



# Research You Can Use

**From: Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication**  
*Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*

*For immediate release*

## **Private ownership of dailies fosters fewer weeklies**

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There are fewer weeklies and somewhat less market penetration in U.S. non-metropolitan counties with privately owned daily newspapers, a study finds in the current *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. The study, which compared privately and publicly owned newspapers, covered 292 non-metropolitan counties scattered across the U.S. Market penetration was calculated by dividing circulation by the number of households in a county.

One explanation for the study's primary findings, "could be related to the tendency of publicly owned dailies to be more aggressive in subscription pricing or the tendency of privately owned dailies to invest more in their newsrooms..." the authors write.

While the study did not compare price or quality differences between publicly and privately owned newspapers, the findings suggest privately owned newspapers may be, "pursuing a strategy of limiting price increases and raising quality investment to limit weekly competition in the long run."

Stephen Lacy, David C. Coulson and Hugh J. Martin, "Ownership and Barriers to Entry in Non-Metropolitan Daily Newspaper Markets."  
*Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, Summer 2004, 81:2.

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## **Attitudes about other nations affected by U.S. TV coverage**

**Contact:** Wayne Wanta, School of Journalism, University of Missouri, 573-884-8989, wantaw@missouri.edu; Guy Golan, Manship School of Mass Communication, Louisiana State University, 225-578-3145, ggolan@lsu.edu; Cheolhan Lee, School of Journalism, University of Missouri, clmp8@mizzou.edu

The more television news coverage another nation receives, the more Americans believe that country is vital to U.S. interests, a study finds in the current *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. The study also notes a link between an increase in negative news coverage and unenthusiastic perceptions by Americans of a foreign nation and vice versa.

While Japan and Russia receive comparatively extensive news coverage and are seen as important, the authors note there are some interesting exceptions to the trend. Indonesia and India, for example, are covered moderately by U.S. news organizations, but are seen as less important than most nations by many Americans.

The study is partially based on a national survey of attitudes about other nations previously conducted by the Chicago Council for Foreign Relations. Television news coverage from the major networks and CNN was analyzed during the period eight months before, during and after the Chicago Council's survey. "...Media coverage of countries may have an impact on how those nations are perceived by the public....The news media can show the public both how vitally important countries are to the United States and how negatively the countries should be viewed."

Wayne Wanta, Guy Golan and Cheolhan Lee, "Agenda Setting and International News: Media Influence on Public Perceptions of Foreign Nations."  
*Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, Summer 2004, 81:2.

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## TV news viewing linked to fearing crime and social attitudes

Contact: **R. Lance Holbert**, Department of Communication, University of Delaware, 302-831-8041, holbert@udel.edu; **Dhavan V. Shah**, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 608-262-0388, dshah@wisc.edu; **Nojin Kwak**, Department of Communication Studies, University of Michigan, 734-764-0420, kwak@umich.edu

Television news viewers are likely to fear crime as well as endorse capital punishment and handgun ownership, a study finds in the current *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. The findings, which were derived from an earlier mail survey of about 5,000 participants, compared television news, crime drama and police reality show viewing habits and public attitudes about a range of social issues.

Adults who enjoy police crime reality shows, for example, are likely to endorse capital punishment and own a handgun, the authors write. However, support for endorsing handgun ownership and similar behaviors is stronger among persons who watch police reality programs compared to television news or crime drama shows.

"... The only truly substantive media relations observed in this study point to the generation of fear, greater support for police authority, and the endorsement of punitive justice and protective measures," the authors write.

R. Lance Holbert, Dhavan V. Shah and Nojin Kwak, "Fear, Authority, and Justice: Crime-Related TV Viewing and Endorsements of Capital Punishment and Gun Ownership."  
*Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, Summer 2004, 81:2.

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## News habits linked to cooperative community attitudes

**Contact:** Christopher Beaudoin, Department of Telecommunications, Indiana University-Bloomington, 812-856-5690, beaudoin@indiana.edu; Esther Thorson, School of Journalism, University of Missouri, 573-882-9590, thorsone@missouri.edu.

Watching network television news and reading newspapers in urban and rural areas are linked to a higher degree of social trust and voting, a study finds in the current *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. In contrast, the study links watching entertainment television to less social trust and volunteering.

The authors find that positive attitudes about social capital, which includes the degree persons trust neighbors and community leaders, are linked to specific media habits. For example, the authors report the impact of watching television is mixed; local TV news had more positive effect on attitudes about social capital in rural but not in urban areas.

The findings are based on simultaneous telephone surveys in St. Louis and Kansas City and more rural Missouri communities of Hannibal and Sedalia.

The authors did not find sharp differences in attitudes about social capital between the urban and rural Missouri communities they surveyed. This finding, "suggests that our focal urban communities are not as socially bleak and isolated," as previous research implies.

Christopher Beaudoin and Esther Thorson, "Social Capital in Rural and Urban Communities: Testing Differences in Media Effects and Models."  
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