

Media and Gaming in Southern Texas: “News Framing” of dominant narratives of south Texas’ eight-liner game room industry

Alexander J. Stella

There has been an ongoing trend within the Rio Grande Valley region of southern Texas. This trend involves a ring of eight-liner slot machine game rooms offering gambling to their patrons but at questionable statuses of legality. Local news media has played a significant role in the understanding and interpretation of these operations by residents of the area. In examining, the specific news coverage of these game room establishments, by one local newspaper, over a six-month period, this paper attempts to explain how certain rhetoric and journalistic practices have substantial impact on creating a framework for how such places are viewed publicly.

Keywords: crime, culture, diction, ideology, news framing, sourcing, vice

Introduction

Deep down in the southernmost tip of the Lone Star State, just a stone’s throw away from the U.S. – Mexico border, lays a small blue-collar city with a population more indicative of the nation neighboring to the south, rather than its own. With a population of approximately 181,860 as of 2013, Brownsville, Texas, located in Cameron County, is a predominantly Hispanic city with about 88 percent of its total population identifying as such (US Census, 2013). In a very hot and rural area of the nation, life on the surface seems rather mundane and simple at face value.

Father Andy Gutierrez of Saint Luke Catholic Church has been a resident and community leader in Brownsville for over 10 years. As he explains, the widespread Hispanic heritage of the community is exemplified by the strong family oriented culture that exists within the community. “The people in this city don’t have very much. Brownsville is a poor area. A lot of people work for hourly wages and maintain simple lives,” (A. Gutierrez, personal *communication*, July 10, 2015).

However, in the wake of the commonplace and the monotonous routine of daily life, dominated by occupational fields of educational/healthcare services, retail trade and construction, there exists a yearning for something more. Within the community exists a sub community not seen to all; an illicit and elaborate industry run by and sustained by the average and ordinary citizens one would see on any given day in Brownsville. Eight-liner gaming machines or “maquinitas” as they are referred to by locals are slot machine like systems that captivate patrons of their venues across south Texas and particularly, the southern tip of Brownsville. Set up in the backrooms of bars, restaurants, or in trailer parks and even churches, these gaming rooms attract flocks of individuals each day in the area, who hope to walk away with a stern profit. While many of these operations have received permits and sanctions from local cities, these small government entities often do not enforce that the game rooms are operating to state law standards which call for no more than a \$5 payout to any patron. It is reported that many cities charge game rooms as much as “200 times” the actual licensing/permit fee which sees these cities profiting heftily from a technically illegal procedure (Sides, 2015).

According to Father Gutierrez, many of the patrons of these eight-liner game rooms are simple, ordinary citizens of Cameron and Hidalgo counties. “They don’t know the legal ins and outs of these places, they’re just looking for an outlet. I’ve mentioned in my preaching one needing vices in moderation but not becoming attached,” (A. Gutierrez, personal *communication*, July 10, 2015).

Background

In order to fully understand the concepts and arguments of this paper, it’s essential to explore the background of the components involved including the newspaper itself, demographics of

Brownsville, the audience of the paper, the issue and analysis of the reporters who work in the community and construct the ideological narratives discussed throughout this paper.

Newspaper

The Brownsville Herald is a small newspaper in Brownsville, Texas owned by AIM Media Texas, LLC and published by R. Daniel Cavazos. The paper circulates at a daily rate of 15,880 and 16,409 on Sundays throughout the Cameron County area. The Brownsville Herald covers an array of topics ranging from local and state issues to national and world news. The paper provides in depth coverage of local high school sports news and provides a platform for community engagement as well as local business offerings and specials.

The sister newspaper of *The Brownsville Herald*, *El Nuevo Herald* serves the highly Hispanic population of the area. It was one of the original Spanish publications to serve the Rio Grande Valley. Given its service to the Hispanic community, *El Nuevo Herald* is distributed beyond Brownsville into deep parts of the Rio Grande Valley.

Demographics

Brownsville has a relatively small population of 181,860 with approximately 88 percent of that population identifying as Hispanic making it overwhelmingly the largest ethnic group in the city. Just over 5 percent of citizens identify as white with Black, Native American and Asians making up the remaining 7 percent.

Residents of Brownsville have modest educational statistics. 62.8 percent of residents over the age of 25 have at least a high school diploma yet only 16.3 percent of residents over the age of 25 have a bachelor's degree. As a result, many of the common jobs of

Brownsville citizens are basic, lacking the necessity for much if any higher education. Aside from a growing petroleum industry, much of the work revolves around retail trade and construction services (A. Gutierrez, personal *communication*, July 10, 2015). Given the extremely high Hispanic population of the city, it's not surprising that 86.6 percent of households speak a language other than English within the household, primarily Spanish.

Undoubtedly, Brownsville is in one of the lowest income areas of the state with a median household income of just \$32,105 compared to the median household income of the state of Texas which is \$51,900.

Audience

The audience of The Brownsville Herald goes deeper than the general population of the city. As mentioned, the city itself is predominantly Hispanic, yet within this cultural unity there are still distinct class separations. These class separations are determined by socioeconomic status within the city. Much of the population in the perceived lower class is employed within the construction, manufacturing and retail industries of the city.

On the other hand, the perceived dominant class within the city is employed mostly within educational services, healthcare, social assistance, finance and insurance. Culturally, this is the demographic population that is more often the target audience of publications. Moreover it is the portion of the audience that this paper is more concerned with. This is the audience that this paper argues is the target of *The Brownsville Herald's* ideological narratives, shaped and disseminated through the rhetoric and discourse of its news coverage.

Issue

The issue that is focused on in this paper, to be explained in terms of ideology and news framing is the trend of eight-liner game rooms appearing and operating throughout southern Texas and in Brownsville. The problem that arises is the seemingly gray area when questioning the legality of these game rooms. Texas law prohibits privatized gambling with payouts of more than \$5. Several counties in southern Texas have recently issued sanctions and permits to these game rooms to allow for the operation of eight-liner slot machines under the supposed guidelines that payout do not exceed \$5. However, a report by *The Brownsville Herald* indicates that these counties have often grossly overcharged these establishments for their permits and then have not enforced that the operations are conducted in accordance with state law. This paper's focus however is not an investigation into the operation of eight-liner game rooms in southern Texas, but rather an insightful look into the manner in which this issue is covered by *The Brownsville Herald* and the messages and narratives that coverage conveys to its audience. (For more detail on the issue see Sides, February 2015).

Reporters/Analysis

While the research for this paper involved extensive reading of stories and reports from *The Brownsville Herald*, there was a direct focus on the writing of three reporters in particular. The reporters studied most closely were Emily Sides, Christina Garza and Laura Martinez. Each of these three reporters is staff writers for the paper and each wrote at least two articles concerning the eight-liner game rooms. The research focused on monitoring stories produced by *The Brownsville Herald* over the last six months. In that span of time, the three reporters of focus were monitored and studied closely with all of their stories examined whether they dealt with the eight-liner game rooms or not. The key difference that was noticed between the reporters was that Emily Sides demonstrated more in depth reporting, writing extensive stories with various

sources, angles and opinions. However, the articles published by Christina Garza and Laura Martinez were seemingly more standard and narrow reports. They lacked critical analysis of the topics they covered and based the stories on police reports and reached out to singular authoritative figures as sources for direct quotes.

Conceptual Framework

There is a tendency within society to take what is reported through various media platforms at face value as a representation of reality and fact. However, Scollon argues that what matters more than the direct interaction between media and its readers or viewers is the direct takeaway and discourse between the individuals engaging with media (1999). When considering *The Brownsville Herald's* coverage of Brownsville's eight-liner game room industry, there is an ideology conveyed through selective reporting, exclusive sourcing and careful diction. Media discourse portrays a dominant narrative favoring the governmental authoritative figures of the community and scapegoating the owners and patrons of these establishments.

Selective Reporting

On February 23, the first story regarding the eight-liner game room industry by *The Brownsville Herald* in 2015 was published. Staff writer Emily Sides wrote an in-depth piece titled "Gaming revenue lures western Hidalgo County towns." Her story created a mental image for readers of what the insides of eight-liner game rooms look like while delving much deeper into the logistics concerning the "how" and "why" an apparently legal industry is existing and flourishing within the community. Sides highlights the legality of game rooms operating with permits or sanctions provided by counties for occupation tax fees but notes that many of these counties are charging up to "200 times" as much as the legal occupation fee according to Texas

law (2015). The implication from Sides' reporting evidently shows possible wrongdoing on the part of four separate counties in the southern Texas region. In order to understand the significance of Sides' reporting, one must understand the concept that by significantly overcharging for permits, the counties make a hefty profit which in turn allows the game room operators to yield substantial profit and sustains these operations as a viable industry.

From February 24 through July 15 of 2015, there were 10 more articles published by *The Brownsville Herald* that dealt with eight-liner game rooms and events surrounding them. The discourse in these reports demonstrated a stern difference in reporting and tone. For example, headlines shifted from implicating counties and towns as possible perpetrators which "gaming revenue lures," to discourses of evil conducted by individuals within the community such as "Bar owner charged in gambling sting," and "Trailers linked to illegal arcades," (*Brownsville*, April 2015 and Martinez, 2015).

As Entman argues, the media has the ability to focus in on certain components when telling a story so "as to promote a particular problem definition" (As cited in Saguy, 2008, p.57). When examining these later stories more closely it is evident that there is selectivity in who was spoken to in gathering the information. For instance, in the "Bar owner charged in gambling sting" report the only details provided are those of the charges against the suspect and the manner in which the police and investigators went about apprehending him. Juxtaposed to the Sides report, there is no mention of whether the bar owner had obtained any permits or licensing from the county.

Exclusive Sourcing

News is inclined to create frameworks of reports that significantly shape the ways in which they are received and understood by the masses. Entman states that with “repetition, placement and reinforcement” news discourse creates strong narratives which have a more lasting impression upon readers (As cited by Kim & Lee. 2008. p. 87). Similarly, media makes use of repeated sourcing to assist in the manufacturing of dominant frameworks which assist in shaping these narratives.

When looking at *The Brownsville Herald's* coverage of eight-liner game rooms, there is a noticeable and cyclical nature of the direct sourcing used in the reports. The most common sources quoted and cited in these reports are those from an authoritative position or position of power such as police, city managers, district attorneys, etc.

According to Said:

“There is first the authority of the author – someone writing out the processes of society in an acceptable, institutionalized manner, observing conventions, following patterns, and so forth. In addition, there is the authority of the narrator, whose discourse anchors the narrative in recognizable...existentially referential, circumstances” (p. 87).

This testimony shows the direct relationship and correlation between source and reporter and how the two entities work together to shape stories into a dominant narrative with strictly limited perceptions and interpretations.

For example, in a February 26 report, the Cameron County District Attorney, Luis V. Saenz is quoted saying, “The illegal and non-regulated eight-liner industry was bleeding our economy,” (Garza, 2015). This report offered direct quotes from no other sources, leaving

readers with no other narrative or dialogue to interpret regarding the situation. Furthermore, when the alleged criminals and wrongdoers of the stories, the game room owners and operators, are named in the reports there are no quotes from coworkers, friends and or family on behalf of those arrested. For instance, in the March 7 report titled, “Officials raid two La Joya game rooms,” Mario Ruiz is named as an operator of the Coyote Game Room. Despite Ruiz having paid the city of La Joya \$28,400 in cash to operate his 100 machines, his establishment was shut down by authorities, yet the report obtained no quote from Ruiz or any other employees of the establishment offering a defense or alternative viewpoint to the story (*Brownsville*, March 2015).

Careful Diction

Other tactics, and perhaps the most powerful, media employ in perpetuating dominant narratives to help maintain particular ideologies within the Brownsville community are word choice and diction. Words are the metaphoric tools of journalists which are wielded in shaping stories to portray particular descriptions of issues and ideas as previously discussed. In coverage of eight-liner game rooms in Brownsville, all stories and reports frame the narratives to yield particular perceptions by readers through word choice, yet not necessarily their own but the particular words they choose to include from the sources they quote.

For example, the February 26 report quotes District Attorney Saenz as saying the eight-liner gaming rooms were “bleeding [the] local economy.” The strong verb choice of “bleeding” in this case paints a brutal image for readers of the financial dangers of the gaming industry. Likewise, Saenz was quoted in an April 22 story titled “DA raids 8-liner on 18-wheelers,” calling the shutdown operation “highly dangerous” (Maldonado, 2015). Again on July 6, Saenz was quoted yet again in a report regarding an eight-liner game room where he stated “the illegal

8-liner industry draws more criminal activity that puts patrons in extreme danger” (Garza, July 2015). The notion of “extreme danger” creates a sense of fear for readers who live amongst these places and may frequent or occasionally visit these establishments. The diction in turn works as a pseudo warning to not venture to these places.

The particular use of vivid adjectives and verbs to describe a local, social issue with no counter narratives within the stories to oppose them create a one-sided narrow interpretation of what is a multi-layered, complex issue.

Method

This paper’s arguments are based primarily on 12 articles published by *The Brownsville Herald* between February 23, 2015 and July 6, 2015 regarding the ongoing trend and issue of eight-liner game rooms in the southern Texas region. The initial approach to the study and research was to become familiar with the newspaper itself as well as the general region which it covers. In searching for trends within news coverage there were a few key issues that appeared commonly discussed throughout the newspaper. One was a SpaceX project that had been approved just outside of Brownsville yet this issue seemed to lack the controversy that would help sustain a sufficient ideological argument. Another was the commonality of drug arrests and drug cartels over the Texas-Mexico border. While I examined these stories and reports thoroughly, the topic and issue of drugs and drug discourse seemed to lack originality in a paper discussing news coverage and ideological, cultural implications. Ultimately the issue of eight-liner game rooms was decided upon as it had a strong level of controversy, was covered relatively frequently over the course of the study period and demonstrated the types of ideological implications involving news framing that justified the arguments of this paper.

With the issue secured, every article written by *The Brownsville Herald* regarding the eight-liner game rooms was printed and reviewed thoroughly. Particular attention was paid to the overall message of the reports, the sources used and diction throughout to obtain a better understanding of what the underlying messages and implications of these stories were. Noticing the trend in negative discourse surrounding the eight-liner game rooms as well as the owners, operators and patrons of the establishments, efforts were made to put the type of coverage they were getting into better context. Each of the three reporters focused on in this research were reached out to as well as editor Ryan Henry from the newspaper. Two of the three reporters responded via e-mail while none were ever available at the various times they were called at the office. Ryan Henry was always unavailable as well and never responded to any e-mails. In addition to the reporters, eight-liner game room operators were reached out to but of the two who were reached, neither agreed to discuss the issue when told of the paper's topic. Lastly, Father Andy Gutierrez of Saint Luke Catholic Church in Cameron County was reached out to in order to give some cultural insight to the research from a local perspective. Father Gutierrez assisted the research in providing general insight to the general perception of eight-liner game rooms in the area and his personal take on the issue as a whole.

With the ideological argument beginning to take shape, alternative scholarly journals and articles discussing topics of ideology, news framing, crime reporting, vice culture in media, etc. were researched. Articles and journals were accessed through Google Scholar and the Florida International University database. In total, there were 12 articles discovered that seemed particularly relevant to both the issue and conceptual argument being made by this paper. The final procedure before the actual writing process was a synthesis of all materials gathered to

outline, organize and structure a cohesive argument. This method and approach has proven successful thus far and looks to sufficiently state and validate the arguments of the paper.

Analysis/Discussion

When discussing ideology, it is imperative to understand the dynamics of the communities involved as well as the historical approaches that lead to the understood beliefs. In the case of Brownsville, Texas, where approximately 88 percent of the population identifies under the same ethnicity, race inequality is not as much a focal point in the discussion as is social class inequality. As discussed in previous sections, the community itself is a “poor” area where the average household income is 8 percent below the U.S. average (U.S. Census 2013).

Conditions such as these lend themselves to increases in citizens taking chances at making money, often times through engaging in activities of questionable legality such as the gambling operations conducted in Brownsville. Such understandings of the framework for a community are necessary for comprehending individuals’ “connections” of media and their own interpretations of crime and fear (Dixon, 2008, p. 108).

Another idea to consider is the issue of vice as a crime. In the case of Brownsville, we’re discussing vice crime of gambling which carries an interesting cultural context and provoke questions of ethics and morality within given communities. Given the potency of media influence, discourse and especially repeated discourse about vices or matters of questionable morality can often incite moral dilemmas and fears within individuals. Soderlund argues that this kind of panic solidifies more profound “fears and anxieties” within a community. Moreover, he points out that often, rather than dealing with direct root causes of such problems, the fear or

panic surrounding the issue causes individuals to place blame on an “identified social group,” often labeled as degenerates (Soderlund, 2002. p. 438-439).

In the context of an ideological concept, which is this paper’s focus, all of these factors contribute to a dominant media narrative which is shaped through rhetoric and discourse of those within the industry.

Crime Reporting and Cultural Implications

Studies have shown that with respect to crime news and crime reporting, there is often a disproportion between representation and reality. With many individuals reading into news purely at face-value, there is a clear opportunity for audience to be misled by reports. According to a study conducted by Joseph Sheley and Cindy Ashkins, portrayals of crime to public masses through print media often “are grossly distorted” (Sheley and Ashkins, 1981. p. 493). Sheley’s research measured the relation between popular conception of crime and official crime reports published by news mediums and outlets. The results of the study found a heightened sense of crime reporting by newspapers as a form of sensationalizing and “creating news.” Furthermore, despite no quantitative spikes in crime over the study’s three-month period, the results of a survey conducted showed that 76 percent of participants thought that there had been an increase in crime over the study period (Sheley and Ashkins, 1981. p. 499).

The research conducted by Sheley and Ashkins along with the notions of repetition and reinforcement evidenced by Kim and Lee, mirrors the ongoing trend of news coverage in Brownsville regarding eight-liner game rooms. The sensationalism and reinforcement of stories of repeated crime in the area disseminates a message of incessant lawbreaking in the community. Again, evidence of repeated discourse in articles covering the eight-liner game rooms implies

negative representations of the owners, operators and patrons of these venues. For example, The March 7 report by *The Brownsville Herald* cites a local area attorney on the issue of two game rooms raided and shut down in La Joya. Carlos Nolasco of R.M.J. and Associates Law Firm in Edinburg, Texas is quoted as saying “A lot of these people don’t even speak English,” in reference to operators of the local game rooms (*Brownsville*, March 2015). This type of rhetoric strengthens notions of class separation, discussed earlier, within the community. It is an attack on a Hispanic demographic in a highly Hispanic area. This furthers the sentiment that within ethnic groups, class separation and distinction is still very much a reality. Inclusion of such discourse in the report sends a strong message to the community of the class of people who exist within the confines of the eight-liner game rooms. The cultural implications of such phrasing cannot be overlooked as it clearly distinguishes certain members of community from another while maintaining that certain people or members of a certain group are better or more meaningful (Scollon, p. 152).

Coverage of Vice by Media

Culturally, vices have always been a topic of controversy. The issues surrounding vice always seem to draw arguments of ethics and morality within differing communities and cultures. For centuries there have been efforts to eliminate and openly attack those who engage in vices or vice culture. Beisel notes organizations formed within the dominant elitist circles of New York and Boston aimed at eradicating vices within the respective cities. The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice (NYSSV) and the New England Society for the Suppression of Vice (NESSV) respectively organized in the late nineteenth century aimed at establishing censorship and anti-obscenity laws (Beisel, 1990. p. 44). Based on his findings, Beisel argues that “lifestyle politics” act as a particular area of struggle both amongst and within social classes.

This particular argument lends strong support to this paper's argument that class separation and distinction plays a significant role in the discourse that negatively portrays the eight-liner game room industry. By demonstrating the negative impact one social class's actions have on another's, dissent can be stirred and molded into negative perception. For example, in a story published by Emily Sides, she highlights how the "illegal" eight-liner game room industry has negatively impacted bingo halls in the area. Charitable bingo is the only form of legal gambling in the state of Texas outside of the state lottery. Bingo is regulated by the state and the halls are required to donate portions of their profits to local charities each fiscal quarter. However, Sides' piece states that charities have been seeing highly decreased donations from bingo halls due to the amount of their regular players flocking to eight-liner game rooms instead.

One Americana Bingo official is quoted as saying:

"The charities of Americana Bingo attribute [the loss of donations] almost completely to the proliferation of eight-liners...2015 promises to be much worse if enforcement action isn't taken."

Testimony of this nature shows direct blame appropriation as well as incites a call to action. The need for action seemingly stems from a need to maintain what feels normalized and in this case that is the prosperity of the government regulated gambling industry, indicative of "upper-class" and the banishment of the "illegal" eight-liner game room industry, indicative of the lower or second class.

As Beisel writes, "The structural barrier that culture erects between classes implies that classes, and the upper class in particular, have an interest in defending class symbols, and that class conflict takes cultural as well as economic and political forms," (Beisel, 1990. p. 46).

Conclusion

This paper examines how the reporting and rhetoric of *The Brownsville Herald* perpetuates dominant narratives that fuel an ideological view that serves in power to the elite class of the community. This paper does not aim to criticize or degrade the journalism of *The Brownsville Herald*, but rather to analyze and discuss the reasoning behind such rhetoric and discourse being vented through the community's local print media outlet. Ultimately the goal of the paper is to demonstrate how media from this outlet have served a more dominant class within the community through the manner in which it has covered this issue. From sourcing to selective reporting and diction, the newspaper frames the perceived news to be interpreted in a manner that works for and in favor of the elite of the community.

From a conceptual standpoint the takeaway from this paper is simple. Within the framework of news coverage by *The Brownsville Herald* with regard to eight-liner game rooms, there are narratives dictated to the audience which reinforce an existing ideology within the area. Considering ideology as a tool of meaning which lends power to some and strip it from others, the newspaper shows evidence of particular strategies and styles of reporting which help to establish and sustain the ideological power of those existing within the dominant class of southern Texas and take it away from those in the perceived lower class of the region.

Taking this concept into consideration, there are improvements that can be made to the journalism across the Brownsville area. From the perspective of the journalists in the area, it is essential to understand and write stories with conscious awareness of the messages and narratives portrayed by the particular practices being repeatedly employed within journalism. For instance in the selection of stories when pertaining to an ongoing issue, it is important to report

all stories and happenings related to the stories but also crucial to investigate issues to their fullest extent in order to unveil whole truths. Furthermore, as the public that those within the journalism field are serving, the community members of Brownsville have a responsibility to put the onus on the journalists. For example, public reaction and action toward the reporting they are reading must demand for better journalism including more diverse sourcing, trending away from typical, and biased authority figures.

In order to establish meaning and reason there must be a practical takeaway from this paper. The arguments that have been made throughout this paper are not intended to discredit the journalistic work or value of *The Brownsville Herald* or any other local media throughout Southern Texas. Rather, the aim is to point out the very real effects and implications of ideologically driven journalism on culture and society as a whole. Because these effects are seemingly more profound and deeply felt at the local level, the ideas discussed are more relevant to a case such as the one in Brownsville as opposed to more major news outlets where the same concepts and principles can undoubtedly be applied as well. Therefore the hope for a practical takeaway is a readership of news that develops a keener eye. One that is better suited to read between the lines of framed and carefully worded reports that shape the perceptions of entire communities. This can be achieved by the public and audience of papers such as *The Brownsville Herald* to learn and look for the use of news framing through careful diction in reporting and storytelling. Understanding the use of certain words to convey particular meanings will allow for more enlightened readers and work to diminish the cultural impacts of perpetual narratives disseminated to the same audience. Ultimately, this type of practice can and should contribute to a better informed public.

References

- Beisel, Nicola. 1990. Class, Culture, and Campaigns against Vice in Three American Cities, 1872-1892. *American Sociological Review*. 55:1, 44-62.
- Brennan, Niall P. 2015. Authority, resistance, and representing national values in the Brazilian television mini-series. *Media, Culture & Society*. Vol. 37(5) 686-702.
- Dixon, Travis L. 2008. Crime News and Racialized Beliefs: Understanding the Relationship Between Local News Viewing and Perceptions of African Americans and Crime. *Journal of Communication*. 58, 106-125.
- Garza, Christina R. 2015. "Eight-liner operation shut down." *Brownsville Herald*. February 26.
- Kim, Hun Shik and Seowting Lee. 2008. National interest, selective sourcing and attribution in air disaster reporting. *The Journal of International Communication*. Vol. 14:1, 85-103.
- Maldonado, Diana Eva. 2015. "DA raids 8-liner on 18-wheelers." *Brownsville Herald*. April 22.
- Martinez, Laura B. 2015. "Trailers linked to illegal arcades." *Brownsville Herald*. April 22.
- Saguy, Abigail C. and Rene Almeling. Fat in the Fire? Science, the News Media, and the "Obesity Epidemic." *Sociological Forum*. 23:1, 53-83.
- Scollon, Ron. 1999. Mediated Discourse and Social Interaction. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*. Vol. 32:1-2, 149-154.
- Sheley, Joseph F. and Cindy D. Ashkins. 1981. Crime, Crime News, and Crime Views. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*. 45:4, 492-506.
- Sides, Emily. 2015. "Gaming revenue lures western Hidalgo County towns." *Brownsville Herald*. February 23.

Sides, Emily. 2015. "Bingo halls struggle to compete with illegal eight-liners." *Brownsville Herald*. March 31.

Soderlund, Gretchen. 2002. Covering urban vice: the New York Times, "white slavery," and the construction of journalistic knowledge. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*. Vol. 19:4, 438-460.

Staff Report. 2015. "Officials raid two La Joya game rooms." *Brownsville Herald*. March 7.

Staff Report. 2015. "Bar owner charged in gambling sting." *Brownsville Herald*. April 22.