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**Critique**

The issue of journalistic tradition in campaign reporting of minority candidates is a serious one. The essence of this research article appears to this reader to be one of gradual accumulation of evidence that ‘yes,’ being a minority (and/or woman) may affect a campaigner’s coverage by the newspaper media. The jury is still out, however, as to what extent such coverage influences voters and other media, as well as what effect, if any, such media coverage has on the final election.

The methodology of this study appears sound, but this reviewer would have felt more comfortable if the authors had given more detail on procedures used to train and insure reliability among graduate student
coding teams. Some reliability statistics might have helped enhance this study, but this reviewer will not 'quibble' over such a minor criticism.

It appears that nearly sixty percent (58.5%) of the general reference stories were Jackson-exclusive. Given the overall political campaign, at face value that could be interpreted as a plus for Jackson. Of course, what the authors do not do is clearly differentiate between positive vs. negative exclusives.

The “Confirmation Paradigm” (announcement, definition, debunking, judgment, conversion) has promise. The authors did an excellent job of differentiating the stages and showing how Jackson’s 1984 campaign can be analyzed from such a paradigm.

Jackson’s early primary successes appeared to negate negative media coverage effects. In addition, as his legitimacy became less a question, so to were there less negative news media coverage, although the “Hymie-Farrakhan-Jewish” issue as reported did have negative ramifications.

One walks a “fine line” between reporting facts (i.e., being “black” and a “civil rights candidate”) or attempting to ignore one’s race and occupational orientation (i.e., by reporting him in the generic, so-called ‘legitimate’ sense as a “Democratic presidential candidate”). Does to be “color blind” now mean to give legitimacy?

This reviewer agrees with the authors: this line of research needs to continue by comparing Jesse Jackson’s 1984 campaign to his 1988 campaign. Only in this way can we get a better understanding of the promising confirmation paradigm of press coverage.

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