, which is the fastest growing minority group in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). Additionally, most of this research surrounds news text in articles or images displayed on television news. The goal of this research is to analyze the stereotypes primed by the way subjects are framed in a social issue in news images.

To understand how stereotypes are perpetuated through news images and how they affect audiences, one first must consider the literature. Often associated with political messages in the news, media effects are explained with several mass communication theories. Two of these are framing and priming. This study will primarily consider framing and its relationship to priming effects. The following sections will look at framing and priming theories, and their relationships to one another, particularly in the realm of news. Then, the theories will be applied as a foundation to study existing research on stereotypes in the news. Stereotypes of minorities associated with social issues will be a specific area of analysis. After laying a foundation for these areas of interest, a final aspect of analysis will be explored, news images, including how a viewer processes them, and what kinds of effects they can have on an audience.

**Media Effects Theories**

To begin with the theoretical framework, one must first understand the tenets of framing, priming, and exemplification. The mass media have concrete, lasting effects on audiences, due to
the pervasive messages flooding the market and being consumed by audiences (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). Sometimes categorized as “negation models” (McQuail, 2005), theories like priming and framing, as related to mass communication, were based on the idea that mass media had potentially strong attitudinal effects. Additionally, these effects also depended heavily on predispositions, schema, and other characteristics of the audience that influenced how they processed messages in the mass media (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). The following sections look at framing, priming, and exemplification in more detail.

Framing Theory

One way to understand how images can perpetuate stereotype is through the use of framing theory. Framing in the social sciences refers to a set of concepts and theoretical perspectives on how individuals, groups, and societies organize, perceive, and communicate about reality. Framing is commonly used in media studies, sociology, psychology, and political science. Framing differs from the accessibility-based models of agenda setting and priming. It is based on the assumption that how an issue is characterized in the news can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences. Framing theory has background in both sociology and psychology (Pan & Kosicki, 1993). Goffmann (1974) argued that to process new information efficiently, people apply interpretive schemas or “primary frameworks” to organize information and interpret it meaningfully (p. 24). Due to this argument, Scheufele (1999) found framing to be both a macrolevel and microlevel construct. As a macroconstruct, the term “framing” refers to approaches people use to present information in a way that reverberates with existing underlying schemas among other individuals (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). When framing theory is applied to media, it is referring to the way journalists and other communicators present news and other information to the public. This presentation is usually done in a way to make information fit
within an audience member’s cognitive schemas or body of knowledge such that it will make sense. When this happens, a frame is created for that topic. Media frames are meant to organize the world for reporters, but also for the news consumers. Gamson and Modigliani (1989) found that creation of frames involves three processes: cultural resonance, sponsor activity, and media practice. Cultural resonance is the relevance, familiarity, and acceptability of certain frames for the reader or audience. Sponsor activity is the involvement of individuals and organizations that might have influence over journalists, such as advocates or politicians, and media practice is the actual norms and routines of news-gathering (Mazzarella & Pecora, 2007). Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) suggested that journalists do not necessarily frame material in such a way as to deceive their audiences, but rather it “is a necessary tool to reduce the complexity of an issue, given the constraints of their respective media related to news holes and airtime” (p. 12). In other words, frames become invaluable instruments for presenting relatively complex issues resourcefully. The topics are presented in a way that makes them comprehensible to audiences because of how they work with the person’s existing mental schemas. Media creators have specific audiences in mind as they build frames. Thus, frames are carefully chosen with their audiences’ knowledge, interests, demographics, and socioeconomic statuses in mind.

The frame is the unit of analysis when applying framing theory to a particular phenomenon. According to Reese and Lewis (2009), “frames are organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world” (p. 777). Framing, as explored by Sheafer and Gabay (2009) is defined as “selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution” (Sheafer & Gabay, 2009, p. 449).
Framing also has background in psychology. Before conducting some of the first framing work in the area of mass communication and political research, Iyengar (1991) traced the origins of framing to psychological work done by Kahneman. According to Iyengar, media reports can be classified as episodic or thematic. Episodic accounts detail a specific event or case. Thematic reports give a more over-arching idea about a topic area. Although Iyengar maintained that news articles are rarely categorized into one end of this dichotomy, it is possible to categorize news stories as more of one than the other. Due to news values and the time constraints of deadlines, most news is episodic, focusing on an isolated event rather than the possible political or social conditions that may have led up to the event. Exposure to primarily episodic programming could impact the public’s perceptions of societal problems.

According to the work of William Gamson and others, media images serve to “construct meaning about political and social issues” (Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson, 1992, p. 374). These meanings change over time, responding to the political and social climate. Frame analysis offers an ideal viewpoint from which to interpret the stereotypes surrounding social issues, because news articles serve to construct “the culture of an issue” (Gamson & Lasch, 1983, p. 397).

As a microconstruct, framing describes how people form impressions about issues using information and presentation (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). When a frame is set in the news, it can affect the news consumers. Frames are set in the way certain words are chosen, the people interviewed, the quotes used, and even the way photos accompanying the story are presented. Mass media actively set the frame of reference the recipients then use for interpreting and discussing topics. Journalists give a story or topic a “spin,” taking into account their organizational and modality constraints, professional judgments, and certain judgments about the
audience (Brantner, Lobinger, & Wetzstein, 2011). At the same time, schemata or preexisting meaning structures, influence the recipients’ information processing and interpretation. When this happens, a frame set by the media can affect the interpretation of the topic by the recipient. One way to consider framing in terms of media effects is in regard to its relationship with exemplification theory.

Exemplification Theory

Articles, magazines, news shows, and other forms of media often incorporate different types and pieces of information to describe a problem or issue (Brosius, 2003). Journalists use these exemplars, or “personal descriptions by people who are concerned or interested in an issue,” as a device to “illustrate particular assertions about the state or urgency of particular social problems” (Brosius, 2003, page 179). In the news, exemplars and their distribution can exert a clear influence on the way recipients (i.e. news consumers) think about facts and issues and on the judgments they make. Journalists might endurably affect the perception of an issue or the population’s opinions through the choice and/or distribution of exemplars (Brosius, 2003), thus the study of exemplification is an important subject of media effects research.

Exemplification theory addresses the “formation and modification of beliefs about phenomena and issues on the basis of samplings of experienced and directly or indirectly witnessed concrete, unitary occurrences that share focal characteristics” (Zillmann, 2006). Those samplings, or exemplars, are informational items relating to the topic. While Zillmann’s (2006) recent research focused on beliefs about safety and health, as was seen in Brosius’s (2003) work, exemplars commonly are used in the news. When an exemplar is used in the news, it often is for the purpose of making the story more interesting, or providing an example for the audience members (Arpan, 2009). A photograph associated with a news story can be an exemplar. For
example, when a journalist incorporates a particular image—such as African-American adults eating food distributed by a food bank— with a story about hunger, that image would serve as an exemplar for the hunger news. Exemplars are typically employed to bring a human element or personal angle to the story, to provide vividness or color, and ultimately to attract attention to the story (Brosius, 2003; D’Alessio, 2003; Zillmann & Brosius, 2000).

Research has shown that individuals pay more attention to and are influenced by more vivid examples than by the accompanying statistics or other types of base-rate data (Bar-Hillel & Fischoff, 1981; Manis, Dovalina, Avis, & Cardoze, 1980; Newhagen & Reeves, 1992; Paivio, 1971). Even when precise base-rate data are present, it has been shown that the selective combination of exemplars does create corresponding shifts in the perception of the exemplified social phenomenon. The greater the number and proportion of specific exemplars, the greater their incidence is presumed to be. For example, Brosius and Bathelt (1994) conducted studies using both print and radio news stories, finding that perception of public opinion was directly related to the percentage of exemplars representing each side of an issue. This held true even when the base-rate information was presented in the story. Gibson and Zillmann (1994) found that news consumers misjudged the severity and scope of a crime issue, carjacking, after reading stories that featured distorted examples of victimization by carjacking. This occurred in spite of the presence of precise base-rate information in the news reports detailing the actual scope of the phenomenon.

Ideas and stereotypes can be primed from exemplars in the news, making priming effects theory a natural progression from the discussion of exemplification theory.
Priming Effects Theory

Originating out of the field of psychology, priming is an increase in the speed or accuracy of a decision that occurs as a consequence of a prior exposure to some of the information in the decision context, without any intention or task related motivation (Shulman, 1997). Considered to be an involuntary phenomenon, priming can occur in tasks where memory for previous information is not required. In psychology, it is an implicit memory effect, in which exposure to a stimulus influences a response to a later stimulus. It can occur following perceptual, semantic, or conceptual stimulus repetition. For example, Jacoby and Kelley (1987) analyzed the unconscious influences of memory, which can be found in the most routine behaviors of normal people. One example would be how one person’s use of language could be influenced by those with whom he converses regularly (Jacoby and Kelley, 1987). Additionally, people unconsciously use memory for prior parts of a conversation when interpreting what is said later. Jacoby and Kelley (1987) show that memory for a single experience can serve as a tool to unconsciously influence the perception and interpretation of later events.

Media priming is a theory in which the activation of one thought may trigger related thoughts. Essentially, media information and images stimulate related thoughts in the minds of audience members. The mass communication aspect of priming research originated out of agenda setting research, when in 1982, Iyengar, Peters, and Kinder first identified an added dimension as the “priming effect.” Founded on the assumption that people do not have elaborate knowledge about political matters and do not take into account all of what they do know when making political decisions — they must consider what more readily comes to mind. By drawing attention to some aspects of politics at the expense of others, the media might help to set the terms by which political judgments are reached, including evaluations of political figures.
As defined in the political communication literature, priming refers to “changes in the standards that people use to make political evaluations” (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987, p. 63). In the news context, priming occurs when news content suggests to news audiences that they ought to use specific issues as benchmarks for evaluating the performance of leaders and governments. There are two reasons for this: (a) Priming is based on memory-based models of information processing. These models assume that people form attitudes based on the considerations that are most salient (i.e., most accessible) when they make decisions (Hastie & Park, 1986). In other words, judgments and attitude formation are directly correlated with “the ease in which instances or associations could be brought to mind” (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973, p. 208); (b) based on the common theoretical foundation, some researchers have argued that priming is a chronological extension of agenda setting (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). Essentially, prominent, frequent, and recent exposure to news stories can develop schemas that are easily primed in subsequent contexts. By making some issues more salient in people’s minds (agenda setting), mass media can also shape the ideas that people take into account when making judgments about politics or other issues (priming). However, priming does not just involve political agendas. It also can involve social issues, such as terrorism, racial inequality, unemployment, and poverty.

With the understanding of how framing, priming, and exemplification theories work to explain the effects of the media on recipients of media messages, one can begin to analyze how framing, priming, and exemplification have been used as theoretical framework for other media studies concerning stereotypes.

**Media Effects and News Images**

A variety of studies have been conducted to explore priming effects in news audiences. Many of these studies have stemmed from the way an issue was framed in a news story about
politics or a social issue (e.g. Iyengar and Shanto, 1993; Brewer, Graf, and Willnat, 2003). However, priming effects also can be studied from the way an issue is framed in images in the news. Images and photographs are framing devices that can prime audiences by activating schemas.

The question might be asked, “Why are images used in the news?” According to Zillmann, Gibson, and Sargent (2000), the answers to this question often are vague. Images are to support, not contradict the overall focus of a report, or are intended to support various foci in a multifaceted report. However, it also must be noted that images are used by news personnel to make a layout more attractive to gain the attention of the readers (Zillmann, Gibson, & Sargent, 2000). Paivio (1971, 1986) found that audiences are more able to recall information from an article that included a picture with text due to the stimulating effect of the image. When an emotional event, such as a social issue, is coupled with an image, the effect is the audience is more likely to retain information (Kety, 1970). Additionally, Zillmann, Knobloch, and Yu (2001) found that audiences were more likely to read news articles that included photos versus those that were merely text. This especially was true if the photos depicted victims. With the understanding of how and why audiences process news with photos, one can begin to see how framing and priming would be used to study the effects of news images.

Abraham and Appiah (2006) used theories of accessibility, such as framing and priming, to explain the potential prejudicial effect that intentional visual framing, when an image featuring African Americans is placed with race-neutral text. The effect will be audiences comprehending the issue racially. In their study, implicit racial images of African Americans helped prime racial stereotypes about African Americans and led to stronger associations of African Americans with the social issues addressed in the news articles (Abraham & Appiah, 2006). The researchers
noted the wealth of studies conducted on text recall as a function of image accompaniment (Gunter, 1987), but acknowledged the lack of research on the impact of implicit information, such as extra text or visuals, on perceptions of issues reported in the media (Abraham & Appiah, 2006). More importantly, little attention has been paid to the potential effect of implicit or incidental information from photographs, not supplied by the verbal/written text on interpretation of multi-modal messages:

It might be expected that impressions from text and images merge and that this merger influences the perception of issues addressed in news reports. More specifically, it can be expected that reactions to featured photographs shift the primarily text-based perceptions and evaluation of issues in the direction suggested by the photographs (Gibson & Zillmann, 2000, p. 355).

Domke, Perlmutter, and Spratt (2002) examined the ability of featured photographs to prime audiences when included with text in a media message. The researchers sought to gain insight into the “power” of visual images, hypothesizing that the images merely interacted with audiences’ existing understanding of the world to shape information processing and judgments (Domke, Permutter, & Spratt, 2002). Their hypotheses were supported, concluding that visual news images (a) influence people’s information processing in ways that can be understood only by taking into account individuals’ predispositions and values, and (b) at the same time appear to have a particular ability to “trigger” considerations that spread through one’s mental framework to other evaluations (Domke, Permutter, & Spratt, 2002). Essentially, people have pre-existing notions about the topics in the news, whether the topics are social issues, stereotypes, or political ideology. When a story is framed in a particular way, especially with an image, these predispositions are activated and bolstered.
Tukachinsky, Mastro, and King (2011) examined the use of visual and textual exemplars on news readers’ judgments regarding use of emergency room health care services by undocumented immigrants and uninsured U.S. citizens. It was found that pictures and personal stories have comparable effects on perceptions and attitudes about the issue. In their study, the researchers called for future investigations into the differences between various media (e.g., print, television) and modalities of message presentation (e.g., verbal, audio, visual), as well as the specific combinations of these modalities, as these message characteristics can promote different attention allocation and result in distinct types of effects. They also noted the need for research on purely visual exemplars (imagery without captions).

It can be concluded that much research has been conducted that suggests that news media help to establish contexts in which Caucasians come to understand race relations and form opinions on various policies. Studies have been conducted to analyze Caucasian perceptions associated with African Americans and crime, perceptions associated with Muslims and terrorism, and perceptions associated with Hispanics and immigration. What is lacking in the research is a study of how news audiences of minority ethnic background perceive portrayals of other minority groups in the news — particularly when framed with a social issue. Due to this void, and the fact that minority populations are growing in U.S. society, it is crucial to analyze media effects from this perspective.

**Hypotheses and Research Questions**

Much research (e.g. Ball-Rokeach et al, 1990; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987; Price et al, 1997) suggests that media presentations of political issues, by selecting and emphasizing certain values and considerations, while excluding others, influences which thoughts are activated as viewers evaluate political situations (Domke, 2011). Applying these relationships to race relations and
stereotype activation is a key factor in understanding how people are affected by the news they consume.

Prior research has found a variety of changes in Caucasians’ attitudes and views toward social policy and political issues after viewing images that feature one racial group or another. For example, Abraham and Appiah (2006) found that implicit racial images of African Americans helped prime racial stereotypes about African Americans and led to stronger associations of African Americans with the social issues addressed in the news articles. A number of specific hypotheses are derived from these findings of Abraham and Appiah (2006), as well as other researchers (Domke, McCoy, & Torres, 1999; Dixon & Azocar, 2007):

H1: Caucasians who read a text-only news story will perceive minorities to be more affected by the problems associated with hunger when compared to the base rate.

H2a: Caucasians who read a news story with an African American photo will estimate more African Americans to be affected by hunger when compared to the text-only condition.

H2b: Caucasians who read a news story with an African American photo will overestimate the effect of hunger on African Americans when compared to the base rate.

H3a: Caucasians who read a news story with a Hispanic photo will estimate more Hispanics to be affected by hunger when compared to the text-only condition.

H3b: Caucasians who read a news story with a Hispanic photo will overestimate the effect of hunger on Hispanics when compared to the base rate.

It has been noted in other research that when an article about a social issue includes an image of a minority, the image primes readers’ stereotypes associated with the ethnic group portrayed in the image (Dixon & Azocar, 2007). Since Hispanics associated themselves with Caucasians more so than with African Americans (Literte, 2011), it is believed that similar
stereotypes will be activated in them as have been observed in Caucasians, concerning African Americans and social issues. This idea informs the following hypotheses:

H4: Hispanics who read a text-only news story will perceive African Americans to be more affected by the problems associated with hunger when compared to the base rate.

H5a: Hispanics who read a news story with an African American photo will overestimate the effect of hunger on African Americans when compared to the base rate.

H5b: Hispanics who read a news story with an African American photo will estimate more African Americans to be affected by hunger when compared to the text-only condition.

Little research exists concerning ingroup stereotypes and attitude changes toward social issues and public policy. However, Gilens (1996) found that the public substantially overestimates the percentage of African Americans among the poor. When one survey asked, “What percent of all the poor people in this country would you say are black?” the median response was 50 percent (Survey Research Center, 1991). Another survey simply asked, “Of all the people who are poor in this country, are more of them black or are more of them white?” Fifty-five percent of the respondents chose African American compared to 24 percent who chose white, with 31 percent volunteering “about equal.”

The public’s exaggerated association of race and poverty not only reflects and perpetuates negative racial stereotypes, but it also increases Caucasian Americans’ opposition to welfare (Gilens, 1996). Caucasians who think the poor are mostly African American are more likely to blame welfare recipients for their situation and less likely to support welfare than are those with more accurate perceptions of poverty. However, the research does not suggest what might happen when Hispanic participants see an article about a social issue, accompanied by an image of Hispanics. Therefore, the following research questions are posed:
RQ1: What are Hispanics’ attitudes toward the seriousness of hunger issues, when primed with ingroup stereotypes?

RQ2: Do Hispanics who are primed with African American or Hispanic images in relation to a news story on hunger report different perceptions of limitations on societal advancement?

RQ3: How will Hispanics’ attitudes toward hunger issues differ from Caucasian’s attitudes toward hunger when primed with a) African American images and b) Hispanic images?
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Design

The experiment investigated the effects of three different news story conditions (i.e., no pictures, African American pictures, and Hispanic pictures) on participants’ perceptions of the extent to which each population (i.e., Hispanics and African Americans) is affected by the public policy issue mentioned in the news story about a social issue. The social issue topic chosen was hunger and emergency hunger services. These particular content areas were chosen because they contain themes that are likely to be stereotypically linked to minorities and may activate racial attitudes. Empirical research shows that there is a consistent contemporary stereotype of African Americans as poor, jobless, criminal, violent, and unintelligent (Devine, 1989; Devine & Baker, 1991; Devine & Elliot, 1995; Sigelman & Tuch, 1997. This was a between subjects design, in which each group of participants is exposed to a news article that is different in use of photographs (visual primes). There were two experimental groups that differed in terms of specific characteristics of the photos included in the article and one control without any photographs (text only). A pretest/posttest format was used. The independent variable was news story condition. The dependent variables were estimates of ethnicities served by the food bank, seriousness of hunger, limitations faced by African Americans, and limitations faced by Hispanics. Detailed descriptions are provided below.

Stimulus materials

The article used in the study was an actual news article, to which statistical data were added. A former newspaper graphic designer formatted the article to appear like an online news article. The article, about the services provided by a local food bank to serve the region’s hungry,
had statistical data about emergency hunger services inserted into it. The article was about Second Harvest Food Bank, a regional resource for hungry, and its work to collect food for area residents. In the article, food bank volunteers are quoted about the good of the program for the community and the need for such programs. The headline and story text was the same for all three conditions. In each of the experimental conditions, the article was presented with two photographs. The text made no mention of race or ethnicity in relation to the individuals quoted. The only mention of ethnicity in the story was the base rate of percentages of ethnicities using emergency hunger services. This information was gathered from Second Harvest Food Bank’s report on hunger in Central Florida (2012). The base rate used were about 44 percent are non-Hispanic white, 32 percent are non-Hispanic black, 20 percent are Hispanic and the rest are from other racial or ethnic groups.

Two photographs were included with the article in two of the conditions. In one photo, a woman was pictured outside, holding a box of food acquired from a food bank. The second photo featured a man and woman collecting food from inside a food pantry. In the Hispanic photo condition, the two women and one man are Hispanic. In the African American photo condition, the two women and one man are African American. Other than the ethnicity of the photo subjects, the photos were essentially the same. They had the same backgrounds, the ages of the subjects were relatively the same, the subjects were positioned identically, and their facial expressions were similar. Much time and effort was given to ensure the subjects’ ethnicity was the only variable that changed between the photographs.

Participants

The sample consisted of 506 undergraduate students at a major southeastern university, a population that is particularly relevant for the following two reasons: a) many university students
already hold jobs, and many others are cognizant of their future roles in the nation’s economy; and b) the ideas and perceptions of university students provide insight into the climate of race relations among individuals entering their adult years. Participants were recruited from large undergraduate classes, and some were offered course credit for participation. The mean age for the participants was 19.7 (SD = 2.49), with the ethnic breakdown: 63.2% Caucasian, 18.2% Hispanic, 9.5% African American, 5.5% Asian, and 3.6% other. The participants were 61.7% female and 38.3% male. The gender breakdown was slightly more unbalanced than the university undergraduate population, as the total university undergraduate population is 54% female and 46% male (Fall 2012). In communication courses, the disparity between the number of female and male students is even greater than the university at large.

**Procedure**

Participants were given a link to an online pretest survey, where they first participated in the open-ended racial stereotype questions (i.e. Take a moment to think about the positive stereotypes other people have regarding African Americans. Please list 5 positive stereotypes other people have regarding African Americans). They were asked to list positive and negative stereotypes regarding African Americans, Caucasians, and Hispanics. A similar question was asked regarding hunger stereotypes (i.e. Take a moment to think about the stereotypes other people have regarding people affected by hunger issues. Please list 5 stereotypes other people have regarding people affected by hunger issues.) After responding to the stereotype questions, they were asked to report the extent to which they believe people think the stereotypes they mentioned are true. The participants then were asked to report the extent to which they believe the stereotypes were held by the general public. The participants also were asked about their experience with and attitudes about social programs (i.e. Food stamps, Pell grants, Bright Futures
Scholarships, Wildlife preservation, Social Security, Unemployment insurance, Medicaid, and aid to families with dependent children).

Approximately one week after completing the pretest, the participants received a link to a second online survey, where they were randomly assigned to one of three news article conditions. In each condition, the same news article about hunger was presented. Condition 1 did not have an image with the news story, Condition 2 included an image with African Americans, and Condition 3 included an image with Hispanics. Participants in each condition were instructed to read the news story.

After reading the news story, participants were directed to a series of questions about the article and/or photos they viewed. The posttest also included questions about the percentages of Caucasians, African Americans, Hispanics, and others affected by hunger. Participants also were asked a series of demographic questions.

**Demographics and Ethnicity**

Participants completed a mix of demographic questions before reading the article. Participants gave their gender, age in number, and ethnicity (Caucasian, African American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian, or Other). If they selected “Hispanic or Latino,” the participant could write in a description.

**Manipulation Checks**

Manipulation checks used to determine whether the participants were attentive to the stimulus articles. Participants were asked questions about the article they viewed during the survey. They were asked if they had read the particular article before, where the article appeared (e.g. “Which of the following companies published the article you read? New York Times, USA Today, Wall Street Journal, Orlando Sentinel, Associated Press), and about the article’s focus
(e.g. “Which of the following descriptions best reflects the focus of the article you just read?”) Protests in Egypt, Hunger problems in Florida, Golf, Historic barns, The value of Facebook) and focus of the story. Near the end of the posttest, the participants were asked to answer an open-ended question to describe their thoughts on the article (e.g. “Please write down some thoughts you have about the news article you just read (approximately 5 sentences). They also were asked to describe any charts/photos they saw with the article.

Participants also were asked a number of distractor questions to help disguise the focus of the research. These questions focused on school spirit (e.g. a College Football Fanship index) and or media enjoyment questions about the participants’ attitudes toward the types of news articles they liked to read (e.g. Eudaimonic Motives index).

Independent Variables

Racial Stereotypes

Stereotypes were assessed using a free-response, list-making task requiring participants to identify five negative and five positive stereotypic characteristics related to African Americans, Hispanics, and Caucasians (Mastro, 2003). This task was open-ended. The participants were informed not to evaluate their own personal beliefs in these stereotypes. After specifying the stereotypes, the students were asked to rate each one for its level of social acceptance by responding to the following two questions: “On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) please identify the extent to which people, in general, perceive this stereotype to be true” and “On a scale from 1 (not at all strongly held) to 7 (very strongly held), how strongly do you believe this stereotype is held by the general public?” (Mastro, 2003).

Three stereotypes were of particular interest: negative stereotypes associated with African Americans and Hispanics, and stereotypes associated with hunger. The most commonly reported
negative stereotypes associated with African Americans and their estimated persistence among the public in general were as follows: criminals ($M = 5.14, SD = 1.45, n = 298$), lack of intelligence ($M = 4.48, SD = 1.51, n = 255$), laziness ($M = 4.66, SD = 1.41, n = 161$), and loud ($M = 5.32, SD = 1.26, n = 152$). The two most common items – criminal and intelligence – were averaged to create a two-item index for a random assignment check (African American Negative Stereotype: $M = 4.64, SD = 1.60, r = .72$).

The most commonly reported negative stereotypes associated with Hispanics and their estimated persistence among the general public were: illegal immigrant ($M = 5.37, SD = 1.39, n = 267$), lack of intelligence ($M = 4.77, SD = 1.31, n = 193$), criminal ($M = 4.98, SD = 1.34, n = 174$), and loud ($M = 5.54, SD = 1.25, n = 170$). The two most common items – illegal immigrant and intelligence – were averaged to create a two-item index for a random assignment check (Hispanic Negative Stereotype: $M = 5.09, SD = 1.19, r = .67$).

Finally, the most commonly reported stereotypes associated with hunger and their estimated persistence among the general public were: poor ($M = 5.74, SD = 1.18, n = 281$), laziness ($M = 5.14, SD = 1.25, n = 175$), and association with Africans/African American ($M = 5.54, SD = 1.30, n = 106$). The two most common items – poor and laziness – were averaged to create a two-item index for a random assignment check (Hunger Stereotype: $M = 5.08, SD = 1.08, r = .63$).

Attitudes Toward Social Programs

Participants’ attitudes toward social programs, such as food stamps, WIC assistance, and welfare, were assessed using a matrix of Likert-type options, ranging from 1 (not at all favorable) to 7 (extremely favorable). Questions about other programs, particularly those of
interest to college undergraduates (government college funding, student loan programs) also
were included as distractors (e.g. “Please mark the button that best reflects your attitude toward
each of the following: Medicaid, Wildlife Preservation, Pell grants for college students, Social
Security, Bright Futures Scholarships, Food Stamps, Unemployment insurance, Aid to families
with dependent children). This is an attitude toward social programs index in which eight items
were averaged (8 items, $M = 5.01$, $SD = 1.21$, $\alpha = .85$).

Experience with Social Programs

Participants were asked about their experience in social programs, such as food stamps,
WIC, welfare, etc. using a matrix of Likert-type questions ranging from 1 (none at all) to 7 (a
great deal). This question was “Thinking about yourself and people you know, please mark the
button that best reflects how much the following programs have affected you, your friends,
and/or family members: Medicaid, Pell grants for college students, Wildlife Preservation, Social
Security, Bright Futures Scholarships, Food Stamps, Unemployment insurance, Aid to families
with dependent children. For the 8-item index, $M = 3.30$, $SD = 1.14$, $\alpha = .71$.

Experience with News Media

Another index was used to measure experience with news media sources: (e.g. “Share
your experience using the following news media sources: Newspaper online, radio news, radio
news online, network television news, local television news, print newspapers, cable TV news
online, cable television news, network TV news online,” using a Likert-type scale ranging from
1 (not at all) to 7 (extremely). This news experience index had nine items, ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.15$, 
$\alpha = .81$).

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Perception of Article Quality

The participants’ perception of the article’s quality was assessed (e.g. “To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the story you just read?”) using a matrix of Likert-type questions ranging from 1 (not very likely, definitely not, disagree) to 7 (very likely, definitely, agree), asking a variety of statements: I found this story to be very meaningful, I enjoyed reading the story, The story was well-written, The story was interesting, The story was well supported, The story was smart, The story was informative, The story was effective, The story was detailed, The story was fair.) This article quality index had 11 items ($M = 5.36, SD = .95, \alpha = .93$).

Attitudes Toward People Suffering from Hunger Problems

Participants also were asked about their attitudes toward people suffering from problems associated with hunger (e.g. “Think about people suffering from hunger-related issues. Please mark the box that best indicates your attitude toward these people, ranked from 1 (very strongly disagree) to 7 (very strongly agree): I am sympathetic, I have compassion for them, I have feelings of warmth toward them, I feel soft-hearted about the situation, I am moved by their situation. This hunger attitude index had five items ($M = 5.52, SD = 1.22, \alpha = .95$).

Dependent Variables

Perceptions of Hunger Pervasiveness

Participants’ views on the effects of hunger on specific ethnic groups were measured using a sliding scale, bar graph. Participants were asked to estimate the percentage of Caucasians, African Americans, Hispanics, and Others affected by the issues associated with hunger (i.e. In your estimation, what percentage of the people who benefit from the food bank program in Orlando belong to the following ethnic groups? Click to the right of the label and
drag the bar to the right to display your estimate). Total estimations of greater than 100 percent could be made to allow for overestimation. The following estimations were made: Caucasians ($M = 35.57, SD = 14.12$), African Americans ($M = 39.01, SD = 16.12$), Hispanics ($M = 31.01, SD = 16.12$), and Others ($M = 13.78, SD = 14.12$).

Structural/Societal Limitations

This measure was designed to assess the extent to which participants perceived that African Americans and Hispanics face structural limitations (e.g., “To what extent do you believe the following ethnic groups face limitations, affecting their ability to gain employment and succeed in society? Choose the most appropriate button for each group”) (Dixon & Azocar, 2007). Participants were asked to rate, on a scale from 1 (not at all affected by limitations) to 7 (extremely affected by limitations) the extent to which the following ethnic groups face limitations, affecting their ability to gain employment and succeed in society. For African Americans, the $M = 4.81$ ($SD = 1.39$), and for Hispanics, $M = 4.82$ ($SD = 1.34$).

Seriousness of Hunger Problem

The participants also were asked about the seriousness of hunger issues (i.e. How serious do you believe the problem of hunger is in Orlando), ranked from 1 (not at all serious) to 7 (extremely serious). The $M = 4.75$ ($SD = 1.21$).

Base Rate

The base rate for hunger statistics among different ethnic groups was obtained from Second Harvest Food Bank’s study of Florida’s hungry (Second Harvest Food Bank, 2010). Their findings were that of the people in Florida who receive food assistance, about 44% are non-Hispanic Caucasian, 32% are non-Hispanic African American, 20% are Hispanic, and the rest are from other racial or ethnic groups.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

For the study’s pretest, 796 respondents participated. However, only 582 of those respondents participated in the posttest, as well. From the 582 participants, the number was reduced to 506 based on responses to the manipulation checks. Of the 506 participants, there were 152 who read the article with the Hispanic photos, 189 who read the article with the African American photos, and 165 who read the text-only version of the article.

Random Assignment Checks

Random assignment checks were conducted for experience with social programs, attitudes toward social programs, attitudes toward people suffering from hunger problems, experience with media, and story evaluation. Indexes were created to represent each of these variables. Analysis of variance was used to insure consistency among the three groups. There were no differences in participant experience with social programs \( F(2, 343) = 2.00, p > .05 \), attitudes toward social programs \( F(2, 335) = .61, p > .05 \), attitudes toward people suffering from hunger problems \( F(2, 343) = .33, p > .05 \), experience with media \( F(2, 343) = 1.92, p > .05 \), and story evaluation \( F(2, 343) = .52, p > .05 \). Participant ethnicity was comparable among the three groups. Additionally, perceptions of pervasive stereotypes associated with African Americans, Hispanics, and hunger also were compared across the three conditions and no significant differences were observed \( \text{African Americans} - F(2, 130) = 2.60, p > .05; \text{Hispanics} - F(2, 107) = 1.17, p > .05; \text{Hunger} - F(2, 102) = .12, p > .05 \). Additionally, there were no differences among the conditions regarding participants’ perception of stereotypical associations between African Americans and welfare \( F(2, 27) = .91, p > .05 \), Hispanics and welfare \( F(2, 165) = .39, p > .05 \), and hunger and Africans/African Americans \( F(2, 103) = .44, p > .05 \).
Base-rate comparisons

The first analyses compared participant perceptions with base-rate values for one variable of interest: ethnicity of those receiving assistance. The first hypothesis (H1) proposed that the Caucasians who read a text-only news story would perceive minorities to be more affected by the problems associated with hunger when compared to the base rate. The mean estimate for African Americans receiving assistance ($M = 38.09\%, SD = 14.27\%$) was compared to the base rate of 32\% using a t-test. The participants overestimated the percentage of African Americans receiving assistance, $t(92) = 4.11, p < .001, d = .43$. The mean estimate for Hispanics receiving assistance ($M = 30.20\%, SD = 14.53\%$) was greater than the base rate of 20\%, $t(92) = 6.78, p < .001, d = .70$. Therefore, H1 was supported (see Table 1).

Exemplification comparison

The next hypotheses compared the estimates among the conditions regarding the stereotypical characteristic of the exemplars. The second hypothesis (H2a) predicted that Caucasians who read a news story with an African American photo would estimate more African Americans to be affected by hunger when compared to the text-only condition. In the African American photo condition, the mean estimate for African Americans receiving assistance ($M = 38.78\%, SD = 15.73\%$) was greater than the mean estimate for African Americans receiving assistance for the text-only condition ($M = 38.09\%, SD = 14.27\%$). An independent sample t-test was conducted, $t(212) = .33, p = .37$. The difference was not significant, so H2a was not supported. H2b predicted that Caucasians who read a news story with an African American photo would overestimate the effect of hunger on African Americans when compared to the base rate. In the African American photo condition, the mean estimate for African Americans
receiving assistance ($M = 38.78\%, \ SD = 15.73\%$) was greater than the base rate of 32%. A one-sample t-test was conducted, $t(120) = 4.74, p < .001, d = .43$. H2b was supported (see Table 1).

The third hypothesis compared Caucasians’ estimates of Hispanics receiving food assistance among the three experimental conditions. In H3a, it was predicted that Caucasians who read a news story with a Hispanic photo would estimate more Hispanics to be effected by hunger when compared to the text-only condition. Caucasians’ estimates of Hispanics receiving assistance were greater in the Hispanics photo condition ($M = 33.51\%, \ SD = 16.84\%$) than in the text-only condition ($M = 30.20\%, \ SD = 14.53\%$). An independent samples t-test was conducted, $t(192) = 1.46, p = .07$. Hypothesis H3a was close to significance, but not supported.

The second part of the hypothesis (H3b) predicted that Caucasians who read a news story with a Hispanic photo would overestimate the effect of hunger on Hispanics when compared to the base rate. In the Hispanics photo condition, Hispanics receiving assistance ($M = 33.51\%, \ SD = 16.84\%$) was greater than the base rate of 20%. A one-sample t-test was conducted, $t(100) = 8.07, p < .001, d = .80$. Therefore, H3 was supported (see Table 1).
Table 1
*Caucasians’ estimates of minorities suffering from hunger issues for each condition, compared with the base rate (n=320)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text-only (no photo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>30.20%a (14.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>38.09%a (14.27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Superscripts indicate means compared within each row for hypothesis testing. * = p < .05, ** = p < .01, *** = p < .001. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Minority Comparisons

The next hypothesis (H4) predicted that Hispanics who read a text-only news story would perceive African Americans to be more affected by the problems associated with hunger when compared to the base rate. The Hispanics in the text-only condition estimated that $M = 34.22\%$ ($SD = 12.45\%$) of African Americans are affected by hunger problems, compared to the base rate of 32%. A t-test was conducted, $t(26) = .93$, $p = .19$. Therefore, the hypothesis was not supported.
The fifth hypothesis focused on the stereotypes Hispanics hold regarding African Americans when primed with African American photos. H5a predicted that Hispanics who read a news story with an African American photo would overestimate the effect of hunger on African Americans when compared to the base rate. The Hispanics in the African American photo condition estimated that $M = 39.11\%$ ($SD = 16.23\%$) of African Americans are affected by hunger problems, compared to the base rate of 32%. A t-test was conducted, $t(37) = 2.70, p = .005, d = .44$. Therefore, H5a was supported (see Table 3). In H5b, it was predicted that Hispanics who read a news story with an African American photo would estimate more African Americans to be affected by hunger when compared to the text-only condition. The estimation in the African American photo condition ($M = 39.11\%, SD = 16.23\%$) was greater than the estimation in the text-only condition ($M = 34.22\%, SD = 12.45\%$). A t-test was conducted, $t(63) = 1.31, p = .08$. The findings were not significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the hypothesis was not supported.

Table 2
Hispanics’ estimates of African Americans suffering from hunger issues for each condition, compared with the base rate ($n = 92$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Text-only (no photo)</th>
<th>African-American photo</th>
<th>Hispanic photo</th>
<th>Base rate</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>34.22% (12.45)</td>
<td>39.11%* (16.23)</td>
<td>39.37% (18.91)</td>
<td>32% b</td>
<td>2.70**</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Superscripts indicate means compared within each row for hypothesis testing. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.
### Table 3

**Summary of hypotheses and outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1  Caucasians in text-only condition would perceive minorities to be more affected by hunger when compared to the base rate</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2a Caucasians in African American photo condition would estimate more African Americans to be affected by hunger when compared to the text-only condition</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2b Caucasians in African American photo condition would overestimate the effect of hunger on African Americans when compared to the base rate</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a Caucasians in the Hispanic photo condition would estimate more Hispanics to be affected by hunger when compared to the text-only condition</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b Caucasians in the Hispanic photo condition would overestimate the effect of hunger on Hispanics when compared to the base rate</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4  Hispanics in the text-only condition would perceive African Americans to be more affected by hunger when compared to the base rate</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5a Hispanics in the African American photo condition would overestimate the effect of hunger on African Americans when compared to the base rate</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5b Hispanics in the African American photo condition would estimate more African Americans to be affected by hunger when compared to the text-only condition</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Issue perceptions**

The first research question (RQ1) asked about Hispanics’ attitudes toward the seriousness of hunger when primed with in-group stereotypes. Analysis of variance indicated no significant differences among the three conditions $F(2, 89) = .10, p = .91$. Hispanics in the Hispanic photo condition estimated the seriousness of hunger to be $M = 4.90$ ($SD = 1.20$), compared to $M =$
5.00 ($SD = 1.64$) in the text-only condition, and $M = 4.97$ ($SD = 1.32$) in the African American photo condition.

Limitations on Societal Advancement

The second research question (RQ2) asked about Hispanics primed with minority photos and their perceptions of limitations on societal advancement. For the limitations on African American advancement, an analysis of variance indicated no differences among the three conditions $F(2, 89) = 1.12, p = .47$. Therefore, the estimates of limitations are not significant among the three groups. Hispanics in the Hispanic photo condition estimated the limitations on African Americans to be $M = 5.04$ ($SD = 1.16$), compared to $M = 4.74$ ($SD = 1.32$) in the text-only condition, and $M = 5.11$ ($SD = 1.81$) in the African American photo condition. For the limitations on Hispanic advancement, an analysis of variance indicated no differences among the three conditions $F(2, 88) = .06, p = .94$. Hispanics in the Hispanic photo condition estimated the limitations on Hispanics to be $M = 5.04$ ($SD = 1.00$), compared to $M = 5.00$ ($SD = 1.40$) in the text-only condition, and $M = 5.11$ ($SD = 1.20$) in the African American photo condition.

The third research question (RQ3) asked about Hispanics’ attitudes toward hunger issues, including limitations on societal advancement and the seriousness of the hunger issue, when compared with the Caucasian participants’ attitudes (see Table 4). First, a comparison was conducted of Caucasians’ and Hispanics’ attitudes toward social limitations for those who read the article with the African American photos. In the African American photo condition, an independent samples t-test was conducted. For the limitations on African Americans, $M_{Caucasian} = 4.40, SD = 1.55; M_{Hispanics} = 5.04, SD = 1.16; t = 2.00, df = 126, p < .05, d = .36$. The Caucasian evaluation is significantly lower.
### Table 4
Comparisons of Caucasians’ and Hispanics’ estimates of limitations on African Americans and Hispanics and estimates of the seriousness of the hunger issue

**African American Photo**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>4.62 a</td>
<td>5.11 b</td>
<td>1.96*</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>(1.39)</td>
<td>(1.18)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>2.10*</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limits</td>
<td>(1.45)</td>
<td>(1.20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.20)</td>
<td>(1.7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hispanic photo**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>4.40 (1.55)</td>
<td>5.04 (1.16)</td>
<td>2.00*</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>4.52 a</td>
<td>5.04 b</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limits</td>
<td>(1.45)</td>
<td>(1.00)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.12)</td>
<td>(1.20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Superscripts indicate means compared within each row for hypothesis testing.  
* = p < .05, ** = p < .01, *** = p < .001. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Second, a similar analysis was conducted for those in the Hispanic photo condition. For the limitations on Hispanics, $M_{Caucasian} = 4.52$, $SD = 1.45$; $M_{Hispanics} = 5.04$, $SD = 1.00$, and $t = 1.70$, $df = 125$, $p = .09$. 

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For the seriousness of the hunger issue, there were no significant differences between the two. The independent samples t-test for the Hispanic condition showed that, for seriousness, \( t = 1.85, df = 126, p = .07 \). For the limitations on Hispanics, the independent samples t-tests for the Hispanic condition indicated there were no differences between Caucasian and Hispanics assessments of: limitations on African Americans \( t = 1.96, df = 159, p = .05, d = .31 \); limitations on Hispanics, \( t = 2.10, df = 159, p = .05, d = .33 \); or seriousness of the hunger issue, \( t = 1.59, df = 159, p = .12 \).
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Due to the pervasiveness of news in an increasingly visual society, it is important to look at how the media perpetuate stereotypes. The purpose of this research was to analyze how images can prime stereotypes among news readers, and influence their perceptions of a social issue. This study applied priming, framing, and exemplification theories to examine the impact of photographs of people of different ethnicities accompanying a news story about hunger can have on audience perceptions. Numerous studies have demonstrated the impact of media representations of race, and the often negative and stereotypical representations of minorities (e.g. Dixon & Linz 2000; Valentino 1999). Negative portrayals of minorities, particularly in association with social issues, can activate and strengthen racial stereotypes in the minds of news audience members. (Dixon et al, 2005).

Hunger is an important issue because it affects people of all backgrounds and it has been a growing problem as enrollment in government food assistance programs has increased during the past several years (U.S. Census, 2012). Additionally, while hunger affects all ethnicities, it is often perceived to be primarily a minority issue. Due to this perception, the current project was conducted focusing on the relationships and perceptions held by Caucasians about African Americans and Hispanics, as well as those held by Hispanics about African Americans and other Hispanics. In the study, participants read a news article about hunger. The article was from a newspaper (slightly modified to include base rate information) and presented to appear as though it was published in an online format. The article told about emergency hunger services in Central Florida, and offered the percentages of Caucasians, African Americans, Hispanics, and other ethnicities affected by hunger in Central Florida.
This project yielded several important observations about the impact of photographs (visual primes) in news stories. First, although there is much support for the priming effects of photographs on Caucasians’ perceptions of African Americans, Caucasians’ estimates of the percentage of African Americans served by the hunger program did not appear to be influenced by the photographs (visual primes). They consistently overestimated the percentages regardless of the photo primes. Second, in contrast, the inclusion of photographs appeared to have an effect on Caucasians’ perceptions of Hispanics. That is, Caucasians who saw photos of Hispanic exemplars were more likely to have higher estimates of the percentage of Hispanics served by the hunger program. Third, like the Caucasians, Hispanics generally overestimated the percentages of African Americans served by the hunger program. However, the effect of the photographs on their estimates is somewhat unclear. Finally, compared to Caucasians, the photographs with minority exemplars appeared to have a greater influence on Hispanics’ perceptions of limitations on societal advancement for minorities (particularly African Americans). These findings, as well as several others, are elaborated upon in this section of the report.

The study began by examining Caucasians’ perceptions of African Americans and Hispanics. Most research regarding social issues focuses on the stereotypes Caucasians hold about other ethnicities, primarily African Americans (e.g. Dixon et al, 2005; Dixon & Azocar, 2007), so it was important to see how hunger stereotypes impacted that often studied relationship. Additionally, the relationship between Caucasians and Hispanics was studied. Hispanics are the fastest growing minority in America (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). However, very little research has been conducted about Caucasians’ stereotypes regarding Hispanics and social issues (e.g. Mastro & Tukachinsky, 2011; Tukachinsky, Mastro, & King, 2011). The final
areas of interest were Hispanics’ stereotypes regarding African Americans and Hispanics’ views of other Hispanics (their ingroup stereotypes). Little media research exists about these relationships. As the Hispanic population rapidly increases in America, it is crucial to understand this group’s views about other ethnicities and social issues. Such views can have a profound impact on political decisions, public policies, professional advancement, and the way individuals of one ethnicity treat those of another. In general, this research adds to understanding of how fundamental media effects theories can provide insight into effects of news practices on society.

The following discussion is structured to address the variety of issues examined by this research project. The first sections discuss Caucasians and their perceptions of minorities in comparison to reality. Then, the priming conditions and exemplification findings are discussed, followed by a discussion of seriousness of hunger issues and limitations on societal advancement. Finally, framing and priming, practical applications of the research, limitations, and future research suggestions are discussed.

Exemplification

The first analyses looked at Caucasian news viewers’ perceptions of race and social issues. As the majority population, it was important to see if Caucasians’ attitudes and perceptions regarding stereotype and hunger aligned with other research regarding Caucasians, minority groups, and social issues. The study found that Caucasians in each of the three groups — African American photo, Hispanic photo, and text-only — overestimated the percentages of minorities affected by hunger compared to the reality. This demonstrates news viewers’ baseline perceptions, which are distorted compared to reality. These findings were in line with other research.
Additional, when Caucasians were primed with a photo of Hispanics accompanying a news article, they estimated more Hispanics to be affected by hunger when compared to those Caucasians who saw no photo. These findings were expected because of previous research. Domke, Perlmutter, & Spratt (2002) found that visual news images influence people’s information processing in ways that can be understood only by taking into account individuals’ predispositions and values, and at the same time appear to have a particular ability to trigger considerations that spread through one’s mental framework to other evaluations. The findings in the Caucasian-Hispanic relationship echo previous research (e.g. Dixon & Azocar, 2007) concerning the Caucasian-African American relationship, where an overrepresentation of African American crime suspects on television news influenced news viewers to overestimate the number of African American criminals. Due to Dixon’s and Azocar’s findings, in the current study, it was unexpected that the same was not true in the condition where Caucasians were primed with a photo of African Americans. While there was a difference between the two conditions in the estimations of African Americans affected by the problem associated with hunger, it was not a significant difference. The Caucasians’ estimates of African Americans were fairly consistent across conditions. This suggests that they may carry an inflated perception of the effects on African Americans and the photo primes were not strong enough to further distort that perception. However, the priming effect associated with Hispanics was evident. This may speak to the strength of the association between Hispanics and the issue of hunger among Caucasians. The perception appeared to more effectively manipulated by the photo prime. This finding was surprising because Caucasians were expected to respond to the photographic primes in a similar manner regardless of which minority group was represented in the photo. This shows
that when it comes to the issue of hunger, Caucasians in this sample do not pass equal judgment on minority groups. Caucasians’ may have such a great amount of cumulative exposure to stereotypical depictions of African Americans (in media and other social venues) and social issues like hunger that their attitudes are chronically accessible. That is, they are in a constant state of activation and therefore the photo exemplars would not alter the activation of the stereotype. Whereas, Caucasians may not experience the same cumulative exposure to a stereotype associating Hispanics and hunger. This would mean that the Hispanic photo exemplars may activate Caucasians’ attitudes connecting Hispanics and hunger programs which then can lead to higher estimations of participants.

Hispanics Exemplification

Due to an increasing population and a relative lack of research, Hispanics’ relationship with African Americans and other Hispanics in regard to hunger was of particular interest. Many other researchers (e.g. Mastro & Tukachinsky, 2011; Dixon & Azocar, 2007; Dixon et al, 2005; Carter, 2004) have expressed interest in studying stereotypes from the minority perspective. In the current study, there was difficulty recruiting minority participants. However, the results did show that when Hispanics were shown an article with a photo of African Americans, they overestimated the effect of hunger on African Americans when compared to reality. The effect was almost the same in the Hispanic condition. They may be responding to the minority image and their perceptions of African Americans in need of hunger services may be more malleable. The same fluctuation was not evident for estimations of Hispanics. In both cases, the statistical analyses were not effective in clarifying the hunger issue. When there was no prime, no significant differences were found between the Hispanic participants’ estimations and the base
rate. This could be because Hispanics do not have the same chronic accessibility that Caucasians do. This shows that, like Caucasians, they are more likely to be influenced by a photographic exemplar than by the inclusion of the actual percentages of people affected by hunger. Despite these findings, many questions remain regarding the way Hispanics view African Americans and other Hispanics in relation to social issues. In this study, it was anticipated that Hispanics would overestimate the effects of hunger on African Americans, both when shown no photo (compared to reality), and when shown African American photos (compared to the text-only condition). A lack of Hispanic participants yielded inconclusive results, however, the means are in a direction that fits the expectations. More research, with increased numbers of Hispanic participants would be necessary.

**Hispanics and Hunger Perceptions**

Additional questions were asked about Hispanics’ attitudes toward the seriousness of hunger when primed with ingroup stereotypes. It was asked whether or not Hispanics would believe hunger to be a more serious issue when they saw photos of other Hispanics accompanying the article. However, there were no significant differences in seriousness among the three conditions, meaning that who is pictured in the photo, or if there is a photo at all, did not affect Hispanics’ judgment on the seriousness of hunger. Upon further review, this measure might be problematic. The perception of how serious an issue like hunger might be is not race-related. It might be perceived as serious regardless. More nuanced questions could be used to examine perceptions of the hunger problem. For example, measuring the support for government programs offering food services, financial support of non-profit organizations like Second Harvest Food Bank, and the relative importance of the issue among other issues facing society might be more effective.
The second question asked about Hispanics and their perceptions of limitations on societal advancement. It is important to understand the extent to which people believe various ethnic groups face limitations on advancement because such views can affect one’s penchant to have sympathy or offer support for a person in need. If society is hindering a person from advancing, then that system should be changed through policy or program alterations. However, if the person is in need, but does not face limitations from society, then it would suggest the person is responsible for his or her own circumstances. A person’s views on societal limitations facing a minority group might affect his or her willingness to vote for change or donate time and money to make a difference. While differences concerning limitations on African American advancement were indicated among the three conditions, a lack of Hispanic participants rendered the results inconclusive. Additionally, there were no differences among the conditions regarding limitations on Hispanic advancement. The implications of these results show that when an African American is pictured in a circumstance of need, Hispanics might be more apt to believe African Americans as a whole face limitations on societal advancement. Further research is needed for conclusive results, as understanding Hispanics’ views on this subject can offer much insight into their views on social policies and programs.

Research suggested that Hispanics’ stereotypes regarding African Americans are similar to those of Caucasians (Literte, 2011). However, in the analysis for the third research question, which asked about the comparison of seriousness and societal limitations between the Hispanics and Caucasians regarding African Americans, the Caucasian evaluation was significantly lower in the cases where minority photo primes were present. This suggests that when it comes to stereotypes of African Americans regarding societal advancement, Hispanics are more likely than Caucasians to believe African Americans are limited when it comes to employment
opportunities and other means of advancement. The same was true regarding Hispanics’ views of limitations on societal advancement concerning other Hispanics. Caucasians’ evaluation was significantly lower than Hispanics’. These findings suggest that Hispanics do believe African Americans and other Hispanics to be affected by societal limitations, perhaps seeing a similarity between the two minority groups. This shows that when it comes to assessing advancement of African Americans and Hispanics, the Hispanics do not hold the same stereotypes as Caucasians, as Literte (2011) suggested. Literte (2011) found that Hispanics’ stereotypes of African Americans invoke images long-embedded in the American consciousness by White supremacy, that African Americans are violent, lazy, untrustworthy, and sexually promiscuous. While Literte (2011) found that Hispanics see themselves more similar to Caucasians than to African Americans, the current study suggests that in the area of societal limitations Hispanics might be apt to align themselves with African Americans, a fellow minority. The result shows the importance of context when considering out-group assessments.

Minorities and the news

This research supports prior studies showing that the photos used to illustrate news articles about social issues do activate stereotypes and impact the perceptions of that social issue. The results from this study are in line with the findings of Dixon and Azocar (2007) that exposure to racialized news shapes the perceptions of African Americans and race relations. Similar to the way that Dixon and Azocar’s (2007) study showed the long-term effects of news viewing that overrepresents African American lawbreakers, this study shows that priming news readers with images of African Americans or Hispanics causes a misrepresentation of those minorities affected by hunger. It is believed that these effects are driven by the priming of African American and Hispanic stereotypes. Higgins (2000), Fiske and Taylor (1991), and
Devine (1989) suggest that frequent activation of a stereotype might lead to chronic activation over time (e.g., automatic use of the stereotype). One interpretation of the findings is that exposure to a majority of Hispanic or African American photos representing hungry or needy people confirms the stereotype of minorities as needing government assistance with the problems associated with hunger. Whether in the areas of crime, immigration, or hunger, when Caucasians interact with a social issue, they are likely to overestimate the minority populations affected by that issue. These findings align with the work of Abraham and Appiah (2006), who used framing and priming to explain the potential prejudicial effect of intentional visual framing, when an image featuring African Americans is placed with race-neutral text. The effect was audiences comprehending the issue racially. In their study, implicit racial images of African Americans helped prime racial stereotypes about African Americans and led to stronger associations of African Americans with the social issues addressed in the news articles.

Framing and Priming Theories

Findings by Dixon and Azocar (2007), Dixon and Linz (2000), and Mastro and Tukachinsky (2011) all indicate that Caucasians are affected by the way the news portrays people of other ethnicities, acknowledging the influence of framing and priming. While most of the research centers on the African American-Caucasian relationship, the present study shows that when Caucasians are primed with a photo of Hispanics, a Hispanic stereotype of need and suffering from the problems associated with hunger is activated. As the Hispanic population increases, it is important to understand the Caucasian-Hispanic and Hispanic-African American relationships and the stereotypes associated with them. It is crucial for news organizations to understand the ramifications of publishing images overrepresenting minorities as needy or suffering from hunger. A social issue is framed as a minority problem when news producers
predominantly use photographs of minorities to illustrate a story on the topic. Media messages can trigger or prime stereotypes, and in turn, these stereotypes can influence judgments about policies and perceptions of limitations. If a group of people believes that another group does not have societal limitations that hinder advancement, but at the same time believes that group to have a large dependence on emergency or government food services, it could affect the way they vote on or voice their support for or against policies related to government assistance programs. Such stereotypes also could influence a person’s charitable giving, volunteer time, and simply their attitude toward people of other ethnic backgrounds.

Priming and exemplification are generally considered the result of heuristic processing. The findings in the project represent snap judgments made by the participants after consuming media. In a news production environment, the demand that content be produced quickly and efficiently means judgments about where to take photographs or which photos to include in a story are often snap judgments as well. Therefore they are as susceptible to heuristic processing as the stereotypical judgments observed in the study. When an assignment is made, a reporter or photographer is instructed to get the best story or photo possible before the deadline. However, in spite of best intentions, as deadlines loom, journalists sometimes have to use the information that is accessible and sufficient. This can lead to inadvertent use of unrepresentative photographs. Thus, framing in the news is not necessarily intentional. Rather, it can be a result of a variety of circumstances in the news process.

News producers walk a fine line. In an article published by the Poynter Institute, Nelson Poynter Scholar for Journalism Values Bob Steele reminds journalists of their responsibility. “It is because the role of journalism is singular in our society that journalists have a profound responsibility to be very good at what they do, to strive for excellence every day in every byline,
every photograph, and every newscast” (Steele, 2011). However, he admits that his is increasingly difficult. Steele (2011) goes on to discuss the arena in which journalists operate, and how much it has changed from the days when the morning or afternoon newspaper and the evening newscasts determined deadlines and agendas. “That was a relatively simple era compared to the current landscape where breaking news is likely to be intensely covered by the Internet and wall-to-wall by satellite live shots. Journalists increasingly operate in a mixed-media maelstrom where decisions are made in the matter of seconds” (Steele, 2011). Due to these challenges, news producers must make an even more concerted effort to maintain fairness, accuracy, and timeliness when covering sensitive topics in the news.

Limitations

The interaction between racism and news

The current study looked at how priming influenced the estimation of ethnicities suffering from hunger and the attitudes toward those ethnicities. Although a pretest analyzing participants’ stereotypes of Caucasians, African Americans, and Hispanics was conducted, that measure was only used as a random assignment check. However, it is possible that preexisting stereotypes about the ethnicities in the photos influenced estimations. A measure of the individual’s personal stereotypes could be used to determine if it played a role in the perceptions. Essentially, the photo simply activated a preexisting stereotype about minority populations suffering from problems associated with hunger. This question should be investigated in future work.

Participants

The participants in the present study came from a convenience sample of undergraduate students. Nearly 20 percent of the respondents were Hispanic, which is consistent with the
university’s Hispanic/Latino population of 19% (UCF, 2012). Additionally, the ethnic breakdown of the sample is comparative to that of Orlando, Florida, at Caucasian, 57.6%; African American, 28.1%; Hispanic/Latino, 25.4% (U.S Census, 2010). Additionally, there were nearly 200 participants who either did not complete both the pretest and posttest, or whose responses were excluded due to concerns about fidelity in their responses. The final number of Hispanic participants may be creating issues with type II error, i.e. the incorrect acceptance of a null hypothesis. By conducting a posteriori power analysis using the effect size of a Cohen’s $d = .4$ with statistical power of .8 and a $p$-value of .05, it is evident that the minimum number of Hispanics needed per condition should be 78. More data would be needed to effectively address some of the research questions and hypotheses posed herein. In a future study, it would be ideal to reach out to minority communities.

Additionally, since the participants were recruited from a large university in Central Florida, they were of a specific age group. In future work, it would be interesting to study stereotype and social issues of a broader age range. Additionally, Caucasians in Central Florida have more interaction with Hispanics than in many other parts of the country (United States Census Bureau, 2012). Therefore, generation and regional factors could impact participants’ perceptions of need and societal limitations.

An additional factor that could have influenced the results is the present and recent state of the economy. Florida is the state with the most properties with homes with foreclosure filings (RealtyTrac.com, 2013). In Florida, as of January 2013, foreclosure activity had increased on an annual basis for the eleventh time in the last thirteen months (RealtyTrac.com, 2013). These statistics are just some of the examples of how more Americans with recession-depleted incomes are requiring assistance and government aid. Recent years have seen an increase of families
receiving aid from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (USDA FNS, 2013). Due to these increases, the study participants could have been more acclimated to the idea of assistance, perhaps not seeing a negative stereotype associated with the issue.

**Future Research**

**Long-term effects**

The current study looked at the impact of racialized photos associated with a social issue after one viewing. It would be interesting to see if the same effects were observed when similar news articles and photos are viewed over a longer period of time. If the effects were observed and even increased over a longer period of time, it would show just how powerful the news is in perpetuating stereotypes about important social issues. A question to explore would be, “What kind of frequency of exposure is required to help people modify their stereotype schemas?”

**Practical applications**

Future research in framing, priming, and exemplification theories also would benefit from focusing on practical applications of these findings to news organizations. Results of this research could benefit news producers by demonstrating how factors such as photograph selection and reported base-rate information can influence news viewers’ perceptions of the issues being presented.

**Conclusion**

This study has given greater understanding of how people are affected by the images they see in the news, and these findings are not just crucial to the area of media research. As Navasky said, “It is based largely on journalism that we make up our national mind” (Zelizer & Allen, 2002). These are topics that span into the fields of journalism, economics, and politics. Journalists, editors, publishers, and other news producers have a responsibility to be accurate in
their portrayal of social issues, because what news viewers see can drastically impact the way they view society. Society’s views on social issues and stereotypes can influence the way people spend money, vote in elections, and simply treat other people.
APPENDIX A:

IRB APPROVAL LETTER
Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: UCF Institutional Review Board #1  
FWA0000351, IRB00001138

To: Meredith J. Morris

Date: April 04, 2013

Dear Researcher:

On 4/4/2013, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination
Project Title: The Priming Effects of Media Frames in Regard to News Images and Stereotypes Held by Hispanic Audiences
Investigator: Meredith J. Morris
IRB Number: SBE-13-09181
Funding Agency: n/a
Research ID: n/a

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Patria Davis on 04/04/2013 01:50:58 PM EST

IRB Coordinator
APPENDIX B:

PRETEST
Q1 News Perceptions 1 Principal Investigator: Meredith Jean Morris Faculty Supervisor: William Kinnally, PhD

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Whether you take part is up to you. · The purpose of this research is to examine media use and attitudes. · To accomplish this goal, you are being asked to complete two surveys. All items are completely voluntary and you may opt out of the survey at any time. There are two parts to this research project. Each part involves completing a survey. For each survey, any computer can be used during each of the data collection periods, which is approximately two weeks. This survey is the first of the two and your participation in both will be required to complete the project. The current survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The second survey will be made available to you within two weeks. You do not have to answer every question or complete every task. You will not lose any benefits if you skip questions or tasks. · There will be two surveys to be completed during a two-week period. Each will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study. Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem: If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, talk to Meredith Morris, Graduate Student, Nicholson School of Communication, meredithjean@knights.ucf.edu or Dr. William Kinnally, Faculty Supervisor, Nicholson School of Communication by email at William.kinnally@ucf.edu. IRB contact about your rights in the study or to report a complaint: Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact: Institutional Review Board,
Are you interested in participating in this research project?

☐ Yes (1)
☐ No (2)

If Choice - No, Is Selected Then Skip To End of Survey

Q2 What is your gender?

☐ Male (1)
☐ Female (2)

Q3 What is your race or ethnicity?

☐ African American/Black (1)
☐ Asian (2)
☐ Caucasian/White (3)
☐ Hispanic/Latino (4)
☐ Other (5)

Answer If What is your race or ethnicity? Hispanic/Latino Is Selected

Q142 Describe your ethnic heritage.

Q4 How old are you?
Q5 What year in college are you classified as?

- Freshman (1)
- Sophomore (2)
- Junior (3)
- Senior (4)
- Graduate (5)
Q11 I understand that the extra credit I receive is for full participation in this survey project. That includes reading and responding to the questions with care.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
Q126 Thinking about yourself and people you know, please mark the button that best reflects how much the following programs have affected you, your friends, and/or family members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>1 Not at all (1)</th>
<th>2 (2)</th>
<th>3 (3)</th>
<th>4 (4)</th>
<th>5 (5)</th>
<th>6 (6)</th>
<th>7 A great deal (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife Preservation (2)</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pell grants for college students (3)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security (4)</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bright Futures Scholarships (5)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Stamps (6)</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment insurance (7)</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid to families with dependent children (8)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Q127 Please mark the button that best reflects your attitude toward each of the following.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Not at all favorable (1)</th>
<th>2 (2)</th>
<th>3 (3)</th>
<th>4 (4)</th>
<th>5 (5)</th>
<th>6 (6)</th>
<th>7 Extremely favorable (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wildlife Preservation (2)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pell grants for college students (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Security (4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bright Futures Scholarships (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Stamps (6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment insurance (7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aid to families with dependent children (8)</td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q40 Take a moment to think about the positive stereotypes other people have regarding African Americans. Please list 5 positive stereotypes other people have regarding African Americans.

Stereotype 1 (1)
Stereotype 2 (2)
Stereotype 3 (3)
Stereotype 4 (4)
Stereotype 5 (5)

Q41 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) please identify the extent to which people, in general, perceive these stereotypes to be true.

_____ Positive Stereotype 1 (1)
_____ Positive Stereotype 2 (2)
_____ Positive Stereotype 3 (3)
_____ Positive Stereotype 4 (4)
_____ Positive Stereotype 5 (5)
Q47 On a scale from 1 (not at all strongly held) to 7 (very strongly held), how strongly do you believe these stereotypes are held by the general public?

______ Positive Stereotype1 (1)
______ Positive Stereotype 2 (2)
______ Positive Stereotype3 (3)
______ Positive Stereotype 4 (4)
______ Positive Stereotype 5 (5)
Q128 Take a moment to think about the negative stereotypes other people have regarding African Americans. Please list 5 negative stereotypes other people have regarding African Americans.

  Stereotype 1 (1)
  Stereotype 2 (2)
  Stereotype 3 (3)
  Stereotype 4 (4)
  Stereotype 5 (5)

Q44 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) please identify the extent to which people, in general, perceive these stereotypes to be true.

   ______ Negative Stereotype 1 (1)
   ______ Negative Stereotype 2 (2)
   ______ Negative Stereotype 3 (3)
   ______ Negative Stereotype 4 (4)
   ______ Negative Stereotype 5 (5)
Q129 On a scale from 1 (not at all strongly held) to 7 (very strongly held), how strongly do you believe this stereotype is held by the general public?

_____ Negative Stereotype 1 (1)
_____ Negative Stereotype 2 (2)
_____ Negative Stereotype 3 (3)
_____ Negative Stereotype 4 (4)
_____ Negative Stereotype 5 (5)
Q130 Take a moment to think about the positive stereotypes other people have regarding Caucasians. Please list 5 positive stereotypes other people have regarding Caucasians.

Stereotype 1 (1)
Stereotype 2 (2)
Stereotype 3 (3)
Stereotype 4 (4)
Stereotype 5 (5)

Q131 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) please identify the extent to which people, in general, perceive these stereotypes to be true.

_____ Positive Stereotype 1 (1)
_____ Positive Stereotype 2 (2)
_____ Positive Stereotype 3 (3)
_____ Positive Stereotype 4 (4)
_____ Positive Stereotype 5 (5)
Q132 On a scale from 1 (not at all strongly held) to 7 (very strongly held), how strongly do you believe these stereotypes are held by the general public?

_____ Positive Stereotype 1 (1)
_____ Positive Stereotype 2 (2)
_____ Positive Stereotype 3 (3)
_____ Positive Stereotype 4 (4)
_____ Positive Stereotype 5 (5)
Q133 Take a moment to think about the negative stereotypes other people have regarding Caucasians. Please list 5 negative stereotypes other people have regarding Caucasians.

Stereotype 1 (1)
Stereotype 2 (2)
Stereotype 3 (3)
Stereotype 4 (4)
Stereotype 5 (5)

Q134 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) please identify the extent to which people, in general, perceive these stereotypes to be true.

_____ Negative Stereotype 1 (1)
_____ Negative Stereotype 2 (2)
_____ Negative Stereotype 3 (3)
_____ Negative Stereotype 4 (4)
_____ Negative Stereotype 5 (5)
Q135 On a scale from 1 (not at all strongly held) to 7 (very strongly held), how strongly do you believe this stereotype is held by the general public?

______ Negative Stereotype 1 (1)
______ Negative Stereotype 2 (2)
______ Negative Stereotype 3 (3)
______ Negative Stereotype 4 (4)
______ Negative Stereotype 5 (5)
Q136 Take a moment to think about the positive stereotypes other people have regarding Hispanics. Please list 5 positive stereotypes other people have regarding Hispanics.

Stereotype 1 (1)
Stereotype 2 (2)
Stereotype 3 (3)
Stereotype 4 (4)
Stereotype 5 (5)

Q137 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) please identify the extent to which people, in general, perceive these stereotypes to be true.

_____ Positive Stereotype 1 (1)
_____ Positive Stereotype 2 (2)
_____ Positive Stereotype 3 (3)
_____ Positive Stereotype 4 (4)
_____ Positive Stereotype 5 (5)
Q138 On a scale from 1 (not at all strongly held) to 7 (very strongly held), how strongly do you believe these stereotypes are held by the general public?

______ Positive Stereotype 1 (1)

______ Positive Stereotype 2 (2)

______ Positive Stereotype 3 (3)

______ Positive Stereotype 4 (4)

______ Positive Stereotype 5 (5)
Q139 Take a moment to think about the negative stereotypes other people have regarding Hispanics. Please list 5 negative stereotypes other people have regarding Hispanics.

   Stereotype 1 (1)
   Stereotype 2 (2)
   Stereotype 3 (3)
   Stereotype 4 (4)
   Stereotype 5 (5)

Q140 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) please identify the extent to which people, in general, perceive these stereotypes to be true.

   _____ Negative Stereotype 1 (1)
   _____ Negative Stereotype 2 (2)
   _____ Negative Stereotype 3 (3)
   _____ Negative Stereotype 4 (4)
   _____ Negative Stereotype 5 (5)
Q141 On a scale from 1 (not at all strongly held) to 7 (very strongly held), how strongly do you believe this stereotype is held by the general public?

_____ Negative Stereotype 1 (1)
_____ Negative Stereotype 2 (2)
_____ Negative Stereotype 3 (3)
_____ Negative Stereotype 4 (4)
_____ Negative Stereotype 5 (5)
Q144 Take a moment to think about the stereotypes other people have regarding people affected by hunger issues. Please list 5 stereotypes other people have regarding people affected by hunger issues.

Stereotype 1 (1)
Stereotype 2 (2)
Stereotype 3 (3)
Stereotype 4 (4)
Stereotype 5 (5)

Q145 On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) please identify the extent to which people, in general, perceive these stereotypes to be true.

_____ Hunger Stereotype 1 (1)
_____ Hunger Stereotype 2 (2)
_____ Hunger Stereotype 3 (3)
_____ Hunger Stereotype 4 (4)
_____ Hunger Stereotype 5 (5)
Q146 On a scale from 1 (not at all strongly held) to 7 (very strongly held), how strongly do you believe this stereotype is held by the general public?

______ Hunger Stereotype 1 (1)

______ Hunger Stereotype 2 (2)

______ Hunger Stereotype 3 (3)

______ Hunger Stereotype 4 (4)

______ Hunger Stereotype 5 (5)
Q48 We are interested in your attitudes toward stories and features you see in the media (television, Internet, newspapers, and magazines, etc.). Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about your interest in media stories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree (3)</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree (5)</th>
<th>Agree (6)</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like stories that challenge my way of seeing the world. (1)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like stories that make me more reflective. (2)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like stories that focus on meaningful human conditions. (3)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My favorite kinds of stories are ones that make me think. (4)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am very moved by stories that are about people’s search for greater understanding in life. (5)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like stories that have profound meanings or messages to convey. (6)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s important to me that I have</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
fun when reading/watching stories. (7)
Stories that make me laugh are among my favorites. (8)

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Q10 Please share your experience with using the following news media sources...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Not at all (1)</th>
<th>2 (2)</th>
<th>3 (3)</th>
<th>4 (4)</th>
<th>5 (5)</th>
<th>6 (6)</th>
<th>7 Extremely often (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print newspapers (1)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local television news (2)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network television news (3)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable television news (4)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio news (5)</td>
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<td>Newspapers online (6)</td>
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<td>Network TV news online (7)</td>
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<td>Cable TV news online (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radio news online (9)</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q143 Think about people suffering from hunger-related issues. Please mark the box that best indicates your attitude toward these people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am sympathetic. (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have compassion for them. (2)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have feelings of warmth toward them. (3)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel softhearted about the situation. (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>I am moved by their situation. (5)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Q28 Please mark the box that best indicates your attitude toward UCF Knights football.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am a Knights fan. (1)</td>
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<td>I take pride in being a Knights fan. (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I want other people to know that I am a Knights fan. (3)</td>
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<td>I root hard for the Knights. (4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is important to me that UCF has a successful football season. (5)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Q54 What are the first four letters of your last name?

Q55 What is your favorite city in the U.S.?

Q56 What is the name of your favorite restaurant?
Q28 Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Your participation is greatly appreciated. If your instructor is offering credit, click on the following link to enter your name and instructor's name... Click here to register for course credit.
APPENDIX C:

POSTTEST
Q1 News Perceptions 2 Principal Investigator: Meredith Jean Morris Faculty Supervisor: William Kinnally, PhD

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Whether you take part is up to you. · The purpose of this research is to examine media use and attitudes. · To accomplish this goal, you are being asked to complete two surveys. All items are completely voluntary and you may opt out of the survey at any time. There are two parts to this research project. Each part involves completing a survey. For each survey, any computer can be used during each of the data collection periods, which is approximately two weeks. This survey is the first of the two and your participation in both will be required to complete the project. The current survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The second survey will be made available to you within two weeks. You do not have to answer every question or complete every task. You will not lose any benefits if you skip questions or tasks. · There will be two surveys to be completed during a two-week period. Each will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study. Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem: If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, talk to Meredith Morris, Graduate Student, Nicholson School of Communication, meredithjean@knights.ucf.edu or Dr. William Kinnally, Faculty Supervisor, Nicholson School of Communication by email at William.kinnally@ucf.edu. IRB contact about your rights in the study or to report a complaint: Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact: Institutional Review Board,
Are you interested in participating in this research project?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Choice - No, Is Selected Then Skip To End of Survey

Q2 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Q3 What is your race or ethnicity?

- African American/Black (1)
- Asian (2)
- Caucasian/White (3)
- Hispanic/Latino (4)
- Other (5)

Answer If What is your race or ethnicity? Hispanic/Latino Is Selected

Q62 Describe your ethnic heritage.

Q4 How old are you?
Q5 What year in college are you classified as?

- Freshman (1)
- Sophomore (2)
- Junior (3)
- Senior (4)
- Graduate (5)
Q12 For this project, you are asked to read a randomly selected news article. Please click on one of the following buttons to proceed.

☐ 1 (1)
☐ 1 (2)
☐ 1 (3)
Q13 1. Please read the following article published by the Orlando Sentinel.
Family Fund:
Food bank bridges hunger gap in tough economy

By Mark Schlueter, Orlando Sentinel

They start lining up two hours before the doors open.

Grandmothers, unsteady on canes. Children darting around parents' legs. Whole families.

They're from different walks of life, with at least one commonality: hunger. When Tuskawilla United Methodist Church in Casselberry opened its food pantry, it fed about 50 families a week.

Now, 2 1/2 years later, on average, 260 families come to the weekly food distributions. The number keeps climbing; a few lucky ones find jobs, but about 45 new people show up every week.

They are people such as David Rugg, whose hands still show the calluses of a lifetime spent on construction sites, even though it has been a year since he was laid off.

"If it weren't for the food bank, we'd really be hurting," he said.

The food on the Ruggs' table comes from Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida. Tuskawilla's pantry is one of more than 500 nonprofit agencies that feed the hungry at least in part with food from Second Harvest.

Second Harvest, one of several nonprofit organizations supported by the Orlando Sentinel Family Fund Holiday Campaign, distributes millions of meals to hungry families in six counties.

Rugg, 32, began coming to the Tuskawilla food pantry with his wife, Alida, about a year ago, shortly after he lost his job as a heavy-equipment operator for a major construction company after 18 years. The Ruggs' three children live with them in Oviedo, forced together by necessity. Only their daughter has found regular work, and that's part-time.

Alida must stay home to care for son Donny, 8, who is wheelchair-bound with cerebral palsy. Donny is quick with a smile and a laugh. He helps as best he can, gathering aluminum cans for Christmas money.
Q64 Here is the second part of the article from the Orlando Sentinel. Please be sure to scroll down and read the entire article.
David and Aida volunteer at the food pantry. Aida helps others navigate the system and loads groceries in their cars. David directs parking-lot traffic during the rush on days food is distributed. Even Donny puts cardboard boxes together for those in need.

At the pantry, they're given enough food to last through the week, if they're careful.

“We don’t eat steaks, but at least we eat,” said Aida, 31. “You just have to make it stretch.”

Second Harvest’s main warehouse in west Orlando is a cavernous space filled with about a million pounds of canned goods, fresh vegetables, jars of pasta sauce, meat, poultry, baked goods and whatever else people give.

But with the country’s economy in a shambles, it’s not enough.

“People just can’t find jobs. We are seeing people come in with college educations, good track records, great resumes, but they can’t find work anywhere,” said Dave Krepcho, Second Harvest CEO and president. “They don’t know where the next meal is coming from. Many are skipping meals.”

In 2006, Second Harvest provided food to 293,000 people. In 2010, that number climbed to 732,000. Last year saw an inauspicious record: Second Harvest distributed 21 million meals. In 2010, Second Harvest conducted a hunger study, and found that of the people in Florida who receive food assistance, about 44 percent are non-Hispanic white, 32 percent are non-Hispanic black, 20 percent are Hispanic and the rest are from other racial or ethnic groups.

“And there is a huge gap that still exists,” Krepcho said.

The meals go out so quickly that Second Harvest’s warehouse, even with its million pounds of food, would be empty in about 20 days if not constantly replenished by donations.

These days, when Second Harvest sends out fundraising letters, it’s not unusual to receive replies from past donors who now need help themselves.

David Rugg’s family understands that need.

“You never think about it until it’s knocking on your door,” he said.

It would be easy to get discouraged, but Second Harvest and its army of distribution agencies and volunteers know the importance of a single bag of food to a hungry child.

“The thing we focus on is: There is hope for a better future,” Krepcho said. “Every can of soup and jar of jelly makes a difference. You can make a difference.”
Q15 Please read the following article published by the Orlando Sentinel. When you are done reading, you will be asked to answer some questions about the article.
Family Fund:

Food bank bridges hunger gap in tough economy

By Mark Schiefelbein, Orlando Sentinel

They start lining up two hours before the doors open.

Grandmothers, unsteady on canes. Children darting around parents' legs. Whole families.

They're from different walks of life, with at least one commonality: hunger. When Tuskawilla United Methodist Church in Casselberry opened its food pantry, it fed about 50 families a week. Now, 2 1/2 years later, on average, 280 families come to the weekly food distributions. The number keeps climbing; a few lucky ones find jobs, but about 45 new people show up every week.

They are people such as David Rugg, whose hands still show the calluses of a lifetime spent on construction sites, even though it has been a year since he was laid off.

"If it weren't for the food bank, we'd really be hurting," he said.

The food on the Ruggs' table comes from Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida. Tuskawilla's pantry is one of more than 500 nonprofit agencies that feed the hungry at least in part with food from Second Harvest.

Second Harvest, one of several nonprofit organizations supported by the Orlando Sentinel Family Fund Holiday Campaign, distributes millions of meals to hungry families in six counties.

Rugg, 32, began coming to the Tuskawilla food pantry with his wife, Alda, about a year ago, shortly after he lost his job as a heavy-equipment operator for a major construction company after 18 years. The Ruggs' three children live with them in Oviedo, forced together by necessity. Only their daughter has found regular work, and that's part-time.

Alda must stay home to care for son Donny, 6, who is wheelchair-bound with cerebral palsy. Donny is quick with a smile and a laugh. He helps as best he can, gathering aluminum cans for Christmas money.
Q65 Here is the second part of the article from the Orlando Sentinel. Please be sure to scroll down and read the entire article.
David and Alda volunteer at the food pantry. Alda helps others navigate the system and loads groceries in their cars. David directs parking-lot traffic during the rush as food is distributed. Even Donny puts cardboard boxes together for those in need.

At the pantry, they're given enough food to last through the week, if they're careful.

"We don't eat steaks, but at least we eat," said Alda, 31. "You just have to make it stretch."

Second Harvest's main warehouse in west Orlando is a cavernous space filled with about a million pounds of canned goods, fresh vegetables, jars of pasta sauce, meat, poultry, baked goods and whatever else people give.

But with the country's economy in a shambles, it's not enough.

"People just can't find jobs. We are seeing people come in with college educations, good track records, great résumés, but they can't find work anywhere," said Dave Krepcho, Second Harvest CEO and president. "They don't know where the next meal is coming from. Many are skipping meals."

In 2008, Second Harvest provided food to 298,000 people. In 2010, that number climbed to 732,000. Last year saw an inauspicious record: Second Harvest distributed 21 million meals. In 2010, Second Harvest conducted a hunger study, and found that of the people in Florida who receive food assistance, about 44 percent are non-Hispanic white, 32 percent are non-Hispanic black, 20 percent are Hispanic and the rest are from other racial or ethnic groups.

"And there is a huge gap that still exists," Krepcho said.

The meals go out so quickly that Second Harvest's warehouse, even with its million pounds of food, would be empty in about 20 days if not constantly replenished by donations.

These days, when Second Harvest sends out fundraising letters, it's not unusual to receive replies from past donors who now need help themselves.

David Rugg's family understands that need.

"You never think about it until it's knocking on your door," he said.

It would be easy to get discouraged, but Second Harvest and its army of distribution agencies and volunteers know the importance of a single bag of food to a hungry child.

"The thing we focus on is: There is hope for a better future," Krepcho said. "Every can of soup and jar of jelly makes a difference. You can make a difference."
Q17 Please read the following article published by the Orlando Sentinel. When you are done reading, you will be asked to answer some questions about the article.
Family Fund:  
Food bank bridges hunger gap in tough economy

By Mark Schlueter, Orlando Sentinel

They start lining up two hours before the doors open.
Grandmothers, unsteady on canes. Children darting around parents' legs. Whole families.

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“The thing we focus on is: There is hope for a better future,” Krepcho said. “Every can of soup and jar of jelly makes a difference. You can make a difference.”
Q19 Have you read this particular article before?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
Q43 To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the story you just read?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 Not at all (1)</th>
<th>1 (2)</th>
<th>2 (3)</th>
<th>3 (4)</th>
<th>4 (5)</th>
<th>5 (6)</th>
<th>6 Extremely (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I found this story to be very meaningful. (1)</td>
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<td>The story was thought provoking. (2)</td>
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<td>I enjoyed reading the story. (3)</td>
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<td>The story was well-written. (4)</td>
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<td>The story was interesting. (5)</td>
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<td>The article was well supported. (6)</td>
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<td>The story was smart. (7)</td>
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<td>The story was informative. (8)</td>
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<td>The story was effective. (9)</td>
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<td>The story was</td>
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<tr>
<td>detailed. (10)</td>
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<td>The story was fair. (11)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Q49 Which of the following companies published the article you read?

○ New York Times (1)
○ USA Today (2)
○ Wall Street Journal (3)
○ Orlando Sentinel (4)
○ Associated Press (5)

Q23 Which of the following descriptions best reflects the focus of the article you just read?

○ Protests in Egypt (1)
○ Hunger problems in Florida (2)
○ Golf (3)
○ Historic barns (4)
○ The value of Facebook (5)
Q56 In your estimation, what percentage of the people who benefit from the food bank program in Orlando belong to the following ethnic groups? Click to the right of the label and drag the bar forward to display your estimate.

_____ African American/Black (1)
_____ Caucasian/White (2)
_____ Hispanic/Latino (3)
_____ Other (4)

Q68 In your estimation, what percentage of the people who are affected by the protests in Egypt belong to the following ethnic groups? Click to the right of the label to drag the bar forward to display your estimate.

_____ African American/Black (1)
_____ Caucasian/White (2)
_____ Hispanic/Latino (3)
_____ Other (4)
Q67 To what extent do you believe the following ethnic groups face limitations, affecting their ability to gain employment and succeed in society? Choose the most appropriate button for each group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>1 Not at all affected by limitations (1)</th>
<th>2 (2)</th>
<th>3 (3)</th>
<th>4 (4)</th>
<th>5 (5)</th>
<th>6 (6)</th>
<th>7 Extremely affected by limitations (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caucasians</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other groups (4)</td>
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Q60 How serious do you believe the problem of hunger is in Orlando?

- ☐ 1 Not at all serious (1)
- ☐ 2 (2)
- ☐ 3 (3)
- ☐ 4 (4)
- ☐ 5 (5)
- ☐ 6 (6)
- ☐ 7 Extremely serious (7)

Q53 Please write down some thoughts you have about the news article you just read (approximately 5 sentences).
Q66 Please briefly describe the photos and/or charts in the article you read.
Q53 What are the first four letters of your last name?

Q55 What is your favorite city in the U.S.?

Q57 What is the name of your favorite restaurant?
Q28 Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions on this survey. Your participation is greatly appreciated. If your instructor is offering credit, click on the following link to enter your name and your instructor's name. Keep in mind that you must also participate in the second survey to receive credit. Click here to get registered for course credit.
LIST OF REFERENCES


doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00331.x


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cognition. *Communication Research, 26* (5), 570-607.


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