

FIRST IMPRESSIONS, “AMERICA’S PAPER”
AND PRE-PRIMARY BLACK PRESIDENTIAL
CANDIDATES: *THE NEW YORK TIMES*
COVERAGE OF REV. JESSE JACKSON (1983),
REV. AL SHARPTON (2003), AND
SEN. BARACK OBAMA (2007) CAMPAIGN
ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INITIAL DAYS

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INTRODUCTION

Since the birth of political reporting, the press has yielded significant and powerful influence in a variety of public events (Leonard, 1986). Media texts, such as newspapers, powerfully shape our social worlds and thus affect our public life (Reese et al., 2003). Mass media also plays an important role in setting the agenda of political campaigns and how consumers react to such an agenda: “readers learn not only about a given issue, but also how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position” (McCombs and Shaw, 1972, 1). Historically, the American public has relied on the mass media to introduce them to political candidates (Berelson et al., 1954: 234; Bartels, 1988). Moreover, while news audiences’ prior political knowledge is the most effective predictor of news recall (Price and Zaller, 1993), the content and context mass media provides the general public has often been the limited information upon which voters make decisions on candidate preferences (Lang and Lang, 1966, p. 466).

Mass media is known to affect potential voters’ decision-making processes generally (Kuklinski and Hurley, 1994) and when the public has the opportunity to evaluate a perceived viable black candidate for major office, those on the left and the right acknowledge how mass media has played an even bigger role (Mitchell, 2009; Selepak, 2007; Fredoso, 2008). Black candidates for higher office immediately begin their campaigns with the general expectations from most whites that they are not qualified for the office (Williams, 1990). Building on research that examines the role of race throughout mass media (Dates and Barlow, 1983; Reeves, 1997; Entman and Rojecki, 2001; Downing and Husband, 2005), I examine *The New York Times*’ portrayal of Rev. Jesse Jackson, Rev. Al Sharpton and Senator Barack Obama during their campaigns for

the nation's highest office. An examination of the news articles printed within the campaigns' first thirty-days is significant as "a black candidate for higher office begins with the bias among many whites that he or she is not qualified" (Williams, 1990, p. 53). As a result, *The New York Times* coverage of the campaigns' first thirty days matters as the newspaper has the opportunity to cut against the bias depending on how the coverage commences.¹ Moreover, when it comes to first impressions, cognitive and social psychologists have long recognized the power of first impressions to hold firm even in the face of conflicting evidence and contradictory events (Tetlock, 1983; Nisbett and Ross, 1980; Allport, 1954; Hamilton, 1979). The first thirty days of a campaign are also significant because the pre-primary "surfacing" period generally introduces voters to the themes and issues agenda the candidate is likely to use in later stages of the campaign (Trent, 2009). Additionally, news organizations' content merits social scrutiny and may yield negative social implications (Fowler, 1991).

Methods

A three-pronged longitudinal content analysis of qualitative, comparative analysis are used. One measures the frequency of articles about Jackson, Sharpton, and Obama within the selected thirty-day period.² A second method focuses on the placement of those articles which primarily discuss Jackson, Sharpton, and Obama yet were not centrally located

¹ The examination of thirty days of coverage is common: see, for example, Avraham, et al. (2000) Dynamics in the News Coverage of Minorities: The Case of the Arab Citizens of Israel, *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 24:2, 117-133. The choice to analyze the first thirty days of a candidate's campaign is also significant because the public's favorability ratings respective to the candidates within the first weeks of their campaign is usually different from their favorability rating later. This difference suggests that public opinion changes with increased knowledge and opportunities for influence. For example, Hillary Clinton's favorability rating with Gallup was at its highest during the first month of her presidential campaign (58%) and did not return to that level until early January 2009, as the Obama administration commenced. Near the conclusion of her campaign, her favorability rating was 54%. Meanwhile Barack Obama's favorability rating for the same Feb 9-11 2007 initial campaign period was at 53%. Near the conclusion of his 2008 primary campaign his favorability rating was 61%. Thus, how the American public views the candidates favorably within a month of their presidential announcement matters. As the public get their information about candidates through the news, (as what they know about the candidate presumably increases), their favorability either increases or decreases – it does not remain constant. See, for more information: "Favorability: People in the News." Retrieved 6/1/2010. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1618/Favorability-People-News.aspx#5>

² This analysis examines articles located within the Lexis Nexus Academic and Library Solutions database by searching for the candidates' names within quotation marks. Articles printed within the main body of the *New York Times* are examined only and excludes articles reprinted with the permission of the Associated Press. The first thirty days includes the day the candidate formally announced their intention to join the race and the subsequent twenty-nine days. The announcement date for Jackson in 1983 was November 3, January 5, 2003 for Sharpton and February 10, 2007 for Obama.

in *The New York Times*. Such positioning of articles is termed “article placement” (Page, 1996, p. 112). A third methodological process utilized a five-point Likert Scale measure to code the articles’ racial and political content.³ The conclusions are based on how Sharpton, Jackson and Obama are portrayed as black presidential candidates, given a total of one hundred and fourteen articles.⁴

EXPLORING THE *NEW YORK TIMES* PROMINENCE

Why the focus on the *New York Times*? First, *The New York Times*, the industry standard for news gathering and reporting, plays in an important part in shaping political reality (Althaus and Tewksbury, 2002). Second, *The Times*, while third in national circulation,⁵ maintains the global reputation as the preeminent news source. Further, it is understood that many comparable and smaller news outlets pattern the context of their coverage from the *Times* (Marshall, 1998).⁶ Moreover, the *Times* is known as an intricate organization whose editorial and content battles have shaped major public events for most of its history (Diamond,

³ A five-point Likert-scale methodological process was utilized to evaluate article placement and content. Labels of *positive*, *Neutral-Positive*, *neutral*, *Neutral-Negative*, or *negative* were affixed to articles implicating the black presidential candidates accordingly. *Positive* articles favorably represented the black candidates, provided the candidate with ample quotations to address issues in their own words, and did not include stereotypical references or language. *Positive* also indicates favorable article placement and relevant political content. *Neutral-Positive* articles favorably represented the black candidates, provided the candidate with limited quotations to address issues in their own words, and did not include stereotypical references or language. *Neutral-Positive* also indicates reasonable article placement, yet limited relevant political content. *Neutral* articles are not negative or positive and yet fairly represented the black candidates respective to other candidates within the article. *Neutral* articles included limited references to the candidate. *Neutral-Negative* articles unfairly represented the black candidates and included occasional damaging language and content. *Neutral-Negative* also indicates that the article’s placement and/or the candidate’s referenced name was positioned poorly. *Negative* articles grossly represented the black candidates and included repetitive damaging language. *Negative* also indicates that the article’s placement and the candidate’s referenced name were positioned poorly.

⁴ Articles and editorials were selected as “major” or “important” to each candidate’s election campaign and categorically exclude the following article categories: “Briefings” and “News Summary.” Carol Moseley Braun’s 2004 presidential bid is excluded because she withdrew from the campaign before the Democratic Primaries and the date of her formal announcement is in dispute. Braun filed paperwork with the Federal Election Commission to form an exploratory committee in February 2003, though, at the time she indicated she would decide whether to formally run for president later that year. Having “campaigned” for months, her formal announcement in September 2003 is not comparable with Sharpton, Jackson and Obama. Rev. Jesse Jackson’s 1988 campaign is excluded because his 1984 campaign already introduced him to voters and media conglomerates as a presidential contender; thus, the theory of first impressions would not apply.

⁵ “Audit Bureau of Circulation”. March 31, 2010. <http://abcas3.accessabc.com/ecirc/newstitlesearch.usp>. Retrieved 2010-06-01.

⁶ Personally, a brief intern experience in the United States Congress informed the extent to which many politicians pattern their daily activities and public comments based on the *Times* coverage.

1995). *The Times* has also been found to give more emphasis to topics ‘owned’ by the Democratic Party (such as issues pertinent to Democratic primary candidates) during presidential campaigns when the incumbent President is a Republican, which is the case for the Jackson and Sharpton presidential campaigns (Puglisi, 2004). Thus, the *Times*, as Benjamin Page suggests, is of particular interest:

Since public deliberation concerning policy issues is now largely carried out through the mass media, by professional communicators, there is good reason to look closely at forums within which the most prominent and influential communicators interact with each other and speak to broader audiences. One such forum is the . . . *New York Times* (p. 17).

Page also asserts how the *New York Times* enjoys the role of industry leader and that maintains considerable influence throughout American mass media:

The *Times* . . . is one of the most prestigious and authoritative publications in the United States . . . Thus, the opinions voiced in the *Times* also tend to find their way—directly, or through syndication, or by trickle-down processes involving editors, writers, and commentators in other media—to a mass audience. The quality of deliberation in such a forum could affect the quality of debate generally (p. 17).

While Page confirms the *Times* as the leader in print media, he also finds that the newspaper has a greater responsibility of fair and accurate coverage because it potentially affects “the quality of debate generally” (Page 1996, p. 17). In other words, it is quite likely that what the *Times* suggests can become social doctrine imbedded into the minds and thoughts of the average American. Page’s revelation here is simple: with elitism and powerful influence, certain measures of responsibility are *expected*. Yet, Page asserts later that there are reasons to be “skeptical” of such expectations, which implies that the “[*New York*] *Times* is taken very seriously by its readers, and the *Times*, in turn, takes its central position in policy debates very much to heart” (Page 1996, p. 18).

These positions the readers hold, concerning the influence of the *Times*, are significant. As a result I assume that throughout the time between 1983 and 2003, the nature of the *Times*’ influence sustained.

NEW YORK TIMES COVERAGE OF JACKSON 1983
PRE-PRIMARY CAMPAIGN⁷

The 1984 presidential candidacy of Rev. Jesse Jackson, a prominent African American civil rights leader, was an exciting and pivotal moment in African American history (Barker and Walters, 1989; Reed, 1986; Gibbons, 1993; Morris, 1990). The second black presidential candidate, (after Shirley Chisholm), Jackson was a leading figure in the African American community. *The New York Times* captured the significance of the Jackson candidacy and the careful timing of his announcement:

In barely 24 hours, America has witnessed a pivotal transition. On Wednesday President Reagan signed the law establishing a Federal holiday in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., this fixing the highest seal of public approval on the long first-stage struggle, the achievement of civil rights. Yesterday brought a welcome milestone in the second stage, the exercise of those rights[:] The Rev. Jesse Jackson . . . (“Civil Rights: The Movement Moves,” November 4, 1983, A26).

Jackson’s November 3rd campaign announcement to enter the 1984 race for the Democratic presidential nomination occurred the same week that President Reagan signed into law a Federal Holiday to be established in honor of the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.:

Dr. King’s widow, Coretta Scott King, and the Rev. Jesse Jackson, who has said he will announce on Thursday his candidacy for the Democratic Presidential nomination . . . were among those in the Rose Garden for an occasion that blacks described as an exciting, historic day (“President, Signing Bill, Praises Dr. King,” November 3, 1983, A1)

While the articles referencing Jackson’s candidacy appear neutral, the newspaper’s November 4th story on Jackson’s announcement also recognizes the historic nature of Jackson’s candidacy and the role he played in the civil rights movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., so this article was labeled positive.

Another article I labeled *positive* was printed the day after Jackson’s announced candidacy and was on the front page of the *Times*.⁸ *The arti-*

⁷ This section includes select chronological descriptions of content analysis article coding for Jackson. For a complete reference of articles featuring Jackson, see Table 1.

⁸ Analysis reveals three front-page articles featuring Jackson throughout the thirty-day period.

cle appears to portray the candidate's prospects in seeking the nomination and highlights Jackson's influence on the black community:

By attracting black votes that would otherwise go to Mr. Mondale, the Jackson candidacy almost certainly enhances Senator Glenn's chances of making the breakthrough he needs in the Southern primaries. A strong Jackson candidacy also raises the possibility of a deadlocked Democratic convention ("A Provocative Candidate," November 4, 1983, A1, Page 1).

While the article did not discuss any of the policies and initiatives Jackson proposed to implement if elected and highlights how several black leaders chose to support Jackson's opponent for the Democratic nomination – Mondale, the article also profiled some of Jackson's high-profile black endorsements, and his role as a leader in the black community. Jackson's article analysis yielded a surprising number of positive articles and the aforementioned selection is indicative of the article content that positively profiled Jackson's candidacy in its early stages.

Forty-eight hours later the *Times* printed a *neutral-positive* article wherein the newspaper noted Jackson's appearance before the Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee:

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, in a speech to an Arab-American group, said tonight that the United States had an interest in both a secure Israel and the creation of a Palestinian state . . . Mr. Jackson said there was a need for discussion in this country about new ways of approaching peace in the Middle East ("Jackson Sees Palestinian State in U.S. Interest," November 6, 1983, p. 31).

This article was labeled neutral-positive because of decisive language and balanced word choice that prevented it from being labeled positive. For example, the newspaper content indicated: "James Zogby, [the group's] director, said he was not troubled that Mr. Jackson did not choose to make a major address on Middle East issues alone" (ibid). This statement reveals that Jackson's multi-topic speech was not specific to Middle-East issues with the implication being that Jackson's choice to speak about topics other than Middle East issues, was unexpected, but not problematic.

In later articles, the *Times*, again, portrays Jackson differently. For example, a November 23rd article, labeled neutral-positive, references Jackson's comments regarding key Labor endorsements for his main Democratic rival, Mondale:

Mr. Jackson, the only black among the eight announced . . . At a news conference called on short notice today . . . He offered no figures [after mention his campaign has made progress in "organization"] . . . Recently, Mr. Jackson had muted his criticism of that commission [Democratic National Committee] after being reminded by party officials that some of his key supporters served on it ("Jackson Assail Labor's Support for Mondale as Move by 'Bosses,'" November 29, 1983, A19).

These chronological quotations reveal the potential for the article to be labeled as *negative*. The article content, does in fact use strong language, "Jackson Assails . . ." and highlights out of context references to Jackson's race while ignoring the racial classification of Mondale or other Democratic nomination candidates. However, because the article provided Jackson with ample opportunity to explain his position in his own words and concludes with Jackson's perspective, the article was labeled neutral-positive as the majority of its content referenced the facts concerning Labor endorsements Mondale received and featured Jackson's responses prominently.

Not all of the *New York Times* coverage near the end of the first month of his campaign had elements of neutrality, however. In a November 26th article titled "Jackson Hones His Position on Issues," the coverage of Jackson as a presidential candidate was *positive*:

In nearly 16 years as a civil rights leader, the Rev. Jesse Jackson has amassed a voluminous record of positions on traditional civil rights concerns, ranging from busing for school integration to affirmative action. He has also touched on issues such as economic development, education philosophy and financing of domestic programs, and even some foreign policy issues (JACKSON HONES HIS POSITION ON ISSUES, November 26, 1983, p. 10).

This article focused on the issues of the campaign and the language used to describe Jackson's qualifications for his Democratic nomination bid was decisively favorable toward Jackson's experience.

In reference to New York state black leaders' endorsement of former Vice-President Walter F. Mondale for President, the *Times* printed a *neutral* article, focused on high-ranking Congressional Representative Charles Rangel's (D-NY) support of Mondale, "The endorsements represented a significant defection from the strong political support for the Rev. Jesse Jackson's bid for the nomination (RANGEL AND 4 OTHER BLACKS IN STATE BACK MONDALE, November 30, 1983, B5)."

While this article infers the potentially negative effects high profile black endorsements for Mondale may have on Jackson's campaign, it does not belabor the issue. Rather, the article lists the high profile black endorsements for Mondale and Jackson supporters in New York leadership circles. This suggests an attempt to balance the article content and is labeled *neutral*.

The final highlighted example of the *Times*' coverage of Jackson's first month as a black presidential candidate in 1983, printed a month after Jackson's historic campaign announcement, attempts to discredit Jackson and was labeled *neutral-negative*:

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, who has been criticizing A.F.L.-C.I.O. leaders for endorsing Walter F. Mondale's candidacy for the Democratic Presidential nomination without polling the unions' members, today received an endorsement decided in a similar way. The Rev. T.J. Jemison, chairman of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A. Inc., endorsed Mr. Jackson . . . Mr. Jemison repeatedly declined to give a precise answer when asked if he had polled the denomination's members or its governing board . . . the church leader said that his endorsement was a personal, rather than an organizational one . . . (12/2/1983, p. B8).

The beginning content within this article contextualizes how Jackson once criticized a campaign tactic from which he later benefits. Strikingly, the *Times*' source that was to confirm Jackson's flip-flop campaign tactic, Rev. Jemison, only indicates that the endorsement in question was personal. Still, the article content infers a Jackson flip-flop even though the source of the endorsement invalidates that claim.

These selected quotations from *Times* coverage of the first thirty days of Jackson's 1984 campaign highlights the varied coverage of Jackson and the significant number of *positive* articles.

NEW YORK TIMES COVERAGE OF SHARPTON'S 2003 PRE-PRIMARY CAMPAIGN⁹

The Rev. Al Sharpton, founder and president of the National Action Network, declared his intention to seek the 2004 Democratic presidential nomination on January 5, 2003 and formally filed papers to form a presidential exploratory committee on January 22nd of the same year. However, *The New York Times* in its first article profiling Sharpton's

⁹ This section includes select chronological descriptions of content analysis article coding for Sharpton. For a complete reference of articles featuring Sharpton, see Table 2.

candidacy, *The Times'* *neutral-negative* coverage highlighted his unlikely win in its first paragraph:

The Rev. Al Sharpton has run for office three times from New York, and has lost each time. He has been embroiled in polarizing disputes throughout his career, including the handling of his personal finances and his involvement in a racially charged rape case that a jury found to be a hoax. Even the ever-energetic and indefatigable Mr. Sharpton acknowledges it is unlikely that he will ever be elected president of the United States (A Wily Contender, But Unlikely Winner, Eyes the Presidency, Section A; Column 1, Pg 16, 1/13/2003).

Clearly, this quote identifies how the article initially focuses on the drawbacks of Sharpton's candidacy.

However, the article is not entirely negative on Sharpton. For example, the article also references how serious Sharpton considers the candidacy:

He is planning to create a presidential exploratory committee on Jan. 21, and is already delivering speeches across the nation, preparing to open an office in Washington and offering opinions on everything from North Korea to deficit spending. "I'm very serious about this," Mr. Sharpton said between cellphone calls over breakfast at the Four Seasons in the Georgetown section of Washington the other day. "I'm not just talking about Sharpton getting a position in the White House. I'm talking about fighting for the soul of the Democratic Party" (A Wily Contender, But Unlikely Winner, Eyes the Presidency, Section A; Column 1, Pg 16, 1/13/2003).

The article quote above avers Sharpton's reasons for running and lists his ability to articulate positions on a variety of campaign issues. Yet, this article, one of the only major articles on Sharpton, prominently featured, and with relevant content.

A few weeks later when Sharpton formally filled his Federal Elections Commission Statement of Candidacy, the newspaper again alleges the *neutral-negative* contributions Sharpton brings to the presidential contest:

Mr. Sharpton, who has run unsuccessfully for public office three times in New York, filed papers at the Federal Elections Commission. In doing so, Mr. Sharpton, who is black, said he would appeal to Americans, including liberal Democrats and members of minorities, who he

said were not voting in presidential elections (“Sharpton takes step in Presidential Bid,” January 22, 2003 A18).

This article again immediately reminds readers of Sharpton’s failed political quests. This repetitive content is questionable. Questionable content and its placement within news articles are acknowledged as deliberate journalistic tools used to convey a particular message: “language is used in newspapers to form ideas and beliefs” (Fowler 1999, p. 1). The choice to place the details of Sharpton’s previous failed bids for public office early in the article text and within one of the few articles on Sharpton centrally placed in Section A on page 18 is suggestive as leading the reader toward a particular influence. In addition, this article highlights Sharpton’s racial identity, labeling the black candidate’s race as a key feature of his campaign. Still another concern was the content referencing Sharpton’s “appeal to Americans.” This article’s placement of content within the text and its discursive prose is troubling alone. However, the article further describes Sharpton’s civil rights struggles within a mediated context and represents his civil rights struggles in a certain tone: “He has been identified with several high-profile racially charged episodes,” written as if that is the sum total of his career experience that qualifies him to seek the presidency. In all, then, the content details how news “is a practice: a discourse which far from neutrally reflecting social reality and empirical facts,” intervenes in the reader’s own construction of reality (Fowler 1999, p. 2). For all of these reasons, this article was considered *neutral-negative*.

The next day, the *Times* detailed the effects of a fire destroying the historic ballroom at Sharpton’s Harlem headquarters:

The Harlem ballroom where the Rev. Al Sharpton has held court for six years, preaching civil rights and excoriating politicians who raised his ire, was destroyed yesterday morning by fire. City officials said last night that the two-alarm fire had been caused by an electrical problem (“Electrical Fire Destroys Ballroom at Sharpton Headquarters,” January 23, 2003).

This article is strikingly different from the previous article as it references details associated with the fire without the specter of questionable content. Even though, this article is placed in Section B, in contrast to the preferred article placement in Section A. While the article is placed in Section B, it is on the front page of the section, demanding attention to the reader, and thus contributed to its labeling as *neutral-positive*.

A NOTE ON SHARPTON'S CONTENT ANALYSIS

Ironically, the *Times*, based in New York, from which Sharpton's National Action Network is located, had few articles on the candidate's first thirty days of his presidential campaign.¹⁰ Most of the *Times* coverage was limited to the Metropolitan Desk and not the National Desk. Sharpton has an extensive body of news coverage regarding his political activism throughout metropolitan New York City.¹¹ However, the lack of National Desk coverage of Al Sharpton is puzzling. Sharpton's favorability rating, according to a Gallup Poll stood at 16%, a sizable percentage.¹² He sustained enough support to be listed on the ballot in twenty-two states and the District of Columbia throughout the entire primary season.¹³ Thus, the *Times*' lack of coverage of the first thirty days of Sharpton's presidential campaign is likely in part explained by Sharpton's residence in New York. Recognized as a local black political activist throughout the metropolitan New York City region (Sharpton and Walton, 1996; Walters and Smith, 1999), the *Times* has regularly covered his local activities and actively disparaged many of his efforts. In other words, this history may have had an effect on how the *Times* initially covered his presidential campaign.

NEW YORK TIMES COVERAGE OF OBAMA 2007
PRE-PRIMARY CAMPAIGN¹⁴

With the tagline expressed by many, "a charmed introduction to national politics," Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) announced to the nation his intention to compete for the Democratic nomination for president on February 10, 2007. Speaking from the steps of the Old Statehouse in Springfield, IL, an invoking the passions and zeal of President Abraham Lincoln, Obama entered into the race after significant speculation¹⁵ and amidst an international love affair with just the potential for his candidacy (Selepak, 2007). As a result, the conditions under which the *Times* began to cover Obama's first thirty days of his presidential campaign was vastly different from Jackson and Sharpton. Though he shared some

¹⁰ Analysis reveals zero front-page articles featuring Sharpton throughout the thirty-day period.

¹¹ "Times Topics: People: Al Sharpton: http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/times/topics/people/s/al_sharpton/index.html Accessed 6/1/2010

¹² No Author. "Favorability: People in the News." Retrieved 6/1/2010. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1618/Favorability-People-News.aspx#5>

¹³ "America Votes 2004: The Primaries," <http://cnn.hu/ELECTION/2004/special/primary/Accessed 6/1/2010>

¹⁴ This section includes select chronological descriptions of content analysis article coding for Obama. For a complete reference of articles featuring Obama, see Table 3.

¹⁵ See, for example, "Obama Says He'll Consider A 2008 Bid for The Presidency: Democratic Senator to Decide After Elections," Dan Balz, *Washington Post*, October 23, 2006

historic overtures and perceptions of viability with Jackson, he did not hail from the civil rights generation like Jackson or Sharpton. Thus, the *Times*' coverage of Obama was less of an introduction to him and his politics, than a continuation of the pre-existent love affair with this image.

The day after Obama's announcement, *The Times* had several articles and editorials devoted to his historic entry into the race. One of the significant articles published that day profiled Obama's announcement speech as a call for generational change:

Senator Barack Obama of Illinois, standing before the Old State Capitol where Abraham Lincoln began his political career, announced his candidacy for the White House on Saturday by presenting himself as an agent of generational change who could transform a government hobbled by cynicism, petty corruption and "a smallness of our politics." "The time for that politics is over," Mr. Obama said. "It is through. It's time to turn the page." . . . Speaking smoothly and comfortably, Mr. Obama offered a generational call to arms, portraying his campaign less as a candidacy and more as a movement. "Each and every time, a new generation has risen up and done what's needed to be done," he said. "Today we are called once more, and it is time for our generation to answer that call" (Obama Formally Enters Presidential Race With Calls for Generational Change, Section 1; Column 1; Pg. 34, 2/11/2007).

Noticeably the tone of the article's coverage of Obama's announcement speech leans positive. As opposed to underscoring Obama's failed bid to unseat Representative Bobby Rush (D-IL), or his perceived limited experience as a less than one-term senator, the newspaper's content largely consisted of quotes from Obama's own speech. This article was labeled *neutral positive*.

The Times, a week later, continued to report how Obama's entry into the race was so significant that it changed the expectations of traditional political venues:

"Perhaps it's time to write the obit to the living room," David Yepsen, the state's premier political columnist, wrote in *The Des Moines Register* after Senator Barack Obama drew thousands of people to a gym in Ames. "They are now relics of past campaigns, as ancient as the torchlight parade. Rock-star candidates need room for their fans and the gawkers" (In Iowa, the Living Room

Has Fallen Out of Favor, Section A; Column 1; Pg. 11, 2/19/2007).

In this quotation the newspaper quotes a political columnist from a major newspaper in Iowa, where an early presidential primary was to be held. By acknowledging how local reporters recognized ‘star’ candidates were erasing the once-popular living room conversation element of primary campaigns, the newspaper confirmed how traditional politics change given the infusion of new participants in the political process: “To a certain extent — and with all due respect to veteran chroniclers of the American political system given to nostalgia and perhaps idealized memories of past Iowa journeys — this may not be an entirely bad thing. The events for Mr. Obama, the Democratic senator from Illinois, were bustling with young faces that were not familiar to many Iowa political activists.” For an article that profiled how many candidates, such as John Edwards and Hillary Clinton, were drawing significant crowds at events that formally were designed to be small group conversations, no one appeared to have the draw of Obama:

Last week, Mr. Obama’s campaign aides scheduled one session in the home of Tom and Patti Friend of Iowa Falls. But after the Friends put a notice of the event in the newspaper, 200 people showed up, spilling out of the living room. When Mr. Obama walked through the door, the booming applause made it clear that the gathering was not so intimate after all; he had to climb up the stairs to find a speck of floor to speak from. One day after Mr. Obama appeared there, he bounded onto the stage at the Field House at the University of New Hampshire in Durham. Christine Sohl, who arrived early to get a seat about 20 rows back, recalled meeting a little-known governor named Bill Clinton in a group of no more than 20 people (In Iowa, the Living Room Has Fallen Out of Favor, Section A; Column 1; Pg. 11, 2/19/2007).

Given that the article profiled the increased level of interest in primary campaigns for multiple candidates and yet noted how Obama’s ‘star’ power yielded even greater interest, this article was also labeled *neutral-positive*.

A week later, *the Times* printed a front-page article of Obama, emphasizing his anti-war stance to the war in Iraq:¹⁶

¹⁶ Analysis reveals eight front-page articles featuring Obama throughout the thirty-day period.

Senator Barack Obama is running for president as one of the few candidates who opposed the Iraq war from the beginning, a simple position unburdened by expressions of regret or decisions over whether to apologize for initially supporting the invasion. Iraq remains a defining topic in the opening stages of the 2008 presidential race, but it may prove easier for Mr. Obama, Democrat of Illinois, to revisit the past than to distinguish his views in the future (As Candidate, Obama Carves Anti-War Stance, Section A; Column 5; Pg. 1, 2/26/2007).

This quotation, the first few lines of the article immediately references the ease with which Obama can project an anti-war image. The article does not acknowledge until several sentences inward that Obama's new-found anti-war stance was not always so fervent:

Mr. Obama was not always so critical of the Congressional vote, taken on Oct. 11, 2002. In several interviews before the Democratic National Convention in 2004, where his national political ascent began, he said he did not place blame on Democrats who had voted to authorize the war, conceding he had not been privy to the same intelligence information. Now, he appears intent on drawing the contrast between his early opposition to the war and the Senate votes to authorize it by Mr. Edwards, who has since repudiated his vote and apologized for it, and Mrs. Clinton, who has not apologized but has said she would not have supported the resolution had she known then what she knows now (As Candidate, Obama Carves Anti-War Stance, Section A; Column 5; Pg. 1, 2/26/2007).

This quotation references that Obama was not a senator at the time of the vote to authorize war in Iraq and that he, himself, had acknowledged that had he been in the position he likely would have voted for the war. Thus, it appears *the Times* chose to include the contradictions to Obama's candidate anti-war stance deep within the article, when seemingly similar contradictions for other black presidential candidates prior were either titles of articles or referenced in the initial lines of the article.¹⁷ As a result this language and article placement, the article was labeled *neutral-positive*.

¹⁷ See, for example: "JACKSON GETS SUPPORT, APPARENTLY WITHOUT POLL OF THE GROUP," Section A; Page 8, Column 3, 12/2/1983).

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In the previous sections I described the content in select articles to highlight the content analysis methodology. The methodology reveals that *The Times* coverage of Jackson, Sharpton and Obama as black presidential candidates varied. The number of articles written about the candidates throughout the initial thirty-day period varied greatly as well. While the newspaper, known for its liberal bent (Okrent, 2004; Puglisi, 2004), covered all three candidates with a significant percentage of neutral/neutral-positive ratings, the newspaper covered Jackson with more positive ratings than the other candidates. The following table reveals the results:

TABLE 4: CONTENT ANALYSIS SUMMARY OF ARTICLES

	Positive	Neutral-Positive	Neutral	Neutral-Negative	Negative	Total
Jackson	6 (16%)	13 (34%)	14 (37%)	5 (13%)	0	38
Sharpton	0	4 (22%)	8 (44%)	6 (33%)	0	18
Obama	1	25 (47%)	21 (40%)	5 (11%)	1	53

These data indicate a paradoxical, baseline trend within the *New York Times*' coverage of black presidential candidates. For example, while sixteen percent of the *Times*' coverage of Jackson was *positive*, suggesting favorable placement, content and representation with ample quotations to address issues in his own words, nearly half of its coverage of Obama leaned positive as was labeled as *neutral-positive*, suggesting reasonable placement content and representation with limited quotations to address issues in his own words. Meanwhile, few articles for either candidate were *negative* or *neutral-negative*. In each case, a significant percentage of articles were *neutral*.

A closer analysis that compares the historic candidacies of Jackson and Obama, indicates a slight positive change with a thirteen percentage point increase in articles labeled *neutral-positive*. Meanwhile, the percentage of *neutral* and *neutral-negative* articles remained roughly comparable. Notably, in numeric terms, the sum of articles labeled as *negative* increased by one and the sum of articles labeled positive decreased by five; whereas, the number of articles denoted as *neutral* increased from fourteen to twenty-one, though in ratio terms remained roughly equal. This trend suggests the *Times*' coverage of black presidential candidates was improved over time (see table below). Sharpton aside, *the Times* printed significantly more articles that featured Obama in 2007 than featured Jackson in 1983. Additionally, although the number of *positive* articles decreased over time, the sum of *neutral-positive* articles increased significantly.

TABLE 5: COVERAGE OF SHARPTON AND OBAMA

	Sum of Articles	Neutral Positive Content Analysis	Sum of Front Page Article Placement
Jackson	38	13 (34%)	3
Obama	53	25 (47%)	8

This table reveals that the *Times*' coverage of the historic candidacies of Jackson and Obama varied and that the newspaper printed more articles, many were placed more significantly, and that the content improved.

Overall, there is no overwhelming misrepresentation of black presidential candidates in the *New York Times*, as there were few recorded *negative* and *neutral-negative* articles. As a result, it cannot be said that the *Times* deliberately mediated in their coverage of the Jackson, Sharpton and Obama generally. However, article placement and some language choices infer a progressively positive trend, as the newspaper printed more articles on Obama and more that were labeled *neutral-positive*. The *Times*' coverage of black presidential candidates improved in terms of language/content and article placement over time.

CONCLUSION

The New York Times is the nation's newspaper industry standard. How "America's Paper" (Hirschorn, 2009) covers significant news events reverberates throughout our culture. The *Times*' coverage of black presidential candidates, Rev. Jackson, Rev. Sharpton and Sen. Barack Obama merits attention as its choice of article placement, and language can have a significant impact on the development of public opinion respective to these candidates. Examining the first thirty days of coverage post the candidate's formal announcement to enter the presidential contest, the *Times*' number of neutral and positive leaning articles increased over time, as the number of negative and negative leaning articles remained firm.

The data reveal that the *New York Times* is inconsistent in its coverage of black presidential candidates' early campaigns, with respect to Jackson, Sharpton, and Obama. However, the newspaper's article placement and content seemingly improved as the black presidential candidate's viability was believed to be greater. With several examples of the newspaper's substantive content of Jackson, Sharpton, and Obama, this analysis reminds how the process of news gathering and reporting occurs in social context:

In the end, of course, what gets defined as "legitimate," "official," or "plausible" is also a function of who does the defining. That is, how journalists select their sources

and organize the content of their news narratives depends upon their *perceptions* of the socio-political climate surrounding the event in question. Despite the objectivity ideal that undergirds the profession, newswriters *are* people, and an impressive body of scholarship describes the significant influence social location is likely to have on peoples' perceptions (Hunt, 1999, p. 95)

Hunt acknowledges that all journalists are people, and the content of their news is socially constructed. The *Times'* coverage of black presidential candidates appears to follow this theory as the number of their neutral and neutral-positive articles increased over time, as polls indicated that an increasing number of Americans would vote for a black president.¹⁸

With scholars confirming how the power of language and content within news cannot be ignored, "America's Paper" (Hirschorn, 2009), then, has a responsibility and authority as the industry standard, of which "its readers take seriously" (Page, 1996) – to continue to improve its coverage of pre-primary black presidential candidates post-Obama.

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¹⁸ See, for example, "Americans Today Much More Accepting of a Woman, Black, Catholic, or Jew As President," Frank Newport, Gallup Poll, March 29, 1999, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/3979/americans-today-much-more-accepting-woman-black-catholic.aspx> Accessed 6/1/2010 or "Race and the Race," Brian Braiker, Newsweek, July 6, 2007 <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/19623085/site/newsweek/> Accessed 6/1/2010.

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Table 1: Jackson Selected <i>Times</i> Articles			
Article Title	Date Published	Content Analysis	Article Placement
President Signing Bill, Praises Dr. King	11/3/1983	Positive	Section A; Page 28, Column 1
Mondale's Lead Found Wider	11/3/1983	Neutral	Section A; Page 26, Column 2
Jackson Issues Denial Of Being Anti-Semitic	11/3/1983	Neutral	Section B; Page 15, Column 4
A Provocative Candidate	11/4/1983	Positive	Section A; Page 1, Column 1
Civil Rights (Editorial)	11/4/1983	Positive	Section A; Page 26, Column 1
Persistent Glenn Courts Black Voters in the City	11/4/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section B; Page 5, Column 5
Jackson Declares Formal Candidacy	11/4/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section B; Page 5, Column 1
DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES DISAGREE OVER ADEQUACY OF NUCLEAR FORCE	11/6/1983	Neutral	Section 1; Part 1; Page 26, Column 1
JACKSON SEES PALESTINIAN STATE IN U.S. INTEREST	11/6/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section 1; Part 1; Page 31, Column 1
Washington Look Back, Look Forward (Editorial)	11/6/1983	Neutral-Negative	Section 4; Page 21, Column 4
JACKSON POSES SOME DIFFICULT QUESTIONS FOR OTHER DEMOCRATS	11/6/1983	Positive	Section 4; Page 5, Column 1
6 DEMOCRATS, IN REPLIES TO KOCH, AGREE ON ARMS	11/7/1983	Neutral	Section B; Page 17, Column 1
ARABS, JACKSON AND JEWS: NEW PAGE OF TENSE RELATIONS	11/7/1983	Neutral	Section B; Page 12, Column 3
THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY; HOMOSEXUALS INCREASINGLY FLEX POLITICAL MUSCLE	11/8/1983	Neutral	Section A; Page 26, Column 1
ANDERSON FOUNDS A POLITICAL PARTY	11/9/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Page 25, Column 1
MAJOR LESSON AT POLLS	11/10/1983	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Page 1, Column 3
ELECTION OF 2 BLACK MAYORS IS EVALUATED BY COLLEAGUES	11/10/1983	Neutral-Negative	Section D; Page 27, Column 5
Democrats to Sponsor Debate	11/12/1983	Neutral	Section 1; Page 21, Column 1
WILL A WOMAN BE A VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE	11/12/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section 1; Page 10, Column 3

SECRET SERVICE PROTECTING JACKSON MONTH BEFORE OTHER CANDIDATES	11/12/1983	Neutral-Negative	Section 1; Page 2, Column 1
WASHINGTON RALLY DRAWS THOUSANDS	11/13/1983	Neutral	Section 1; Part 1; Page 17, Column 1
BOSTON ELECTS RAYMOND L. FLYNN, A POPULIST COUNCILMAN, AS MAYOR	11/16/1983	Neutral	Section A; Page 1, Column 2
OHIO POLITICIAN SAYS HE'LL RUN CAMPAIGN FOR THE REV. JACKSON	11/16/1983	Positive	Section A; Page 27, Column 1
A DEMOCRATIC DISPUTE TURNS NASTY	11/17/1983	Neutral	Section B; Page 12, Column 4
ECONOMY IS ONESURE THEME, BUT WHO WILL IT WORK FOR?	11/20/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section 4; Page 5, Column 1
ACCOUNT DIFFER ABOUT DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS TANGLE	11/23/1983	Neutral	Section A; Page 19, Column 1
Former Atlanta Mayor Backs Jackson's Presidential Drive	11/24/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section B; Page 18, Column 1
GLENN SHOWS GAIN IN NEW POLL	11/24/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section B; Page 15, Column 1
IOWA DEMOCRATS SY ONLY MONDALE'S MARGIN OF VICTORY IN DOUBT	11/25/1983	Neutral	Section A; Page 20, Column 1
DECISIONS FACE JACKSON ON KEY CONTESTS AND WORKERS IN FIELD	11/25/1983	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Page 20, Column 1
JACKSON HONES HIS POSITION ON ISSUES	11/26/1983	Positive	Section 1; Page 10, Column 4
CANDIDATES AVOID POLITICAL FORUM	11/27/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section 1; Part 1; Page 30
VOTING: THE NEW BLACK POWER	11/27/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section 6; Page 35, Column 1
GLENN NARROWS MONDALE'S LEAD IN RACE FOR FUNDS	11/28/1983	Neutral	Section B; Page 7, Column 1
JACKSON ASSAILS LABOR'S SUPPORT FOR MONDALE AS MOVE BY 'BOSSSES'	11/29/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Page 19, Column 3
REAGAN AIDE HINTS AT HELP FOR CITIES	11/30/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Page 25, Column 1
RANGEL AND 4 OTHER BLACKS IN STATE BACK MONDALE	11/30/1983	Neutral	Section B; Page 5, Column 3
RIVALS ATTACKED BY 2 DEMOCRATS	12/1/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section B; Page 14, Column 4
WOMEN'S ENDORSEMENT SEEMS A 2-WAY RACE	12/2/1983	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Page 24, Column 5
JACKSON GETS SUPPORT, APPARENTLY WITHOUT POLL OF THE GROUP	12/2/1983	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Page 8, Column 3

Table 2: Sharpton Selected <i>Times</i> Articles			
Article Title	Date Published	Content Analysis	Article Placement
In Harlem, Response To Shooting Is Subdued	1/5/2003	Neutral	Section 1; Column 6, Pg. 27
The Seven Dwarfs (Editorial)	1/6/2003	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Column 6, Pg. 21
Daschle, Changing Course, Declines to Seek Presidency	1/8/2003	Neutral	Section A; Column 1, Pg. 17
A Bad Joke, Resembling A Bad Penny	1/10/2003	Neutral-Negative	Section B; Column 1, Pg 1
A Wily Contender, But Unlikely Winner, Eyes the Presidency	1/13/2003	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Column 1, Pg 16
First Joint Appearance Set By 6 Presidential Hopefuls	1/15/2003	Neutral	Section A; Column 5, Pg 18
RALLY; Thousands Converge in Capital to Protest Plans for War	1/19/2003	Neutral	Section 1; Column 1, Pg 12
Mount Morris Journal; A Gay Bathhouse in Harlem? Hey, It's No Secret	1/19/2003	Neutral-Negative	Section 1; Column 1, Pg 28
Mayor Honors Vow to Sharpton, Who Returns the Disfavor	1/21/2003	Neutral-Positive	Section B; Column 3, Pg 6
Cake or Prayer, Marching or Running, Holiday Is a Work in Progress	1/21/2003	Neutral	Section B; Column 2, Pg 1
Rule No. 1: It's Sharpton Who's No. 1	1/21/2003	Neutral-Negative	Section B; Column 1, Pg 1
Sharpton Takes Step in Presidential Bid	1/22/2003	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Column 5, Pg 18
In Turn, 6 Presidential Hopefuls Back Abortion Rights	1/22/2003	Neutral	Section A; Column 1, Pg 18
A Routine at a Harlem Bully Pulpit	1/23/2003	Neutral	Section B; Column 1, Pg 4
Electrical Fire Destroys Ballroom at Sharpton Headquarters	1/23/2003	Neutral-Positive	Section B; Column 2, Pg 1
Sharpton Fire Is Spawning Conspiracy Theory	1/24/2003	Neutral-Positive	Section B; Column 1, Pg 3
Sharpton Rallies the Faithful, But From a Different Pulpit	1/26/2003	Neutral-Positive	Section 1; Column 1, Pg 28
Street Where He Lived and Died Now Amadou Diallo Place	2/5/2003	Neutral	Section B; Column 1, Pg 6

Table 3: Obama Selected <i>Times</i> Articles			
Article Title	Date Published	Content Analysis	Article Placement
Today's Version of 'I Will Run' Is Way More Than 3 Little Words	2/10/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 1, Pg 10
In New Hampshire, Clinton Owns Up to Her Vote on Iraq War	2/11/2007	Neutral	Section 1; Column 1, Pg 34
Decoding the Debate Over the Blackness of Barack Obama (Editorial)	2/11/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section 4; Column 1; Pg. 11
Stop Him Before He Gets More Experience (Editorial)	2/11/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section 4; Column 2; Pg. 12
Obama Formally Enters Presidential Race With Calls for Generational Change	2/11/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section 1; Column 1; Pg. 34
Why Are the Pacifists So Passive? (Editorial)	2/12/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 2; Pg. 21
Until The War Ends (Editorial)	2/12/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 6; Pg. 21
For Clinton and Obama, Different Tests on Iraq	2/12/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 2; Pg. 1
Obama Plan Has a Critic in Australia	2/12/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 6; Pg. 18
Obama Restructures a Remark on Deaths	2/13/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 3; Pg. 16
All Eyes on Iraq Debate	2/13/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 18
Claiming Outsider Status, Romney Says He'll Seek White House	2/14/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 22
Obama, Legally Blonde (Editorial)	2/14/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 27
As Connecticut Senator Runs for President, He Hopes to Be Heard	2/17/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 12
Clinton Gives War Critics New Answer on '02 Vote	2/18/2007	Neutral	Section 1; Column 1; Pg. 30
SENATE REJECTS RENEWED EFFORT TO DEBATE IRAQ	2/18/2007	Neutral	Section 1; Column 6; Pg. 1
The Real Patriots (Editorial)	2/19/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 6; Pg. 15
In Iowa, the Living Room Has Fallen Out of Favor	2/19/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 11
After a Delicately Worded Pitch, Clinton Draws Cheers	2/20/2007	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Column 3; Pg. 15
The Hot Ticket in Hollywood: An Evening With Obama	2/20/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 3; Pg. 15
Obama's Big Screen Test (Editorial)	2/21/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 5; Pg. 21

Rivals at Democratic Presidential Forum Push Positions on Iraq War Into Spotlight	2/22/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 18
In Both Parties, 2008 Politeness Falls to Infighting	2/22/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 6; Pg. 1
Stepping to the Plate, Giuliani Is Seeing Only Softballs	2/23/2007	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 17
Proposal by Obama on Public Financing Appears to Gain	2/23/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 6; Pg. 17
In a Clinton-Obama Skirmish, A Detour From the High Road	2/23/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 1
Et Tu, David? A Lucrative Friendship Sours	2/23/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 4; Pg. 16
Ending Bid for Presidency, Vilsack Cites Fund-Raising	2/24/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 10
Early Stops on the Sweet-Talk Circuit	2/24/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 11
In Clinton's Backyard, It's Open Season, As An Obama Fund Raiser Lines Up Donors	2/24/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 11
Surveying Presidential Field, Governors Urge Moderation	2/26/2007	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 18
Substance Over Image (Editorial)	2/26/2007	Negative	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 21
Mud, Dust, Whatever (Editorial)	2/26/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 5; Pg. 21
As Candidate, Obama Carves Anti-War Stance	2/26/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 5; Pg. 1
Ozone Man Sequel (Editorial)	2/28/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 19
Competing in the Money Marathon	2/28/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 18
Senators Regret Remarks on Troops	3/2/2007	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 14
McCain and Obama in Deal On Public Financing	3/2/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 15
Orphan No More, California Enjoys Electoral Muscle	3/2/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 15
Obama Had Slaveowning Kin	3/3/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 5; Pg. 11
Where's His Right Hook? (Editorial)	3/3/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 6; Pg. 15
Neither Clinton, Nor Obama (Editorial)	3/4/2007	Neutral	Section 4; Column 1; Pg. 12
Recalling Struggle for Civil Rights, Democrats Battle for Black Votes	3/4/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section 1; Column 5; Pg. 1

Bring Back the Politics of Personal Destruction (Editorial)	3/4/2007	Neutral	Section 4; Column 2; Pg. 12
Clinton and Obama Unite, Briefly, in Pleas to Blacks	3/5/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 14
Off the News, The Show Goes On	3/6/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 19
Disinvitation by Obama is Criticized	3/6/2007	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Column 3; Pg. 19
Obama: Man of the World (Editorial)	3/6/2007	Positive	Section A; Column 5; Pg. 21
Obama, in Brief Investing Foray In '05, Took Same Path as Donors	3/7/2007	Neutral-Negative	Section A; Column 5; Pg. 1
Obama Says His Investments Presented No Conflicts of Interest	3/8/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 16
DEMOCRATS RALLY BEHIND A PULLOUT FROM IRAQ IN '08	3/9/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 6; Pg. 1
Out of Spotlight, Edwards Seeks Momentum in Iowa	3/10/2007	Neutral	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 10
Obama's Back Fund-Raising In New York, Not Quietly	3/10/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 10
Stung by Remarks, Nevada Democrats Cancel Debate on Fox	3/10/2007	Neutral-Positive	Section A; Column 1; Pg. 10