

An inquiry into media bias during the 2020 vice-presidential campaign: Framing agents of change in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* coverage

by

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B.A., NC State University, 2019

A THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Journalism and Mass Communications
College of Arts and Sciences

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

2022

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Abstract

The *New York Times* (*NYT*) and the *Washington Post* (*WP*) are two of the most reputable and influential newspapers in the country. The *NYT* alone has 8 million subscribers and consumers of either newspaper can interact with stories from both outlets through their direct sites or social media channels (Fu & Shumate, 2017; Pew Research Center, 2021). Many in the public use these stories to form their ideas about political parties and politicians, and this substantial influence is why these two outlets were of interest for this thesis (Kane, 2020). The topic itself, how vice-presidential candidates Mike Pence and Kamala Harris were portrayed, was chosen because, as leading political figures for the United States, vice-presidential candidates and their campaigns can be vitally important to the function of democracy. This information also may yield insights into political parties and their interactions with each other and the voting public at large (McCarthy, 2019).

Along these lines, this thesis used the coverage from the *NYT* and the *WP* to construct a sample of media data that can examine the possibility of media bias. From a span of 2 weeks before the election and 2 weeks after the election, 76 articles, with 42 from the *NYT* and 34 from the *WP*, were chosen. The thesis used JASP, a software program for statistical modeling, to carry out a series of analyses focused on differences between coverage based on Pence and Harris. Results demonstrate significant differences in coverage of change associated with each candidate, and how race and gender were framed in relation to Pence or Harris. The findings of this thesis break new ground in understanding how these vice-presidential candidates were covered in the highly contentious and polarized 2020 election. In so doing, they also shed additional light on bias in media coverage.

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Preface

The interest for undertaking this thesis arose from my desire to learn more about the possible inequalities in media coverage based on gender. The widespread media coverage around Harris, in particular, was compelling due to what her gender and ethnic background meant for historical purposes. The thesis' creation came from the eagerness to know how this background could influence her media coverage as compared to her opponent.

The amount of work necessary to research and write this thesis would not have been possible without Dr. Jacob Groshek and the resources of Kansas State University. Through invaluable guidance, the thesis, in its current form, resulted.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Renowned political scientist Harold Lasswell titled his book *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How*. His inquiry is fundamental in guiding the research conducted for this thesis since it pertains to how two media outlets covered two political candidates in the 2020 election; Lasswell wrote at length about the mechanisms of politics (1936). The subject of how media outlets cover candidates in political races is not a new topic but understanding this subject through coverage of Pence and Harris in the 2020 election, and framing theory, as well as through the gatekeeping theory, and news value theory, is a crucial consideration.

Indeed, there is good reason to seek to better understand media content through these means. Comprehension of media coverage of candidates can lead to readers becoming more familiar with the bias that may or may not exist in this coverage. A lack of bias means there is objectivity. Such objectivity within the press is important to democracy because it allows those who come in contact with the press to form their own opinions and ideas without having these thoughts influenced by outside forces. According to the social identity theory, people want to form identities that connect them to other people (Turel & Osatuyi, 2021). If there is not objectivity within press and fake news is being spread, meaning a certain idea the writer wants to advance is the entire framework of the article, people could agree with the information in the work, even if it is not true, to simply align their thinking with peers (Turel & Osatuyi, 2021). Because people are easily influenced and have a desire to be similar to those in a community, objectivity in the press within a democracy is important due to its ability to allow individuals to be completely unbiased in their formation of opinions (Turel & Osatuyi, 2021).

The problem this thesis focuses on regards whether there is bias, or a lack of objectivity, in the media coverage of the *NYT* and the *WP*. Further, it relates to how these outlets covered

Pence and Harris, in general within a time period of 2 weeks before and after the election, although it does not examine or prove media effects. The subject examined here is how the leading media outlets of the *NYT* and the *WP* covered the two vice-presidential candidates in the 2020 election. This research provides insight as to the type of coverage two popular outlets in media have, and by understanding these media, researchers can understand the ways media content is structured. This thesis focuses on the structure of media coverage through the *NYT* and the *WP* before and immediately after the 2020 election, to better understand political coverage as it relates to Pence and Harris specifically but also vice-presidential candidates (which have been understudied) more generally.

This subject is important because it has a relevance that extends to political coverage as a whole, and it broadens the literature that already exists concerning media coverage of politics, political events, and media bias around the world. For example, Lašas (2017) studied media and politics in Lithuania. Similarly, Power et al. (2016) examined Irish media coverage as it pertained to political protests. There is also an extensive amount of coverage related to how outlets can influence readers' states of mind. For instance, Kim and Patnode (2021) found certain outlets, such as sports outlets, evoke different emotional responses in readers than others, and, as such, a reader could view a story from certain outlets as more positive. How a reader views an outlet determines their consumption of news from this outlet (Kim & Patnode, 2021).

If a reader feels positively toward an outlet, they will likely continue to use the outlet, and consume that information and news more (Ardèvol-Abreu & Gil de Zúñiga, 2017). In this same regard, readers who have favorable opinions toward certain presidential candidates will view outlets who cover these candidates advantageously less negatively than outlets that might not (Weeks et al., 2019). The attitudes of readers, and whether bias can affect their perceptions, has

been shown to depend on how much benevolence outlets show toward certain politicians and topics (Weeks et al., 2019).

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Outlets, and even headlines from these outlets, can influence readers' attitudes (Weeks et al., 2019). The *Drudge Report* is a website comprised of headlines with links to media outlets' coverage (Hsu, 2020). In 1998, the *Drudge Report* was even involved in then-president Bill Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky (Shin, 2018). The *Drudge Report* alleged *Newsweek* knew about the relationship but was withholding this information (Shin, 2018). The report is powerful in its ability to introduce readers to a multitude of stories at once. This type of power can translate into readers forming certain types of perceptions about people and events based on the headlines they see. Once an entity has power, bias being present or not present can further solidify certain ways of thinking in readers (Freedman, 2014). Therefore, understanding the presence of media bias is extremely important.

Media bias could exist based on coverage in specific countries. Media from any country has always had an intertwined relationship with political coverage; however, there are some overlaps in how media outlets cover political candidates and the effects this coverage has (Ciaglia, 2013). Much of the research related to media coverage and political candidates focuses on certain nations, such as the United States. For instance, research shows that individuals involved in media can have specific motivations for conducting coverage a certain way (Raymond & Taylor, 2021). Specifically, wanting to increase demand and increase readership is of prime importance to many in media (Raymond & Taylor, 2021). Media coverage tends to reflect the desires of the writer regarding how a subject becomes covered (Raymond & Taylor, 2021).

The literature has also found that media can be particularly interested in reaching youth and is responsible for increasing awareness of a subject area. Some media can have an interest in

youth due to a youth's relatively strong impact in a family unit, their participation in protests, and their influence in future elections (Hussain, Sajid, & Jullandhry, 2018). Media can also be examined through a culturalist perspective (Block, 2013). Media can be used to enhance an individual's understanding of culture and cultural processes (Block, 2013). Media's political coverage can be used to increase knowledge in any subject the writer sees fit (Uldam, 2019). The literature related to media coverage of politics reinforces the notion that media can create coverage a certain way to enhance interests or influence perceptions of an idea.

Another aspect of existing literature tied to this thesis' subject is race as discussed by media. The media have used race to further the notion that non-white individuals are invading spaces and areas meant for white individuals (Edwards, 2021). For instance, when Mollie Tibbetts was murdered, some media outlets constructed their coverage around the idea that her murderer, an undocumented individual, had immersed himself in a country he should not have (Edwards, 2021). Other scholars have discussed the connection between race and free expression in media; specifically, to allow an unfiltered commentary of events from media outlets, discussions about race are sometimes necessary but uncomfortable (Khiabany & Williamson, 2015). Research has also been centered on the use of racial stereotypes, both in a media context and a non-media context (Tukachinsky, 2015). Race has proven to be a worthwhile research subject that the media can use for its purposes, although substantial, recent literature related to race in politics is lacking. What the literature does show is that even if a constituent harbors negative feelings toward a politician due to race, he or she may still support this candidate if this candidate is viewed as the best option (Meyer & Woodard, 2017). Regardless, race has been shown to frame many important issues that exist today (Edwards, 2021).

Similarly, gender within media is another thought-provoking topic. The media can reflect the experiences of everyday women when it comes to what they do or do not experience because of their gender (Wenhold & Harrison, 2021). In addition, the media has been shown to illuminate important issues related to gender (Wenhold & Harrison, 2021). The media can be responsible for spreading messages about issues related to gender (Lopez et al., 2013). Lastly, the media are responsible for crafting certain messages around gender (Aaldering & Van Der Pas, 2020). In particular, media outlets construct their coverage around male politicians differently than they do around female politicians with the idea that male politicians display vigor in ways female politicians do not (Aaldering & Van Der Pas, 2020). The literature focusing on gender is highly relevant to this thesis, although literature revolving around gender and politics within the last 10 years and involving American politicians is somewhat sparse.

The literature pertaining to gender in news media demonstrates the notion that women who are politicians are subject to stereotypes in ways men are not (Bauer & Taylor, 2022). Women can be seen as not being as prepared for leadership as men, leading to fewer women being elected in positions of power (Bauer & Taylor, 2022). This information is reinforced in other literature, especially regarding the coverage of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Governor Sarah Palin in 2008, where similar stereotyping was found through the research (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009). The negativity revolving around female politicians can easily lead to these women's ability to lead being doubted (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009). Similarly, gender bias has been shown to be present as it regards to how much coverage a female politician receives in electoral systems, although this gender bias is not present in electoral systems of a majoritarian nature (Van der Pas & Aaldering, 2020). More focus also tends to be on a woman politician's looks and personal details than on a man who is a politician (Van der Pas & Aaldering, 2020). News media

construct messages around men who run for office differently than they construct messages around women who do (Van der Pas & Aaldering, 2020).

The political landscape, in general, influences media coverage, just as the environments of urban areas, specifically, do (Rodgers et al., 2014). In addition, an aspect of urban areas is the digital media its residents use. The extensiveness with which media are used dictates the type of coverage media output (Rodgers et al., 2014). For example, in areas where Facebook is popular, politicians have been shown to use their Facebook accounts to make their reputations more credible and build more integrity among constituents (Orkibi, 2015). Media can be used to distribute content related to politics, but also used by politicians to distribute content that makes them look more appealing (Orkibi, 2015). Media, in general, can be a powerful tool politicians and journalists use to create, and spread, a certain message to fulfill a goal they have as politicians and journalists.

Understanding media coverage in relation to political candidates is especially prudent when considering the 2020 vice-presidential election due to how historical it was and how this historicalness may or may not correspond to specific coverage. The 2020 election was historic due to Harris' background. As the second female to run for vice president, after Palin, and the first person of color to run for the office, Harris was a unique candidate. Upon winning the election, Harris became the first woman to reach the vice-presidential office and the first person of color to achieve this feat. Harris' campaign was extremely significant for these reasons.

The thesis' subject demonstrates the notion that scholarship, including this thesis, can be built on each other and enriched. Understanding how Pence and Harris were written about can help researchers and even those not involved in the scholarly community understand similar elections. This subject can be extended upon and elaborated with a variety of other topics,

making it applicable to research conducted by other individuals. Comprehending what type of media coverage there was about these two candidates enables scholars to compare and contrast this data with theirs. The thesis' subject is important because it illuminates how newspapers can create their coverage, which is a worthwhile subject many find interest in due to its relevance.

Framing theory is an important theory that relates to the media and therefore this thesis' subject. Erving Goffman (1974) first discussed a conceptualization of framing theory decades ago. Goffman wrote about how the media can structure information a certain way so that an angle is present (1974). This theory is especially useful for the purposes of this thesis, as it pertains to media coverage and how the *NYT* and the *WP* have discussed Pence and Harris.

Gatekeeping theory is another theory that could be applied to this thesis. Kurt Lewin (1947) created the theory. Lewin wrote about how some individuals can decide what information a group is or is not exposed to and thus are gatekeepers (Lewin, 1947). The theory is helpful for this thesis since the media can be seen as gatekeepers, specifically the *NYT* and the *WP*.

News value theory is beneficial as well and pertains to the notion that certain values determine what is and is not suitable for news (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Events are not inherently newsworthy; there are certain aspects that do dictate this state, however (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). This theory is useful for this thesis since the media, specifically the *NYT* and the *WP*, did decide that Harris and Pence were newsworthy topics.

Other researchers who have focused on media systems include Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky. Herman and Chomsky's research revolved around the notion that media outlets act in the interest of the entities that own them, and they tailor their content to benefit the company (1988). The *NYT* and the *WP* are owned by corporations that have a desire to stay relevant and, to do so, these media outlets will generate content that appeals to the masses

(Herman & Chomsky, 1988). Harris is covered in a more positive light than Pence in both outlets. By creating coverage this way, both outlets have created content that is appealing to the liberal masses, aligning with Herman and Chomsky's research.

W. Lance Bennett also contributed to the field of media research. Bennett's research involved understanding how political issues attract interest (1975). The ability to define phenomena and comprehend how these definitions influence our perspectives is essential (Bennett, 1975). Analyzing Harris' run from its historical viewpoint determines how much interest is gained from the historical nature of Harris' candidacy. The *NYT* and the *WP* understood the consequences of Harris' run both from a racial perspective and a gender perspective and decided to create articles based on this notion that emphasized how historical Harris' run was. As such, Bennett's work on political definitions provides insight into this idea.

Research Questions

An assessment of the literature led to five research questions (RQs) that are presented as the following:

RQ1- How much change does each outlet show Pence and Harris as making?

RQ2a- Is race mentioned in regards to Harris more than Pence?

RQ2b- Is race mentioned positively, negatively, neutrally, or not specified in any way?

RQ3a- Is gender mentioned in regards to Harris more than Pence?

RQ3b- Is gender mentioned positively, negatively, neutrally, or not specified in any way?

RQ4- Is one political party mentioned more than another?

RQ5- Is one political ideology mentioned more than another?

All research questions were used to gather the most detailed information possible; the third chapter discusses data collection and analysis as pertaining to the methods in this thesis.

Chapter 3 - Methods

The method used in this thesis was a content analysis. A content analysis was chosen due to its ability to closely examine the relationships and contexts of certain words being used with other words. A content analysis would be able to offer an amount of detail for this endeavor that was most appropriate. The unit of analysis were headlines from the *NYT* and the *WP* pertaining to Harris and Pence. This unit of analysis was also chosen due to its conciseness and the fact it allows an individual to fully grasp how a politician is covered by the media. The time frame of 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after the election was selected because such a time period would lead to a specific number of articles. Having too many articles could lead to broad conclusions, while having too few articles could lead to not specific enough conclusions. Thus, the time frame, as well as the other components, chosen hoped to avoid this situation to gain the most beneficial data.

The thesis pertained to how media outlets covered vice-presidential candidates in 2020. This endeavor was undertaken to understand how possibly consequential, for historical purposes, Harris' win would be and how she would be covered differently than Pence. A difference in coverage could then lead to the existence, or lack of existence, of media bias. Being able to build on the research of past scholars was a key desire as it relates to media bias and outlets. Understanding how politics have been researched in the past, and what ideas have arisen from this coverage, was essential. To understand the present and the future, the past first needs to be comprehended.

The *NYT* and the *WP* were chosen due to their relevance and importance in understanding media coverage because of their level of prestige. Many people are aware of these outlets and value what these outlets report. Further, the *WP*'s location in Washington, DC gives the outlet a

unique aspect other outlets do not have. The newspaper is close to the political action in this country. In addition, these outlets are reputable (Hepburn, 2021). Lastly, the breadth of information these outlets could cover, even in their headlines only, was meaningful, which led to the final choice of these outlets.

This research is practical due to its continued relevance. Political elections will likely exist for many centuries to come. Understanding how news outlets depict candidates is fundamental for knowing how ideas can be created and shaped. It is also important to understand the historical implications behind electing certain individuals. For example, Harris is a woman and a person of color. Becoming vice president was a significant historical moment for these reasons. Understanding how news outlets like the *NYT* and the *WP* cover moments like these is key to comprehending how news outlets will cover future elections and again relates to the continued relevance of this type of research.

The purpose of the thesis was to analyze this significance and completely understand the coverage of media outlets regarding political candidates. The purpose was to glean useful information that can be applied to a variety of circumstances. Accessing the mechanisms of the media and how these mechanisms can be used to create certain coverage guided the thesis. The goal of being able to understand media coverage of important political events and connecting this coverage to broader situations involving theory and communication concepts was paramount.

To measure primary change, secondary change, race, race valence, gender, gender valence, political party, and ideology, the researcher used the home page of the *NYT* and the *WP*'s websites to type in "Mike Pence" and "Kamala Harris." These search results generated any headline with Pence or Harris mentioned. After refining the results to the specified time period, 76 articles were found.

These headlines were coded and operationalized with the following criteria: for primary and secondary change, whether Pence or Harris' ability to invoke influence was measured (see Appendix A). 1, for primary change, was coded as either candidate invoking positive change, while 2 was either candidate invoking negative change, 3 was substantial change, 4 was a lack of change, 5 was change not present, and 6 was neutral change. For example, one headline was, "Harris Pays Tribute to Women Who Came Before Her." This headline was coded, for primary change, as 6, neutral, because Harris' behavior is neither positive, negative, or substantial, she is simply paying tribute. Secondary change shared this same coding and was added to allow the researcher the ability to measure change in more than one way if it was evident in more than one way. For instance, for the same headline, secondary change was coded as 5, not being present, because another notion of change had not been indicated. The other coding schemes followed a similar pattern.

For race, 1 was coded as person of color, 2 was white, and 3 was race not present. Pertaining to race valence, 1 was positive, 2 was negative, 3 was race not present, and 4 was neutral. Gender valence shared this same coding scheme, while, for gender, 1 was woman, 2 was man, 3 was nonbinary or other, and 4 was gender not present. For political party, 1 was Republican, 2 was Democrat, 3 was Independent, and 4 was political party not present. For political ideology, 1 was conservative, 2 was liberal, 3 was moderate, and 4 was political ideology not present.

In total, 76 articles, 42 being the *NYT* and 34 being the *WP*, were coded. After the data collection, intercoder reliability was calculated. The researcher's second coder was given explicit instructions regarding what to look for in each of the 20 headlines she was given. This individual was trained in the content of the categories and data input. Upon completion, this second coder's

data were combined with the researcher's data in one Excel file. The available data were then inputted into the Deen Freelon's intercoder reliability website *ReCal*, where Krippendorff's alpha was found (see Appendix B). This information revealed that, for variables 7 and 8, which were political party and ideology, there was 100% agreement. For variable 1, which was primary change, the Krippendorff's alpha was 0.753. For variable 2, which was secondary change, the Krippendorff's alpha was 0.835. For variable 3, which was race, the Krippendorff's alpha was 0.618. When specifying race valence, the Krippendorff's alpha was 1. For variable 4, which was gender, not specifying valence, the Krippendorff's alpha was 0.655. When specifying gender valence, the Krippendorff's alpha was 1.

Although the reliability was not particularly strong with some variables, the alpha scores were only slightly below the validity threshold and are still a good representation of data moving in the right direction. After the calculation of intercoder reliability and the criteria of reliability being met, the data were uploaded into JASP, a statistics software. Contingency tests were run to understand Cramer's *V*, the chi-square coefficient, and descriptive statistics. Data were then extrapolated from these tests to make certain conclusions.

The data analyzed for the purposes of this thesis were collected at the nominal level of measurement for race, gender, political party, and ideology. Data collected at the ordinal level included primary change, secondary change, race valence, and gender valence. This information was chosen because it was most representative of the categories. In order to carry out statistical analyses to test the hypotheses posed, the software package JASP was used.

For the primary change variable, change not present reflected 57.895% of coverage altogether. The mean was 4.308 (SD = 1.316) for Pence and 3.397 (SD = 2.036) for Harris. In this case, 1, for primary change, involved positive change, 2 involved either candidate invoking

negative change, 3 involved either candidate invoking substantial change, 4 pertained to a lack of change, 5 was change not present, and 6 was neutral change.

For the secondary change variable, change not present reflected 69.737% of overall coverage. Negative change appeared in 3.175 % of overall headlines. The mean for Pence was 5.231 (SD = 0.439), and the mean was for Harris was 5.190 (SD = 0.737). Secondary change shared the same coding scheme as primary change.

For the race variable, race not present contained a percentage of 73.684% in terms of appearance. The mean for Pence was 3.000 (SD = 0.000), and the mean for Harris was 2.365 (SD = 0.938). Accounting for race valence, race not present represented 73.684% of coverage. The mean for Pence was 3.000 (SD = 0.000), and the mean for Harris was 2.635 (SD = 1.140). For race, 1 was coded as a person of color being mentioned, 2 was white, and 3 was race not present. Regarding race valence, 1 pertained to positive, 2 to negative, 3 to race not present, and 4 to neutral.

For the gender variable, gender not present appeared in 71.053 % of coverage. The mean for Pence was 4.000 (SD = 0.000), and the mean for Harris was 2.968 (SD = 1.425). Accounting for gender valence, the overall percentage of gender not present was 71.053%. The mean for Pence was 4.000 (SD = 0.000), and the mean for Harris was 3.286 (SD = 1.507). Gender valence had the same coding scheme as race valence, but, for gender, 1 was seen as a woman in some capacity being mentioned, 2 was a man, 3 was a nonbinary or other individual, and 4 was gender not present.

For the political party variable, political party not present reflected 97.368% of coverage. The mean for Pence was 4.000 (SD = 0.000), and the mean for Harris was 3.937 (SD = 0.353).

The last variable, political ideology, was not present in 98.684 % of headlines. The mean for Pence was 4.000 (SD = 0.000), and the mean for Harris was 3.984 (SD = 0.126).

Harris was mentioned more than Pence, appearing in 82.894% or 63 of headlines across both outlets, while Pence appeared in 17.105%, or 13, of headlines.

Chapter 4 - Results

For the first research question, which was “how much primary and secondary change each candidate was expected to create,” results of a chi-square test found that there was a statistically significant difference for primary change ($\chi^2 = 21.503$, $df = 3$, $p < .001$). This means that the differences in how Pence and Harris were covered are not due to chance in the *NYT* and *WP* during this period of time. The Cramer’s *V* was 0.532, which meant there was a relatively strong relationship between variables. More specifically, it is clear that Harris was covered more in terms of positive change (41.270%) and neutral change (4.762%) out of all the coverage about her. In terms of comparison, coverage of Pence was skewed more towards negative change (23.077%) or no change at all being mentioned (76.923%). Regarding Harris coverage, change was not present in 53.968% of her coverage. Positive change was not present at all for Pence, while it was for Harris, showing a contrast in coverage. The contingency table for primary change is summarized in Table 4.1., with the chi-squared tests of statistical significance included, as well as the Cramer’s *V* coefficient. Insert Table 4.1 about here---

When analyzing the secondary change component of the first RQ, another chi-square test did not provide evidence of a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = 0.647$, $df = 2$, $p = 0.724$). This means that the differences in coverage related to Pence and Harris were so minor that how the candidates were framed in terms of secondary change themes did not substantially diverge. In other words, when looking at secondary change coverage, the candidates were treated similarly. However, the data show that Harris did have a more negative depiction when it pertains to secondary change (0.000% for Pence and 3.175% for Harris). Harris was also shown as having more neutral secondary change than Pence, with 28.571% compared to 23.077%. Change was not present, for secondary change, in 68.254% of Harris coverage and 76.923% of Pence coverage. For this analysis, the Cramer's V coefficient was 0.092, which shows a very strong relationship between these variables. The contingency table for secondary change is seen in Table 4.2., with the chi-squared tests of statistical significance there, as well as the Cramer's V coefficient. Insert Table 4.2 about here---

For research question two, which was “is race mentioned more in reference to Harris more than Pence,” there was also dissimilar content when analyzing data based on race in general, without including its valence. Harris’ identity as a person of color was mentioned in 31.746% of coverage, meaning race was not present in 68.254% of coverage related to her, and no articles mentioned Pence’s racial identity. The coded term to measure Pence’s racial identity was the use of the word white, which did not appear in any coverage related to Pence. This information is summarized in Table 4.3. In addition, a chi-square test found there was a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = 5.601$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.018$). This information, along with the Cramer’s *V* coefficient, is part of Table 4.3. This chi-square result means that the findings were likely not due to chance, and the findings are statistically significant. The Cramer’s *V* was 0.271, showing a moderate association between variables. Insert Table 4.3 about here---

There was different coverage based on the valence of race when it was mentioned for each candidate. Harris' racial identity as a person of color was mentioned positively in 23.810% of coverage and negatively in 3.175% of coverage, while race, using the word white, was not present in any of the articles mentioning Pence. Harris' race was mentioned neutrally in 4.762% of coverage. In addition, the Cramer's V coefficient was 0.271, demonstrating a moderate association between variables. A chi-square test of race valence found there was not a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = 5.601$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.133$). This finding shows that the dissimilarities between Pence and Harris, based on race, could be due to chance corresponding to newspaper coverage 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after the election. All this information is summarized in Table 4.4. Insert Table 4.4 about here---

For research question three, which was “is gender mentioned more in regards to Harris than Pence,” Harris’ gender as a woman, without accounting for valence, was mentioned in 33.333% of coverage, meaning gender was not mentioned in 65.079% of Harris coverage, while Pence’s gender was not mentioned at all under the measure of the usage of the word man. Man was referenced in connection to Harris’ husband, not Pence, accounting for 1.587% of coverage. This information is present in Table 4.5. There was a statistically significant relationship between variables ($\chi^2 = 6.389$, $df = 2$, $p = 0.041$). The Cramer’s V coefficient was 0.290. This coefficient shows a moderate association between variables. Insert Table 4.5 about here---

Harris' status as a woman was also mentioned positively in 26.984% of coverage, and negatively in 1.587% of coverage. Gender was not present in 65.079% of coverage related to Harris. Gender was covered neutrally in 6.349% of Harris coverage. This information is present in Table 4.6, along with the chi-square and Cramer's *V* coefficient. Pence's gender was not mentioned at all, in reference to him being a man. A chi-square test of gender valence discovered that there was not a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = 6.389$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.094$). This information shows that the coverage differences pertaining to Pence and Harris were likely due to chance in the *NYT* and the *WP*. While the significance level did not reach less than .05, at 0.094, it still may be meaningful because it is illustrative of how Pence and Harris were covered. The Cramer's *V* coefficient was 0.290, showing a moderate relationship between variables. Insert Table 4.6 about here---

For the fourth research question, which was “is one political party mentioned more than another,” Harris was associated with the phrase “Democrat” during coverage, with this word appearing in 3.175% of coverage related to her, while “Republican” did not occur at all. “Political party not present” was not present in any of the coverage related to Pence. This information is present in Table 4.7, along with chi-square and the Cramer’s V coefficient. Chi-square results found that there was not a statistically significant difference for political party ($\chi^2 = 0.424$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.515$). This information shows that the differences in Pence and Harris coverage were almost certainly due to chance and can be interpreted as having no bearing on the coverage whatsoever. Again, this finding is important due to what it does show. The Cramer’s V coefficient was 0.075, showing a very weak association between these variables. Insert Table 4.7 about here---

For the fifth research question, which was “is one political ideology mentioned more than another,” moderate was mentioned in relation to Harris 1.587% of the time, while political ideology was not mentioned 98.413% of the time as it related to Harris. Political ideology was also not mentioned in 100% of Pence coverage; this information is seen in Table 4.8, along with the chi-square and the Cramer’s *V* coefficient. Chi-square results showed that there was also not a statistically significant difference for political ideology ($\chi^2 = 0.209$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.647$). This finding again demonstrates that the differences in coverage of Pence and Harris in terms of ideology were not substantial and can be considered equivalent. The Cramer’s *V* coefficient was 0.052, showing a very weak association between the variables. Insert Table 4.8 about here---

Chapter 5 - Discussion

The data reveal that there is variety in how newspaper outlets cover the same topic, and there are also similarities. Both the *NYT* and the *WP* covered Harris with emphasis on her race and gender more so than Pence and used her race and gender in headlines to reinforce the significance of her vice-presidential run. Pence's traits were not highlighted in a similar way, reflecting the lack of change his re-election would entail. Harris' status as a person of color and a woman were ways to differentiate her from Pence. Similarly, meaningful aspects of Pence's background were not covered. This notion again reflects the idea that bias should be considered by researchers when gathering information related to media coverage.

The findings illustrate a connection between Harris' background as a person of color and a female with relatively favorable media coverage of those characteristics. Interestingly, the analyses do not identify any aspect of Pence's background in a similar way—in fact, his racial identity and gender were completely absent in coverage—thereby demonstrating differences in how these candidates were framed. Harris was depicted as having a background that would be unique. Her identity as a person of color and a woman was covered as noteworthy, while Pence's background as a white male was not covered.

To the point of this thesis, Harris' background was emphasized along racial and gender lines while Pence's background was not. While Harris' background would be historical in that she would be the first vice president of color and the first female vice president, Pence would be another white male as vice president. Pence did not benefit from his male identity, but it was not held against him in either outlet. Conversely, race and gender were key points of coverage related to Harris, although it was not a statistically significant difference. Harris' race and gender

were treated as positive, whereas Pence's race and gender had no bearing on the way he was covered.

Harris' race and gender being framed in a positive way is not surprising given existing literature. Voters usually do not know a substantial amount of information about the politicians they are voting for, instead finding shortcuts to evaluate their opinions of the candidates (McLaughlin & Thompson, 2016). In this case, Harris' race and gender could be shortcuts for voters so it is sensible for the *NYT* and the *WP* to discuss these topics. Similarly, existing literature has discussed the importance of black politicians not alienating white voters; the positive framing of Harris' gender, in particular, could be appealing to black and white voters who are women (Platt, 2017). Therefore, it is again sensible for the *NYT* and the *WP* to frame her gender positively. Lastly, black voters have fewer negative opinions of Democratic politicians than Republican ones (Stout & Le, 2017). For any black reader of the *NYT* or the *WP*, he or she could already have a more positive opinion of Harris over Pence. Capitalizing on the notion that Harris' background makes her more relatable to these individuals is again a reasonable action from the *NYT* and *WP* and could serve as a possible basis for the outlets conducting the coverage in this manner.

Harris and Pence were covered differently, as Harris was covered differently from Palin. Palin was mocked, and her appearance was commented on, while Harris' was not. (Snipes & Mudde, 2020). Harris was covered in a fair, factual manner while Palin was mischaracterized and depicted in a negative way (Snipes & Mudde, 2020). Even though Palin could have been the first female vice president, her gender was used against her, while Harris' was not. The newspapers showed a clear distinction between how Harris was seen and how Pence was seen, and a similar distinction can be seen in the Harris and Palin case as well.

All the research questions related to this information were answered. The first RQ asked which type of change each candidate would be expected to bring based on the coverage of Pence and Harris. The data indicated that Harris was shown as making a different kind of change than Pence. While Pence was covered as not bringing any change, Harris was portrayed as bringing about different forms of change in coverage by the *NYT* and the *WP*. Even Harris' husband no longer retaining his job as a lawyer to support his wife was mentioned, despite it not directly involving Harris. The evidence shows that Harris was viewed more favorably, indicating a degree of media bias could be present. However, this result was not found with secondary change. With secondary change, Harris was not viewed more favorably than Pence.

The second RQ asked whether race was mentioned more regarding Harris than Pence. The results found that Harris' race was an extensive point of coverage. The *NYT* and the *WP* specifically focused on Harris' status as a biracial woman. Harris' background was a noticeable aspect of her candidacy, unlike Pence's. In addition, the results were not statistically significant, meaning there is a possibility that the differences in coverage were due to chance, although the information is still noteworthy because it dispels the notion of media bias as it pertains to race, and the data related to race valence shows Harris' race was considered positive whereas Pence's was not.

The third RQ determined whether gender was made apparent in Harris' headlines rather than Pence's, while the fourth and fifth questions pertained to a political party or ideology being mentioned more. Data found that gender was a major component of Harris' candidacy and possible election as related to her media coverage, but the results were not statistically significant, meaning differences could be due to chance. However, mentions of gender related to Pence were not used in a similar way and were instead nonexistent. This information

demonstrates that the *NYT* and the *WP* had an agenda in mind when crafting coverage related to Harris. The outlets wanted the reader to think about what Harris represented since she was a historical candidate. She represented the potential to be the first female vice president and the first vice president to be a person of color. By electing Harris, constituents could evoke a historic change that would not be represented if they reelected Pence. Harris being vice president would bring a change in history, while Pence's reelection would not, thus answering the third research question and perhaps explaining why Harris' gender was mentioned more than Pence's.

The data relating to gender valence does not indicate a level of media bias or comes close to such a proposition. However, Harris' gender was a positive point of discussion, and Pence's was not mentioned at all. Although this information does not indicate bias necessarily, there is a difference in how these two candidates were covered in terms of gender. Harris' gender was a highlight of her media coverage, while Pence's was not. Harris was seen as important because of her gender, whereas Pence was not.

The fourth RQ pertained to whether a political party was mentioned more in reference to Harris or Pence. The results were not statistically significant. The lack of statistical significance means that there is a higher probability that the differences in media coverage occurred out of chance. If there was a *p*-value of .05 or lower, it would be easy to conclude that the differences in coverage are likely not due to chance, but no such conclusion can be formed in this case. The fact that a political party was mentioned in conjunction with either candidate could be due to chance. "Democrat" was not a term associated with Harris, while "Republican" was a term heavily associated with Pence. This choice could be deliberate. Regardless, "Republican" was a phrase heavily associated with Pence and somewhat associated with Harris, while "Democrat" was not.

The fifth RQ regarded the presence of political ideology with each candidate mention. The results were not statistically significant, meaning it is possible the differences in political ideology coverage are due to chance. Implicit values are present in the news, and these values can also dictate what news outlets can choose to write about and what stories to ignore, including whether political ideology is covered a certain way (Castro et al., 2021). Capitalism, for example, is a topic often covered by news outlets (Castro et al., 2021). If a news outlet is creating coverage on, moderatism for example, they could have implicit values dictating such coverage. The only political ideology mentioned was regarding Harris, and it referred to moderatism. This information shows that political ideology was not as important as race and gender, for instance, when it came to describing either candidate. Emphasizing Harris' gender as well as her race was more important. These aspects were not as newsworthy as race and gender because they were not unusual in the way Harris' background was. The fact that political ideology was not as meaningful as race and gender, when it came to coverage, is reflective of the historical undertones Harris' candidacy contained.

The results, as a whole, indicate that Harris' background offered clear benefits that Pence's did not. She was viewed as being a positive changemaker, while Pence was viewed as not initiating change. Harris' background as a person of color and a woman was notable and discussed, but Pence's background as a Caucasian individual and a man was not deemed important enough for discussion. There is evidence that the coverage was skewed toward Harris on the basis of change, race, and gender, although political party and ideology proved not significant. The lack of significance regarding political party and ideology shows that the coverage was not focused on trying to construct a certain image around political party and ideology, but instead made differentiations based on race and gender. Although these findings do

not necessarily show bias, they do show a clear distinction between how Harris was covered and how Pence was covered.

Framing Based on Race and Gender

The historical aspects of Harris' coverage and candidacy pertain to framing theory. Framing theory, as stated at the beginning of the thesis, refers to the idea that the media are responsible for what its audience members pay attention to within coverage in the sense that a specific frame can be presented that can be influential if there is already an opinion in place that an individual can easily access and believe (Bullock & Shulman, 2021). The newspapers operated with the notion that Harris was more important to pay attention to than Pence, so both outlets dedicated much of their coverage to her which, in itself, could be a reflection of the framing the media use (Bullock & Sherman, 2021). In addition, because of how potentially consequential her election would be on the basis of race and gender, these outlets dedicated substantial coverage to these aspects of her background as well. Harris was framed from the perspective of how unique her racial identity, and gender, were as compared to other vice-presidential candidates, while Pence was not framed in this way. Electing Pence would have the same outcome as every other vice-presidential election had. By emphasizing this contrast between candidates, the *NYT* and the *WP* framed Harris in the context of how important her background, as framing theory suggests (Bullock & Sherman, 2021).

The findings also connect to gatekeeping theory. Gatekeepers are responsible for showing the world a certain way (Shoemaker & Reese, 1991). Gatekeepers decide what does and does not comprise news (Shoemaker & Reese, 1991). Those in the media filter content to present specific types of information (Shoemaker & Reese, 1991). Politicians and recognizable individuals are often chosen by the media to be the center of news stories (Gans, 1979). In addition, the media

tend to sensationalize events and draw attention to impactful people (Gans, 1979). Both of these pieces of information align with the *NYT* and *WP* coverage since Harris and Pence were two high-profile individuals capable of making a great impact. Due to this nature, the media, acting as gatekeepers, chose to focus a high number of their stories on these individuals, thus choosing what information to expose readers to amidst the coverage.

The news value theory can be applied to this thesis due to its notion that, if a news story has components of relevance to the reader, it is valuable as a story and thus should be included as one (Ziegele et al., 2018). In this regard, it aligns with the *NYT* and the *WP* coverage because Harris and Pence were highly relevant topics due to these two individuals being candidates in the 2020 vice-presidential election. Due to these individuals having relevance, they were chosen as the topic of news stories, and given value by the media (Ziegele et al., 2018). This theory, along with the framing theory and the gatekeeping theory, can easily explain why Harris and Pence were the center of media coverage.

Theory, in general, also relates to Herman and Chomsky's work. The researchers' work focused on the idea that news outlets customize information to align with corporate interests (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). In this case, the *NYT* and the *WP* knew that Harris' race and gender were historically important and would appeal to constituents, so these areas of Harris' background were capitalized. To increase readership, these outlets focused on portraying Harris positively, by viewing her candidacy mostly through how impactful it would be and did not have this endeavor with Pence. By creating news that was customized in this way, the reporters were able to satisfy those higher on the corporate ladder since increased readership means increased profits. There is a component of selfishness with Herman and Chomsky's work, and this

information aligns with this component of selfishness. Instead of reporting the news in an unbiased, factual way, a clear angle was implemented in political coverage.

This information also connects to Bennett's work. Bennett's work centered around the idea that political elites control what news outlets publish (1990). Pleasing liberal and Democratic politicians with coverage emphasizing Harris is a way to find a certain audience among those who wield the most power and influence. In this case, by focusing so much on Harris, these individuals were satisfied. Herman, Chomsky, and Bennett essentially all have the same perspective that those working in the media industry have motives not related to pure journalistic integrity that guides their coverage. In Herman and Chomsky's case, the motives correspond with pleasing those in high positions, just as they do in Bennett's work.

The chi-square test is a test of reliability that is useful for this thesis, as Herman, Chomsky, and Bennett's work was. The chi-square test is a method through which researchers can understand whether the differences in data are the result of chance, or if these differences result because of the studied variables. In other words, the chi-square test allows the researcher to comprehend whether Pence and Harris were covered differently on race, for example, due to chance or if there was a relationship. The chi-square was used, in this thesis, due to its ability to inform its user of whether there is a presence of variable association.

Another aspect of the research was calculating the *p*-value. The *p*-value refers to the calculation that is used to understand whether the null hypothesis has a high or low probability of being true. The null hypothesis states that statistical significance is nonexistent. The *p*-value allows a researcher to know whether variables have a connection due to chance or an actual relationship. The *p*-value should be .05 or below in order for randomness to be minimized. For example, if the *p*-value is .05, that means the given relationship is accurate in 95% of cases. The

p -value, in this research, was calculated by JASP and allowed the researcher to form basic assumptions.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion

Aside from data organization, the data have implications for other research possibly centering on the same, or similar, topic. The data show that the media are most interested in the most noteworthy aspects of a political candidate. If other researchers focus their research on how the media does cover political candidates, they should be aware that whatever generates the most interest will likely be most discussed. As such, these researchers may need to customize their research questions and hypotheses to align with this situation. For example, perhaps a researcher wants to discuss how the influence of politicians has grown in recent years with the advent of social media through a media lens. This researcher should be considerate of how much more power a male candidate might have regarding reaching individuals and how media outlets will likely discuss the significance of the male candidate appealing to a certain segment of the population, such as other males, through social media. Essentially, this researcher should be aware that many in the media have a certain frame constructed around stories, per framing theory, and coverage depends on what angle is being presented. This angle was apparent in this research because both the *NYT* and the *WP* focused somewhat extensively on Harris' race and gender, showing a certain perspective.

Future research can benefit from the research presented in this thesis due to its relevance. Political elections have been a trademark of American society for hundreds of years. This aspect of American life shows no signs of disappearing, and elections are becoming more diverse. In fact, Congress is the most diverse it has ever been, with 23% of its members being a racial or ethnic minority (Schaeffer, 2021). Therefore, it is important to understand how everyday Americans, and even those around the world due to America's impact, comprehend these candidates. Comprehension derives from those who have power cultivating and shaping

opinions, which would be the media. This research can provide individuals, both in the scholarly community and outside of it, with an ability to understand how media outlets will cover candidates with similar backgrounds to Pence and Harris in the future. By understanding what past coverage existed, future coverage can be better predicted. This type of information is simple to draw conclusions from for constituents from all backgrounds. Therefore, this research's relevance is a component of its usefulness.

Another reason this research is useful is that it pertains to two very popular news outlets, the *NYT* and the *WP*. Both outlets are responsible for shaping the opinion of many Americans. In fact, the *NYT* has approximately 7.5 million subscribers (2021). The *WP* has approximately 3 million (Fischer, 2020). In addition to its subscribers, many people see headlines both newspapers generate. The type of reach these outlets have is extensive. Americans come to these sources with the expectation they will be able to find the news. Therefore, understanding how these outlets cover the news is very beneficial because it also allows researchers to understand what many Americans could be thinking due to their popularity.

A third reason this research is helpful is because it can provide other researchers with ideas on how to expand this research. For instance, in the future, other researchers could undertake a similar endeavor but broaden the dates of headlines. Expansion of the date would allow for more articles to be gathered, and the breadth of knowledge could be increased. Similarly, other candidates could be researched, and findings could be compared to the findings in this research. For example, Palin could be analyzed through media coverage and such coverage could be compared to Harris' coverage in a full body of work. There are many ways to incorporate this research into other research. The research here allows scholars to build upon a solid foundation and strengthen what is already in the academic community. All research is

beneficial in this regard due to its ability to allow individuals to enhance existing ideas. Another researcher could also analyze Harris if she runs for re-election in the next election and use this existing work to compare how media coverage might differ. By using the research in this thesis, new research can be implemented to better understand Pence, Harris, or any other politician both in modern times and in the future.

A limitation of this research that other researchers can modify is the number of articles. Although more articles would have been beneficial, the number of articles resulted from the researcher's search terms. The search terms were used because they were able to yield the most concise results. Perhaps, in the future, another researcher could have a more generalized, broader thesis that would also include more generalized, broader search terms. By being less specific, more articles would likely result. While 76 is a substantial number, future studies might provide more articles. Another limitation is the fact that the findings indicate media bias, but they do not prove media effects. In order to establish such findings, an entirely different research approach would need to be taken, where human subjects would be involved.

Although there are 76 articles in this research and it does not prove media bias, the research provides new information by focusing on Pence and Harris in a very historical election, looking, specifically, at their most relevant aspects. Harris is a biracial woman and her significance as the first vice-presidential candidate as such, and eventually, the first vice president was a new area covered by media outlets. At no other point in history had such a candidate been covered. Therefore, the research is new because it emphasizes how media outlets covered this candidate. For instance, Palin ran for vice president in 2008 and she was the first woman in the Republican party to do so. Conducting research on Palin would have similarly

focused on an area of history that had never occurred before. The information resulting from such an endeavor would have been new, just as the information in this research was.

Another reason this research is unique is that it directly compares two candidates with the same standing and is extremely relevant in its timing. While other research might focus on politicians with varying degrees of status, Pence and Harris were vying for the same position with the same status. It was not two atypical politicians. Similarly, a final way this research is unique is because it was conducted in the same year a new vice president was elected. Some researchers wait years to conduct research pertaining to a certain subject. The research, in this case, was done in 2021, when Harris became the new vice president. The timing of this research makes the results more enriching and engrossing, given how relevant they are.

The research, besides being unique, solves the initial main question related to the differences in how Pence and Harris were perceived by media outlets during the 2020 election. The research points to how those in the media cover candidates not necessarily based on their political history or prowess, but parts of their background that make them the most noteworthy. This information is a beneficial predictor for how media outlets could cover future elections. While some might think these outlets will look at the achievements of candidates, the significance behind each candidate is more likely. For instance, if another candidate with a similar background to Harris' runs, media outlets, both including and excluding the *NYT* and the *WP*, will most likely focus on race and gender. These media outlets could just as easily emphasize how the candidate has helped their constituents or how they are more or less moderate than their opponents, but the most newsworthy details will likely be covered the most. This information shows what media outlets look for when publishing to the public.

The research addresses gaps in current research by connecting framing theory to other researchers' work while establishing all this information as part of a larger whole. Instead of ignoring theory, the research connects to theory in a fundamental way. In addition, the research uses what past researchers have already found, such as Herman and Chomsky, and Bennett, but diversifies this information by adding a new component. Specifically, the research is timely, thorough, and is representative of a changing shift in American politics. In recent years, more diverse candidates have risen through the political system in the United States. In fact, Congress is the most diverse it has ever been. This diversity should be reflected in research related to political elections. By having this research center on Harris, it highlights this diversity by assessing how the media analyze such a candidate. While other research might focus only on theory or on relating to other researchers, the information in this thesis does not and allows the reader to form their own opinions regarding the nature of media coverage of diverse candidates in this country.

Additionally, the research takes into account how Harris might be portrayed differently than Pence from the beginning. Instead of obscuring Harris' background in an attempt to focus on the contrast between herself, a Democrat, running against Pence, a Republican, Harris' status as a woman of color and a woman is fully embraced. The nominal and ordinal categories are reflective of Harris' background, and the researcher is aware of how her background can be used to support her and gain voters. Therefore, the racial and gender implications of this research address a gap in race and gender research because it deepens the knowledge that is already out there. By reading this thesis, a more specific, detailed understanding of Harris can result, and this knowledge can then be used by others to expand this research.

This research also fills a gap by conveying information that is relevant for everyone in the country. Understanding how elections work and the process by which media outlets cover candidates is useful for every American, regardless of background. Instead of focusing on a truly vague subject, this research emphasizes an extremely relevant subject that is beneficial on a wide scale. This research can be used to understand future elections and candidates, which is why it is helpful to all citizens and thus fills a gap.

The research in this thesis allowed the researcher to understand how popular outlets cover politicians a certain way. The hope is that this research will allow others to take on similar research endeavors which will lead to the field being broadened. By using what other social scientists have studied, this research continues the tradition of those involved in the scholarly community building on each other's work. As time progresses and more elections occur, media coverage will continue to be a relevant topic and, ideally, with this research, the scholarship of this coverage will be enhanced and bettered.

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Tables and Figures

Table 4.1

Relative Percentages of Primary Change Coverage for each Candidate

		<u>candidate</u>		
		Harris	Pence	Total
Positive	Count	26.000	0.000	26.000
	% within column	41.270 %	0.000 %	34.211 %
Negative	Count	0.000	3.000	3.000
	% within column	0.000 %	23.077 %	3.947 %
Change Not Present	Count	34.000	10.000	44.000
	% within column	53.968 %	76.923 %	57.895 %
Neutral	Count	3.000	0.000	3.000
	% within column	4.762 %	0.000 %	3.947 %
Total	Count	63.000	13.000	76.000
	% within column	100.000 %	100.000 %	100.000 %

Chi-Square

	Value	df	p
x ²	21.503	3	<.001
N	76		

Nominal

	Value^a
Phi-coefficient	NaN
Cramer's V	0.532

Note. Phi coefficient is only available for 2 by 2 contingency Tables

Table 4.2*Relative Percentages of Secondary Change Coverage for each Candidate*

	candidate		
	Harris	Pence	Total
Count	2.000	0.000	2.000
% within column	3.175 %	0.000 %	2.632 %
Count	43.000	10.000	53.000
% within column	68.254 %	76.923 %	69.737 %
Count	18.000	3.000	21.000
% within column	28.571 %	23.077 %	27.632 %
Count	63.000	13.000	76.000
% within column	100.000%	100.000 %	100.000%

Chi-Square

	Value	df	p
X ²	0.647	2	0.724
N	76		

Nominal

	Value^a
Phi-coefficient	NaN
Cramer's V	0.092

Note. Phi coefficient is only available for 2 by 2 contingency Tables

Table 4.3*Relative Percentages of Race Frequency Without Valence for each Candidate*

race		candidate		
		Harris	Pence	Total
Person of Color	Count	20.000	0.000	20.000
	% within column	31.746 %	0.000 %	26.316 %
Race Not Present	Count	43.000	13.000	56.000
	% within column	68.254 %	100.000 %	73.684 %
Total	Count	63.000	13.000	76.000
	% within column	100.000 %	100.000 %	100.000 %

Chi-Square

Value	df	p
X ² 5.601	1	0.018

N 76

Nominal

	Value^a
Phi-coefficient	0.271
Cramer's V	0.271

Note. Phi coefficient is only available for 2 by 2 contingency Tables

Table 4.4*Relative Percentages of Race Valence for Each Candidate*

race valence number		candidate		
		Harris	Pence	Total
Positive	Count	15.000	0.000	15.000
	% within column	23.810 %	0.000 %	19.737 %
Negative	Count	2.000	0.000	2.000
	% within column	3.175 %	0.000 %	2.632 %
Race Not Present	Count	43.000	13.000	56.000
	% within column	68.254 %	100.000 %	73.684 %
Neutral	Count	3.000	0.000	3.000
	% within column	4.762 %	0.000 %	3.947 %
Total	Count	63.000	13.000	76.000
	% within column	100.000 %	100.000 %	100.000 %

Chi-Square

Value	df	p
X ² 5.601	3	0.133
N	76	

Nominal

	Value^a
Phi-coefficient	NaN
Cramer's V	0.271

Note. Phi coefficient is only available for 2 by 2 contingency Tables

Table 4.5*Relative Percentages of Gender Frequency without Valence for Each Candidate*

		candidate		
		Harris	Pence	Total
Woman	Count	21.000	0.000	21.000
	% within column	33.333 %	0.000 %	27.632 %
Man	Count	1.000	0.000	1.000
	% within column	1.587 %	0.000 %	1.316 %
Gender Not Present	Count	41.000	13.000	54.000
	% within column	65.079 %	100.000 %	71.053 %
Total	Count	63.000	13.000	76.000
	% within column	100.000 %	100.000 %	100.000 %

Chi-Square

	Value	df	p
X ²	6.389	2	0.041
N	76		

Nominal

	Value ^a
Phi-coefficient	NaN
Cramer's V	0.290

Note. Phi coefficient is only available for 2 by 2 contingency Tables

Table 4.6*Relative Percentages of Gender Valence for Each Candidate*

gender valence number		candidate		
		Harris	Pence	Total
Positive	Count	17.000	0.000	17.000
	% within column	26.984 %	0.000 %	22.368 %
Negative	Count	1.000	0.000	1.000
	% within column	1.587 %	0.000 %	1.316 %
Gender Not Present	Count	41.000	13.000	54.000
	% within column	65.079 %	100.000 %	71.053 %
Neutral	Count	4.000	0.000	4.000
	% within column	6.349 %	0.000 %	5.263 %
Total	Count	63.000	13.000	76.000
	% within column	100.000 %	100.000 %	100.000 %

Chi-Square

	Value	df	p
X ²	6.389	3	0.094
N	76		

Nominal

	Value^a
Phi-coefficient	NaN
Cramer's V	0.290

Note. Phi coefficient is only available for 2 by 2 contingency Tables

Table 4.7*Relative Percentages of Political Party for Each Candidate*

political party		candidate		
		Harris	Pence	Total
Democrat	Count	2.000	0.000	2.000
	% within column	3.175 %	0.000 %	2.632 %
Political Party Not Present	Count	61.000	13.000	74.000
	% within column	96.825 %	100.000 %	97.368 %
Total	Count	63.000	13.000	76.000
	% within column	100.000 %	100.000 %	100.000 %

Chi-Square

	Value	df	p
X ²	0.424	1	0.515
N	76		

Nominal

	Value^a
Phi-coefficient	0.075
Cramer's V	0.075

Note. Phi coefficient is only available for 2 by 2 contingency Tables

Table 4.8*Relative Percentages of Political Ideology for Each Candidate*

ideology		candidate		
		Harris	Pence	Total
Moderate	Count	1.000	0.000	1.000
	% within column	1.587 %	0.000 %	1.316 %
Political Ideology Not Present	Count	62.000	13.000	75.000
	% within column	98.413 %	100.000 %	98.684 %
Total	Count	63.000	13.000	76.000
	% within column	100.000 %	100.000 %	100.000 %

Chi-Square

	Value	df	p
X ²	0.209	1	0.647

N 76

Nominal

	Value^a
Phi-coefficient	0.052
Cramer's V	0.052

Note. Phi coefficient is only available for 2 by 2 contingency Tables

Appendix A - Codebook

title of headline	date of headline	candidate	outlet	change primary	change secondary	race
Kamala Harris, elected V.P., has risen higher in national politics than any woman before her.	11/07/20		1	1	1	6 3
Kamala Harris Tells Voters to 'Honor the Ancestors'	10/20/2020		1	1	6	5 1
As U.S. Votes, a Village in India Prays for Kamala Harris	11/3/2020		1	1	1	6 1
Kamala Harris and the 'Double Blind' of Racism and Sexism	10/9/2020		1	1	5	5 1
Kamala Harris Makes History as First Woman and Woman of Color as Vice President	11/7/2020		1	1	1	6 1
Kamala Harris's History of Firsts	11/7/2020		1	1	1	6 1
Kamala Harris Makes California History	11/9/2020		1	1	1	6 1
British Peer Criticized for Calling Kamala Harris 'the Indian'	11/9/2020		1	1	5	5 1
Kamala Harris, in a White Suit, Dressing for History	11/8/2020		1	1	1	6 1
It's a Big Deal: TV Coverage Notes Magnitude of Kamala Harris Victory	11/7/2020		1	1	1	6 1
Harris Pays Tribute to Women Who Came Before Her	11/7/2020		1	1	6	5 3
A Long Time Coming: Black Women Celebrate Harris's Ascension	11/7/2020		1	1	1	6 1
Democrats Cheer 'Historic' Win as Race is Called for Biden and Harris	11/7/2020		1	1	1	6 1
Joy in India as Biden and Harris Win, but Questions, Too	11/8/2020		1	1	1	2 1
Before Harris, This Vice President Broke a Racial Barrier	11/10/2020		1	1	6	5 1
I am a Proud Patriotic American,' Harris Says at Rally	10/28/2020		1	1	5	5 3
Trump Tells Supporters to Stop Harris from Becoming the First Woman President	10/26/2020		1	1	1	2 3
This is no Time to Let Up,' Kamala Harris Tells Texas Democrats	10/30/2020		1	1	5	5 3
Kamala Harris's Ancestral Village in India Offers Prayers for her Victory	11/3/2020		1	1	1	6 1
Vote Like Our Lives Depend on it Because They Do' Kamala Harris Says in Philadelphia	11/2/2020		1	1	1	6 3
These Candidates Made History in the 2020 Election	11/4/2020		1	1	1	6 1

Appendix B - Intercoder Reliability

	Percent Agreement	Scott's Pi	Cohen's Kappa	Krippendorff's Alpha	N Agreements	N Disagreeme	N Cases	N Decisions
Variable 1 (cols 1 & 2)	90	0.7468354	0.746835443	0.753164557	18	2	20	40
Variable 2 (cols 3 & 4)	95	0.8312236	0.831932773	0.835443038	19	1	20	40
Variable 3 (cols 5 & 6)	90	0.6078431	0.607843137	0.617647059	18	2	20	40
Variable 4 (cols 7 & 8)	100	1	1	1	20	0	20	40
Variable 5 (cols 9 & 10)	95	0.6460177	0.649122807	0.654867257	19	1	20	40
Variable 6 (cols 11 & 12)	100	1	1	1	20	0	20	40
Variable 7 (cols 13 & 14)	100	undefined*	undefined*	undefined*	20	0	20	40
Variable 8 (cols 15 & 16)	100	undefined*	undefined*	undefined*	20	0	20	40