

MANUFACTURER INFLUENCE ON TONE IN AUTO REVIEWS

By

GREGORY FINK

A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS IN MASS COMMUNICATION

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2013

© 2013 Gregory Fink

To my parents, teachers, friends and family who supported me through this process

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair for taking the time to both teach and guide me through the process of writing this thesis. I would also like to thank my committee for providing me with their insights during my proposal and defense. The knowledge I have gained from each of these individuals' teachings will help me succeed well into the future.

Finally, I would like to thank the University for providing me an environment conducive to my studies.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	4
ABSTRACT.....	8
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	9
2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	12
Second-Level Agenda Setting.....	13
Financial Influence.....	17
Product Endorsement in the Media.....	20
The Role of the Internet and the Gate Keeper.....	22
3 RESEARCH METHODS.....	29
Diction and Definitions.....	32
Data.....	36
Intercoder Reliability.....	39
Empirical Framework.....	40
4 RESULTS.....	47
Empirical Results.....	47
Testing for Bias in Relation to Awards.....	47
Testing for Bias in Relation to Advertising Expenditures.....	48
Manufacturer's advertising expenses, 2011.....	49
Manufacturer's magazine advertising expenses, 2011.....	50
Manufacturer's Internet advertising expenses, 2011.....	51
Manufacturer's Internet and magazine advertising expenses, 2011.....	52
Testing for Bias in Relation to Manufacturer-sponsored Events.....	53
Testing Car and Driver for bias from manufacturer-sponsored events.....	54
Testing Motor Trend for bias from manufacturer-sponsored events.....	54
5 DISCUSSION.....	63
Conclusion.....	63
Future Study.....	68
APPENDIX: CODEBOOK.....	73
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	74

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH..... 79

## LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>		<u>Page</u>
3-1	Overall advertising expenditures in 2011 by manufacturer .....	42
3-2	Advertising expenditures on magazine and Internet in 2011 by manufacturer ...	43
3-3	Variables tested.....	44
3-4	Variables tested by manufacturer .....	45
4-1	Results by independent variable.....	56
4-2	Results by advertising expenditures in 2011 .....	58
4-3	Results by magazine advertising expenditures in 2011 .....	59
4-4	Results by Internet advertising expenditures in 2011 .....	60
4-5	Results by magazine and Internet advertising expenditures in 2011.....	61
4-6	Results by number of press drives .....	62

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School  
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Mass Communication

MANUFACTURER INFLUENCE ON TONE IN AUTO REVIEWS

By

Gregory Fink

August 2013

Chair: Wayne Wanta  
Major: Mass Communication

The relationship between automotive manufacturers and the automotive press is often muddled. Using a content analysis, this study looked at 296 reviews of vehicles by ten major manufacturers in the publications *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend* for the year of 2011 (January through December). Using the theory of second-level agenda setting, each review was analyzed for tone and compared with the advertising expenditures of each manufacturer in 2011, as well as the number of press-related driving events each manufacturer offered each publication. The results failed to support any financial influence by the manufacturer to affect editorial tone; however, significance was found between tone and press events for one of the tested publications.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The role of advertisers often times bleeds from the pages of the media into the newsroom as David E. Davis Jr. discovered in his April 1968 article for *Car and Driver* “Turn Your Hymnals to 2002”.

Driving the then-new BMW 2002, Davis (1968) wrote, “The 2002 had a lovely-looking AM/FM affair neatly slipped into its console—easily a hundred-and-fifty bucks worth of radio—and I couldn't pick up a Manhattan station from the far end of the Brooklyn Bridge. Honestly. It was maybe the dumbest radio anybody ever stuck in an automobile, like all Blaupunkt and Becker radios, yet the German car makers—for reasons unknown—continue to use them” (p. 86).

Davis would admit in September 2009 that his refusal to write a column apologizing to Blaupunkt cost him his job with Ziff Davis Publishing, the then-owner of *Car and Driver* (Autoline After Hours, 2009).

Automotive publications however not only rely on manufacturers as advertisers; these publications also rely on manufacturers to supply vehicles for testing – a practice that has allowed automakers to take advantage of the press and new-vehicle consumers. The use of a “ringer” 1964 Pontiac GTO with a bigger than stock 421 cubic-inch V8 engine given to *Car and Driver* for testing resulted in performance numbers the real car was unable to achieve (socal-speedzone, 2010). Automotive journalist Jason Cammisa reports that Volkswagen was guilty of putting more powerful European-spec engines in Volkswagen Scirocco press cars driven by American journalists when the second-generation model of the car was introduced (Cammisa, 2012).

Volkswagen's press fleet was called out again late in 2011, when *Consumer Reports* noticed that the Volkswagen Passats being reviewed by the press contained equipment unavailable on cars sold to consumers (Linkov).

Even Ferrari has dealt with issues of delivering "ringers" to journalists. British journalist Chris Harris notes in his opinion piece "How Ferrari spins" that, "Ferrari will never admit that its press cars are tuned, but has the gall to turn up at any of the big European magazines' end-of-year-shindig-tests with two cars. One for straight line work, the other for handling exercises" (Harris, 2011). Harris' point is such: Ferrari prepares its press cars in a manner unlike the models consumers can buy.

In an interesting twist, Harris was blackballed from driving Ferrari press vehicles after writing "How Ferrari spins" (Wert, 2011). Though Harris' assertions in "How Ferrari spins" may be untrue, the ability of manufacturers to pull press credentials over an article the company disagrees with puts into question just how "unbiased" the automotive media are.

In his article "Taking Readers for a Ride," Frank Greve (2011) notes that automotive journalists are often gifted "free business-class flights and expense-paid stays at places like Archerfield House, an exclusive seaside golf resort north of Edinburgh." In the instance of the Archerfield House, Volkswagen arranged for the press to stay at the luxury resort during the press launch of the then-new Bentley Mulsanne.

Of course, "gift" is a relative term to members of the automotive media. Former *Car and Driver* editor William Jeanes told John Phillips (2011), "As far as manufacturer gifts are concerned, a \$25 windbreaker is the intergalactic limit."

Yet, in the case of *Car and Driver*, it seems limitations on gifts from manufacturers are limited to tangible items, as Phillips writes about press trips: “Asked why he robbed banks, Willie Sutton replied, ‘Because that’s where the money is,’ and the dirty little secret about press trips is that you go, like it or not, *because that’s where the cars are.*”

Consumers reading automotive reviews expect a publication to be free of bias and an accompanying agenda; however, even Pulitzer Prize winning automotive reviewer Dan Neil admits that, “Pressure for a favorable review is more and more intense” (Greve, 2011).

In order to test the bias in automotive reviews in commercial media, a content analysis will be carried out using major automotive review media publications to test the theory of second-level agenda setting that comes to play in these reviews through the use of the manufacturer as both advertiser and vehicle supplier for automotive media.

An affective dimension will be used to determine the bias in the commercial automotive media outlets *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend*. *Car and Driver* is an automotive publication that has established itself as “the world’s largest automotive magazine brand” (Car and Driver, 2012), while *Motor Trend* has been in the business of automotive journalism since 1949 and has a total audience of just over 6.8 million readers (Motor Trend, 2013). This study examines reviews of vehicles written during the publishing dates of January 2011 through December 2011 for both magazines.

Using the theory of second-level agenda setting, this study looks at the role tone has on attribute salience in automotive reviews.

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The inception of second-level agenda setting as a theory can be traced back to two earlier theories highly-utilized in media studies: agenda setting and framing. Though this study focuses on the role of second-level agenda setting, acknowledging key studies in agenda setting and framing is important to understand the evolution and significance of agenda setting at the second-level.

Agenda setting's origins as a theory can be traced back to the famous Chapel Hill study conducted by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972). This study "attempted to match what Chapel Hill voters *said* were key issues of the campaign with the *actual content* of the mass media used by them during the campaign" (p. 177). Their attempt was to find a link between what issues voters found important and what issues the media had deemed important in its coverage of the 1968 election.

McCombs and Shaw found that the results of their experiment "suggest a very strong relationship between the emphasis placed on different campaign issues by the media (reflecting to a considerable degree the emphasis by candidates) and the judgments of voters as to the salience and importance of various campaign topics" (p. 181).

Since the Chapel Hill study, many researchers have documented the effects of what Carroll and McCombs (2003) called "the salience of objects" (p. 38) in the media. Salience can be operationally defined as "perceived importance" (Weaver, 2007, p. 142) of an object, or "the classical assertion that the news tells us *what to think about*" (McCombs and Shaw, 1993, p. 62).

Like the original Chapel Hill study by McCombs and Shaw, many studies henceforth in agenda setting involve the news' ability to create object salience in the political realm. As McCombs and Shaw (1993) note, "agenda setting entered a new phase, during the 1976 election when Weaver, Graber, McCombs and Eyal (1981) extended the idea of agendas into two new domains. One was the agenda of candidate characteristics reported by the media and learned by voters; the other was the larger agenda of personal concerns on which all aspects of politics - issues, candidates, and so on - are but a single, and usually minor, item" (p. 59). This secondary agenda largely introduced the role of second-level agenda setting into the theory of agenda setting.

A noted aspect of agenda setting and second-level agenda setting in the automotive media is the proclivity of awarded endorsements. *Car and Driver* nominates the "10Best" cars available on the market and *Motor Trend* delivers an "of the Year" award to the SUV, Car and Truck that the publication deems to be the best vehicle of the model year. Manufacturer's honored with these awards will in turn advertise the achievement.

### **Second-Level Agenda Setting**

The second-level of agenda setting is particularly important because it goes beyond presenting to an audience what to think about - it also presents to an audience how to think about certain things. Such a look into agenda setting at either the first- or second-level has not been conducted as extensively in entertainment and review journalism as it has been in political media, nor has extensive research of agenda setting at the first- or second-level been conducted in a medium that requires an author give an even-handed review of a product in the name of helping consumer purchasing decisions. This is not to say important studies do not exist in this area of research, it is

simply acknowledging that fewer studies do and notes the importance of this study's research into second-level agenda setting in automotive reviews.

Before noting the literature that supports agenda setting at the second-level, a definitive clarification of framing and second-level agenda setting must be acknowledged. David H. Weaver, in his 2007 article "Thoughts on Agenda Setting, Framing, and Priming", looks deeply into the defined operative differences of both framing and second-level agenda setting. Weaver notes that "frame" is a very ambiguous term that "can be applied to many different aspects of messages and to many different types of messages" (p. 144). As Weaver concludes: "There are similarities between second-level agenda setting and framing, even if they are not identical processes... But framing does seem to include a broader range of cognitive processes—such as moral evaluations, causal reasoning, appeals to principles, and recommendations for treatment of problems—than does second-level agenda setting (the salience of attributes of an object)" (p. 145-146).

Essentially these two terms are tied together very closely, with framing noting a broader more ambiguous term that is often used as a device in approaching the telling of a story and second-level agenda setting being more clearly defined as the salience of object attributes, or *how* to think about an object. As Carroll and McCombs (2003) write, citing the work of McCombs and Ghanem, "at the second-level of agenda-setting...news coverage conveys more than just facts, it also conveys feelings and tone" (p. 39). This study looks to find how tone affects second-level agenda setting in automotive reviews.

In a similar approach to second-level agenda setting, Dietram A. Scheufele (2006) notes five factors that “may potentially influence how journalists frame a given issue: social norms and values, organizational pressures and constraints, pressures of interest groups, journalistic routines, and ideological or political orientations of journalists” (p.109).

Each of these can be seen in automotive review journalism, as well. Looking particularly at “pressures of interest groups,” automotive journalists must often succumb to the pressure of advertisers. As noted above in this study’s introduction, David E. Davis Jr. felt advertiser pressure to write a column apologizing for his views on the Blaupunkt radio in his article “Turn Your Hymnals to 2002” (1968). Similarly, Chris Harris argues that manufacturer pressure and fear of being blacklisted from press events is in large part why automotive journalists do not call Ferrari out for providing “ringer” press cars (2011).

Yet, one cannot ignore the “ideological...orientations of a journalist” (Scheufele, 2006, p. 109) in the automotive medium. Though it can be assumed that most automotive journalists attempt to remain fair and balanced, personal ideology can often times lead to the framing of a story that supports the author’s personal automotive preferences.

What Scheufele fails to acknowledge in his list of potential influencers of journalist frames is the role of the publisher, as Warren Breed noted in his study “Social Control in the Newsroom: A Functional Analysis” (1955). In this study, Breed concludes that newsroom policies (and thus the means of delivery and presentation that can

influence both framing and second-level agenda setting) are learned “by osmosis” (p. 328).

This osmosis can be traced back to numerous aspects of the newsroom, but Breed particularly notes the role of editors and publishers in establishing a second-level of agenda setting. As Breed notes, “when an executive sees a clearly anti-policy item, he blue-pencils it, and this constitutes a lesson for the staffer” (p. 332); this form of editorial notation allows journalists of a publication to learn the newsroom policies toward agenda setting at the first- and second-level.

Breed concludes that it is the publisher who influences such policies that encourage a publication’s newsroom agenda; however, Breed fails to look into the psychology of why a publisher is setting this agenda. Since the latter part of Breed’s study (finding out the motivations behind publisher decisions) was not carried out, it is hard to conclude what drives a publisher’s editorial decisions; however, as David E. Davis Jr. noted on Autoline After Hours (2009), it was not stereo-manufacturer Blaupunkt that asked him for an apology column for his negative remarks of the stereo in the BMW 2002, but the publisher of *Car and Driver* at the time, Ziff Davis Publishing. From such an example we can infer that the publishers who influence the agenda of a newsroom are themselves influenced by their advertisers. Such a policy not only implies the encouragement of second-level agenda setting, but also a potential for bias.

Bias then is how second-level agenda setting and framing differ most. Framing, James W. Tankard Jr. (2001) argues, “goes beyond notions of *pro* or *con*, *favorable* or *unfavorable*, *negative* or *positive*. Framing adds the possibilities of additional, more

complex emotional responses and also adds a cognitive dimension (beliefs about objects as well as attitudes)” (p. 96).

### **Financial Influence**

Robert Entman’s (2007) study on media bias reveals how monetary means can support bias in a publication. In the political realm he notes that, “If anything, research cited previously suggests a net advantage for conservatives across a range of issues and groups...Even if journalists working for the national media tend to be predominantly (though moderately) liberal (Pew Research Center for People and the Press, 2004), that could be outweighed by...conservatives’ deeper financial and organizational resources for skilled media management (Hacker and Pierson, 2005), the limits that the campaign finance system places on Democrats’ rhetorical options (Entman, 2005), and the strong influence of corporate advertisers and owners on media production incentives (Baker, 1994; Bennett, 2007)” (p. 170).

Entman’s study supports the role of monetary bias in the media. He notes that the frames of journalists are generally liberal, but the agenda being set by the publisher often encourages reporters to work outside of their own frames and support a conservative agenda due to the monetary influence of the Republican Party.

Money, though, doesn’t only bias the political articles we read, as television is also a proven medium in which the media succumbs to advertisers as well. Keith Brown and Roberto Cavazos (2005) found that “even when adjusting for audience size and demographic composition, advertisers pay a premium for advertising spots on sitcoms, and pay a discount for advertising on ‘darker’ programming like news magazines and police dramas. As a result, the broadcast networks air a disproportionately high amount of sitcoms” (p. 18).

Such a finding reveals the potential for advertisers to set the media agenda. In essence, television networks desire to make more money from advertising. In order to do this, the networks allow the advertisers to influence the agenda; in this case it sets the agenda of a predominant skew of “light” sitcoms over “dark” dramas.

The authors cite HBO as a counter-example to the content-based agenda advertisers encourage networks to follow: “HBO deliberately employs darker themes, more conflict, and more complex story lines to consciously differentiate themselves from network television. Since HBO is a pay channel, this certainly indicates that broadcast networks systemically underserve large groups of viewers; viewers willing to pay directly for different programming” (p. 20).

In a similar study, Champlin and Knoedler (2002) found advertiser influence not only in the kinds of programming put on, but also in the content within the show. This second-level of agenda setting has been well accounted for, as the authors note that, ‘When the Project on Excellence in Journalism surveyed local TV news directors in 2000, one third suggested that they had received pressure to avoid negative stories about advertisers, while 75 percent of investigative reporters and editors at television stations reported that advertisers had tried to influence their content (FAIR 2000, 1)’ (p. 463).

Unfortunately, the current market for automotive media largely forces automotive review publishers to rely on advertising revenue in order to produce content; however, the very nature of the magazine industry encourages users to pay a fee to read the material. As such, magazines are, in theory, financially culpable to the needs of both its advertisers and its readers.

A similar study looked at the role advertisers play on media bias. In this study the authors acknowledged that most media are either paid for by subscribers and advertisers, or solely by advertisers. This study discovered that when media companies “only source of revenue [are] advertising fees, newspapers choose to minimally differentiate in their reporting strategies. By eliminating any slanting in their reporting and appealing to readers with moderate beliefs, the newspapers can increase their readership, which allows them to command higher fees from advertisers (Gal-or, Geylani & Yildirim, 2010, p. 26).

The researchers found that when revenues come “from advertising in addition to subscription fees, the additional advertising market introduces three different effects on the behavior of newspapers”. The authors first note “the existence of advertising revenues puts downward pressure on subscription fees, as newspapers intensify competition for subscribers”. This results in publishers choosing “to increase polarization in order to alleviate this competition”. The authors also find that as publishers “attempt to increase their readership in order to attract advertisers, they may moderate slanting in order to appeal to readers having moderate beliefs”.

Finally, the authors note that in order to reach an audience that will be more receptive to the messages of advertisers, the advertiser “may induce newspapers to seek greater distinctiveness and bias, and by doing so, offer a better match between advertisers and readers” (p. 26).

Though this study’s subject matter involved newspapers in particular, a similar pattern of revenue and competition affects the automotive media industry, as well. According to this study, we can infer that bias will be more prevalent if an automotive

publisher receives more funding by its advertisers than its subscribers. This is a growing trend, as online material by automotive publications generally does not require user fees but still does rely upon advertising.

While a reliance on advertisers and subscribers by the automotive media industry may increase bias according to the findings in the above study, Ellman and Germano (2009) found that monopolistic media conditions automatically lead to advertiser influence on reporting, while media industry competition “induces maximal accuracy” (p. 699).

Using the results of both the study by Gal-or, Geylani and Yildirim, as well as the study by Ellman and Germano, it can be inferred that the competitive nature of the automotive press should serve to limit bias.

### **Product Endorsement in the Media**

Chiang and Knight (2011) looked into the role of political endorsements by the media and the effects this had on agenda setting. Like an auto manufacturer boasting of an award by the press, an endorsement by a popular media company for a political candidate can set the agenda of voters for whom they should cast their ballot for on Election Day (in the case of car buyers, the agenda would be related to which vehicle a consumer should purchase).

Yet, the authors discovered that although there is the potential for an agenda to be set by endorsements, voters generally “rationally account for the credibility of any endorsements” (p. 817). The authors further concluded that, “these results suggest that voters are sophisticated and attempt to filter out any bias in media coverage of politics” (p. 817).

However the authors did note that, “Endorsements are also more influential among moderate voters and those more likely to be exposed to the endorsement” (p. 817). Such a statement infers that endorsements are less influential to individuals who are well informed or individuals who are presumably set in their ways politically.

The results of this study can correlate to car buyers and the media agenda set by the automotive press. As noted earlier, publications such as *Car and Driver* nominate the “10Best” cars available on the market each year and *Motor Trend* provides three vehicles (an SUV, a car and a truck, respectively) with its “of the Year” award, an award for being the best vehicle in its respective segment for a given model year.

While automotive enthusiasts who pay attention to the industry and its products will likely be less influenced by the agenda setting at the first- or second-level by the press, the average car buyer (which can be equivocated to the moderate voter) is more likely to be influenced by an endorsement by an automotive publication, as they are not as well versed on the subject matter. This relays the importance of this study, as a biased automotive media can influence the purchase decisions of the average car buyer by simply handing out awards to their major advertisers or by reviewing manufacturer-supplied press vehicles that are “ringer” models of the actual vehicle available to the public. The reality of using awards in advertising is that bias as a result of agenda setting at the first- and second-level moves from beyond the physical or digital pages of the consumer-oriented automotive media, and into the advertisements of the profit-oriented automobile manufacturer.

In this regard Golan, Kiouisis and McDaniel (2007) found “significant evidence of an agenda-setting effect at the first level and mixed evidence of a second-level agenda-

setting function” (p. 441) when studying political ad campaigns. Though this study deals with salience in political advertising and not in the news media, it is important to note how salience can be transferred from the media to advertising. The authors’ finding of only mixed object attribute salience in their study of political advertising would seem to make for an interesting future study.

From the above-mentioned study by Chiang and Knight (2011), it seems it is possible that voters might be similarly influenced by endorsements in advertising. In the case of the study by Golan, Kiouisis and McDaniel (2007), we can infer that these voters may use their rationale to negate the effects of second-level agenda setting in a political ad as a means to sway their vote, though the object itself (agenda setting at the first level) becomes a topic the voters choose to think on. It can be inferred that automotive advertising that uses media endorsements will also likely show evidence of agenda setting at the first level with mixed evidence of second-level agenda setting in advertising to new car buyers. Where second-level agenda setting is present in automotive advertisements, car buyers have the potential to use their rationale to negate the endorsed content in the advertisement by the manufacturer.

### **The Role of the Internet and the Gate Keeper**

Outside of the print medium, the study of agenda setting at both the first- and second-level has also been studied in the digital realms of the Internet. As McCombs (2005) states, “the Internet is the new frontier for research on these traditional agenda setting affects” (p. 544).

McCombs explains that the rise of the Internet has caused “some social observers [to] predict the end of agenda setting as audiences fragment and virtually

everyone has a unique external media agenda that is a highly individualized composite constructed from this vast wealth of online news and information” (p. 544).

While in theory this is a legitimate argument, in reality it is not the case. McCombs uses James Hamilton as a source in noting “that the five largest American newspapers – *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Washington Post* – account for 21.5 percent of the circulation among the top 100 daily newspapers” (p. 545). Subsequently “the top five newspaper websites – which includes three of those newspapers, *USA Today*, *New York Times*, and *Washington Post* in addition to the *Detroit News* and *Seattle Times* – account for 41.4 percent of the total links found on the Internet to the top 100 newspapers” (p. 545).

Despite the rise of the Internet, individuals are still leaning toward the agendas of only a few media companies. As Marilyn, Wanta and Tzong-Horng (2002), discovered when measuring the influence of agenda setting by *The New York Times*, Associated Press, Reuters, *Time Magazine* and CNN against online Internet discussions on electronic bulletin boards that three-fourths of the issues examined in the study “showed a clear agenda setting relationship between media coverage and Internet discussions” (p. 459). Such a finding reveals the influence these major media outlets have on the news agenda.

While the findings by Marilyn, Wanta and Tzong-Horng show the news media’s ability to set the agenda, Esrock and Leichty (1998) discovered “that relatively few corporations use the medium [of their web page] for either public consultation or to help set the public agenda” (p. 317). Such findings support the notion that a corporation, or automakers, best way to influence agenda setting is through the media. This study

attempts to draw a correlation between the agenda setting power of the media by determining if corporate spending on advertising is able to influence how the media portrays a vehicle manufacturer's products.

Another way the media is able to set the agenda is through their role as a gate keeper. As David Manning White (1950) found in his study "The 'Gate Keeper': A Case Study In the Selection of News", another aspect of agenda setting (a term he did not use since his study stems before the Chapel Hill study) is that of the "gate keeper". In White's study, the "gate keeper" was a wire editor who chose which wire stories to run in the newspaper he worked for.

White concluded that in the case of his subject, known as "Mr. Gates", "in his position as 'gate keeper' the newspaper editor sees to (even though he may never be consciously aware of it) that the community shall hear as a fact only those events which the newsman, as the representative of his culture believes to be true" (p. 390).

Similar to Breed's (1955) findings, White concludes that those in charge set the agenda. Though there may be more information available today due to the Internet, those in charge of the most trafficked sites are the "gate keepers" who set the agenda of the public. This is important to note as the two publications in this study publish their material in the form of a printed magazine, as well as in the online realm.

Two studies penned by Jonathan Reuter testing for bias in review journalism must be noted for their relation to this study of second-level agenda setting in automotive reviews. Testing review bias in the ratings of wine, Reuter (2009) discovered that "Overall, I find little consistent evidence of bias. At worst, the tests for biased ratings

suggest that *Wine Spectator* rates wines from advertisers almost one point higher than wines from non-advertisers” (p. 19).

Of note is that the study’s control subject is a wine reviewer funded entirely by subscribers, while the other subject analyzed, *Wine Spectator*, uses both subscribers and advertisers for funding. The fact that the bias found in *Wine Spectator* is inconsistent and generally unsubstantial supports the findings by Gal-or, Geylani and Yildirim (2010), as well as Ellman and Germano (2009), whose studies concluded that when both subscriber fees and advertising account for funding, as well as when there is media competition, bias is limited.

Though some wines can rival the price of a new car, generally the finances required to purchase a bottle of wine are merely fractions of the cost of a new vehicle. As such, it is important to discover if reviews of items with greater financial value result in more or less bias.

Looking into the role of advertising in the financial media, the study “Do Ads Influence Editors? Advertising and Bias in the Financial Media” (2005) found that “the personal finance publications in our sample are more likely to recommend the funds of their advertisers, even after controlling for the observable fund characteristics that their readers might value” (Reuter and Zitzewitz, p. 18-19).

This study chose “five of the top six recipients of mutual fund advertising dollars” (p. 1), as test subjects in testing for bias. Proof of bias and agenda setting by these publishers is important to acknowledge, as the monetary risks of mutual funds can lead to gains and losses by investors often times equaling the price of many new cars. The

advertisers of these funds can make significant gains by consumer investments, just as automakers can make significant profit from consumer purchases.

The resulting bias found in the study by Reuter and Zitzewitz is not surprising given Sutter's (2002) conclusions in "Advertising and Political Bias in the Media: The Market for Criticism of the Market Economy". As Sutter states, "advertisers often choose to bundle their ads with the media's messages, thus paying for the production of news programs, because the associated news generates a larger audience than unbundled transmission" (p. 728). It is in the advertiser's best interest to ensure that their own product is being discussed in the media. Sutter seems to imply this phenomenon occurs by the advertiser "paying for the production of new programs" (p. 728).

Despite this, it must be acknowledged that the consumer ultimately decides what to make of the media's agenda independently. As Chiang and Knight (2011) discovered "voters are sophisticated and attempt to filter out any bias in media coverage of politics" (p. 817). As noted earlier, this conclusion can be applied to consumers reading automotive reviews as well.

In the study "Revisiting the Clinton/Lewinsky Scandal: The Convergence of Agenda Setting and Framing" (2003) the authors find in their content analysis of the infamous Presidential scandal that, "Despite copious coverage of the scandal, and the public's concern over the president's alleged lying and obstruction of justice, Clinton's approval ratings were not negatively affected" (Yioutas and Segvic, p. 571).

The authors note that this is particularly interesting in regard to the fact that, "Even in 1992, when the economy was a very salient topic, 67% of respondents

believed that during the presidential campaign ‘too little attention’ had been paid to moral standards, specifically that the country's were not high enough” (p. 576).

In a similar situation, cars praised by the press often do not motivate the consuming public to purchase these vehicles, and cars that are panned by the press often do not discourage the consuming public from purchasing these vehicles. Specifically this can be seen with the 2012 Honda Civic, which merely a year after its introduction, received significant changes after the press panned the subpar nature of the car. Despite this the 2012 Civic sold decidedly well, and as Autoblog notes, “The Civic [was] selling near the top of its class” with “234,029 units [sold] through September of [2012]” (Paukert, 2012). This exemplifies that the agenda (particularly at the second-level) set by reviews by automotive journalists does not necessarily correlate to consumer motivation.

From the above literature related to the theory of second-level agenda setting, as well as literature on the theory of agenda setting at the first level, framing, gate keeping, and the general idea of advertising bias, this study attempts to answer the following hypotheses:

1. As net advertising spending goes up for a manufacturer, the percentage of reviews containing no negative tone will go up.
2. As magazine advertising spending goes up for a manufacturer, the percentage of reviews containing no negative tone will go up.
3. As Internet advertising spending goes up for a manufacturer, the percentage of reviews containing no negative tone will go up.
4. As magazine and Internet advertising spending goes up for a manufacturer, the percentage of reviews containing no negative tone will go up.

5. As the number of manufacturer-sponsored press drives increase, the percentage of reviews containing no negative tone will go up.

Though the final hypothesis does not test for a monetary independent variable, it is an important variable to test for in its potential to bias automotive reviews. As Jim Mateja, former automotive reviewer for the *Chicago Tribune*, told Frank Greve (2011), “A few – or more than a few – [automotive journalists] would never say anything bad about a car, because they wanted to keep getting free cars to drive.”

## CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODS

This study relies on a content analysis to determine bias in the field of automotive journalism. As defined by Riffe, Lacy and Fico (2005), a content analysis “is the systematic and replicable examination of symbols of communication, which have been assigned numeric values according to valid measurement rules and the analysis of relationships involving those values using statistical methods, to describe the communication, draw inferences about its meaning, or infer from the communication to its context, both of production and consumption” (p. 25). In layman’s terms, a content analysis places numerical values on content in order to draw inferences about the meaning of the content. As noted above, the content analysis used in this study is theory driven. The choice of a content analysis stems from previous studies in the field of agenda setting at the first- and second-levels, as well as studies relating to media bias.

Of course, a content analysis is not without its negatives. As Shoemaker and Reese (1996) note, “Reducing large amount of text to quantitative data does not provide a complete picture of meaning and contextual codes” (p. 29).

Yet, in the context of this study no better option is available to determine bias in automotive reviews than the content analysis. Shoemaker and Reese acknowledge this by concluding that most content analyses focus on the fact that media often “singles out and highlights certain elements over others” (p. 34) – i.e. the media is prone to using framing and agenda setting.

In regard to this study, no study was found that deals with the issue of bias in the automotive media, making this research particularly important to others studying the

field of agenda setting at the second-level. This study is also important to consumers looking for professional advice in the automotive publishing field before the purchase of a new vehicle. Studies were found that question the bias in other forms of review media, though.

Looking at the study “Does Advertising Spending Influence Media Coverage of the Advertiser?” the authors used a content analysis to determine if the advertising spending of Italian fashion companies resulted in more coverage by a variety of fashion publications through Europe and the U.S.

As the authors conclude, “With a sufficient advertising budget, the media may cover products without regard to their quality” (Basuroy and Rinallo, 2009, p. 42). While these authors did not conclude an editorial bias in such coverage, their content analysis did conclude that it is possible for fashion companies to pay for editorial coverage.

Such a conclusion is interesting to note in regard to the automotive publishing industry as well. In 2011, General Motors spent \$3,055,700,000 in advertising, according to *Advertising Age* (Johnson, 2012). Such an advertising expenditure should result in General Motors receiving more coverage according to the conclusion of Basuroy and Rinallo (2009); however, this study seeks to find if General Motors’ large advertising expenditure results in biased reviews toward the products of General Motors. As Gentzkow and Shapiro (2005) note, media firms “desire to build a reputation for accuracy” (p. 29). As such, it is unexpected that the automotive media will blatantly endorse a subpar product. Rather, it is expected that the automotive media will choose to use non-hostile diction and tone to avoid both endorsing a subpar product and putting down a major advertiser’s vehicle.

Such diction and tone largely leads to the second-level of agenda setting in automotive reviews. Rather than simply providing its audience with *what* to think about, the reviewer can use tone to influence *how* to think about the object.

Carroll and McCombs (2003) provided that study units in a content analysis “can be arrayed along an affective dimension, typically defined as positive, negative, neutral, and mixed” (p. 38-39), acknowledging the work of McCombs and Ghanem in noting that such an evaluative dimension “at the second-level of agenda-setting recognizes that news coverage conveys more than just facts, it also conveys feelings and tone” (p. 39). With a focus on “feeling and tone”, this study analyzes editorial content from both *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend*, noting each tested review’s positive, neutral or negative tone toward the vehicle being reviewed.

Comparing the results of the affective dimension with the advertising expenditures, as well as the incentive factor of the number of manufacturer-sponsored press drives, of the manufacturers that spent the most money on advertising in 2011 will reveal a relationship between reviews and manufacturer influence.

As noted earlier, the content being analyzed was produced for the publishing year of January 2011 through December 2011. In order to compare the results of the content analyzed with manufacturer advertising expenditures, *Advertising Age’s* June 25, 2012 article the “100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition” is referenced. This article details the top 100 leading advertisers during the year of 2011. Specifically it notes the expenditures of the top 100 advertisers; however, additional spending information is provided and used in this study as well.

## Diction and Definitions

As suggested by Carroll and McCombs (2003) an affective dimension that consists of positive, negative and neutral is used to denote tone in the reviews of automotive products.

Using regression analyses, this study seeks to find a relationship of an exponentially greater percentage, and number, of new car reviews with positive or not negative (the inverse of negative) tone in automotive media for manufacturers with larger advertising expenditures.

Another factor that is analyzed is the number of manufacturer press events put on by each manufacturer. These events are operationally defined as “press drives.” Press drives are manufacturer-sponsored events that give journalists time behind the wheel of a new product in conditions generally controlled by the manufacturer. In these cases the manufacturer often supplies the vehicle, the route, and in many cases perks, such as meals and hotel accommodations if the location of the press drive is located in a different city, state or country from the journalist.

Alternatively, publications test vehicles, often supplied by the manufacturer, for multiple days (in some cases longer) and conduct numerous tests on the product including performance testing. These tests are operationally defined as “road tests” and come in the form of a review of an individual car, a comparison between a handful of competing vehicles and long-term road tests, in which the publication uses the vehicle for an extended period of time (*Motor Trend* holds onto long-term vehicles for a year, while *Car and Driver* generally holds onto long-term vehicles for 40,000 miles of driving) and proceeds to write a concluding review of their experience with the vehicle. The manufacturer generally supplies the vehicle(s) in road test scenarios.

Each review was placed into a document using IBM's SPSS statistical software in order to compare the number and percentage of reviews with positive, negative and neutral tone given to different manufacturers by each publication. In order to make the analyses results consistent, only vehicles road tested or driven during a press event were analyzed as study units.

Furthermore, vehicle reviews analyzed consist only of new (at the time of publication) production models. These vehicles will have been, or will soon be, made available to the public and were actually driven by the publication for editorial purposes. Meanwhile, when looking at road tests of long-term vehicles, only the conclusion of the publication's long-term road tests were analyzed. As such, articles that introduce or update readers to the status of these long-term vehicles were not analyzed for content. Furthermore, feature stories that involve travel by the publication while using a vehicle outside of a press event setting were also ignored; unless the publication was able to retain the vehicle long enough to conduct their own performance testing.

In so far as the definitive properties of "positive", "neutral" and "negative" are concerned, "positive" is defined as a review by the publication that uses diction possessing a favorable tone. Similarly, "negative" is defined as a review by the publication possessing an unfavorable tone. And "neutral" is defined as a review by the publication that is neither favorable nor unfavorable in its tone. Such neutral tone is further defined in two ways for the purpose of this study.

- Neutral reviews are reviews by the publication that express neither favorable nor unfavorable tone to an object and its attributes.
- Neutral reviews are reviews by the publication that express an even-handed mix of favorable and unfavorable tone to an object and its attributes.

The “information units” analyzed are “the meaningful symbols” grouped for comparative analysis (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2005, p. 70). As such, the information units in this content analysis are the publication, the manufacturer of the object being reviewed by the publication, the manufacturer’s total advertising spending in 2011, the manufacturer’s advertising spending toward magazines in 2011, the manufacturer’s advertising spending toward the Internet in 2011, the manufacturer’s combined spending toward magazines and the Internet in 2011, and the type of review conducted by the publication (i.e. road test or press drive). Another information unit used in this study is that of “award.” Award denotes that a vehicle was noted by *Car and Driver* as a “10Best” car or by *Motor Trend* as a car, truck or SUV “of the Year.”

Manufacturer total advertising spending in 2011, as well as manufacturer magazine advertising spending in 2011 and manufacturer Internet advertising spending in 2011 come from *Advertising Age’s* “100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition”. Manufacturer combined spending toward magazines and the Internet in 2011 is the total of the latter two information units - manufacturer magazine advertising spending in 2011 and manufacturer Internet advertising spending in 2011.

Table 3-1 shows the automobile manufacturers included in *Advertising Age’s* “100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition”, as well as each manufacturer’s advertising expenditures in 2011, while Table 3-2 shows the expenditures of each manufacturer toward advertising in magazines and the Internet, as well as a combined total of the two expenditures. Reviews of vehicles produced from the ten manufacturers listed in Table 3-1 are the study units being analyzed in editorial reviews conducted by *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend*. The decision to look at advertising spending by the

manufacturer for the year 2011 as a whole stems from both Breed's (1955) study, in which he noted the publisher plays a large role in social control of the newsroom, and the "Willie Sutton Rule," which "stresses the need for an individual to focus on activities that generate high returns" (Investopedia). In accordance with Breed's results, if a publisher seeks to gain social control of the newsroom through agenda setting it is in his or her best interest as the publisher, and not the editor of the magazine, to encourage behavior that generates high returns.

In regard to *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend*, the publishers that own both magazines are involved in areas of the commercial media industry that extend beyond magazines (*Car and Driver* is currently owned by Hearst after having been purchased in 2011 by Hachette Filipacchi Media, and *Motor Trend* is owned by Source Interlink Media). Furthermore, Internet branding for both *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend* extends the editorial functions of these publications past the supermarket newsstands of printed media.

For definitive purposes the ten manufacturers that function as study units for this study are defined as such: General Motors Co. consists of the brands Chevrolet, GMC, Buick and Cadillac; Ford Motor Co. consists of the brands Ford and Lincoln; Toyota Motor Corp. consists of the brands Toyota, Lexus and Scion; Fiat/Chrysler Group consists of the brands Fiat, Ferrari, Maserati, Dodge, Jeep, Ram and Chrysler; Honda Motor Co. consists of the brands Honda and Acura; Nissan Motor Co. consists of the brands Nissan and Infiniti; Hyundai Motor Co. consists of Hyundai; Kia Motors Corp. consists of Kia; Volkswagen consists of Volkswagen, Audi, Lamborghini, Bugatti and Bentley; and Daimler consists of Mercedes-Benz and Smart. In order to complete

regression analysis, vehicles tested by both *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend* are accompanied by the reported manufacturer's advertising expenditure, as well as the manufacturer's specific expenditures to magazine advertising and Internet advertising, and the combined spending of each manufacturer on magazine advertising and Internet advertising using data obtained from *Advertising Age's* "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition".

The publishing date span of January 2011 through December 2011 was chosen for a number of reasons. For one, this ensures that there are a large number of reviews to be analyzed. Another reason is the access available to the advertising expenditures each major manufacturer spent during the year of 2011, an important factor for testing this study's hypotheses and determining if there is a relationship between advertising expenditures and new car reviews.

Analyzing the percentage of positive, neutral and negative reviews, as well as the number of reviews with observed net positive tone, for the automotive advertisers listed in *Advertising Age's* "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition" was done in order to account for the varied number of cases analyzed for each manufacturer. Calculating the percentage of reviews with positive, neutral and negative tone allows for an even weight when running regression analysis on these figures.

### **Data**

This study tests the tone in automotive reviews for the automotive publishing industry's two biggest automotive magazine titles in 2011. *Car and Driver* recorded advertising rate card revenue of \$148,622,418 and *Motor Trend* recorded advertising rate card revenue of \$132,050,125 in the year 2011 (PIB, 2012). This study also uses

data from *Advertising Age's* "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition", and the *Advertising Age* database.

Reviews published in both *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend* were obtained by purchasing reprints of both magazines' 2011 publishing year (January 2011 – December 2011), constituting 24 magazines in total. For every new car review that fit the operational definitions of road test or press drive by each magazine, the make, model and parent manufacturer were gathered, as well as the additional notation of whether the review possessed positive, neutral or negative tone. This resulted in a total number of 410 reviews, 192 of which were written by *Car and Driver* and 218 of which were written by *Motor Trend*.

Tone was measured by looking at specific object attributes commonly noted in new car reviews. These attributes are outlined in the codebook attached in the appendix of this study. Each attribute was tested for the positive, neutral or negative tone in the review, or was marked N/A if the attribute was not mentioned. Two final factors, conclusion and other, were also tested for positive, neutral or negative tone. The conclusion of the review was tested for its tone, as were other attributes not listed in the codebook. Counting the number of positive, neutral and negative remarks, as well as using some personal judgment, aided in determining the overall tone of the vehicle being reviewed.

Next, information was collected from *Advertising Age's* list of "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition". Further information was collected from *Advertising Age's* database denoting each manufacturer's measured spending in 2011 on magazine advertisements and Internet advertisements.

Makes not listed under the manufacturers (Table 3-2) listed in *Advertising Age's* "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition" were dropped from the study, and the total number of reviews analyzed was reduced to 296, with 131 sourced from *Car and Driver* and 165 sourced from *Motor Trend*.

Of these 296 reviews, each was tested again for positive, neutral or negative tone and marked accordingly – all reviews were met with the same affective dimension score as originally found.

Table 3-3 summarizes the independent and dependent variables that are used in this study to test for regression. An observed seven of ten awards were given to a manufacturer included in this study by *Car and Driver*, while an observed two of three awards were given to a manufacturer included in this study by *Motor Trend*.

Tone by both publications was used as a variable, with positive, neutral and negative coded as one, zero and negative one, respectively. *Car and Driver's* average of .351, compared to *Motor Trend's* average of .206, shows that less articles with positive tone are written about for vehicles tested by *Motor Trend*. Advertising expenditures in 2011 by each of the ten manufacturers in this study was also used as a variable.

Finally the number of press drives and road tests conducted by each publication were used as study units to test for the effects that the manufacturer as a supplier of test vehicles and, in the case of press drives test locations, have on the positive, neutral or negative tone that enters product reviews written by these two publications.

Table 3-4 shows the number and percentage of reviews given to each manufacturer by each publication with positive, neutral and negative tone.

Using a frequency table, the number of positive, neutral and negative reviews tested for tone for each manufacturer by each publication was placed over the total number of reviews conducted for each manufacturer by each publication to calculate percentage totals. Since this study is using regression to map tone against a number of variables, creating equal weight between the reviews written by both publications for the respective manufacturers is important so that the regression is not merely calculating frequency.

### **Intercoder Reliability**

In order to ensure the reliability of the affective dimension used in this study, intercoder reliability was relied upon. Using the ten manufacturers listed in *Advertising Age's* "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition", 296 reviews were analyzed for this study, with 131 sourced from *Car and Driver* and 165 sourced from *Motor Trend*. Intercoder reliability requires that 10 percent of the material tested in the study be tested by an outside coder. This meant 30 (29.6) reviews needed to be coded by the individual serving as the coder.

However, before vetting reviews of vehicles by manufacturers that were not listed in *Advertising Age's* "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition", 410 reviews were analyzed. In the best interest of this study, and the reliability of the coding, it was decided that 10 percent of the original reviews would be coded for reliability. This left the individual serving as the coder with 41 articles to code. All articles coded by this individual were reviews of vehicles produced by the ten manufacturers listed in *Advertising Age's* "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition".

Twenty of the articles coded for reliability were sourced from *Car and Driver* and 21 were sourced from *Motor Trend*. Due to the fact that *Motor Trend* published 34 more

reviews than *Car and Driver* that were analyzed for tone in this study, the coder coded an additional *Motor Trend* article.

Using the intercoder reliability method of percent agreement, a method defined as “the percentage of all coding decisions made by pairs of coders on which the coders agree” (Lombard, Snyder-Duch & Bracken, 2002, p. 590), this study sought a percentage agreement of .9 (or 90 percent) or greater between the 41 reviews coded by the independent coder. With 41 articles, this meant that at least 37 (.9 percentage agreement equals 36.9 agreed upon reviews) of the 41 reviews needed to be in agreement with the original results of the affective dimension conducted during this study. Using the codebook (see appendix) as a guide, the coder incorrectly coded three reviews of the 41 coded. As such, percent agreement was at 92.68 percent, supporting the reliability of the original coding. Even if the coder had only coded for reliability for 10 percent of the reviews used for regression in this study (n=296), the three reviews that differed during intercoder reliability results in a percent agreement of 90 percent, or just at the threshold of what this study sought in percentage agreement when testing for intercoder reliability.

To further ensure reliability of the coding in this study, Cohen’s Kappa was calculated by SPSS to be .878 with a p-value of less than zero. Such a value is categorically outstanding according to the standards set by Landis and Koch (1977) that set the “rule of thumb values of Kappa from 0.40 to 0.59 are considered moderate, 0.60 to 0.79 substantial, and 0.80 outstanding” (TexaSoft, 2008).

### **Empirical Framework**

Using the IBM statistical software SPSS, the empirical framework of this study is mapped out within the parameters of the program. Using this framework, data collected

for this study were run for linear regression in order to test for biased tone within the automotive publishing medium and the manufacturers that support it.

An ANOVA provides a figure regarding the significance of the regression found in order to support whether the data input for this study confirm or deny bias by the automotive press, or whether such bias is significant enough to warrant further study on the subject in the future. Significance is defined as a figure below .05. Any figure above .05 was dismissed as statistically insignificant.

When mapping regression for the observed cases of positive, neutral and negative tone, the cases were coded to determine observed net positive tone in reviews. Positive, neutral and negative were coded as one, zero and negative one, respectively. The formula to find observed net positive tone is as such, where X is the number of reviews recorded with positive, neutral or negative tone:

$$X(1)+X(0)+X(-1)= \text{observed net positive tone}$$

When mapping regression for the percentage of cases deemed positive, neutral and negative, the inverse of percentage negative was scrutinized as well. This inverse, percentage not negative, is the culmination of the percentage of positive and neutral tone reviews over the independent variable. The formula to find percentage not negative is:

$$\text{Percentage positive} + \text{percentage neutral} = \text{percentage not negative}$$

Table 3- 1. Overall advertising expenditures in 2011 by manufacturer

Manufacturer	Advertising dollars spent in 2011 (millions)
General Motors Co.	\$3,055.70
Ford Motor Co.	\$2,141.30
Fiat/Chrysler Group	\$1,770.90
Toyota Motor Corp.	\$1,727.60
Honda Motor Co.	\$1,139.90
Nissan Motor Co.	\$940.80
Volkswagen	\$729.60
Hyundai Motor Co.	\$559.20
Kia Motors Corp.	\$497.80
Daimler	\$388.30

Table 3- 2. Advertising expenditures on magazine and Internet in 2011 by manufacturer

Manufacturer	Advertising dollars spent in magazines in 2011 (thousands)	Internet spending in 2011 (thousands)	Total magazine and Internet spending (thousands)
General Motors Co.	\$214,926.00	\$241,782.00	\$456,708.00
Ford Motor Co.	\$136,179.00	\$90,155.00	\$226,334.00
Fiat/Chrysler Group	\$154,262.00	\$84,823.00	\$239,085.00
Toyota Motor Corp.	\$134,221.00	\$137,931.00	\$272,152.00
Honda Motor Co.	\$89,359.00	\$73,605.00	\$162,964.00
Nissan Motor Co.	\$85,614.00	\$38,877.00	\$124,491.00
Volkswagen	\$29,799.00	\$30,132.00	\$59,931.00
Hyundai Motor Co.	\$39,529.00	\$26,663.00	\$66,192.00
Kia Motors Corp.	\$22,046.00	\$24,554.00	\$46,600.00
Daimler	\$14,259.00	\$11,659.00	\$25,918.00

Table 3- 3. Variables tested

Variable	N	Observed	Average	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Awards Car and Driver	10	7	0.7	0.823	0	2
Awards Motor Trend	10	2	0.2	0.632	0	2
Tone Car and Driver	131	131	0.351	0.6671	-1	1
Tone Motor Trend	165	165	0.206	0.6198	-1	1
Advertising dollars spent in 2011 (in millions)	10	296	\$1,295.11	862.69196	\$388.30	\$3,055.70
Advertising dollars spent in 2011, magazines (in thousands)	10	296	\$92,019.40	66940.19101	\$14,259.00	\$214,926.00
Advertising dollars spent in 2011, internet (in millions)	10	296	\$76,018.10	70163.02263	\$11,659.00	\$241,782
Advertising dollars spent in 2011, Internet and magazines (in thousands)	10	296	\$168,010.50	133975.9925	\$25,918	\$456,708
Press drives Car and Driver	10	32	3.2	2.348	0	7
Press drives Motor Trend	10	39	3.9	2.998	0	10
Road tests Car and Driver	10	99	9.9	4.383	3	19
Road tests Motor Trend	10	126	12.6	6.586	4	24

Table 3- 4. Variables tested by manufacturer

	General Motors Co.	Ford Motor Co.	Fiat/Chrysler Group	Toyota Motor Corp.	Honda Motor Co.	Nissan Motor Co.	Volkswagen	Hyundai Motor Co.	Kia Motors Corp.	Daimler
Observed positive Car and Driver	6	9	7	3	7	1	15	2	1	9
Observed neutral Car and Driver	8	5	9	5	4	5	8	7	2	4
Observed negative Car and Driver	0	0	1	2	1	4	2	1	0	3
Observed positive Motor Trend	5	7	13	5	0	4	11	3	0	4
Observed neutral Motor Trend	13	11	15	12	6	5	15	7	3	8
Observed negative Motor Trend	3	3	2	1	3	1	1	3	1	0
Percent positive Car and Driver	42.90%	64.30%	41.20%	30%	58.30%	10%	60%	20%	33.30%	56.30%
Percent neutral Car and Driver	57.10%	35.70%	52.90%	50%	33.30%	50%	32%	70%	66.70%	25%
Percent negative Car and Driver	0%	0%	5.90%	20%	8.30%	40%	8%	10%	0%	18.80%

Table 3- 4. Continued

	General Motors Co.	Ford Motor Co.	Fiat/Chrysler Group	Toyota Motor Corp.	Honda Motor Co.	Nissan Motor Co.	Volkswagen	Hyundai Motor Co.	Kia Motors Corp.	Daimler
Percent positive Motor Trend	23.80%	33.30%	43.30%	27.80%	0.00%	40%	40.70%	23.10%	0%	33.30%
Percent neutral Motor Trend	61.90%	52.40%	50%	66.70%	66.70%	50%	55.60%	53.80%	75%	66.70%
Percent negative Motor Trend	14.30%	14.30%	6.70%	5.60%	33.30%	10%	3.70%	23.10%	25%	0%
Press drives Car and Driver	2	2	5	5	2	2	6	1	0	7
Road tests Car and Driver	12	12	12	5	10	8	19	9	3	9
Press drives Motor Trend	3	4	6	3	1	3	10	2	0	7
Road tests Motor Trend	18	17	24	15	8	7	17	11	4	5

## CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

### Empirical Results

#### Testing for Bias in Relation to Awards

This section attempts to test whether *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend* favor larger advertisers when awarding vehicles. *Car and Driver* is known for its “10Best” award, an award given to the ten vehicles on the market the magazine views as the best.

In 2011 these cars were: the Hyundai Sonata, Volkswagen Golf/GTI, Honda Accord and Honda Fit, Ford Mustang GT, Cadillac CTS-V, Chevrolet Volt, BMW 3-Series/M3, Mazda MX-5 Miata and Porsche Boxster/Cayman.

Likewise, three “of the Year” articles were published in 2011 by *Motor Trend*. Chevrolet took “2011 Car of the Year” and “2011 Truck of the Year” with the Volt and Silverado HD, while Land Rover took 2012 “SUV of the Year” with the Range Rover Evoque (though not included in this study, the “2011 SUV of the Year,” which was published in 2010, was the Porsche Cayenne).

As such, seven of *Car and Driver’s* “10Best” cars are produced by the ten manufacturers observed as a unit of study due to their inclusion in *Advertising Age’s* “100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition”, while two of the three awards given by *Motor Trend* were occupied by a top automotive advertiser. More interesting is that the two awards given to a major automotive advertiser from *Motor Trend* were awarded to vehicles produced by General Motors, the highest spending advertiser among automotive manufacturers in 2011, and the second highest spending advertiser overall,

with only Procter & Gamble, Co. spending more on advertising in 2011 according to *Advertising Age's* "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition" (Johnson, 2012).

Correlation, however, is not causation, and with only one year's worth of awards collected for use in this study, it would be irresponsible to draw conclusions from these numbers. Yet, such statistics are hard to ignore and in order to determine if, to paraphrase Shakespeare, "there is something rotten with the state of automotive awards," further research should be conducted comparing advertising spending with nominal awards over a larger period of time.

### **Testing for Bias in Relation to Advertising Expenditures**

With the advertising expenditures of ten automotive manufacturers serving as the independent variable, and the percent of reviews with positive, neutral and negative tone given to each manufacturer by both *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend* serving as the dependent variable, this study used regression analysis to test for bias by one or both of these publications for manufacturers with greater advertising expenditures.

The regression test relied upon overall advertising spending in 2011 by each manufacturer as the independent variable; however, three subsequent tests were performed to see if expenditures restricted to only advertising spending in magazines, the Internet, and both magazines and the Internet correlated to bias in reviews as well. The decision to test for regression against each manufacturer's spending in 2011 on magazine advertising and Internet advertising was made due to the fact that both *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend* operate as print and online publications. With each manufacturer's individual spending on magazine and Internet advertising extracted from *Advertising Age's* database, it was decided to test the combined sums of the two spending units by each manufacturer as both *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend* receive

funding from magazine and online advertising. For each regression test performed, figures related to Beta,  $R^2$  and significance were taken. These figures are listed together in Table 4-1.

### **Manufacturer's advertising expenses, 2011**

In 2011 General Motors Co. spent \$3,055,700,000 on advertising, Ford Motor Co. spent \$2,141,300,000, Fiat/Chrysler Group spent \$1,770,900,000, Toyota Motor Corp. spent \$1,727,600,000, Honda Motor Co. spent \$1,139,900,000, Nissan Motor Co. spent \$940,800,000, Volkswagen spent \$729,600,000, Hyundai Motor Co. spent \$559,200,000, Kia Motors Corp. spent \$497,800,000 and Daimler spent \$388,300,000 (Johnson, 2012).

Table 4-2 shows that with a Beta of .166 and an  $R^2$  of .028, *Car and Driver's* regression of the percentage of reviews with positive tone against manufacturer advertising spending is statistically insignificant (p-value .646). The regression of the percentage of reviews with negative tone has a Beta at -.341, an  $R^2$  of .117, but is also statistically insignificant (p-value .334). Likewise, regression reveals a statistically insignificant (p-value .577) Beta of .202 and an  $R^2$  of .041 for the number of reviews published by *Car and Driver* with observed net positive tone against manufacturer advertising spending.

Table 4-2 also shows that in testing for bias in reviews against manufacturer advertising expenditures in *Motor Trend*, similar results to *Car and Driver* are found. Beta is .151 and  $R^2$  measures at .023 for regression of the percentage of reviews with positive tone, but is statistically insignificant (p-value .676). An  $R^2$  of .003 for regression of the percentage of reviews with negative tone and a Beta of -.059 is also statistically insignificant (p-value .872). The regression for observed net reviews with positive tone

by *Motor Trend* has a Beta of .139 and an  $R^2$  of .019, but is statistically insignificant (p-value .701).

### **Manufacturer's magazine advertising expenses, 2011**

This section uses the same dependent variables to test a new monetary independent variable: advertising expenses by each automotive manufacturer toward magazine advertising in the year 2011. Given that both *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend* continue to be, and historically have been, magazines, this figure reported by *Advertising Age* is relevant to both publications. In fact *Car and Driver* recorded print advertising rate card revenue of \$148,622,418 and *Motor Trend* recorded print advertising rate card revenue of \$132,050,125 in 2011, the two largest rate card revenues recorded in the automotive media that year, according to the Publishers Information Bureau (2012).

In 2011 General Motors Co. spent \$214,926,000 on magazine advertising, Ford Motor Co. spent \$136,179,000, Fiat/Chrysler Group spent \$154,262,000, Toyota Motor Corp. spent \$134,221,000, Honda Motor Co. spent \$89,359,000, Nissan Motor Co. spent \$85,614,000, Volkswagen spent \$29,799,000, Hyundai Motor Co. spent \$39,529,000, Kia Motors Corp. spent \$22,046,000 and Daimler spent \$14,259,000 (Johnson, 2012).

Table 4-3 shows that with Beta at .021, an  $R^2$  at less than .001 regression of the percentage of reviews by *Car and Driver* with positive tone is statistically insignificant (p-value .954). The regression of the percentage of reviews by *Car and Driver* with negative tone has a Beta of -.207 and an  $R^2$  of .043, but is also statistically insignificant (p-value .566). Likewise, the number of reviews with observed net positive tone has a Beta of .056 and an  $R^2$  of .003, but is statistically insignificant (p-value .879).

Table 4-3 shows that *Motor Trend's* results were similar to *Car and Driver* when observing regression in the tone of automotive reviews against each manufacturer's advertising expenditures in 2011 for magazines. Beta measures .178 with an  $R^2$  of .032 for regression of the percentage of reviews with positive tone, and Beta measures -.047 with an  $R^2$  of .002 for regression of the percentage of reviews with negative tone. Regression for both proved statistically insignificant (p-values of .622 and .897, respectively). Regression for the number of reviews with observed net positive tone has a Beta of .151 and an  $R^2$  of .023, but is statistically insignificant (p-value .678).

### **Manufacturer's Internet advertising expenses, 2011**

This section uses the same dependent variables to test a new monetary independent variable: advertising expenses by each automotive manufacturer toward Internet advertising in the year 2011.

In 2011 General Motors Co. spent \$241,782,000 on Internet advertising, Ford Motor Co. spent \$90,155,000, Fiat/Chrysler Group spent \$84,823,000, Toyota Motor Corp. spent \$137,931,000, Honda Motor Co. spent \$73,605,000, Nissan Motor Co. spent \$38,877,000, Volkswagen spent \$30,132,000, Hyundai Motor Co. spent \$26,663,000, Kia Motors Corp. spent \$24,554,000 and Daimler spent \$11,659,000 (Johnson, 2012).

Table 4-4 shows that with Beta at .056 and  $R^2$  at .003 the regression of the percentage of reviews by *Car and Driver* with positive tone is statistically insignificant (p-value .877). Meanwhile, the regression of the percentage of reviews by *Car and Driver* with negative tone has a Beta of -.291 and  $R^2$  of .085, but is statistically insignificant (p-value .414). Likewise, the regression of the number of reviews by *Car and Driver* with

observed net positive tone has a Beta of .085 and  $R^2$  of .007, but is statistically insignificant (p-value .815).

Table 4-4 also shows that *Motor Trend* offers similar results to *Car and Driver* when running regression against Internet advertising expenditures of the ten manufacturers observed in this study.  $R^2$  measures less than .001 for regression of both the percentage of reviews with positive tone (Beta -.012), and the percentage of reviews with negative tone (Beta -.010). Both are statistically insignificant (p-value of .974 and .977, respectively). Regression for the number of reviews by *Motor Trend* with observed net positive tone is much the same, with Beta at -.013 and  $R^2$  at less than .001, regression is statistically insignificant (p-value .971).

#### **Manufacturer's Internet and magazine advertising expenses, 2011**

This section uses the same dependent variables to test a new monetary independent variable: advertising expenses by each automotive manufacturer toward Internet and magazine advertising in the year 2011. This figure combines the reported figures by *Advertising Age* each manufacturer spent on advertising on the Internet and in magazines in 2011.

In 2011 General Motors Co. spent \$456,708,000 on Internet and magazine advertising, Ford Motor Co. spent \$226,334,000, Fiat/Chrysler Group spent \$239,085,000, Toyota Motor Corp. spent \$272,152,000, Honda Motor Co. spent \$162,694,000, Nissan Motor Co. spent \$124,491,000, Volkswagen spent \$59,931,000, Hyundai Motor Co. spent \$66,192,000, Kia Motors Corp. spent \$46,600,000 and Daimler spent \$25,918,000 (Johnson, 2012).

Table 4-5 shows that by comparing the percentage of reviews by *Car and Driver* with positive tone against the combined advertising spending by the ten observed

manufacturers, regression has a Beta of .040 and  $R^2$  measures .002, though this data is statistically insignificant (p-value .913). Regression of the percentage of reviews with negative tone has a Beta of -.256 and  $R^2$  of .066, but is also statistically insignificant (p-value .475). Likewise, the regression of the number of reviews by *Car and Driver* with observed net positive tone has a Beta of .072 and  $R^2$  of .005, but is statistically insignificant (p-value .843).

Table 4-5 shows that *Motor Trend* follows a similar pattern, with the regression of the percentage of reviews with positive tone and the regression of the percentage of reviews with negative tone lacking any statistical significance.  $R^2$  measures .007 with Beta at .083 for regression of the percentage of reviews with positive tone, and  $R^2$  measures .001 with Beta at -.029 for regression of the percentage of reviews with negative tone. Both are statistically insignificant (p-value measured at .819 and .936, respectively). Regression for the number of reviews by *Motor Trend* with observed net positive tone is no more telling, with Beta at .069 and  $R^2$  at .005, it is statistically insignificant as well (p-value .850).

### **Testing for Bias in Relation to Manufacturer-sponsored Events**

Of the 296 cases observed in this study, 71 of the reviews were operationally defined as press drives. These are manufacturer-sponsored events that give journalists time behind the wheel of a new product in conditions generally controlled by the manufacturer. On top of this, perks are often times provided to the reviewer during a press drive. The fifth hypothesis of this study questions the role these events have on the type of tone present in automotive reviews.

The number of press drives each manufacturer offered to both *Car and Driver* and *Motor Trend* during the publishing year of January 2011 to December 2011 served

as the independent variable. As such the number of press drives offered by each manufacturer to each publication was compared against the percentage of reviews each publication gave each manufacturer with positive, neutral and negative tone, as well as the observed net positive tone each publication gave each manufacturer. Specific figures for Beta,  $R^2$  and significance for each regression test can be found in Table 4-6.

### **Testing Car and Driver for bias from manufacturer-sponsored events**

In 2011 *Car and Driver* reviewed two vehicles by General Motors Co. in a press drive setting, two vehicles by Ford Motor Co., five vehicles by Fiat/Chrysler Group, five vehicles by Toyota Motor Corp., two vehicles by Honda Motor Co., two vehicles by Nissan Motor Co., six vehicles by Volkswagen, one vehicle by Hyundai Motor Co., zero vehicles by Kia Motors Corp. and seven vehicles by Daimler.

Table 4-6 shows that when running regression for the percentage of reviews by *Car and Driver* with positive tone against the number of press drives offered by each of the ten observed manufacturers produces an  $R^2$  of .148 and a Beta of .385, while the percentage of reviews by *Car and Driver* with negative tone produces an  $R^2$  of .053 and a Beta of .230. Both regression calculations were statistically insignificant (p-value measured at .272 and .522, respectively). Likewise, regression revealed that the number of reviews by *Car and Driver* with observed net positive tone has a Beta of .456 and an  $R^2$  of .208, but is statistically insignificant (p-value .185).

### **Testing Motor Trend for bias from manufacturer-sponsored events**

In 2011 *Motor Trend* reviewed three vehicles by General Motors Co. in a press drive setting, four vehicles by Ford Motor Co., six vehicles by Fiat/Chrysler Group, three vehicles by Toyota Motor Corp., one vehicle by Honda Motor Co., three vehicles by

Nissan Motor Co., ten vehicles by Volkswagen, two vehicles by Hyundai Motor Co., no vehicles by Kia Motors Corp. and seven vehicles by Daimler.

Table 4-6 shows that when measured for regression against the number of press drives provided by each of the ten observed manufacturers in this study, the percentage of reviews by *Motor Trend* with both positive and negative tone have Betas of .760 and -.791, respectively, and  $R^2$  at .578 and .625. P-value measured at .011 and .006 show a statistically significant relationship between the percentage of reviews with positive, negative and not negative (the inverse of negative) tone that *Motor Trend* gives to manufacturers that offer a greater number press drives.

Likewise, the number of reviews by *Motor Trend* with observed net positive tone also reveals a statistically significant relationship between the two variables, with a Beta of .849,  $R^2$  at .720 and the p-value measured at .002.

To further examine the significance of the data, Spearman's rank correlation was applied in order to constrict variance to the independent variable by applying rank order to the figures used. Each case remained statistically significant, with the level for the percentage of reviews with positive tone and negative tone measuring .001. The net observed number of reviews with positive tone was met with level of significance of less than .001.

Table 4- 1. Results by independent variable

		Advertising expenditures	Magazine advertising expenditures	Internet advertising expenditures	Magazine and Internet advertising expenditures	Manufacturer events
Percent positive Car and Driver	Beta	0.166	0.021	0.056	0.04	0.385
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.028	0	0.003	0.002	0.148
	P-value	0.646	0.954	0.877	0.913	0.272
Percent negative Car and Driver	Beta	-0.341	-0.207	-0.291	-0.256	0.23
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.117	0.043	0.085	0.066	0.053
	P-value	0.334	0.566	0.414	0.475	0.522
Observed net Car and Driver	Beta	0.202	0.056	0.085	0.072	0.456

Table 4- 1. Continued

		Advertising expenditures	Magazine advertising expenditures	Internet advertising expenditures	Magazine and Internet advertising expenditures	Manufacturer events
Percent positive Motor Trend	P-value	0.577	0.879	0.815	0.843	0.185
	Beta	0.151	0.178	-0.012	0.083	0.76
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.023	0.032	0	0.007	0.578
Percent negative Motor Trend	P-value	0.676	0.622	0.974	0.819	0.011
	Beta	-0.059	-0.047	-0.01	-0.029	-0.791
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.003	0.002	0	0.001	0.625
Observed net Motor Trend	P-value	0.872	0.897	0.977	0.936	0.006
	Beta	0.139	0.151	-0.013	0.069	0.849
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.019	0.023	0	0.005	0.72
	P-value	0.701	0.678	0.971	0.85	0.002

Table 4- 2. Results by advertising expenditures in 2011

	Beta	R <sup>2</sup>	P-value
Percent positive Car and Driver	0.166	0.028	0.646
Percent negative Car and Driver	-0.341	0.117	0.334
Observed net Car and Driver	0.202	0.041	0.577
Percent positive Motor Trend	0.151	0.023	0.676
Percent negative Motor Trend	-0.059	0.003	0.872
Observed net Motor Trend	0.139	0.019	0.701

Table 4- 3. Results by magazine advertising expenditures in 2011

	Beta	R <sup>2</sup>	P-value
Percent positive Car and Driver	0.021	0	0.954
Percent negative Car and Driver	-0.207	0.043	0.566
Observed net Car and Driver	0.056	0.003	0.879
Percent positive Motor Trend	0.178	0.032	0.622
Percent negative Motor Trend	-0.047	0.002	0.897
Observed net Motor Trend	0.151	0.023	0.678

Table 4- 4. Results by Internet advertising expenditures in 2011

	Beta	R <sup>2</sup>	P-value
Percent positive Car and Driver	0.056	0.003	0.877
Percent negative Car and Driver	-0.291	0.085	0.414
Observed net Car and Driver	0.085	0.007	0.815
Percent positive Motor Trend	-0.012	0	0.974
Percent negative Motor Trend	-0.01	0	0.977
Observed net Motor Trend	-0.013	0	0.971

Table 4- 5. Results by magazine and Internet advertising expenditures in 2011

	Beta	R <sup>2</sup>	P-value
Percent positive Car and Driver	0.04	0.002	0.913
Percent negative Car and Driver	-0.256	0.066	0.475
Observed net Car and Driver	0.072	0.005	0.843
Percent positive Motor Trend	0.083	0.007	0.819
Percent negative Motor Trend	-0.029	0.001	0.936
Observed net Motor Trend	0.069	0.005	0.85

Table 4- 6. Results by number of press drives

	Beta	R <sup>2</sup>	P-value
Percent positive Car and Driver	0.385	0.148	0.272
Percent negative Car and Driver	0.23	0.053	0.522
Observed net Car and Driver	0.456	0.208	0.185
Percent positive Motor Trend	0.76	0.578	0.011
Percent negative Motor Trend	-0.791	0.625	0.006
Observed net Motor Trend	0.849	0.72	0.002

## CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to see if manufacturers are able to influence agenda setting at the second-level in reviews written by the automotive press by studying the tone used in automotive editorial content. The two publications *Motor Trend* and *Car and Driver* were chosen as the publication study units for this work, while the ten automobile manufacturers, General Motors Co., Ford Motor Co., Fiat/Chrysler Group, Toyota Motor Corp., Honda Motor Co., Nissan Motor Co., Volkswagen, Hyundai Motor Co., Kia Motors Corp. and Daimler were chosen as manufacturer study units due to their large advertising expenditures in 2011 based off of information from *Advertising Age's* "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition".

The dependent variables studied were the observed net positive tone of reviews given by each publication to vehicles reviewed from each manufacturer, as well as the percentage of reviews with positive, neutral and negative tone given by each publication to vehicles reviewed from each manufacturer.

Independent variables consisted of the reported net advertising spending in 2011 by the ten manufacturers in this study, reported magazine advertising spending in 2011 by the ten manufacturers in this study, reported Internet advertising spending in 2011 by the ten manufacturers in this study, reported Internet and magazine advertising spending in 2011 by the ten manufacturers in this study, and the number of press drives each publication recorded for each of the ten manufacturers included in this study.

Overall this study found very little consistent evidence of bias in nearly every area tested. Neither *Car and Driver* nor *Motor Trend* showed any statistically significant

tendency to bias the tone in the reviews that each magazine published in accordance with the advertising expenses of the manufacturers; be it net advertising expenses, magazine advertising expenses, Internet advertising expenses, or both Internet and magazine advertising expenses.

Furthermore, *Car and Driver* showed no statistically significant tendency to increase the number of reviews with positive tone, or decrease the number of reviews with negative tone, for manufacturers that offered the magazine more time behind the wheel of its products in the setting of a manufacturer-sponsored press drive.

The same cannot be said of *Motor Trend*, though, as the magazine showed significance levels that were statistically significant for regression when review tone was regressed against the number of “press drives” by each of the manufacturers studied. *Motor Trend* appears to give a greater percentage of reviews with positive tone, a lower percentage of reviews with negative tone, a greater percentage of reviews without negative tone, and a larger number of reviews with net observed positive tone to manufacturers that invite the magazine to a greater number of press drives.

As noted earlier, no conclusions can be drawn regarding manufacturer influence on the awards given out by either publication, but observed statistics from the awards given out by both manufacturers in 2011 do warrant further study of manufacturer influence on awards.

The results of the content analyses led to the rejection of all five hypotheses for *Car and Driver*, revealing no statistical significance by the magazine in favoring its reviews towards manufacturers with higher advertising spending or a greater number of press drive events.

Hypotheses one through four were also rejected in the case of *Motor Trend*; however regression analysis revealed that *Motor Trend* gives a greater number and percentage of reviews with positive and not negative tone to manufacturers that offer the magazine press drives. Thus, hypothesis five fails to be rejected.

The lack of biased tone in reviews of automotive products gives consumers reason to trust that neither *Car and Driver* nor *Motor Trend* are allowing monetary influence to bias their reviews. Despite the fact that it does not appear that either publication slants its reviews in favor of manufacturers that spend more on advertising, the fact that more than half of the reviews used in this study (152) were analyzed as having neutral tone (i.e. either no discernible tone, or an approximately even amount of positive and negative tone) makes it possible that both publications attempt to “offer a better match between advertisers and readers” (Gal-or, Geylani & Yildirim, 2010, p. 26), by providing reviews that use a combined effort of positive and negative tones to both keep the manufacturer at ease by complimenting the product while also alerting consumers to problem areas in the product. Given the information discovered in this study, it appears the publisher does not have undo influence in the newsrooms of these two publications.

The same cannot be said about the information found in this study regarding the tone in reviews and the perks manufacturers offer automotive journalists during press drives. While reviews by *Car and Driver* did not show any statistical significance in providing additional positive, or not negative, tone in reviews to manufacturers that offer more press drives, *Motor Trend* showed statistically significant regression, which reveals that as the publication attends more press drives for a given manufacturer a

higher percentage of reviews with positive tone, a lower percentage of reviews with negative tone, a higher percentage of reviews with not negative tone, as well as a greater number of reviews with net observed positive tone, is observed in the publishing year of 2011.

Such a policy may explain why *Motor Trend* had seven additional reviews that took place in a press drive setting compared to *Car and Driver* (39 versus 32). The reasons for the relationship between tone and press drives are not fully known, but from what John Phillips (2011) and Frank Greve (2011) wrote, it appears it is in *Motor Trend's* best interest to write positively, or not negatively, about manufacturers who are more likely to hold press drives so that the writers can both go where the cars, as well as the “executives and engineers who build the cars” (Phillips) are, while simultaneously continuing to enjoy the perks of “free business-class flights and expense paid stays” (Greve) at lavish places around the world.

These findings counter Warren Breed's (1955) findings, as it is not the publisher but the writers who seem to be influenced by the media in the setting of a press drive. Press drives are arguably more beneficial to the writer than the publisher as the individual reviewing the vehicle indulges in the perks associated with these events. As automotive publicity manager Fred Heiler told Frank Greve (2011), the reason behind such lavish trips is, “not to promote good journalism, but simply because reviews have proven more effective and cheaper than ads at motivating customers to buy.”

By inviting automotive journalists who “often live and socialize in the same ruling-class circles as the people they cover” to write reviews of a manufacturer's product in such an environment, it is possible that those reviewing the product “are inclined to give

[their peers' product] the benefit of certain doubts" (Friedersdorf, 2013). It is also possible that the settings, which often times are grand and exotic, may serve as a distractor to the reviewer, or that the settings are even purposely chosen by the manufacturer to make the most of a vehicle's abilities (i.e. a manufacturer is unlikely to choose a setting with a curvy road for a vehicle not designed for handling such conditions). In essence, the events and environment of the press drive may distract the reviewer from giving an even-handed review of the product. Such a case can be exemplified by the fact that *Car and Driver* wrote the review of the Nissan Versa in a neutral tone during a press drive, but later wrote in a negative tone when reviewing the car in a road test setting.

No matter the reasons, press drives are less likely to be reviewed with a negative tone and more likely to contain positive tone. Of the 71 press drives in this study, three were negative (4 percent). Meanwhile of the 225 road tests in this study, 29 were negative (13 percent). Conversely nearly 30 percent of road tests were reviewed with a positive tone (66), while almost 65 percent of press drives (46) were reviewed with a positive tone. These numbers show that, statistically, a review is more likely to skew positive or not negative in tone to vehicles tested in a press drive setting. As a manufacturer offers more press drives, the percentage of reviews with not negative tone is likely to skew in the manufacturer's favor. Thus, while the results do show a statistical significance for *Motor Trend* skewing the tone it gives to manufacturers based off of the number of press drives offered, the reality seems to be that as more press drives are offered by any manufacturer the observed percentage of reviews with positive tone, as

well as the number of observed net positive reviews, allows tone to skew in the manufacturer's favor.

Of course other factors may be at play, as well. It is possible that manufacturers that make superior vehicles are more inclined to invite the press to drive their vehicles in a press drive event; however, it is curious that *Car and Driver* did not show a statistical relationship between its tone in reviews based off of the number press drives offered by a manufacturer. Admittedly it is possible that this difference may be an attempt by one or both publications "to increase polarization in order to alleviate...competition" (Gal-or, Geylani & Yildirim, 2010, p. 26).

Another factor possibly contributing to *Motor Trend's* relationship of press drives and the percentage of reviews written without negative tone may be due to personal bias on the part of the author. Ignoring personal relationships, the author may have a personal preference to one brand over another, and for reasons that may or may not be intentional this bias results in the author writing about different vehicle's he or she reviews in a tone that reflects his or her personal brand preference.

### **Future Study**

The majority of the hypotheses raised by this study were rejected; however, in the case of *Motor Trend*, one hypothesis was statistically significant and was thus not rejected – as the number of press drives offered by a manufacturer increases, *Motor Trend* is statistically more likely to review said manufacturer's products with more positive and less negative tone in its writing. This study establishes that such a case existed for *Motor Trend* during the publishing year of January 2011 through December 2011; however, future studies should seek to find if such a pattern continues through other publishing years, through other automotive publications and even through other

industry review publications that rely upon manufacturer-sponsored events to write reviews.

Time also limited the independent variables related to advertising dollars in this study. Future study of this subject should seek to expand the role of advertising budgets to a micro level of advertising spending by month or by week for each manufacturer tested against publishing dates for reviews. Such a study may reveal if manufacturers invest more heavily in advertising before or after the release of an award or a positive published review. This study is thus limited in its ability to study the role advertising budgets play preceding or following such a situation and must assume that each manufacturer a relatively equal amount on advertising on a month-to-month basis in the year 2011.

Another limitation of this study happens to be the different calendar years used by publishers and advertisers (i.e. a January 2011 magazine is usually completed at least one month before the written publication date). In order to accommodate for this limitation, the dependent variables of this study were run against data provided by *Advertising Age's* "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2011 Edition" for the ten manufacturer's tested in this study for the independent variables of overall advertising spending, advertising spending in magazines, advertising spending on the Internet, and advertising spending on magazines and the Internet. The data found was statistically insignificant as well.

Furthermore, it was deemed that the low number of cases in this study involving each publications award winners in 2011 made making a conclusion on the impact of manufacturer advertising spending on awards received unobtainable. Future studies,

however, could and should look into the effects of awards in the automotive and other review journalism fields by looking at the correlation between manufacturer advertising expenditures for multiple award years. Though no conclusion can be made, this study noted that exactly 70 percent of the awards given by *Car and Driver* went to manufacturers with advertising expenditures large enough to be listed in the *Advertising Age*'s "100 Leading National Advertisers, 2012 Edition", and that two-thirds of the awards given by *Motor Trend* in 2011 went to vehicles produced by the second-highest advertiser overall in 2011 according to *Advertising Age*, General Motors (Johnson, 2012). It is conceivable that due to pride in their products achievements that manufacturers invested more in advertising; however, in the case of General Motors, *Advertising Age* reports that in 2010 the company was the third largest advertiser with \$2,746,300,000 spent and the company received no awards from the *Motor Trend* and only one from *Car and Driver*. Such a case also supports that General Motors' vehicles, as well as the vehicles of other manufacturers given awards by both publications, may have simply been superior in 2011 (Johnson, 2012). In any case, future study in this area might put to rest the "considerable suspicion that the Car of the Year on the cover of an auto magazine is the result of an automaker's extensive purchase of advertising space in that magazine" (Wilcox & Cameron, 2012, p. 88).

An area of study future research can also investigate is the role of tone in rank order comparison tests. For example, in *Motor Trend's* comparison test of compact sedans the Mazda 3, a vehicle not included in this study due to Mazda's small advertising budget, was written in an operationally defined negative tone despite the fact it finished in third place in an eight-car comparison test, while vehicles ranked lower

in the test were written in an operationally defined neutral tone. Such a study will need to introduce a formula to make up for the fact that different comparison tests use a different number of vehicles.

Future studies can also look into the role such tone has on consumer purchase decisions. Such a study can compare the role of tone in reviews on a specific vehicle model against said vehicle model's sales figures. Similarly, this can be carried out on other reviewed products such as phones, tablets or computers.

Another aspect that future studies may want to consider is the role of the author. Comparing the tone used by individual authors over various product reviews may reveal if an author has a personal tone preference in writing his or her reviews, or if the authors of a given publication generally share a standardized writing tone - a finding that may reveal if writer's learn "by osmosis" (Breed, 1955, p. 328) to write in a specific tone as a result of a newsroom policy enacted by the publisher.

Following in the vein of Golan, Kiouisis and McDaniel (2007), future studies may also want to look at the relationship reviews play in advertising of automotive or other reviewed products. Manufacturers often quote from media reviews in their advertisements. Future research can look at how manufacturers use these quotes to influence the agenda of their advertisement at both the first- and second-level, and if using more media endorsements translates into more interest in the vehicle being advertised.

Nevertheless, the information found in this study demonstrates that *Motor Trend* provided manufacturers that offered more manufacturer-sponsored press drives a higher percentage, and net number, of positive and not negative reviews in 2011. This

study concludes that the relationship between magazine and manufacturer can potentially influence the tone, and influence the agenda of the press at the second-level, in automobile reviews if a manufacturer offers more press drives to automotive journalists.

APPENDIX  
CODEBOOK

Make	Model	Publication	Award/Road Test/Press Drive	
(Check one)	Positive	Neutral	Negative	N/A
Vehicle acceleration and engine performance				
Transmission performance				
Ride (comfort)				
Handling (performance)				
Brake performance				
Steering performance				
Styling				
Interior comfort and space				
Interior ergonomics and materials				
Seat comfort				
Cargo space				
Features and amenities				
Conclusion				
Other				
Overall				

## LIST OF REFERENCES

- Basuroy, S., & Rinaldo, D. (2009). Does advertising spending influence media coverage of the advertiser?. *Journal Of Marketing*, 73(6), 33-46. doi:10.1509/jmkg.73.6.33. Retrieved from: [http://uh7qf6fd4h.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2004&ctx\\_enc=info%3Aofi%2Fenc%3AUTF-8&rft\\_id=info:sid/summon.serialssolutions.com&rft\\_val\\_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&rft.genre=article&rft.atitle=Does+advertising+spending+influence+media+coverage+of+the+advertiser%3F&rft.jtitle=Journal+of+Marketing&rft.au=Rinaldo%2C+Diego&rft.au=Basuroy%2C+Suman&rft.date=2009-11-01&rft.pub=American+Marketing+Association&rft.issn=0022-2429&rft.volume=73&rft.issue=6&rft.page=33&rft.externalDBID=n%2Fa&rft.externalDocID=212230673](http://uh7qf6fd4h.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2004&ctx_enc=info%3Aofi%2Fenc%3AUTF-8&rft_id=info:sid/summon.serialssolutions.com&rft_val_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&rft.genre=article&rft.atitle=Does+advertising+spending+influence+media+coverage+of+the+advertiser%3F&rft.jtitle=Journal+of+Marketing&rft.au=Rinaldo%2C+Diego&rft.au=Basuroy%2C+Suman&rft.date=2009-11-01&rft.pub=American+Marketing+Association&rft.issn=0022-2429&rft.volume=73&rft.issue=6&rft.page=33&rft.externalDBID=n%2Fa&rft.externalDocID=212230673)
- Breed, W. (1955). Social control in the newsroom: A functional analysis. *Social Forces* 33(4): 326-335.
- Brown, K., & Cavazos, R. (2005). Why is this show so dumb? Advertising revenue and program content of network television. *Review of Industrial Organization*, 27(1), 17-34. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11151-005-4836-6>. Retrieved from: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0167268109001917>
- Cammissa, J. (2012). Old vs new Scirocco shootout! head 2 head episode 15. [Video/DVD] *YouTube: Motor Trend*. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJtcTgBdLF8>
- Car and Driver. (2012). About us. *Car and Driver media kit*. Retrieved from: [http://www.caranddrivermediakit.com/r5/showkiosk.asp?listing\\_id=4170499](http://www.caranddrivermediakit.com/r5/showkiosk.asp?listing_id=4170499)
- Carroll, C. E., & McCombs, M. (2003). Agenda-setting effects of business news on the public's images and opinions about major corporations. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 6(1), 36-46. Retrieved from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/231576825?accountid=10920>
- Champlin, D., & Knoedler, J. (2002). Operating in the public interest or in pursuit of private profits? News in the age of media consolidation. *Journal of Economic Issues*, 36(2), 459-468. Retrieved from: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/4227797.pdf?acceptTC=true>
- Chiang, C., & Knight, B. (2011). Media bias and influence: Evidence from newspaper endorsements. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 78(3), 795-820. doi: 10.1093/restud/rdq037. Retrieved from: <http://restud.oxfordjournals.org/content/78/3/795>
- DataCenter. (2013). 100 leading national advertisers. *Advertising Age*. Retrieved from: [http://adage.com/datacenter/datapopup.php?article\\_id=235491](http://adage.com/datacenter/datapopup.php?article_id=235491)

- Davis, D. E. (1968, April). Turn your hymnals to 2002. *Car and Driver*. Retrieved from: <http://media.caranddriver.com/files/1968-bmw-2002-car-and-driverdavis-2002.pdf>
- Ellman, M., & Germano, F. (2009). What do the papers sell? A model of advertising and media bias. *The Economic Journal*, 119, 680-704. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-0297.2009.02218.x. Retrieved from: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-0297.2009.02218.x/full>
- Entman, R. M. (2007). Framing bias: Media in the distribution of power. *Journal of Communication*, 57(1), 163-173. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00336.x. Retrieved from: [http://uh7qf6fd4h.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2004&ctx\\_enc=info%3Aofi%2Fenc%3AUTF-8&rft\\_id=info:sid/summon.serialssolutions.com&rft\\_val\\_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&rft.genre=article&rft.atitle=Framing+Bias%3A+Media+in+the+Distribution+of+Power&rft.jtitle=Journal+of+Communication&rft.au=Robert+M+Entman&rft.date=2007-03-01&rft.pub=Blackwell+Publishing+Ltd&rft.issn=0021-9916&rft.volume=57&rft.issue=1&rft.page=163&rft.externalDocID=1294143071](http://uh7qf6fd4h.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2004&ctx_enc=info%3Aofi%2Fenc%3AUTF-8&rft_id=info:sid/summon.serialssolutions.com&rft_val_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&rft.genre=article&rft.atitle=Framing+Bias%3A+Media+in+the+Distribution+of+Power&rft.jtitle=Journal+of+Communication&rft.au=Robert+M+Entman&rft.date=2007-03-01&rft.pub=Blackwell+Publishing+Ltd&rft.issn=0021-9916&rft.volume=57&rft.issue=1&rft.page=163&rft.externalDocID=1294143071)
- Esrock, S., & Leichty, G. (1998). Social responsibility and corporate web pages: Self-presentation or agenda-setting?. *Public Relations Review*, 24(3), 305-319. doi: 10.1016/S0363-8111(99)80142-8
- Friedersdorf, C. (2013). Why does the American media get big stories wrong. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from: <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/06/why-does-the-american-media-get-big-stories-wrong/276454/>
- Gal-or, E., Geylani, T., & Yildirim, T. P. (2010). The impact of advertising on media bias. 1-41. Retrieved from: <http://econ.hunter.cuny.edu/media-economics-workshop/conference-papers/Gal-Or%20Geylani%20Yildirim%20Ads%20and%20Media%20Bias.pdf>
- Gentzkow, M., & Shapiro, J. (2005). Media bias and reputation. *National Bureau of Economic Research*, 1-43. Retrieved from: [http://www.nber.org/papers/w11664.pdf?new\\_window=1](http://www.nber.org/papers/w11664.pdf?new_window=1)
- Greve, F. (2011). Taking readers for a ride. *American Journalism Review*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ajr.org/Article.asp?id=5141>
- Golan, G. J., Kioussis, S. K., & McDaniel, M. L. (2007). Second-level agenda setting and political advertising. *Journalism Studies*, 8(3), 432-443. doi: 10.1080/14616700701276190. Retrieved from: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14616700701276190>

- Harris, C. (2011). How Ferrari spins. *Jalopnik*. Retrieved from: <http://jalopnik.com/5760248/how-ferrari-spins>
- Investopedia. Definition of 'Willie Sutton rule'. *Investopedia*. Retrieved from: <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/w/willie-sutton-rule.asp>
- Johnson, B. (2012). 100 leading national advertisers, 2012 edition. *Advertising Age*. Retrieved from: <http://adage.com>
- Linkov, J. (2011). Are Volkswagen's media vehicles the same as what you can buy?. *Consumer Reports*, Retrieved from: <http://news.consumerreports.org/cars/2011/11/are-volkswagens-media-vehicles-the-same-as-what-you-can-buy.html>
- Lombard, M., Snyder-Duch, J., & Bracken, C. (2002). Content analysis in mass communication assessment and reporting of intercoder reliability. *Human Communication Research*. Retrieved from: [http://atar.mscc.huji.ac.il/~mb/analyzing\\_CA.pdf](http://atar.mscc.huji.ac.il/~mb/analyzing_CA.pdf)
- Marilyn, R., Wanta, W., & Tzong-Horng, D. (2002). Agenda setting and issue salience online. *Communication Research*, 29(4), 452-465. doi: 10.1177/0093650202029004004
- McCombs, M. (2005). A look at agenda setting: Past, present and future. *Journalism Studies*, 6(4), 543-557.
- McCombs, M.E., & Shaw, D.L. (1972). The agenda-setting functions of mass media. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 34(2), 176-187.
- McCombs, M., & Shaw D. (1993). The evolution of agenda setting research: Twenty-five years in the marketplace of ideas. *Journal of Communications*, 58-67. Retrieved from: <http://www4.ncsu.edu/~amgutsch/McCombsShawnew.pdf>
- McElroy, J. (2009). Thus spake David E.. *Autoline*. Retrieved from: <http://www.autoline.tv/daily/?p=5606>
- Motor Trend. (2013). *Motor Trend 2013 Media Kit*. Retrieved from: [http://ads.simautomotive.com/CONSUMER/\\_PDF/\\_MEDIA\\_KITS/MTD-GenMediaKit.pdf](http://ads.simautomotive.com/CONSUMER/_PDF/_MEDIA_KITS/MTD-GenMediaKit.pdf)
- Paukert, C. (2012). Honda warns dealers to clear out 2012 civic stock, 2013 emergency refresh on sale Nov. 29. *Autoblog*. Retrieved from: <http://www.autoblog.com/2012/10/23/honda-warns-dealers-to-clear-out-2012-civic-stock-2013-emergenc/>

- Phillips, J. (2011). Yes, a car manufacturer once sent me money. *Car and Driver*. Retrieved from: <http://www.caranddriver.com/columns/john-phillips-yes-a-car-manufacturer-once-sent-me-money>
- PIB. (2012). January-December 2011 v 2010. *Publishers Information Bureau*. Retrieved from: <http://www.magazine.org/insights-resources/pib/magazine-titles-data-ytd/january-december-2011-vs-2010>
- Reuter, J. (2009). Does advertising bias product reviews? An analysis of wine ratings. Retrieved from: [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1480293&http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&ved=0CEwQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpapers.ssrn.com%2Fsol3%2Fdelivery.cfm%3Fabstractid%3D1480293&ei=TZmAT\\_unBli6tweEtu2iBg&usg=AFQjCNHRFlqvZXY60wG\\_7yQld9DHjtVDBA](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1480293&http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&ved=0CEwQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpapers.ssrn.com%2Fsol3%2Fdelivery.cfm%3Fabstractid%3D1480293&ei=TZmAT_unBli6tweEtu2iBg&usg=AFQjCNHRFlqvZXY60wG_7yQld9DHjtVDBA)
- Reuter, J., & Zitzewitz, E. (2005). Do ads influence editors? Advertising and bias in the financial media. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 1-28. Retrieved from: <https://www2.bc.edu/jonathan-reuter/research/ads.pdf>
- Riffe, D., Lacy, S., & Fico, F. (2005). Analyzing media messages: Using quantitative content analysis in research. *Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.* Retrieved from: <http://books.google.com/books?id=t6ezVKmiCVcC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>
- Socalspeedzone. (2010). Jim Wangers and the Car and Driver “ringer” GTO. *YouTube*. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qy6Zn4TIOr4>
- Scheufele, D. (1999). Framing as a theory of media effects. *Journal of Communication*, 49(1), 103-122. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.1999.tb02784.x. Retrieved from: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1999.tb02784.x/abstract>
- Shoemaker, P., & Reese, S. (1996). Mediating the message: Theories of influences on mass media content. *Longman Publishers USA*. Retrieved from: <http://shoemaker.syr.edu/docs/mediating-the-message-2nd-edition-1996-shoemaker-reese.pdf>
- Sutter, D. (2002). Advertising and political bias in the media: The market for criticism of the market economy. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 61(3), 725-745. doi: 10.1111/1536-7150.00187
- Tankard, J. (2001). “The empirical approach to the study of media framing” in *Framing Public Life*, edited by Reese, Gandy and Grant (Erlbaum).

- TexaSoft. (2008). Interrater reliability (kappa) using SPSS. *SPSS Tutorials for Statistical Data Analysis*. Retrieved from: <http://www.stattutorials.com/SPSS/TUTORIAL-SPSS-Interrater-Reliability-Kappa.htm>
- Weaver, D. H. (2007). Thoughts on agenda setting, framing, and priming. *Journal of Communication*, 57(1), 142-147. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00333.x. Retrieved from: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00333.x/asset/j.1460-2466.2006.00333.x.pdf?v=1&t=h7mdvs38&s=54e0b1c60b2fbdf72fe9d6a76a086a5f0d34dd57>
- Wert, R. (2011). This is the only way Chris Harris is allowed to drive a Ferrari. *Jalopnik*, Retrieved from: <http://jalopnik.com/5856492/this-is-the-only-way-chris-harris-is-allowed-to-test-drive-a-ferrari>
- White, D.M. (1950). The "gate keeper": A case study in the selection of news. *Journalism Quarterly* 27(4), 383-390.
- Wilcox, D., & Cameron, G. (2012). Public relations strategies and tactics. *Pearson, Tenth edition*, 88.
- Yioutas, J., & Segvic, I. (2003). Revisiting the Clinton/Lewinsky scandal: The convergence of agenda setting and framing. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 80(3), 567-582. Retrieved from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/216929626?accountid=10920>; [http://uh7qf6fd4h.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2004&ctx\\_enc=info:ofi/enc:UTF-8&rft\\_id=info:sid/ProQ%3Aabiglobal&rft\\_val\\_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&rft.genre=article&rft.jtitle=Journalism+and+Mass+Communication+Quarterly&rft.atitle=REVISITING+THE+CLINTON%2FLEWINSKY+SCANDAL%3A+THE+CONVERGENCE+OF+AGENDA+SETTING+AND+FRAMING&rft.au=Yioutas%2C+Julie%3BSegvic%2C+Ivana&rft.aulast=Yioutas&rft.aufirst=Julie&rft.date=2003-10-01&rft.volume=80&rft.issue=3&rft.spage=567&rft.isbn=&rft.btitle=&rft.title=Journalism+and+Mass+Communication+Quarterly&rft.issn=10776990](http://uh7qf6fd4h.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2004&ctx_enc=info:ofi/enc:UTF-8&rft_id=info:sid/ProQ%3Aabiglobal&rft_val_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&rft.genre=article&rft.jtitle=Journalism+and+Mass+Communication+Quarterly&rft.atitle=REVISITING+THE+CLINTON%2FLEWINSKY+SCANDAL%3A+THE+CONVERGENCE+OF+AGENDA+SETTING+AND+FRAMING&rft.au=Yioutas%2C+Julie%3BSegvic%2C+Ivana&rft.aulast=Yioutas&rft.aufirst=Julie&rft.date=2003-10-01&rft.volume=80&rft.issue=3&rft.spage=567&rft.isbn=&rft.btitle=&rft.title=Journalism+and+Mass+Communication+Quarterly&rft.issn=10776990)

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Gregory Fink earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism from the University of Florida in December of 2011. He joined the University of Florida's Master of Arts in Mass Communication program in January of 2012 and received his degree in August of 2013.