Published in final edited form as:
Newsp Res J. 2010 ; 31(1): 20–35.

Readers Use Black Newspapers for Health/Cancer Information

María E. Len-Ríos[assistant professor],
School of Journalism at the University of Missouri

Elisia Cohen[assistant professor], and
Department of Communication at the University of Kentucky

Charlene Caburnay[research assistant professor]
Health Communication Research Laboratory in the George Warren Brown School of Social Work
at Washington University in St. Louis

Abstract

A national survey of readers of black newspapers shows that whether readers depend on black newspapers for cancer and health information depends on their black newspaper use, black self-identity and general media dependency.

According to the 2009 Bacon's Media Directory,¹ there are 211 U.S. African-American daily and community newspapers—slightly fewer than the figure of 237 reported in the 2006 directory. While the newspaper industry as a whole is suffering declines in circulation, those who study the black press have asserted that “the continuing desire for an alternative minority press reveals both the unmet promise of media diversity trumpeted in the 1960s and the ever present yearning by distinct groups to assert their unfiltered voices in the marketplace of ideas.”² They contend that even with increased inclusion in general audience media, black newspapers deliver a product that cannot be equaled by the mainstream press.³ African-American publishers and editors agree and believe that their newspapers provide niche content.⁴ Researchers have conducted few surveys specifically on the attitudes and media use behaviors of African-American newspaper audiences. Existing research appears to back the assertion of black newspapers, illustrating that black newspaper audiences use black newspapers to augment their use of general audience (or “mainstream”) media. The benefits to black newspaper readers include perspectives and news topics not included elsewhere.⁵ Furthermore, research indicates that health information in black newspapers may promote positive health behaviors,⁶ but, to our knowledge, no study has systematically looked at individual factors associated with black newspaper readership and dependence on black newspapers for health and cancer news.

This study examines individual characteristics of black newspaper readers and their general audience media use to gain an understanding of how reading black newspapers fits into their media consumption habits for health information. The results of this study fill a gap in the academic literature by looking more deeply at an understudied population and by extending our understanding of media dependency for health news by African-Americans who disproportionately experience health disparities. Moreover, it will provide black newspaper management with information about their audiences and will guide health communication researchers who use African-American media in their health interventions.

Literature Review

One of the goals of the National Cancer Institute's 2006 cancer research plan was to overcome health disparities.⁷ Race and ethnicity have long been factors tied to health disparities.⁸ Researchers have identified reasons for the disparities experienced by African-

Americans—cancer is detected at later stages, may be more aggressive and doctors offer African-Americans fewer treatment options.⁹ In addition, recent studies suggest that early screening is not necessarily the only explanation for these disparities.¹⁰ While there are myriad factors associated with late diagnosis, two important factors are a person's education level and a delay in seeking care. One way to address the problem of disparities is to increase awareness and knowledge about these issues in the African-American community. In that way, the community can be better informed and perhaps remedy another contributing problem—physician delay in testing and diagnosis—by encouraging patient-provider communication. A viable way to increase awareness and knowledge is through black newspapers, whose information can empower African-Americans.

A recent study of black newspapers and health information¹¹ included a large scale survey of black newspaper readers covering 24 weekly black newspapers reaching an estimated initial circulation of 739,000 and a news content analysis of the 24 largest circulating weekly black newspapers and 12 largest circulating general audience newspapers drawn from a broader sample of 12 U.S. cities and 12 standard metropolitan areas (SMAs).¹² Content analysis results showed that black newspapers ran proportionately more cancer news stories (13.6 percent of health stories)¹³ than did general audience newspapers (9.6 percent of health stories).¹⁴ In addition, the black newspapers' stories included more prevention and community resource information. The audience survey confirmed previous research demonstrating that black newspaper readers feel that black newspapers play an important community role and supply information missing in mainstream coverage. Other analyses of these data indicated that black newspaper stories did a better job than did general audience newspapers in mentioning health disparities and dispensing personal mobilization information (e.g., how to get help).¹⁵ Still another analysis found that while general audience newspapers contained a greater number of staff-written cancer stories, black newspapers furnished readers with more staff-written stories about gender-specific cancers in line with the higher mortality rates experienced by blacks.¹⁶

Although these data show that black newspapers are more likely than are the mainstream press to publish health and cancer stories that include personally relevant and localized information for their readership, researchers have not systematically studied the ways in which the black press may influence what people think about health. For instance, Miller and Wanta¹⁷ concluded that minority newspapers may prioritize issues differently, which then may affect the significance that minority audiences ascribe to those issues. Extant data also suggest that African-Americans have more faith in what is reported in black newspapers¹⁸ and find black newspaper reports more credible than general audience newspapers.¹⁹ Moreover, although the trend of many newspapers confronting declining circulation numbers is to reach out to women in an attempt to bolster their readership,²⁰ less research has focused on black newspaper readership patterns despite their struggle for economic survival.²¹ Clearly, understanding how newspaper readers use and perceive black newspapers warrants further scholarly consideration.

Media Dependency Theory

Early research on media dependency argued that dependency was a separate construct from simple media use (e.g., Do you read “X” newspaper?) and media exposure (e.g., How many days a week do you read “X” newspaper?). Dependency, in contrast, is defined by the reader's goals (e.g., why the reader uses a particular medium). The idea is that when a particular media product enables a person to achieve his/her goals, it can create a dependency relationship. Those goals could be learning, entertainment or something else. At the macro-level, media dependency is also determined by the availability and accessibility of information. If information in a social system is scarce, people will increasingly depend on media sources. Dependency theory explains how the power of media fluctuates. According

to Becker and Whitney,²² “Audience members are dependent on a given medium to the extent they have needs which are being fulfilled by the medium.” A literature review²³ illustrates that media dependencies vary in their occurrence and tend to surface during societal change when there is a strong need for information.

Dependence on a specific type of medium may confer special benefits. For example, Becker and Whitney²⁴ found that those who were newspaper dependent had more knowledge about local political affairs than did those who were television dependent. Media dependency, then, was linked to knowledge about politics. Similarly, in the context of the current study, increased knowledge or a need for self-understanding about health issues related to the African-American community could be linked to media dependency on black newspapers.

Later research by Ball-Rokeach²⁵ developed Media System Dependency Theory to account for a system of media power and effects. Such theorizing considers asymmetries between different players in the media system (e.g., networks, news bureaus, etc.), as well as the position of the audience, to be important in explaining media's influence. In studying newspapers, Loges and Ball-Rokeach²⁶ argue that “dependency relations between an individual and a media system can be studied through an analysis of the types of information a person seeks from the media system in order to meet personal goals.” They identified three types of newspaper media dependency relations—social understanding, self-understanding and action orientation. The self-understanding dependency relationship most relates to the present study because it is operationalized as staying on top of one's health as well as learning more about oneself. The goal for self-understanding may relate to black newspaper use for health and cancer information.

Media Dependency Theory and Group Identification

Media dependency theory would suggest that black newspapers help their readers achieve goals related to self-understanding because they are customized for a black audience. General audience media cannot equal this customized purpose. Indeed, a recent study comparing the effects of general audience news consumption and the social connectedness of blacks and whites shows that blacks benefit less than whites and that television viewing, which is higher among the U.S. black population, is more detrimental to social connectedness among blacks.²⁷ This is not to suggest that media dependency means that individuals only use one form of media.²⁸ It would be naïve to think so. However, media dependency would suggest that the health information that black newspaper audiences get may serve goals of self understanding better than do general audience media because the information is more likely to be culturally relevant. Furthermore, black newspapers are more likely to carry information about local community events, such as health fairs, clinics and programs because most black newspapers are community weeklies. As Jeffres et al.'s survey of editors at urban community newspapers revealed, “providing news of local festivals, events” was their top goal.²⁹

A focus on the unique connection between black newspapers and their readers is important, given that early studies of black newspaper readers indicated that the majority of African-Americans viewed black newspapers as supplemental to a daily mainstream paper, which often was regarded as a “mouthpiece” of the white power structure.³⁰ Few recent studies have been conducted with black newspaper readers to examine their thoughts and perceptions about modern black newspapers.³¹ Some scholarship reflects the view that African-Americans evaluate the black press more positively than they do the daily general audience alternative.³² Additionally, studies using unobtrusive measures of online news selection show that blacks pay significantly more attention to the race of news story subjects than do whites and that they are more likely to seek out stories if the main character is black.

³³ This line of research suggests that black newspaper content would appeal to blacks because it resonates with black self-identity.

Scholars have sought to explain these evaluations, in part, by studying the distinctive qualities of news stories carried in black newspapers,³⁴ the ways in which African-American newspaper editors and reporters perceive their role in the black community,³⁵ and the general relationship between African-Americans and the print media.³⁶ A study by Vercellotti and Brewer³⁷ of African-American use and opinions of general audience and black media shows a positive relationship between consumption of mainstream and black media, with a sub-group of politically alienated African-Americans reporting more faith in black media. Given the ability of black newspapers to publicize issues through their newsgathering and reporting practices, scholarship also needs to determine how dependent readers are on black newspapers as a valued information resource.

Recently, the concept of media dependency has expanded to examine media dependency in terms of minority group self-identification. For instance, Morton and Duck³⁸ studied the media dependency of gay men and their attitudes toward safe sex and found that those who identified most highly with the gay community and were dependent on gay media for health information also had more positive attitudes toward safe sex. Recent research in psychology suggests that group identification helps minority group members cope with feelings related to discrimination. Outten, Schmitt, Garcia and Branscombe³⁹ examined the association of black group identification and different types of coping on measures of self-esteem and life satisfaction. They found that intergroup problem-solving and intergroup emotion-focused options led to significantly higher levels of self-reported self esteem and life satisfaction. These findings in terms of media dependency would suggest that minority media could serve as a coping function and as an intergroup problem-solving mechanism in terms of helping to provide a voice and forum for group problem solving of issues, such as health, that disparately affect the black community.

It also may be true that certain demographics of a minority community are associated with stronger dependencies on minority media. For instance Morton and Duck⁴⁰ found that gay men with lower levels of education more strongly identified with gay media. It may be that education level has an effect on reliance on minority media and the benefits gained from health information. Outten et al.⁴¹ found that “individuals with more education endorsed intergroup problem-focused options less, thus lowering subjective well-being.” In other words, it may be that those with a higher education level would be less likely to rely on minority media for health news. In terms of health communication, then, those who are more likely to rely on minority media may also be in more need of quality health information or health information they believe is more credible because it is coming from a trusted source. In terms of black newspaper readers, it may be that education level and the strength of one's black self-identity are associated with a stronger dependency on black newspapers for health information. Research on distinctiveness theory in advertising⁴² and news media selection⁴³ suggests that those who identify more strongly with their ethnicity or race are more likely to pay attention to messages that are created for their group as compared to group members who do not identify closely with their race or ethnicity. Distinctiveness theory, often attributed to McGuire, states “that a person exists insofar as he or she is different and that he or she is perceived by self and others in terms of those differences.”⁴⁴ The idea is that, if a person defines his/her identity according to their ethnicity, he or she will be more conscious of information related to that aspect of self. This suggests that there may be differences in black newspaper media dependency based on the strength of one's racial identification.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The present study explores the media dependency relationship between black newspaper readers and use of black newspapers for health and cancer information. To assess this overarching question, the following research questions and hypotheses are offered.

RQ1a: How does black newspaper use among black newspaper readers compare with their use of general audience media?

RQ1b: How does black newspaper use among black newspaper readers compare with their use of general audience media for health and cancer information?

RQ2: Is black self-identity associated with black newspaper use and black media dependency relationship strength?

RQ3: Will there be differences in the level of trust in general audience media (mainstream newspapers, magazines, the radio, the Internet and television) for cancer information between those classified as black newspaper dependent and those who are not classified as black newspaper dependent?

H1: Black newspaper dependent readers will trust black newspapers as a resource for health and cancer information more than will those who are not classified as black newspaper dependent.

H2: Black newspaper use will predict media dependency relationship strength on black newspapers, after controlling for demographics, black self-identity and media dependency relationship strength on general audience media.

Method

Readers of black newspapers in 24 study communities were surveyed to gain an understanding of their media use, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors related to cancer and cancer prevention. The sample is described and reported in Caburnay et al.⁴⁵ and Cohen et al.⁴⁶ The panel survey was conducted by a midwestern university from September 2005 through April 2006. As summarized in Caburnay et al.,⁴⁷ a total of 783 (49.4 percent of all) eligible contacts completed the reader survey and received a \$15 gift card or check for their participation.⁴⁸ Caburnay et al. reported that,⁴⁹ “Respondents were mostly women (76 percent), had completed high school (86 percent), and averaged 50 years old (SD = 15 years),” which best reflects the bias of black newspaper readership. The sample total for multivariate analyses was 773 after 10 outliers were removed. Also, cases where variables were missing data were deleted.

Predictor Variables

Demographic Variables—Respondents were asked to indicate their age, gender and level of education.

Black Self-identity—Five items ($\alpha = .92$) measured the importance of respondents' racial identity to their self-concept. The questions were: “How important is it that your (co-workers; friends, people in general; peers; and family) view and accept you as black/African American?”

Black Newspaper Use—Two items measured black newspaper use:

- Have you read the black newspaper in the past 30 days?
- How many times per month do you read the black newspaper?

General Audience Media Use—Respondents were asked:

- How many times per month do you read the mainstream newspaper?
- On a typical day, about how many hours do you watch television?
- On a typical weekday, about how many total hours do you listen to the radio?
- In the past seven days, how many days did you read a magazine?

Black Newspaper Dependent—This grouping variable is a separate and correlated measure of media dependency relationship strength, ($r = .22$, $p < .001$, $n = 756$). This variable classified readers using the questions: “In the past 12 months, which top three [media] sources have you paid attention to for information about health or medical topics?” Respondents who ranked black newspapers as their first or second choice were classified as black newspaper dependent. Respondents choosing another medium were grouped together as not dependent on black newspapers. Of respondents, 34.1 percent ($n = 267$) ranked black newspapers as first or second.

Criterion Variables

Media Dependency Relationship Strength with Black Newspapers—Media dependency relationship strength is conceptually defined as the degree of trust and usefulness individuals feel toward a media product. Respondents were asked to rate two statements: “I think the black newspaper provides necessary information I need so that I can take action regarding health matters,” using a Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), and “How much would you trust the information about cancer from black newspapers?” measured as 1 (not at all) to 4 (a lot). These two items correlated significantly ($r = .32$, $p < .001$) and were summed. The range of scores for this item was 2 to 9, with $M = 7.22$ and $SD = 1.40$.

Media Dependency Relationship Strength with General Audience Media—Respondents were similarly asked about their trust in mainstream newspapers, magazines, radio, television and the Internet for cancer information. Response categories were from 1 (not at all) to 4 (a lot). These were single-item measures. [See Table 1]

To answer RQ1, descriptive statistics were used. RQ2 was answered analyzing zero-order Pearson correlations. A set of independent t-tests was used to evaluate RQ3 and H1. Finally, hierarchical multiple regression was used to answer H2.

Findings**RQ1a and RQ1b pertained to how black newspaper readers used black newspapers compared with other news media**

The results show that although black newspaper readers are exposed less often to black newspapers per se than to other media, if the average is considered as a proportion of all available black newspaper issues in a month (4.33 issues month, or 52 issues per year) compared with general audience newspapers (30.42 issues a month, or 365 issues a year), black newspaper readers appear to read proportionately more black newspaper issues ($M = 2.65$ per month, or 61.2 percent of issues) compared with general newspaper issues ($M = 14.48$ per month, or 47.6 percent of issues). RQ1b explored how readers depended on black newspapers for health and cancer information. Table 1 shows that black newspaper readers depend on black newspapers for health information and trust black newspapers for cancer information more than they do general audience media.

RQ2 looked at the association between black self-identity and black newspaper use and black newspaper media dependency for health and cancer information

The data illustrate that black self-identity was not associated with black newspaper media use. [See Table 2] However, black self-identity correlated with media dependency on black newspapers for health information ($r = .08$, $p < .05$) and cancer information ($r = .14$, $p < .01$). In summary, black self-identity was not associated with use of black newspapers generally, but it was associated with use of black newspapers for health and cancer information specifically.

RQ3 asked whether those who were classified as black newspaper dependent for health information trusted general audience media (mainstream newspapers, magazines, the radio, the Internet, and television) for cancer information differently than those who were not black newspaper dependent

A series of independent t-tests were run to determine differences between the two groups of black newspaper readers. First, perceptions of trust in general audience newspapers for cancer information was examined and revealed a statistically significant difference, $t(765) = 2.58$, $p = .01$. Those not dependent on black newspapers trusted general audience newspapers for cancer information more ($M = 3.08$, $SD = .85$) than did those classified as black newspaper dependent ($M = 2.91$, $SD = .92$). Next, trust in magazines as a cancer information source was examined and no differences were found, $t(765) = 1.83$, $p = .07$. There were also no significant differences between the two groups in trusting radio $t(757) = .23$, $p = .82$ or television $t(768) = .63$, $p = .50$ as cancer information sources. There was a statistical difference in trust of the Internet. Those who were black newspaper dependent trusted the Internet less ($M = 3.18$, $SD = .98$) than did those who were not ($M = 3.34$, $SD = .88$), $t(682) = 2.14$, $p = .05$.

H1 predicted that those who are black newspaper dependent would trust black newspapers for cancer information more than those who were not

An independent t-test shows that the hypothesis is supported, $t(762) = -2.27$, $p = .05$. Those classified as black newspaper dependent trusted black newspapers significantly more for cancer information ($M = 3.45$, $SD = .75$) than did those who were not ($M = 3.32$, $SD = .78$).

H2 stated that black newspaper use would predict black newspaper dependency relationship strength after controlling for demographics, black self-identity, and general audience media dependency strength

The analysis shows that each block uniquely and significantly added to explaining black newspaper dependency relationship strength. [See Table 3] An examination of the first block reveals that younger readers and those with less education predict black newspaper dependency relationship strength. The second block establishes that readers with a stronger black self-identity are predicted to have greater black newspaper dependency relationship strength. Next, general audience media dependency relationship strength on newspapers and radio predicts black newspaper dependency relationship strength for cancer information. Dependence on general audience media adds the most explanatory power. Lastly, black newspaper medium use was significantly related to black newspaper dependency relationship strength. Together, all the variables explain 24 percent of the variance in black newspaper dependency relationship strength (i.e., why black newspaper readers trust and rely on black newspapers for health and cancer information).

Discussion

These data reveal that even though black newspaper readers may spend less absolute time with black newspapers compared with general audience media, they read proportionately more issues a month and depend more on black newspapers for health and cancer information.

In this study, media dependency was measured in two ways. First, black newspaper readers were classified by whether they ranked black newspapers as their first or second choice for health information. Readers who were classified as black newspaper dependent trusted general audience newspapers and the Internet less for cancer information than did those who were not dependent. This merits closer scrutiny. General audience newspapers may be trusted less by black newspaper dependent readers because the newspapers provide less information specifically for blacks and do not purport to serve the black community. The Internet may be less trusted because these readers may be less likely to access it. Although this survey did not address Internet access, it did ask readers if they or a friend or a family member had ever searched the Internet for cancer information. Additional analysis shows that 41.5 percent ($n = 107$) of black newspaper dependent readers and 50.4 percent ($n = 251$) of those who were not had had someone search the Internet for cancer information. The difference is significant, $X^2(1, N = 756) = 5.4, p < .05$, suggesting that dependent readers may have less access or be less likely to access the Internet.

With regard to media dependency relationship strength, a different array of relationships appeared, including dependence on general audience newspapers and radio for cancer information. This may appear contradictory, but recall that the scores were above the midpoint on a 4-point scale for both the black newspaper dependent (2.91) and those not dependent (3.08). In examining the results, it is notable for what is not related—use of magazines, the Internet or TV. It may be that those who trust newspapers and radio are different in important ways from those who depend on TV, magazines or the Internet.

Other relationships uncovered relate to demographics and black self-identity, which align with research on gay media⁵⁰ and distinctiveness theory. Results demonstrated that those who were younger and less educated showed stronger black newspaper dependency relationship strength. It may be that these black newspaper readers define their self-concept in terms of their racial identity. Although stemming from different circumstances, research has found that Latinos use Hispanic media for acquiring and maintaining cultural knowledge.⁵¹ In terms of black media use for health information, it may be even more important for blacks because of current disparities and documented historical mistreatment. Black newspapers may serve as a forum for inter-group problem solving when it comes to health issues.

The finding that readers with less education depend more on black newspapers raises consideration with regard to knowledge acquisition. Research on general audience news consumption and breast cancer knowledge among African-American women has found that more highly educated women learned more from the media than did those with less education.⁵² The present study's results suggest that research should explore whether black newspapers may attenuate knowledge inequalities among African-Americans since those with lower levels of education have stronger black newspaper dependency relationship strength.

The current study also indicates that regular black newspaper readers have stronger black newspaper dependency relationships for health news, suggesting developed habits. One implication for black newspapers is that including health and cancer information may satisfy many readers' news goals. Interestingly, while a majority of health news consumers are

female⁵³ and women have been thought to be the primary family caregivers,⁵⁴ the data here did not reveal any gender differences in dependencies among black newspaper readers. Nevertheless, it is clear that since the regression analysis only explained 24 percent of the variance in black newspaper dependency strength, there are other factors at play.

A further limitation to this study is that it is correlational. Moreover, the measures used here accounted for black newspaper dependence for health and cancer information but did not investigate how black newspapers increase reader knowledge, help readers act on the information or spur readers to engage in physician-patient communication. Future studies should examine these questions.

With regard to media system dependency theory, this investigation examined just one small part of the self-understanding construct. There are certainly other dependency goals that newspaper readers pursue. To our knowledge, no study has looked at cataloguing what those dependencies might be for black newspapers or for other ethnic media. However, in the context of dependency for health and cancer information, this study raises the question as to whether the findings can be generated in other contexts. Some research suggests that these findings may hold for Latino media (both Spanish-language and “geo-ethnic” targeted media) and Hispanic populations.⁵⁵ Addressing media dependencies on ethnic media merits further exploration.

Acknowledgments

This study was supported by the National Cancer Institute’s Centers of Excellence in Cancer Communication Research program (CA-P50-95815).

Notes

1. Cision. Bacon's Newspaper Directory. 57th. Chicago: Cision; 2008.
2. Newkirk, Pamela. The Minority Press: Pleading Our Own Cause. In: Overholser, Geneva; Jamieson, Kathleen Hall, editors. The Press. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2005. p. 89
3. Stephens, Mitchell; Mindich, David TZ. The Press and the Politics of Representation. In: Overholser, Geneva; Jamieson, Kathleen Hall, editors. The Press. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2005. p. 372-383. Wilson, Clint C, II. Contributions in Afro-American and African Studies. Vol. 145. New York: Greenwood Press; 1991. Black Journalists in Paradox: Historical Perspectives and Current Dilemmas.
4. Lacy, Stephen; Stephens, James M.; Soffin, Stan. The Future of the African-American Press: A Survey of African-American Newspaper Managers. Newspaper Research Journal. summer;1991 12(no. 3):8-19.
5. Sylvester, Judith. Media Research Bureau Black Newspaper Readership Report. In: Black, Fred H., editor. Milestones in Black Newspaper Research. Washington, DC: National Newspaper Publishers Association; 1993. p. 11-13. p. 56-81. Vercellotti, Timothy; Brewer, Paul R. Journal of Black Studies. Vol. 37. 2006. To Plead Our Own Cause: Public Opinion Toward Black and Mainstream News Media Among African-Americans; p. 231-50.
6. Caburnay, Charlene A.; Kreuter, Matthew W.; Cameron, Glen T.; Luke, Douglas A.; Cohen, Elisia; McDaniels, Lillie; Wohlberg, Monica; Atkins, Paul. Black Newspapers as a Tool for Cancer Education in African American Communities. Ethnicity & Disease. autumn;2008 18(no. 4):488-95. [PubMed: 19157255]
7. National Cancer Institute. The Nation's Investment in Cancer Research: A Plan and Budget Proposal for Fiscal Year 2006. Washington, D.C.: National Cancer Institute; 2004.
8. Institute of Medicine. Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press; 2003.
9. Mayberry, Robert M.; Mili, Fatima; Ofili, Elizabeth. Racial and Ethnic Differences in Access to Medical Care. In: LaVeist, Thomas A., editor. Race, Ethnicity and Health: A Public Health Reader.

- San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons; 2002. p. 163-97. Virnig, Beth A.; Baxter, Nancy N.; Habermann, Elizabeth B.; Feldman, Roger D.; Bradley, Cathy J. A Matter of Race: Early-Versus Late-Stage Cancer Diagnosis. *Health Affairs*. 2009; 28(no. 1):160–168. Millwood. [PubMed: 19124866]
10. Virnig, Baxter, Habermann, Feldman, Bradley. A Matter of Race: Early-Versus Late-Stage Cancer Diagnosis.
 11. Caburnay, Kreuter, Cameron, et al. Black Newspaper as a Tool.
 12. For details on newspaper sampling methodology, see, Cohen, Elisia L.; Caburnay, Charlene A.; Luke, Douglas A.; Rodgers, Shelly; Cameron, Glen T.; Kreuter, Matthew W. Cancer Coverage in General-Audience and Black Newspapers. *Health Communication*. 2008; 23(no. 5):430. Additional newspaper and circulation information is available by request from the authors.
 13. Caburnay, Kreuter, Cameron, et al. Black Newspaper as a Tool.
 14. Cohen, Caburnay, Luke, et al. Cancer Coverage.
 15. Caburnay, Kreuter, Cameron, et al. Black Newspaper as a Tool.
 16. Len-Ríos, María E.; Park, Sun A.; Cameron, Glen T.; Luke, Douglas A.; Kreuter, Matt. Study Asks If Reporter's Gender or Audience Predict Paper's Cancer Coverage. *Newspaper Research Journal*. spring;2008 29(no. 2):91–99.
 17. Miller, Randy E.; Wanta, Wayne. Race as a Variable in Agenda Setting. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. winter;1996 73(no. 4):913–925.
 18. Vercellotti, Brewer. To Plead Our Own.
 19. Gibbons, R Arnold; Ulloth, Dana R. *Journalism Quarterly*. Vol. 59. fall. 1982 The Role of the Amsterdam News in New York City's Media Environment; p. 451-55. Wolseley, Roland E. *The Black Press USA*. 2nd. Ames, Iowa: Iowa University Press; 1990.
 20. American Society of Newspaper Editors. *Newspaper Readership, Interests, Needs and Reader Evaluation Among Men and Women*. Reston, Va: ASNE; 2000. McGrath, Kristin. Women and Newspapers. *Newspaper Research Journal*. spring;1993 14(no. 2):95–109. Fitzgerald, Mark. What Do Women Want? Editor & Publisher. November; 2007 140(no 11):52, 54, 56–58.
 21. Wagner, John. Black Newspapers Are Fighting for Survival. *Wall Street Journal*. October 4.1990 : 1. sect. B.
 22. Becker, Lee B.; Whitney, D Charles. Effects of Media Dependencies: Audience Assessment of Government. *Communication Research*. 1980; 7(no. 1):95–120.
 23. Merskin, Debra. Media Dependency Theory: Origins and Directions. In: Demers, David; Viswanath, K., editors. *Mass Media, Social Control, and Social Change: A Macrosocial Perspective*. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University; 1999. p. 77-98.
 24. Becker, Whitney. Effects of Media Dependencies.
 25. Ball-Rokeach, Sandra J. The Origins of Individual Media System Dependency: A Sociological Framework. *Communication Research*. 1985; 12(no. 4):485–510.
 26. Loges, William E.; Ball-Rokeach, Sandra J. Dependency Relations and Newspaper Readership. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. 1993 Autumn;70(3):602–614.
 27. Beaudoin, Christopher E.; Thorson, Esther. The Social Capital of Blacks and Whites: Differing Effects of the Mass Media in the United States. *Human Communication Research*. April; 2006 32(no. 2):157–177.
 28. Riffe, Daniel; Lacy, Stephen; Varouhakis, Miron. Media System Dependency Theory and Using the Internet for in-Depth, Specialized Information. *Web Journal of Mass Communication Research*. January. 2008 <http://www.scripps.ohiou.edu/wjmcr/vol11/11-b.html>
 29. Jeffres, Leo W.; Cutietta, Connie; Lee, Jae won; Sekerka, Leslie. Differences of Community Newspaper Goals and Functions in Large Urban Areas. *Newspaper Research Journal*. summer; 1999 20(no. 3):86–98.
 30. Bayton, James A.; Bell, Ernestine. An Exploratory Study of the Negro Press. *Journal of Negro Education*. winter;1951 20(no. 1):8.
 31. Vercellotti, Brewer. To Plead Our Own.

32. Gibbons, Ulloth. The Role of the Amsterdam. Johnson, Paula B.; Sears, David O.; McConahay, John B. Black Invisibility, the Press, and the Los Angeles Riot. *American Journal of Sociology*. January; 1971 76(no. 4):698–721. Vercellotti, Brewer. To Plead Our Own.
33. Knobloch-Westerwick, Silvia; Appiah, Osei; Alter, Scott. News Selection Patterns as a Function of Race: The Discerning Minority and the Indiscriminating Majority. *Media Psychology*. July; 2008 11(no. 3):400–417.
34. Fearn-Banks, Kathleen. African-American Press Coverage of Clarence Thomas Nomination. *Newspaper Research Journal*. fall;1994 15(no 4):98–116. Muhammad, Larry. The Black Press: Past and Present. *Nieman Reports*. September 22; 2003 57(no. 3):13–16.
35. Lacy, Stephens, Soffin. The Future of the African.
36. Allen, Richard L.; Bielby, William T. Blacks' Relationship with the Print Media. *Journalism Quarterly*. fall;1979 56(no. 3):488–96. 545.
37. Vercellotti, Brewer. To Plead Our Own.
38. Morton, Thomas A.; Duck, Julie M. Social Identity and Media Dependency in the Gay Community: The Prediction of Safe Sex Attitudes. *Communication Research*. 2000; 27(no. 4): 438–460.
39. Outten, H Robert; Schmitt, Michael T.; Garcia, Donna M.; Branscombe, Nyla R. Coping Options: Missing Links between Minority Group Identification and Psychological Well-Being. *Applied Psychology*. 2009; 58(no. 1):146–70.
40. Morton, Duck. Social Identity and Media.
41. Outten, Schmitt, Garcia, Branscombe. Coping Options. :159.
42. Appiah, Osei. Ethnic Identification on Adolescents' Evaluations of Advertisements. *Journal of Advertising Research*. September; 2001 41(no. 5):7–22. Deshpandé, Rohit; Stayman, Douglas M. A Tale of Two Cities: Distinctiveness Theory and Advertising Effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing*. February; 1994 31(no. 1):57–64.
43. Knobloch-Westerwick, Appiah, Alter. News Selection Patterns.
44. McGuire, William J. Search for the Self: Going Beyond Self-Esteem and the Reactive Self. In: Zucker, Robert A.; Aronoff, Joel; Rabin, AI., editors. *Personality and the Prediction of Behavior*. Orlando, Fla: Academic Press Inc.; 1984. p. 73-120.
45. Caburnay, Kreuter, Cameron, et al. Black Newspaper as a Tool.
46. Cohen, Caburnay, Luke, et al. Cancer Coverage.
47. Caburnay, Kreuter, Cameron, et al. Black Newspaper as a Tool.
48. Caburnay, Kreuter, Cameron, et al. Black Newspaper as a Tool.
49. Caburnay, Kreuter, Cameron, et al. Black Newspaper as a Tool.
50. Morton, Duck. Social Identity and Media.
51. Ríos, Diana I.; Gaines, Stanley O. Latino Media Use for Cultural Maintenance. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. winter;1998 75(no 4):746–61. Subervi-Velez, Federico. The Mass Media and Ethnic Assimilation and Pluralism: A Review and Research Proposal with Special Focus on Hispanics. *Communication Research*. 1986; 13(no. 1):71–96.
52. Frisby, Cynthia M.; Wanta, Wayne. The Search for Health Information: Racial Differences and the Knowledge Gap Hypothesis in Breast Cancer Prevention. paper presented at AEJMC; San Antonio, Texas. August 2005;
53. Fox, Susannah. Online Health Search 2006. Washington, D.C.: Pew Internet & American Life Project; 2006.
54. Wade, Serena; Schramm, Wilbur. The Mass Media as Sources of Public Affairs, Science and Health Knowledge. *Public Opinion Quarterly*. summer;1969 33(no. 2):197–209.
55. Wilkin, Holley A. PhD diss. University of Southern California; 2005. Diagnosing Communication Connections: Reaching Underserved Communities through Existing Communication Ecologies. Wilkin, Holley A.; Ball-Rokeach, Sandra J. Reaching at Risk Groups: The Importance of Health Storytelling in Los Angeles Latino Media. *Journalism*. August; 2006 7(no. 3):299–320.

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations For Black Newspaper Readers' General Media Use and Media Dependency For Health And Cancer Information

Variables	Mean	SD	N
<i>General Media Use</i>			
How many times per month do you read the black newspaper?	2.65	3.24	783
How many times a month do you read mainstream newspaper?	14.48	12.16	783
On a typical day, about how many hours do you watch television?	5.60	4.30	778
On a typical weekday, about how many total hours do you listen to the radio?	3.72	4.25	778
In the past seven days, how many days did you read a magazine?	2.34	2.17	782
<i>Media Dependency for Health and Cancer Information</i>			
I think the black newspaper provides necessary information I need so that I can take action regarding health matters.	3.87	0.93	761
How much would you trust the information about cancer from black newspapers?	3.35	0.79	772
How much would you trust the information about cancer from mainstream newspapers?	3.02	0.87	775
How much would you trust the information about cancer from magazines?	3.07	0.86	775
How much would you trust the information about cancer from the radio?	2.76	0.91	767
How much would you trust the information about cancer from the Internet?	3.29	0.91	692
How much would you trust the information about cancer from the television?	3.13	0.83	778

Table 2
Pearson Correlation Coefficients For Black Self-Identity and Black Newspaper Use and Black Newspaper Media Dependency Relationship Strength Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1 Read Black newspaper past 30 days	—				
2 Days in month read Black newspaper	.143**	—			
3 Media dependency health	.018	.078*	—		
4 Media dependency cancer	.049	.042	.321**	—	
5 Black identity	.032	-.034	.080*	.139**	—

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

Table 3
Hierarchical regression analysis of demographic variables, black self-identity, general audience media dependency, and Black newspaper media use on media dependency on Black newspapers for social understanding ($N = 647$)

<i>Blocks of independent variables</i>	Std. beta	R^2 change	Total R^2	F-value	p-value
1. Demographic variables			.04	9.72	.000
--Age	-.105**				
--Gender	-.002				
--Education	-.17***				
2. Black self-identity	.14***	.02	.06	13.59	.000
3. General audience (GA) media dependency variables					
--GA newspaper – cancer	.22***	.17	.23	27.87	.000
--Magazines – cancer	.06				
--Radio – cancer	.15***				
--Internet – cancer	.05				
--TV – cancer	.08				
4. BN media use	.025	.01	.24	4.1	.017
--BN last 30 days	.06				
--BN per month	.07*				

*
 $p < .05$,

**
 $p < .01$,

 $p < .001$.