

Framing Disaster in the Third World: The *New York Times* and *The Times* Coverage of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake

Abstract

'Third World' is a heavily loaded term. It is attached to many attributes and aspects that are usually negative. Many of us from the First World have not experienced the Third World firsthand. Therefore, we depend on the media's news stories to teach us about the Third World and its countries. The following study examines the depictions of a Third World country, Haiti, by First World media sources. More specifically, the study analyzes how the *New York Times* and *The Times* (London) reported the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake with at least 52 aftershocks causing an estimated 230,000 deaths. The media theory of news framing was applied. This theory showcases the media's power to shape audience perceptions in certain ways. 92 newspaper articles (54 the *New York Times* and 38 for *The Times*) were examined for the news frames used by both media sources in covering the event. Four research questions were posited including; how the 2010 Haiti earthquake was framed by both sources, if any frames were similar to news frames found in previous research on Haiti, what frames of Haiti were used by these sources in coverage prior to earthquake, and what implications and influences these frames may have. Nine frames were found from the analysis, four news frames being identified in past research and five being unique to this study. The majority of these frames painted Haiti in a negative light. The implications of these news frames can be vast due to the powerful agenda-setting positions held by these prominent sources. The news frames used by both the *New York Times* and *The Times* can impact not only First World ideological views of Haiti and the Third World, but even foreign policy and relations and governmental actions.

Keywords: News Framing, Third World, Haiti, the *New York Times*, *The Times*

A majority of us in the First World do not have firsthand experience in Third World countries. Due to this, many of us depend on the media to gain knowledge and insight on these particular countries. Based on news framing theory, the media have the power to tell us what aspects of a news story we should pay attention to. This becomes even more powerful when it is on a subject, the Third World, which much of the audience is not immensely aware of. The media's news frames become stronger in this case, not only swaying the public's opinion on the Third World but also swaying political leaders and policy makers' decisions in respect to these countries.

In this study, I analyze the news frames used by two prominent First World newspapers, the United Kingdom's *The Times* and the United States' *New York Times* during their coverage of Haiti's tragic 2010 earthquake. I argue that First World media sources tend to frame Third World countries, such as Haiti, in a negative light. These negative frames may have bigger implications such as influencing international policy and relations. I also argue that Third World countries are not on First World media's agenda unless private interests exist or a natural disaster occurs. First, I explain the mass communication theory of news framing. Second, I provide information on the Third World and Haiti as a Third World country. Third, I detail the news framing methods used in this analysis. Fourth, I provide a brief explanation of Haiti's 2010 earthquake. Fifth, I analyze *The Times* and the *New York Times* coverage of the Haiti 2010 earthquake through news framing analysis. Lastly, I provide implications and conclusions based on the data.

News Framing

Numerous media scholars define the multiple facets involved in the process of news framing. A news frame can be described as a lens created by the media that affects how

individuals view and interpret a news story. As Entman (2007) states, framing is “the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation” (p. 164). This narrative or frame is constructed of words and images carefully selected by the media in order to elicit a specific interpretation. Tankard (1991) further explains that the media create a news frame through “the use of *selection*, *emphasis*, *exclusion*, and *elaboration*” (in McCombs & Shaw, 2000, p. 366). The use of these procedures demonstrates how framing is not simply the use of a singular news frame, it is a process.

In order to construct a news frame, the media must go through a process composed of multiple steps. De Vreese (2005) explains the process of framing consisting of stages: “frame-building, frame-setting, and individual and societal level consequences of framing” (p. 52). Factors internal to journalism, such as journalists, and factors external to journalism, such as political and social elites, shape what aspects go into a frame-building (de Vreese, 2005).

Once a frame is built the next stage of frame-setting occurs. Frame-setting involves “an interaction between media frames and individuals’ prior knowledge and predispositions” (de Vreese, 2005, p. 52). This stage illustrates how news frames can affect individual’s interpretations and views of an issue in the news. These interpretations consist of “connections between an issue and particular considerations relevant to its definition, causes, implications, and treatment” (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009). The frame shapes every aspect of the issue presented thus possibly shaping how the issue is defined and interpreted by the individual.

The effects of framing make up the last stage of the framing process. These effects unfold at an individual and societal level (de Vreese, 2005). At an individual level, certain frames may change a person’s attitude towards a specific context or issue. This effect on attitude includes

changing an attitude once held, forming a new attitude, or using news frames as justification for one's attitudes (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009). Tewksbury and Scheufele (2009) argue that news frames are "most powerful when they activate existing constructs" (p. 25). In other words, news frames are more powerful when they trigger pre-existing ideas, beliefs, and interpretations. Also, if an individual endorses a news frame in personal conversations or in decision-making then the news frame had a truly powerful effect on the viewer (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009). Once employed, these individual effects may shape aspects of society.

As previously stated, news frames may lead to societal consequences and implications. Evans (2010) argues that media framing can even affect governmental policies and decisions, "Media framing affects government decision-making both directly, by supplying information to decision-makers, and indirectly, through public opinion (p. 210). If this public opinion becomes dominant, it can affect decision-makers in society and in turn shape policies and even governmental actions. News frames can also shape policy and decision-makers directly. These elite look to the media for information on events especially when they are not on domestic borders. As Evans (2010) asserts "Policy-makers, like the public, depend on the media reports for most of their information about world events" (p. 210). Most of the time, little is known about these distant regions and news reports and frames become shaped by "action seeking correspondents with little in-depth knowledge of the regions or conflicts they are covering" (Evans, 2010, p. 211). With little knowledge comes possible distorted news frames. These frames not only affect our view of that region, but even our policies and foreign relations.

An example of news frames affecting our views and interpretations of foreign countries can be seen in news coverage of Haiti. Balaji (2011) argues that with selective news frames U.S. media portrayed Haiti during and after the earthquake in a negative light empowering the U.S.

citizens' and government action. The U.S. media employed news frames, through words and images that depicted Haiti as the "racialized Other" (Balaji, 2011, p. 52). Balaji (2011) states "mediated responses to Haiti reflect racialization of pity and the privileging of a white view of the dark world as dysfunctional, childlike and dependent" (p. 51). Haiti was depicted as helpless and hopeless in need of help that they could not provide themselves. This was illustrated through constant images of victims amid rubble and testimony of the Haitian government not taking action.

These aspects of the media frames for the earthquake affected U.S. viewers to take action. Balaji (2011) explains, "These faces are used as embodiments of destruction and hopelessness, begging the viewer to feel empowered by donating money" (p. 56). U.S. policy-makers and citizens took action with celebrity telethons, donations, volunteers, and government aid to Haiti based on these pitiful depictions. This frame of dysfunction and helplessness has become a generic news frame typically used to represent the Third World

The Third World

The Third World is an overloaded term used to categorize a group of countries or nations in the world. The literal term Third World is credited to the French demographer Alfred Sauvy (McCann & Kim, 2010). The development of the term Third World was a response to the Cold War era and how it redrew the map of the world. After the Cold War, the world and its countries were separated into three separate spheres: First World, Second World, and the Third World. "The First World was a label designating the first nations to go through industrialization, the liberal-capitalist nation-states of Western Europe and the U.S." (McCann & Kim, 2010, p. 152). The Second World similarly went through industrialization but through communist and socialist nations and revolutions. "The Third World referred to those nations that were not aligned with

either side in Cold War political contests after World War II” (McCann & Kim, 2010, p.152).

Despite the term being developed solely for this Cold War classification, it has collected multiple applications along the way.

The Third World, and the countries the term represents, has become parallel to the word developing or developing countries. International organizations including the United Nations (UN), the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have all created their own classifications for what a developing country consists of. Although these organizations typically take an economic approach to defining developing countries, they also include other features that are related to other societal attributes. For example, the World Bank defines developing countries as “countries with low to middle levels of GNP per capita” or gross national product. (The World Bank Group, 2004). This definition is not restrictive to just these levels but also “their economic structure or the official opinion of their governments” (The World Bank Group, 2004). Developed countries are those with high GNP levels and “higher standards of living” and “physical capital” (The World Bank Group, 2004). Over 80 percent of the world’s population lives in developing countries while developed countries comprise 15 percent of the world population (The World Bank Group, 2004). The Third World is not just defined by economic measures, however.

Attributes such as standards of living and political climates are also tied to the Third World term. The UN assesses developing countries through poverty lines. Poverty lines are based on standards of living such as drinkable water and lack of malnourishment (Nielsen, 2011). The Third World terminology is also connected to political and societal attributes. Kamrava (1995) states that all Third World countries have similar political cultures that “tend to be tenuous, impermanent, fragmented and, even if recently democratized, still without social

resonance” (p. 700). These fragmented political cultures affect all aspects of a Third World country’s society making it remarkably different from its First World counterparts.

The Third World term is tied to societal aspects as well. Third World countries are “consistently represented in Eurocentric discourses as lacking agency” (Mani, 1990, p. 401). While the Third World lacks agency, the First World/developed countries are seen as more “progressive” (Narayan, 2010, p. 333). These societal notions connected to these terms can have far-reaching implications. Seeing the Third World as lacking agency and progression can tie into current news frames, such as those previously mentioned by Balaji (2011), of Third World countries being helpless and in need of our First World help. These consequences could affect decisions made by governments and world organizations. It can also affect the news frames used by First World media to represent and reflect news from the Third World.

Haiti as a Third World Country

Nestled in Central America and the Caribbean, Haiti falls under the Third World and developing labels due to its economy and political climate.

Economy. According to The World Bank Group (2012), Haiti is considered a low-income economy, which is deemed a developing country by The World Bank, due to its income being \$1,025 or less. This economic status can be explained from many viewpoints, but much of it is due to debt to other countries, ironically all considered First World countries. Haiti had to pay reparations of “150 germinal francs” (Farmer, 2011, p. 127) to France and England after their revolution and declaration of sovereignty. In addition to this, Haiti became indebted to the United States which caused economic strife.

Any economic success made by its people was quickly cut short when Haiti accepted a structural adjustment program by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1994 because it

could not pay its debts (Middleton, 2010). The IMF's structural adjustment programs impose strict economic and societal restrictions and regulations on developing countries, leaving them little room for economic freedom. These economic struggles lead to many of Haiti's political struggles.

Politics. Haiti's political history is filled with coups and uprisings. Most of the political leaders were a part of the Haitian elite constantly trying to keep the elite in power. Haiti's political environment can reflect the political culture deemed to be Third World. As Kamrava (1995) states, most Third World countries have "tenuous, impermanent, fragmented and, even if recently democratized" (p. 700) governments that are not socially approved by its people. Haiti's political culture can be seen as an example of this type of Third World political culture. Based on this, Haiti has become portrayed on the mediated world stage as helpless, another aspect attributed to Third World countries.

Methods

Coverage of crisis in a Third World country will be the focus of this paper as the coverage of the 2010 earthquake in Haiti is examined. Four research questions are formulated based on the literature. The first two research questions relate to news framing:

RQ1: How was the 2010 earthquake in Haiti framed by the *New York Times* and *The Times*?

RQ2: Are the news frames of Haiti present in Balaji (2011) (such as Haiti as the helpless and hopeless "racialized Other"), present in the *New York Times* and *The Times* coverage?

The following research question focus on coverage prior to the earthquake:

RQ3: What news coverage occurred prior to the earthquake in both sources?

The last research question pertains to the possible significance of the news frames used in the overall coverage of the 2010 earthquake in Haiti by both sources:

RQ4: What is the possible influence of this coverage on world policies, governmental decisions and international relations involving Haiti?

These questions will be answered through a descriptive framing analysis of newspaper articles from both the *New York Times* and *The Times*. The *New York Times* and *The Times* were chosen to be analyzed for these news frames of Haiti's earthquake because of their agenda-setting power. McCombs & Shaw (2000) explain that influential media sources set "the agenda for the agenda setters" (p.368) or other news sources. The *New York Times'* Pulitzer Prize awards and 950,000 weekday circulation, 1.4 million on Sunday newspapers, make it a key agenda setter for all other U.S. media sources. (Plambeck, 2010, April 26). The British equivalent to the *New York Times* is *The Times*. *The Times* has a long history of being the national daily, and quality, newspaper of England since 1785 and has over 400,120 in circulation ("ABCs: National", 2012). One could argue this makes it a strong agenda setter for British media. The news frames used by these sources have an even stronger effect since they will most likely become the frames used by other U.S. and UK media sources.

Both inductive and deductive approaches to news framing analysis will be utilized. Deductively, the researcher will analyze the data with some news frames in mind (de Vreese, 2005). Previous news frames used in coverage of Haiti as seen in past research, such as Haiti being helpless, hopeless, racialized, and in need of First World aid (Balaji, 2011) will be kept in mind during the analysis. Also, the researcher will be searching for frames pertaining to the Third World or Haiti as a Third World country. However, the researcher will also implement an inductive approach to framing analysis examining what "frames emerge from the material during the course of analysis" (de Vreese, 2005, p. 53). This dual news framing analysis will be implemented on news coverage from both the *New York Times* and *The Times*. The periodical

databases *LexisNexis*, *Newspaper Source Plus*, and *Academic Search Complete* were used to collect the full-text articles.

The time frame for these articles was January 2009-February 2010. This time frame was chosen for a number of reasons. First, within this time frame is the major natural disaster of the January 2010 earthquake that hit Haiti. We may see if this crisis was of interest to these two different sources, and countries, based on political and economic interests as well as physical proximity. The time frame of coverage studied also includes a year before and a month after the event. This is to examine if Haiti was on these First World sources' agendas before the crisis occurred as well as after the crisis. Also, news frames can be compared from before, during, and shortly after the crisis to see if a common pattern of news frames were used by these sources. Through the framing analysis of these two sources over a year span, we will see how Haiti and its tragic earthquake were portrayed by the First World.

Analysis

2010 Earthquake in Haiti

On January 12, 2010 at 4:53pm, the most powerful earthquake to hit Haiti in over 200 years shook the country (Thompson Reuters Foundation, 2012). The 7.0 magnitude earthquake caused two 3 meter tsunamis that hit the majority of Haiti's shoreline as well as the Dominican Republic's shores. The powerful earthquake also triggered numerous aftershocks with magnitudes as high as 5.9 (Thompson Reuters Foundation, 2012). The disaster killed an estimated 200,000 people and injured 1.5 million and was considered "the biggest urban disaster in modern history" (Thompson Reuters Foundation, 2012, p. 1). Haiti not only suffered human costs, but also economic, governmental, and physical damages.

The geographic physical tolls were as high and devastating as Haiti's human costs. "Haitian government estimates suggest that 250,000 homes and 30,000 workplaces and shops were either destroyed or badly damaged" (Middleton, 2010, p.31). Crucial political buildings such as "28 out of 29 government ministries" (Farmer, 2011, p.119) were completely destroyed (Thompson Reuters Foundation, 2012). Hospitals were destroyed and "14 percent of Ministry of Health employees died" (Farmer, 2011, p. 119). Major roads were destroyed, the sea port could not be used, phone lines and cell phone towers were destroyed, and there was a shortage on fuel (Thompson Reuters Foundation, 2012). All of these damages not only deterred relief reaching Haiti's victims, but it also hindered the government being able to aid its own country.

Haiti's government and economy also suffered immensely from the disaster. The World Bank estimated that damages from the earthquake evaluate at \$7.9 billion (Thompson Reuters Foundation, 2012). To make matters worse, Haiti's main economic industry and major export, the clothing industry was severely damaged (Middleton, 2010). This would have economic consequences for many years after the earthquake. Haiti's government was also damaged by the disaster. Not only did it lose many of its governmental buildings, but also much of its staff and leaders, "Some reports claimed that close to 40 percent of all federal employees were injured or killed" (Farmer, 2011, p. 119). As previously stated, the damage done to the country's agencies, governmental headquarters, and staff hindered the country's ability to help its own people. This led to reliance on outside aid agencies, countries such as the U.S. and UK, and the UN to help relieve Haiti's of its wounds. However, some of those that came to Haiti's rescue did more harm than help for the country.

Rampant problems continued to exist for Haiti long after the earthquake. Many Haitians are still homeless or living in camps originally made by aid agencies, "more than half a million

people are still living in tents and makeshift shelters in Port-au-Prince” (Thompson Reuters Foundation, 2012). Not only do Haiti’s people still suffer, but also its government and peace, “A disputed presidential election in 2011...also complicated the reconstruction efforts” (Thompson Reuters Foundation, 2012). In the end, the damages and effects of the 2010 earthquake still hang over Haiti today.

News Frame Analysis

The magnitude of the disaster in Haiti led to an influx in news coverage on the Third World country. To accurately capture the news frames used by the *New York Times* and *The Times*, 112 articles were analyzed for news frames. Of these articles, 51 were from *The Times* and 61 were from the *New York Times*. After analyzing each individually, 20 articles were taken out of the analysis, 12 from *The Times* and seven from the *New York Times*. These articles were voided from the analysis for not covering Haiti or discussing Haiti. Some of the articles covered stories of Americans’ or Britons’ reactions. Lastly, some of these articles were strictly news facts, lacking thematic frames.

With these articles omitted, 92 articles, 54 the *New York Times* and 38 for *The Times*, contained news frames. Frames were identified based on Entman’s (1993) definition of news frames as “the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information and sentences that provided thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments” (in de Vreese, 2005, p. 54). Based on this notion, nine dominant frames were found. Eight of these frames appeared in both *The Times* and the *New York Times*. The last frame was only present in the *New York Times*. Figure 1 charts the nine frames and their prevalence in both the *New York Times* and *The Times*. The frames Helpless, Hopeless, Racialized Other, and First World Aid, were previously identified frames from past research on coverage of the 2010

earthquake in Haiti (Balaji, 2011). The other five frames appeared from the analysis of these specific articles. Each frame will be detailed in order of most prevalent to least prevalent.

Figure1.

News frames and prevalence in articles.

News Frame	<i>NYT</i>	<i>T</i>
Third World Chaos	37	22
Helpless	21	15
Hopeless	9	18
First World Aid	20	4
Political Inferiority/Incapability	10	8
Third World Other	6	5
Racialized Other	3	2
Self-Help/Not Hopeless	14	2
Political Assertion	2	

Note. *NYT* = *New York Times*, *T* = *The Times*. Number quantities represent how many articles. Blank cells means zero articles.

Third world chaos. The news frame of Third World Chaos was the most reoccurring frame in both *The Times* and the *New York Times*. This frame occurred in 58% of the *The Times*' articles analyzed and 69% of the *New York Times*' articles. This frame consisted of extreme negative adjectives and themes attributed to Haiti before and after the earthquake. The chaos does not include the typical chaos that may occur in any country that suffers a fatal earthquake. This specific chaos is identified as always being present in Haiti because of its developing/Third World status.

These negative adjectives and stressed themes consisted of: volatile, nightmarish, dysfunctional, desperate, grotesque and apocalyptic. Aspects highlighted in this frame include: rape, looting, slums, murder, child trafficking, coups, gangs, riots, poverty and tyrants. These aspects were paired with the exaggerated adjectives to depict strongly chaotic illustrations of Haiti as a country. In an article entitled "Rule of the rapists" *The Times* depicts the country with

themes such as “the gangland slums of Haiti” and “stories of sexual violence stain much of that sad history of coup and counter-coup” (Alex, 2008, May 6, p. 1, para. 22). Another *Times* article two days after the earthquake hit Haiti highlighted that the country “served as a text-book example of a dysfunctional nation” (Charles, 2010, January 14, para. 2).

The *New York Times* also used similar adjectives and themes under this frame. As one article four days after the earthquake stated about Haiti as a country, “In Haiti, the apocalypse wears the trappings of the norm. It’s a place where heartbreak never seems to end” (Herbert, 2010, January 16, para. 1). Another article illustrates Haiti filled with “shantytowns” and “the poor who define this nation” (Romero, 2010, January 14, para. 1, 3). This news frame filled with extreme negative adjectives and themes ties into the next news frame entitled Helpless.

Helpless. This news frame occurred in 39% of the *New York Times*’ articles analyzed and 39% of *The Times*’ articles. The Helpless frame in past research was described as the Haitians incapable of helping themselves and in desperate need for the rich to save them (Balaji, 2011). This theme was apparent in this frame as well, with more emphasis on Haiti as a country being helpless. Helpless does not mean just helpless due to the earthquake. It also implies that Haiti has always been helpless, unable to survive without the help of others.

Aspects of this frame include highlighting what Haiti lacks while also highlighting its dependence on outside organizations or countries. Reoccurring areas of lack include lack of: equipment, a large airport, police, government, hospitals and providing basic services. These are then followed by illustrations of Haiti’s dependence on outside agencies and countries before and after the earthquake. It was constantly published that Haiti has depended on foreign aid and governance by outside organizations in order to run the country because they cannot do it themselves. *The Times* point out how Haiti is helpless to rule themselves, especially during the

earthquake, “The Government was unable to administer the country even in peacetime...The UN must accept responsibility for directing the humanitarian effort” (“Time for Leadership”, 2010, January 19, para. 8). The *New York Times* numerous stressed how Haiti has always been dependent on outside help, helpless to do it themselves. In an article a year before the earthquake the *New York Times* implemented the helpless frame, “United Nations soldiers are an essential element in keeping the country from becoming unhinged” (Lacey, 2009, October 5, para. 10). This notion was reaffirmed during the earthquake crisis, “at least 10,000 private organizations perform supposedly humanitarian missions in Haiti, yet it remains one of the world’s poorest countries” (Kidder, 2010, January 14, para. 4). Haiti being depicted through a helpless frame ties into the next most used frame, Haiti as a hopeless country.

Hopeless. The Hopeless frame combines with the helpless frame which ultimately depicts Haiti as incapable and begging for help (Balaji, 2011). The Hopeless frame occurred in 47% of *The Times*’ articles and 35% of the *New York Times*’ articles.

Aspects of this frame include depictions and descriptions that illustrate Haiti in a desperate and miserable state that seems never-ending. This hopelessness has always been a part of the country, not something brought upon by the natural disasters. Some descriptions include: unlucky, depressed, woes, desperate, repression. As *The Times* depicted in one article “The only saving grace for the Haitian masses...was that their shacks in the dreadful slums...were probably too flimsy to kill them as they collapsed” (Martin, 2010b, January 14, para. 12). They further exert hopelessness by highlighting “Haiti has frequently been described as the world’s unluckiest country” (“A Fateful”, 2010, January 16, para. 7). The *New York Times* paints a haunting hopeless picture of Haiti before the earthquake, “Haiti’s rail-thin children, the mounds of garbage and open sewage dumps or the heavily armed peacekeeping troops struggling to keep a

lid on the sprawling urban slums” (Lacey, 2007, February 16, para. 4). Another example highlights Haiti’s “legacy of repression and exploitation; international peacekeepers come and go; the earth no longer provides food; jobs almost don’t exist” (Bhatia, 2010, January 14, para. 7). By mentioning international peacekeepers in the last quote, we see that the Hopeless frame is often combined with the Helpless frame. As Balaji (2011) noted, combining the helpless and hopeless frames help to attract aid from outside often First World nations and organizations. This leads into the next news frame used, First World Aid.

First World Aid. This frame was used in 37% of the *New York Times*’ articles analyzed and 11% of *The Times*’ articles analyzed. The First World Aid frame applies to articles that depict a sole dependence on aid and specifically spent the majority of its focus on championing First World aid. Aspects of this frame include depictions of constant support, numerous donors, millions donated, valiant volunteers and contributions. *The Times* hailed the efforts of international aid, “Scores of countries, agencies and companies from every continent have offered money, rescue teams and emergency supplies” (Giles, Catherine, & Martin, 2010, January 15, para. 13). *The New York Times* constantly ran President Obama’s quote of “unwavering support” (Romero, 2010, January 14, para. 13). The paper also highlighted that “The United States has a special responsibility to help its neighbor...It is a commitment of years” (“Haiti”, 2010, January 14, para. 8). This First World Aid frame was constantly juxtaposed with the next frame: political inferiority/incapability.

Political inferiority/incapability. The Political Inferiority/Incapability frame was consistently used between both sources. This frame was commonly used with the Helpless frame as well as the Third World Chaos frame. This frame was not identified in past research but instead came out of this specific analysis. The Political Inferiority/Incapability frame’s overall

theme was that the Haitian government has always been inferior and lacking compared to other governments (especially First World governments) and that it is constantly incapable of keeping peace and order and meeting its peoples' needs. This frame was used in 21% of the articles analyzed for *The Times* and 19% of the articles for the *New York Times*. Aspects of this frame include constant reminders of Haiti's tumultuous governmental past with countless brutal and thieving leaders, coups, and political reforms. It also highlights how the Haitian people have been ignored by the government and their basic needs are never met.

The Times utilizes this frame and display these attributes in many ways. In an article promptly entitled "This is chaos: someone needs to grasp the nettle", *The Times* employ this frame for the whole article. "There is no Haitian government...Haitian governance is dysfunctional at the best of times" (Tim, 2010, January 19, para. 2). *The Times* further depicts the Haitian government's incapability in another article, "Haiti has pretty much been subject to continual political violence since its first president declared himself emperor in 1804" (David, 2010, January 19, para. 7). This illustrates Haiti's incapability to keep peace as well as its violent political past.

The *New York Times* follows this lead highlighting Haiti's history of political tumult. "Haiti has long been known for its political tumult, for its coups d'etat, years of authoritarian dictatorship and looting of the national treasury for personal gain" (Romero, 2010, January 16, para. 5). The newspaper also highlighted the current governmental incapability during the earthquake, "This country has been mismanaged for the last 50 years, and if we can't run the country well in normal times how can we do it now" (Lacey, 2010, January 20, para. 31). To a First World citizen, the Haitian government seems inferior to their own country's government,

and highly incapable of running itself. This notion ties into the next reoccurring frame, the Third World Other.

Third World Other. The Third World other frame coincides with both the Third World Chaos frame and the Racialized Other frame. It has the Third World entity of the Third World Chaos frame without the chaos part. Like Racialized Other, it contains that otherness feel without race involved. The Third World Other frame occurred in 13% of *The Times*' articles analyzed and 11% of the *New York Times*' articles analyzed. This news frame came specifically from this analysis. Aspects of this frame include highlighting parts of Haiti that make it much different from the First World. These differences are based on facts that are differences between Haiti and most First World countries; however it was framed in a way that made Haiti seem strange or odd for not upholding the ideals, standards, and even religions of the First World.

A major theme of this frame was highlighting Haiti's religious beliefs of voodoo. Their voodoo faith was inserted into articles that had nothing to do with their religion, but was just an added piece to highlight Haiti's otherness. Another article highlighted what American evangelist Pat Robertson claimed that, "the horror is recompense for some voodoo pact made with the Devil at Haiti's birth" (Macintyre, 2010, January 21, para. 1). Voodoo roots and pacts with the Devil make Haiti strongly different from the Christian and Protestant views of the U.S. and UK. The *New York Times* even went as far as to suggest that this voodoo religion causes many of Haiti's cultural problems stating that Haiti, "suffers from a complex web of progress-resistant cultural influences. There is the influence of the voodoo religion, which spreads the message that life is capricious and planning futile" (Brooks, 2010, January 15, para. 8).

Another part of this frame was highlighting Haiti's Third World inferior standards and conditions. Much of this was pointing to Haiti's poor infrastructures or lack of construction

regulations which both newspapers blamed much of the post-earthquake damage on. An example of this comes in an article appropriately titled “Flawed building likely a big element” the *New York Times* point out Haiti’s “substandard design, inadequate materials and shoddy construction practices...the design and construction were far worse than in other developing countries” (Fountain, 2010, January 14, para. 1). *The Times* also utilized this theme, “a country that lacks proper construction standards is appalling” (Martin, 2010a, January 14, para. 7). This thematic emphasis on Third Worldness and otherness ties into the frame Racialized Other.

Racialized Other. The Racialized Other frame was a crucial frame noted in Balaji’s (2011) research on news frames used in coverage on the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. Balaji (2011) argued that news sources depicted Haiti as the racialized Other, “mediated responses to Haiti reflect racialization of pity and the privileging of a white view of the dark world as dysfunctional, childlike and dependent” (p. 51).

As Balaji (2011) noted, this frame highlights race in a way that Haiti becomes dependent on white or First World aid. In the articles from this analysis, the frame would include references to race that were not essential to the news story yet highlighted repeatedly. As *The Times* pointed out in one article, “And, perhaps above all, Haitians are poor and black. In the view of some Americans those two add up to...murderous gangs” (“Fear of”, 2010, January 18, para. 13). The *New York Times* did this as well. In one article, the *New York Times* was highlighting Haiti’s historical past. Although it is fact that Haiti was the first independent black republic in the Western Hemisphere, constant emphasis on race was brought up in the article in white verses black. Emphasis such as “slave-powered factory...African women make their fortunes” (Danner, 2010, January 22, para. 3). These racial themes gave Haiti not only an otherness feel but also connected to their Helpless or Hopeless frames that were also used to depict them. Although

these frames give Haitians and Haiti a negative portrayal, both newspapers implemented a positive news frame for Haitians and Haiti as well; the Self-Help/Not Hopeless frame.

Self-Help/Not Hopeless. The Self-Help/Not Hopeless frame painted Haiti and Haitians in a positive light, noting times when Haitians helped themselves after the earthquake and that Haiti as a country is not as hopeless as others may think. This frame was unique to this specific analysis. Themes of this frame would be highlighting cases in which Haitians helped themselves after the damage of the earthquake or had strength and not helplessness.

The *New York Times* used this theme in many articles such as highlighting “Haitians have jumped in as well to help the relief effort...professors summoned students by text messages and deputized them to serve as trauma counselors for a shocked population (Thompson, Sontag, Cave, Lacey, 2010, January 20, para. 6, 8). Another article highlight Haitian morale strength emphasizing, “there is no quit in the Haitian people” (Herbert, 2010, January 16, para. 9). *The Times* also highlighted this theme, “Haitians must be seen as part of the solution not the problem. It was a Haitian team that initiated the rescue” (Isabelle de, 2010, January 22, para. 4).

The themes of this frame also included highlighting that the country, before and after the earthquake, is not as hopeless as it has been framed. One *New York Times* article “Some frank talk about Haiti” dedicated the whole article to refuting assertions that Haiti was a hopeless and incapable country claiming that Haiti being hopeless “is the most pernicious myth of all...Haiti could plausibly turn itself around” (Kristof, 2010, January 21, para. 18-19). Another *New York Times* article highlighted the country’s strengths, “some of the best mangoes in the world grown in Haiti...excellent coffee is grown in Haiti...Haiti also has many qualities attractive to tourists” (Collier & Warnholz, 2010, January 29, para. 2-3). The next frame also portrayed Haiti in a less hopeless way.

Political Assertion. The Political Assertion frame helped to offset the Helpless and Political Inferiority/Incapability frames. Although only occurring twice, this frame helps to paint Haitian government in a less hopeless and helpless light. One article championed the actions of Haitian President Rene Preval,

the government of President Rene Preval is the most honest Haiti has had in generations. Last year, it presented a two-year development plan that won broad acceptance...Crime was falling before Jan. 12, and Haiti's police, once a source of terror, has become the nation's most trusted institution (Traub, 2010, January 24, para. 8).

Another article highlighted the government's strength after the earthquake, being assertive and arresting Americans who were taking Haitian children for adoption without following Haitian regulations. "For the government, the arrests provided an opportunity to send a strong message...We may be weakened, but without laws the Haitian state would cease to exist...We must be clear they cannot do such things in ours" (Thompson, 2010, February 2, para. 5-6).

Although both the Self-Help/Not Hopeless and Political Assertion frames tend to depict Haiti in a positive light, the positive frames of Haiti are overwhelmed and undermined by the enormous amount of the negative frames.

Discussion and Implications

From these frames and depictions, we are able to compare the *New York Times* and *The Times* coverage of Haiti and its earthquake. Through this comparison, RQ1 through RQ4 will be answered.

RQ1: How Was News Coverage Framed?

RQ1 asked how the 2010 earthquake was framed by the *New York Times* and *The Times*. As shown in the framing analysis, both the *New York Times* and *The Times* used similar frames. These frames were mostly negative portraying Haiti in a harsh light. These negative frames also

ted in with previous notions that Third World countries are displayed as “lacking agency” (Mani, 1990, p. 401). Negative frames from past research (Balaji, 2011) were also present. *The Times* tended to implement the negative news frames (every frame but Self-Help/Not Hopeless and Political Assertion) more than the *New York Times*. For almost every negative frame, *The Times* had a greater percentage of use while using far less of the positive frames compared to the *New York Times*. For example, the Self-Help/Not Hopeless frame was utilized by *The Times* a mere 5% of the time while the *New York Times* used it 26% of the time.

More interesting, the language used in *The Times* to compose the negative news frames was harsher compared to the *New York Times*. Although both *The Times* and the *New York Times* used the Third World Chaos and Hopeless frame extensively, *The Times* word choices for these frames were much stronger than that of the *New York Times*. For example, the *New York Times* would use words such as: unsafe, troubled and poverty for many of its Hopeless and Third World Chaos frames. *The Times* would use stronger words such as: wretched, luckless and mayhem for these frames.

The *New York Times* coverage of the earthquake shared similar frames with *The Times*. The *New York Times* having a slightly more positive vantage point for its coverage of Haiti. As shown in Figure 1, the *New York Times* implemented the negative frames less than *The Times*, other than Third World Chaos and Racialized Other. The *New York Times* also portrayed Political Assertion, showing Haiti in a more positive light.

RQ2: Previous News Frames of Haiti Present In Balaji (2011) Present In This Analysis?

The frames identified in Balaji (2011) were helpless, hopeless, and racialized Other. All three frames were identified in this current analysis. However, the Racialized Other frame was less prevalent in this analysis than it was in Balaji (2011). The Helpless and the Hopeless frames

were utilized the most out of the three. Although race was not stressed as much in the articles analyzed in this study, Balaji (2011) main argument is still maintained. Balaji (2011) argues that all three of these frames are used to legitimize the First World's aid and involvement with Haiti or any other Third World country. This is valid in this study as well. The Helpless and Hopeless frames always involved help from other countries or agencies in order for Haiti to survive after the earthquake and maintain itself in general. The implications of these particular frames will be touched upon in answer to RQ4.

RQ3: What news coverage occurred prior to the earthquake in both sources?

Articles published prior to the earthquake were not highly prevalent. Therefore articles before 2009 were analyzed as well. Four articles from *The Times* were analyzed, one in 2009, two in 2008, and one in 2006. Two articles from the *New York Times* were analyzed, one from 2009 and one from 2007. When Haiti was covered prior to the earthquake, the coverage included negative frames and private interests.

The two *New York Times* articles exemplify private interests. Both articles cover incidents that involve the U.S. and are of economic interest to the U.S. The article from 2007 speaks of tourism in Haiti. The Helpless, Hopeless, Third World Chaos, and Racialized Other were all utilized in the article. These negative frames were also used in the second article analyzed from 2009. The Helpless and Third World Chaos frames were implemented in this article. Again, private economic interests were evident in the *New York Times* coverage of this story by highlighting American companies' possible business expenditures in Haiti.

The four *Times* articles that covered Haiti prior to the earthquake also displayed Third World Chaos. The Helpless frame occurred in three of the four, and one used the Racialized Other frame. The topics for these articles ranged and did not seem to fit private political or

economic interests of the UK. One of these articles covered a natural disaster that occurred in 2008 in Haiti. However, the others simply talked about Haiti and its government and culture in disgust. This can be seen simply in the titles of these three articles: “A salon of refuse”, “Rule of rapists”, and “Colonial jewel that became worthless”. Both *The Times* and the *New York Times* lack of coverage on Haiti before the earthquake shows that Haiti is not on the First World news agenda. Haiti is on the First World agenda only when there is a natural disaster or an event that affects or is associated with the First World’s political or economic interests.

RQ4: Possible Influences on World Policies, Government Decisions, International Relations, and Haiti.

These reoccurring frames in *The Times* and the *New York Times* coverage of Haiti can have powerful effects and consequences. They may affect governmental decisions and international relations between First World countries and Haiti. A mass influx of news coverage on Haiti by both these sources occurred only after the earthquake hit. As previously stated, in crisis news coverage, the frames used by the media to represent the event and the country it occurred in become what the audience remembers about the event. With little news coverage on Haiti before the earthquake, this was the first time many of *The Times* and the *New York Times*’ First World audiences learned about Haiti. These constant negative frames being used to represent Haiti is what the audience will remember. They will remember Haiti as a hopeless, helpless country filled with chaos and dependent on outside help.

U.S. and UK citizens are not the only ones subjected to these frames in these sources. Their political leaders could also be influenced by these frames. If these policy-makers are basing their policies and international relations decisions on information laden with these misleading frames, they could create unsuccessful policies. For example, being framed as so

chaotic and helpless, policy-makers may want to help Haiti too much or too little. In the end, it is Haiti who suffers the most from these frames. The frames affect their image, their commerce and economy, and even post-earthquake aid.

Two *New York Times* articles analyzed displayed a literal depiction of these frames negatively affecting Haiti. One article illustrated how these frames affect Haiti's tourism commerce. Haiti does not have the same booming tourism commerce as its Caribbean neighbors Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. Haiti's tourism minister in 2007, Patrick Delatour pointed to the media for deterring tourists. He explained, "Haiti is a place that is in the news, and it's always bad news." (Lacey, 2007, February 16, para. 8). Violence, bad news, corrupt politics, impoverish people, these are images and words all associated with the frames found in this analysis and used by both *The Times* and the *New York Times*. The negative frames make tourists apprehensive to come to Haiti. As one tourist noted, "I don't want to see poverty...I'm on vacation. I don't want to think that these people don't have enough to eat." (Lacey, 2007, February 16, para. 25). By scaring away tourists, Haiti loses commerce desperately needed for its economy.

Lastly, these news frames also affected Haiti negatively after the earthquake occurred. Due to the constant use of the Third World Chaos, Hopeless, and Helpless frames, First World citizens were less likely to support Haiti with aid because they believed it would be a waste. One *New York Times* article quoted Americans saying, "I won't send money to Haiti because I know what will happen to it" and "Giving money to Haiti and other third-world countries is like throwing money in the toilet" (Kristof, 2010, January 21, para. 2). If First World media consumers constantly see Haiti as corrupt, unorganized, and hopeless, why would they want to

send money? These notions held by both First World citizens and leaders are parallel to the perceptions illustrated in the negative frames found in this analysis.

Conclusion

In the end, this study contributes to the notion of news framing and the perceptions of the Third World. The analysis found 9 frames used by *The Times* and the *New York Times*, two prominent First World agenda setters. These frames are powerful because of their prevalence in each source, both before, during, and one month after the earthquake. The lack of coverage before the earthquakes displays a lack of interest in the Third World unless it directly concerns a First World country's private interests.

More importantly, these frames can lead to negative perceptions of the Third World, in particular Haiti. Haiti's rich culture, strong people, and healing economy and government are left in the dark while Haiti as a helpless, hopeless and chaotic nation is showcased in the spotlight. Due to this, negative perceptions are held about Haiti and negative perceptions of the Third World are maintained. Overall, First World media, especially dominant agenda setters such as *The Times* and the *New York Times*, should be aware of the potential consequences of their news frames. Perhaps then, Haiti and other Third World nations will be seen as more than just hopeless chaotic states.

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