

Fact Sheet:

Religion and Media

Christopher Helland

Innovation Funding Project, 2012-2013

Project Description and Goals:

This project was designed as a follow up study to a previous research project which identified differences in news coverage over regions and between news sources as to how religion stories were covered generally. The previous project considered the manner in which specific religious groups were portrayed. In this study, the main focus was placed on one religious group and one series of events to create a deeper and more textured analysis of the regional and sources differences in the reporting of religion.

Methodology:

- a) From February 11, 2013 to March 15, 2013 we manually collected all news stories referencing the Pope during the target period from selected print, radio, and television news sources.
- b) Collected stories were then matched against the Eureka and Factiva news archives to validate comprehensiveness of coverage.
- c) A large component of the project was to continue with the development of a searchable media database. Given that the articles and images were placed in a web accessible archive, team members across the nation were able to access, code, and analyze the data, and to share those results within the team.
- d) Utilizing developing software at Dalhousie University, articles are being analyzed upon multiple levels to identify trends and patterns in representation.

Student Involvement:

- David Michels, Dalhousie University
- Dan Wiebe, Dalhousie University
- Ashley Doyle, Dalhousie University
- Shannon Ramsey, Dalhousie University
- Elizabeth Michels, Dalhousie University

Dissemination:

Workshop presentation at:

- *Media and Religion*, Université de Montréal, May 17, 2012.

Publications:

- An article provisionally titled “Publishing the Pope: An Analysis of the Papal Election in Canadian National and Regional Print Media” is under review with the *Journal of Religion, Media, and Digital Culture*.
- A second journal article based upon three years of data collection is being prepared called “Framing the News: How Religion is represented in the Print Media in Canada”.