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 Content Analysis
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Journalistic Framing: US Newspaper Coverage of Nikole Hannah-Jones' and *The 1619 Project* Abstract

Since the launch of *The 1619 Project* by the *NYT magazine* in 2019 there has been extensive pushback on Nikole Hannah-Jones' book potentially being used in schools as an educational resource which has led to a proliferation of counter-texts and punditry in the political media regarding her work. Politicians, historians and pundits from both ideological sides use the report to discuss the celebration or caution in teaching the reframing of American history. Republicans use Jones' and her work to invoke discussions revolving around "wokeness," critical race theory and indoctrination. Jones' is in a unique position as a Black female writer who follows in the footsteps of Black women who navigate surveillance of their work and their personhood. Through content analysis and critical discourse analysis this study aims to reveal whether there is any political sentiment or leaning located in the newspaper coverage in the four major US newspapers discussing Jones and *The 1619 Project*.

Intro

Author, Journalist and Professor Nikole Hannah-Jones' began working for US newspaper *The New York Times Magazine* in 2015. Jones', a Black female journalist, reported at various local newspapers across the country specifically publishing articles centering the systemic issues that plague the Black community including housing, education, health and government policy. Jones' focused on these issues along with racial segregation, desegregation and education in the South while at *The NYT Magazine*. In 2019 she along with several Black scholars, writers and poets launched *The 1619 Project* in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the first enslaved Africans brought onto US soil *The project* began as an initiative aiming to "reframe the country's history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the very center of our national narrative," (NYT, 2019). Jones' won the Pulitzer Prize for commentary for her opening essay with the nature of the response to her project being a prime reason for the award.

Although *The Project* reached critical acclaim and even won her one of the highest honors in journalism Jones' received an unwarranted amount of backlash on social media, in the US broadcast media and in the major newspapers. The book sparked commentary that ranged from celebration, curiosity, disbelief and anger from historians, academics, politicians, journalists and everyday trolls. This study aims to focus on the analysis of the media sentiment surrounding Jones' and *The 1619 Project* in

articles located in major US newspapers. In America the news media enforces an ethical for their organizations and for journalists who are assumed to be ideologically unbiased. This bias is disputed by citizenry and scholars who argue that the media frames specific content in a way to agenda-set for the public. There are also media scholars who argue that certain stories are circulated to become the topic of public opinion and conversation over long periods of time. My study aims to focus on how 4 major US newspapers covered Nikole-Hanna Jones and The 1619 Project from April 2021 to April 2022 (Framing The News, 2009). .

RQ1: How do major US newspapers cover Author Nikole Hanna-Jones and The 1619?

Literature Review

Circulation & Framing Theory

Theories of agenda-setting vary throughout journalistic scholarly studies as many academics have discussed the effects of news organizations that choose which stories to present to their audiences. The public has no say in what becomes the most popular news stories in a 24 hour period. Cultivation and framing theory clarify how journalists and other rhetoricians use this mode of communication to center specific stories, at a unique point in time to gather viewers, attention and criticism toward said topic.

Cultivation theory was originally created by Professor Gerbner from the University of Pennsylvania where he focused on the advent of television in the 1960's and how viewers' everyday lives were influenced by this viewing (Chandler, 1995).

This theory emphasizes the fact that the media has a direct influence on how viewers perceive violence and emphasizes how this “mean world syndrome” is brought on by those who are considered to be “heavy viewers” of television who end up believing the world is nastier than reality compared to “light” TV viewers.

This theory is integral to my analysis because it illustrates how the mainstream media creates moments for viewers, listeners and readers to focus on that end up characterizing how they navigate their everyday lives through this mediated lens (Chandler, 1995). This is evident in my analysis because

journalists and news organizations make it clear by publishing these stories that they are centering the discourse around Jones' and by doing so they are informing the public on how to react to this content.

Journalistic framing theory is also a core tenet of my examination of newspaper articles. Framing theory in mass communication is related to agenda-setting theory in that it points to the effects the media has in presenting a topic to the public within a specific context. The packaging of specific events encourage or discourage interpretations from audiences who bring their own cultural frames or life experiences when viewing media. This can affect audiences in various ways as framing from the journalist or news organizations is reflective of the quick turnaround in the 24 hour news period along with their own cultural or social biases. These concepts will be illustrated in my content analysis as I highlight which newspapers discussed Jones and *The 1619 Project*, as well as what other concepts are suggested to the reader in the article (Schuefele and Tewksbury, 2007; Framing The News, 2009). .

Misogynoir and Black public women

The media has become more influential in the last 10 years with the advent of social media sites shifting the way the public engages with and distributes the news. There have been various cases where Black female journalists have been held to a different standard and criticized on social media and in the right-wing news media including specific cases like MSNBC host Melissa Harris-Perry where Black rhetorical scholar Carey describes how women have always been criticized for speaking out but that Black women receive a racialized and gendered response to their rhetorical practices (Carey, 2018). Jones' follows in this tradition as she was met with swift criticism from news networks and newspapers. The term misogynoir is relevant to my study because Nikole Hanna-Jones' is a self-identified Black woman who experiences the intersecting oppressions of racial and sexist prejudice. Misogynoir was coined by Bailey who describes it as misogyny directed toward Black women based on race and gender specifically in digital and visual spaces such as social media platforms (Bailey, 2021). This concept along with Black feminist theory (Hill-Collins, 1990) will be used in my analysis in order to fully comprehend and note the tone and sentiment in articles discussing Jones' and *The 1619 Project*.

There is a long history of Black women and specifically how Black women writers like Jones' break into the public sphere and navigate what Carey calls a "tightrope of perfection." She discusses this tightrope as the notion that Black women are in a unique position when they speak out and emphasizes how American patriarchal ideologies influence how marginalized people see themselves in the world. This tightrope is akin to surveillance and serves as a reminder to Black women to behave in a respectable manner. Navigating this tightrope can be ongoing, empowering, exhausting and dangerous for Black writers like Jones' whose personhood and journalistic work continue to circulate in the media priming the audience about how to feel about her and *The Project* (Framing The News, 2009).

Data Collection

With the help of University of Virginia's Media Studies Librarian I accessed Factiva, a database used to locate archives of newspaper articles that chronicles up to the present day. I then, non-randomly selected 28 articles from the four newspapers dating from April 2021 to April 2022. The newspaper articles chosen revolve around keywords used including Jones' name and the phrase "*The 1619 Project*." After compiling the articles into folders I recruited two coders who were able to complete coding articles with my codebook and instructions over a period of two months.

In this stage I was able to identify key sensitizing concepts to consider when moving forward with my analysis including: political ideology, racism, misogynoir and critical race theory. These topics were linked to Jones' and her work throughout my examination of press coverage. These sensitizing concepts add to the richness of this content analysis as they will provide a framework to analyze the sentiment of these articles in the four US newspapers I chose to examine. During my data collection process I wasn't able to find as many articles from *The Wall Street Journal* discussing my topics around so I decided to broaden the scope of collection for this newspaper from April 2020 to April 2022. This could skew some of my results considering the time frame of some of the articles will be different from the articles in other newspapers.

I chose these US newspapers while thinking and researching their origins and current circulation throughout the United States. *The Washington Post* is an accredited American newspaper known for its

investigative and political journalism with prominent reporters hailing from their publication like Robert Woodward and Carl Bernstein who broke the Watergate scandal in 1972. It was originally founded by “independent-minded” Democracy Stilson Hutchins in 1877 and throughout the 19th and 20th centuries had a rich history of changing publishers with differing political relationships that influenced the political leaning of the paper. In 2013 the paper was bought by Amazon founder and business mogul Jeff Bezos which has led to commentary regarding the ideology of the paper with Bezos’ financial influence at the helm (*Washington Post* Staff, 2022).

The New York Post was a paper I wanted to analyze because it claims to be the “oldest daily newspaper” in circulation in America founded in 1801 by Secretary of Treasury Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton was a staunch supporter of democracy and is known as a founding father of the United States which makes it all the more intriguing that conservative media mogul Rupert Murdoch has owned the publication since 1976. Murdoch is known for owning various right-wing media outlets that are known for their unique framing of American politics and culture (NYPost.com, 2022).

The third major US newspaper I chose was *The New York Times* (NYT) founded in 1851 known for being the first to break major US stories dating back to John Brown’s Raid on Harpers Ferry, publication of the Pentagon Reports’ during the Vietnam War, #MeToo movement pieces and Jones’ own *1619 Project*. *The Times* has the most Pulitzer prizes of any newspaper with 132 and continues to be a widely circulated paper nationally and internationally (NYTCo.com, 2022).

The final paper that I examined was *The Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) this paper began as a “Customers’ Afternoon Letter” distributed by Charles Dow of Dow Jones & Company. The paper was founded in 1889 by Dow who created this paper to cover business and financial news as well as publishing contributors with thoughts about a range of diverse topics in the opinion section (Hughes, 2021).

These four publications are in high demand and circulation in the United States and across the globe. Newspapers have gone through a transformation thanks and many have had to adapt to the changing reading habits of their audiences, they all emphasize using social media and have all been able

to survive the shift to digital news platforms online and on social media. These changes impact how news organizations frame and circulate certain stories which I aim to uncover in my analysis of coverage of Jones' and *The 1619 Project*.

Methodology

In this study I used qualitative textual analysis of the newspaper articles where two coders and myself focused on the specific words and phrases used in each article, along with taking account if there is any political sentiment located in the articles of these newspapers that have a journalistic ethos that renders them unbiased. While understanding these aspects of the articles published I employ a critical discourse analysis of the text where I aim to locate where hierarchy lies within the discourse and how Jones' and her book are characterized by journalists. Qualitative and critical analysis are useful in projects like this one because there is an opportunity to focus on power dynamics located within the discourse along with identifying tonal choices of contributors, individuals quoted that indicate sentiment that informs the public about how to identify with Jones' and her book. These methods made it clear to that there were themes emerging from the Newspaper discourse that will be included in a table in following sections of this study.

I'll also complete a content analysis of the data I collected in order to illustrate different aspects of my newspaper analysis. I'll use this analysis in order to examine if there is evidence of an ideological bias within each newspaper. Through the use of programs on Microsoft PowerPoint I'll include graphs and charts that clearly show how Jones/*The Project* were covered in major US newspapers, it'll also show sentiment towards the author and her work and whether there is evidence of journalistic framing in the articles, this content analysis will enable me to locate specific instances that journalists use framing theory and circulation theory to influence how audiences view certain topics.

Analysis

After a lengthy coding process I was able to delve into specific newspapers and journalists who discussed Jones' and *The Project*. I will divide my analysis into sections per paper in order to organize it in a clear way including written examples from the text and graphs to show how these topics were

covered. I will also include a section that discusses whether there is evidence of ideological bias or difference in coverage in the newspaper articles analyzed.

US newspapers	# of articles per newspaper sampled
<i>The Washington Post</i>	6
<i>The New York Times</i>	7
<i>The New York Post</i>	7
<i>The Wall Street Journal</i>	8

As illustrated by the table above, while I gathered articles to code from each publication I tried to keep an even number of articles per paper but I found that some papers had more written about the topic than others. I was able to find four major themes that emerged as I analyzed:: political culture wars, education, agency of Jones’ and mentioning the rewriting of American history. Within each theme I was able to locate instances in the newspaper articles where Journalistic frames were used and how they influenced public perception of Jones’ and *The 1619 Project*.

Culture Wars

Frame	Newspaper	Article	Quote	Sentiment
Culture War	NYT	“McConnell Attacks Antiracist Education as Defensive Nonsense”	Our nation's youth do not need activist indoctrination that fixates solely on past flaws and splits our nation into divided	Negative

			<p>camps," McConnell and other Republicans wrote.</p>	
Culture War	WSJ	“1619 Project Hurts Blacks”	<p>"The most devastating aspect of the project is its insinuation that blacks are born inherently damaged by an all-prevailing racism and that their future prospects are determined by the whims of whites"</p>	Negative
Culture War	WaPo	“The Truth about the GOP and Critical Race Theory”	<p>These are all undisputed facts. This is the history that has, until now, been ignored or played down. Teachers who expose their students to such truths are not being woke" or convincing impressionable young minds that the nation is irredeemably racist," as Cruz has alleged. They are performing an essential task of education: contextually explaining where we've been so that we can understand where we are and where we need to go</p>	Positive
Culture War	NY Post	“It’s ‘PROPAGANDA’	<p>"The Kentucky Republican (inset)</p>	Neutral - Jones Negative - 1619

		Mitch rips Times' 1619 in Schools"	wrote in a letter to Education Secretary Miguel Cardona that the Times' slavery-focused project is full of 'historically dubious buzzwords and propaganda'"	
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The first theme that strongly showed up in all of the newspapers was the implication of political culture wars stemming from and surrounding Jones' and her journalistic work. I found 9 articles that mentioned politicians discussing *The Project* as well as instances where Jones' was framed to be connected to contemporary political events (Framing The News, 2009). As shown in the table above there were articles from each newspaper that circulated stories involving this theme and I found that there's a political ideological slant seen in the reporting that illustrates how Jones' and her work have become an ongoing topic of debate.

The use of culture wars as a framework to report on Jones' and her work were most evident in the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Post* opinion pieces. For instance the WSJ article "The 1619 Project Hurts Blacks" is one of several written by prominent Black civil rights activist Robert Woodson, posing questions priming (2009) Black parents about the consequences of teaching their children the ethos of *The Project*. He primed parents to be angry about a supposed initiative designed to privilege White Americans who continue to benefit from slavery: "In truth, even during the worst periods of oppression there were blacks were in slavery but not of slavery. They maintained a strong moral code and a belief in self determination and mutual support that allowed them to rise despite enslavement." He poses this as an antithesis to Jones' assertions in her essay that Black people are inherently oppressed due to pervasive institutional racism in the country (Woodson, 2019). I found this an interesting argument coming from a person involved in civil rights as it presents a post-racial society at the core of this culture war and he uses this throughout his articles to emphasize that *some* Black people are able to thrive regardless of the

overwhelming majorities experience. Several other articles from *WSJ* mention the culture war ensuing at a state level as seen in McGurn's "Main Street: Virginia's Phony Culture War" and *WSJ* editorial boards' "California's Radical Indoctrination" touches on the education theme as The Project is used to stew fear in parents of American schoolchildren.

Culture wars are evident in 2 articles from *The Washington Post* that discuss The 1619 Project's connection to politics. There is a debate in the mainstream media regarding the banning of books linked to what the right calls "critical race theory" this theory is used as a dog-whistle or coded word by Republicans who link it to anything they deem "woke" or "liberal." In "The Truth about the GOP, CRT" opinion writer Eugene Robinson breaks down what the right really means when they invoke CRT. Robinson mentions how the cynicism of Republicans is reflected in their denouncement of Jones' *1619 Project* "Perhaps this is because many Republicans already see the Times as a nest of villainous "elites." Perhaps it's because the 1619 Project was led by a Black woman, Nikole Hannah-Jones, whom Republican strategists believe they can demonize. Or perhaps it's because the project tells so much truth." This sentiment about Jones' and her work are reiterated in "Ban my Book, Please!" (2022) where Young talks about Jones' work in relation to prominent Black female writers like Alice Walker and Toni Morrison whose work has been targeted and in some cases banned at the behest of right-wing politicians across the country.

In the *NYT* and *The NY Post* articles that related to this theme it's clear that the journalists from these organizations aimed to capture the political sentiment that is connected to Jones' and *The Project*. Both articles located in the table took comments from Republican Majority Leader McConnell of Kentucky where he describes the long-form journalistic piece as an affront to American history and compares it to a liberal project to indoctrinate the children of America. At the beginning of President Biden's term, he signed an executive order pushing the government to "pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all," in response McConnell and his colleagues asserted "*1619 Project* 'has become infamous for putting ill-informed advocacy ahead of historical accuracy,'" and that 'citing this debunked advocacy confirms that your proposed prioritizes would not focus on critical thinking or

accurate history, but on spoon-feeding students a slanted story" (2021). This illustrates in one instance how Jones’ work circulates and is discussed in larger political media in ways that stir public sentiment.

Education

The assumption that Jones’ work in *The 1619 Project* was going to be used in schools as part of the American historical curriculum has been a topic of debate in school boards and at the federal level since the publication of *The Project* in 2019. I examined 9 articles that focused on this theme ranging from all 4 newspaper sources. The chart below illustrates examples from the journalistic framing used along with quotes.

Education

Frame	Newspaper	Article	Quote	Sentiment
Education	NYT	“Context Behind Blackburn’s Accusation”	“The senator accused Judge Jackson of praising the 1619 Project a 2019 collection of essays in The New York Times' Magazine that described itself as seeking to "reframe the country's history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the very center of our national narrative. Many conservatives denounce the project, which the senator portrayed as arguing that America is fundamentally racist.”	Neutral
Education	WSJ	“God, Parents & The 1619 Project”	"Evaluated honestly The 1619 Project is kind of performance art" Columbia professor John Whitlock argued	Negative

			earlier this year "Facts therefore are less important than attitude"	
Education	WaPo	"Why I Teach 1619 Project – despite it's flaws"	"I teach the 1619 Project not because it is above criticism or because it gets every detail right. I teach it because it leads my students, many of them, to ask why they have never been taught such things previously, and because it prompts them to rethink their understandings of race, racism and anti-racism. I teach it because it has motivated students to research such topics as the legacy of Abraham Lincoln, the problem of police violence and the role of black women in the civil rights struggle. I teach the 1619 Project finally, because, along with my students, I am learning from it."	Neutral
Education	NY Post	"Parents Voices Matter"	And many (rightly) abhor the idea of having their kids taught the divisive, fact-challenged notions of Nikole Hannah-Jones' 1619 Project, which claims that America was founded on slavery, and critical race theory, which splits Americans into victims and	Negative

			oppressors based merely on their race.”	
Education	NY Post	“Fighting for Right to Indoctrinate”	Children Should be educated about the stains or slavery and Jim Crow on Americas heritage. But teachina kids that the nation and all white people are inherently racist is a destructive slur. The NEA might as well change its name to the National Propaganda Association.	Negative

Education was a prominent theme that overlaps into all of the other themes and located in all of the newspapers. *The NYT* had 1 article that focused on this theme and it described an incident seen circulated on political media coverage of Judge Ketanji Brown Jacksons’ confirmation hearings to the Supreme Court. In *NYT* article “The Context Behind Blackburn’s Accusations” Savage wrote about Georgia Republican Senator Marsha Blackburn questioning Judge Jackson about critical race theory and connected it to her judicial record as well as the school she sends her children to. Blackburn mentioned what she deemed a “provocative” a speech given by Jackson before her nomination discussing *The Project*, Jackson stated that America wasn’t perfect in 1776 and that it is “through hard-work, struggles and and sacrifices of African-Americans over the past two centuries that the United States has finally become the free nation that the framers initially touted” (Jackson, 2020). Senator Blackburn goes on to use this as prime the audience about critical race theory. This fear of Jones and her work are used as a dog-whistle for right-wing politicians to discuss and dismiss the history of race in America.

This notion of American children being mis-educated through teaching of *The Project* in seen in 3 *WSJ* articles. Two articles “Main Street: Virginia’s Phony Culture War” and “California’s Radical Indoctrination” are reports that emphasize the push from right-wing politicians and lobbying groups to denounce diversity and equity in American education policy. These articles include quotes from

Republican politicians who deemed *The Project* as part of a “woke agenda” that has no place in schools. This fear is obvious in Fields *WSJ* article “God, Parents and ‘the 1619 Project’” she explains the need to reject *The Project* and reiterates “The Lord called her” to home-school her kids to keep them away from rhetoric like Jones’ essay (2020). Articles like this are published by organizations to provide an unbiased opinion yet I find it hard to believe Fields ever read Jones’ essay to begin with. Fields uses a religious frame when discussing Jones’ and her work: “This form of progressive education destroys and distorts God's order and the fundamental rights of parents and society,” statements like these are the basis of the culture war arguments seen in the previous section and are used to fire up parents to “fight” for their children's education.

The newspaper's continued narrative of fighting for the “truth” to be taught in schools is seen in 2 articles from *The Washington Post* 1 article discusses Jones’ and her journey to tenure as she was the topic of debate in the summer of 2021 while she waited to be approved by her UNC board of trustees. In “Donor Lobbied Against Hiring Jones' ” describes how Arkansas media mogul Walter Hussman Jr. called trustee members stating that he didn’t believe Jones’ work “didn’t seem to uphold the core values of journalism” (Farhi, Barr, 2021). Hussman Jr’s name dons the journalism department’s building at UNC, making his plea to the board privileged and inappropriate. This article is one of many that show how Jones’ is held to a different standard than fellow contributors to *The Project* and is surveilled in a unique way that is indicative of her race and sex (Bailey, 2021). The other article from *WaPo* “Why I teach the 1619 Project– despite its flaws” a teacher recounts the factual critiques of *The Project* and emphasizes the need to teach this in the curriculum as it encourages critical thinking between the students and himself. This was a welcome difference from the other articles I examined as the teacher emphasizes his intent in teaching *The Project* “I teach it because it has motivated students to research such topics as the legacy of Abraham Lincoln, the problem of police violence and the role of Black women in the civil rights struggle, I teach the 1619 Project finally because along with my students, I am learning from it.”

There were 4 articles from the *NY Post* that stood out to me as being apart of this education theme. 2 articles focused on the connection between critical race theory and *The 1619 Project* being

taught in schools. “Fight for the Right to Indoctrinate” and “CRT Double Down– Top Teach union stands by lessons” prime the readers about how to feel about the National Education Association passing a resolution encouraging the teachings of critical race theory in schools as “appropriate and reasonable.” The NEA wrote: “we oppose attempts to ban critical race theory and/or *The 1619 Project*.” These articles frame Jones’ and her work in a neutral light by including quotes from the NEA. In a *NY Post* article posted by the editorial board “Clarity on critical race theory: It’s a political drive, not an educational one” (2021) Manhattan Institute writer Rufo and Princeton Professor of African-American studies Glaude debated the issue of incorporating this into national education policy. At the end of the article the board argues that “if you teach generations of children that capitalism, police and even the founding of the nation have their roots in slavery, you raise a new society that agrees with everything progressives like ‘The Squad’ promote” women of color legislators are invoked to explain the political nature of this educational work. This proves that regardless of hearing opinions from “both sides” there is still an obvious framing and political shift in this newspaper.

Lastly, articles like “Parents’ Voices Matter” and “It’s Politics Not Education” (NY Post, 2021) emphasize the agency of parents in deciding what their children can learn. The articles place the core of the debate in the hands of parents and primes them about how to feel about *The Project* through quotes: “... many (rightly) abhor the idea of having their kids taught the divisive, fact-challenged notions of Hannh-Jones' 1619 Project which claims American was founded on slavery, and critical race theory which splits Americans into victims and oppressors based merely on their race.”

The way the Jones’ and *The Project* are brought into political debate is seen throughout all of the papers and themes and in the following section I will discuss the theme of rewriting history which has been a prime concern of critics of her work since its publication in 2019.

Rewriting History

When *The 1619 Project* was first published in 2019 there was a vast amount of criticism coming from the academic and historical community regarding the factual nature of Jones’ essay. Historians, professors, lobbyists and politicians have dragged Jones’ name and *The Project* for its supposed

inaccuracies especially the notion that Jones' asserts that the American revolution was fought to secure the institution of slavery because of its economic power.

Rewriting History

Frame	Newspaper	Article	Quote	Sentiment
Rewriting History	NYT	“The 1619 Project and the Long Battle Over US History”	The 1619 Project made the provocative case that the start of the African presence in English North American colonies could be considered the moment of inception of the United States of America.	Positive
Rewriting History	WaPo	“1619 Started as History. Now It’s A Political Program”	"The 1619 Project, from magazine to book and all the forms in between, displays its own dynamic and contested historiography. Its evolution is sometimes forthright, sometimes subtle and sometimes grudging, as it figures out what it wants to say."	Negative
Rewriting History	NY Post	“A Founder For Us All”	"Far left efforts like the 1619 Project now claim that many Americans have no reason to honor Washington. But far more accurate	Negative

			is the understanding reflected in the musical "Hamilton." One of the show's most compelling moments is the entry of Gen. George Washington as American rebels suddenly face 32,000 British troops in New York Harbor"	
Rewriting History	WSJ	“Critical Race Theory is a Hustle; it may resemble an academic discipline, but it’s really just a fancy argument for racial preferences”	Critical-race ideology is also entering the classroom via the New York Times "1619 Project," which claims that the Revolutionary War was fought to preserve slavery and earned its creator, Nikole Hannah-Jones, a Pulitzer Prize. In a forthcoming book, "Woke Racism," the humanities professor John McWhorter argues that proponents like Mr. Kendi and Ms. Hannah-Jones have mostly been given a pass because they're racial minorities, they're on the left, and criticizing them is	Negative

			politically incorrect.	
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As shown in the table above this theme was prevalent in most of the newspapers but seen heavily in the *WSJ* seen in the articles. In “Correcting Falsehoods About America’s Founding” Riley talks about civil rights leader Robert Woodson’s rejection of *The Project* and his creation of “1776 Unites” a counter to Jones’ work. This article also talks about the academic community criticizing the books’ validity and Riley ends the article with this: “The 1619 Project is not an intellectual exercise in search of the truth. It’s a political exercise in search of power. More scholars could and should be calling out this false history, but let’s be grateful to the ones who have risen to the occasion” (2021). This quote illustrates how newspapers like *WSJ* frame news based on who is writing and blatantly talks to an imagined Black readership. In an opinion piece (Eberstadt) the Chair of Christian Culture at the Catholic Information Center wrote “Millennials, Put Away Childish Political Things.” Eberstadt addresses the young people claiming they have been robbed of enjoying American history. She mentions *The 1619 Project* and never names Jones’ but calls her an “impresario” that has never thought of herself as “particularly patriotic,” as a way to discourage the use of Jones’ work in schools and as a cultural ethos (2021). This piece shows how this publication agenda-set as they published the fear Eberstadt continually invokes by using right-wing rhetoric by calling all young people “woke.” Two articles from *The NY Post* and one from *NYT* exemplify this theme as they directly discuss critics’ belief that Jones’ aimed to rewrite the nation’s history. In “A Founder For Us All” (NY Post) the author discusses President’s Day and the importance of George Washington’s birthday. In this piece the editorial board states “far-left efforts like the *1619 Project* now claim that many Americans have no reason to honor Washington. But far more accurate is the understanding reflected in the musical ‘Hamilton’” where the author goes on to highlight the historical timeline of the Battle in the Hudson Washington is famous for. This piece shows how there is a fear surrounding the collective memory of America as Jones’ aimed to diversify and center Black people’s experiences in the founding of the country (2022).

This theme shows up again in *NYT* book review of *The 1619 Project* called “A Nation’s Legacy”

where Hoschild reconciles with the critics of Jones by while reading the book. He goes on to respectfully disagree and agree with some of Jones’ finer points as he states: “Despite what demagogues claim, honoring the story told in "The 1619 Project" and rectifying the great wrongs in it need not threaten or diminish anyone else's experience, for they are all strands of a larger American story.” In this instance Hoschild admits the complexity of reading Jones’ work as historical fact but places it within the same context of great historical works that allow Americans to critically think about the country.

Negative or neutral coverage of Jones’ and *The Project* is well- documented throughout this study but the next theme will highlight a few positive instances of newspaper coverage.

Agency to Jones’

Only two newspapers were involved in this theme section, there weren’t many articles that were positive or spoke to Jones’ direct actions in relation to her work. *The NYT* is technically Jones’ home as she published the first essay of *The Project* in the *NYT Magazine*; therefore it’s not surprising that this publication allocated agency in their articles. The act of giving Jones’ a voice is reiterated in two *Washington Post* discussing Jones’ contentious journey to tenure.

Agency to Jones’:

Frame	Newspaper	Article	Quote	Sentiment
Agency	NYT	“Filling In the Gaps”	Hannah-Jones: What we are taught in school or on television is not all that there is. would love it if kids read this story, no matter their race, and decided to interview their grandparents or Other adults In their community to better understand what came before them. We are all have a	Positive

			right to explore it.	
Agency	NYT	“Times Writer Rejects UNC for Howard”	"Ms. Hannah-Jones said Tuesday that the decision to decline the offer had been difficult and that the treatment of her by U.N.C, where she received her master's degree, had been deeply painful."	Positive
Agency	WaPo	Journalist Is Weighing Legal Action Over Tenure	"The board of trustees at The University of North Carolina is under intensifying pressure to grant tenure to Nikole Hanna-Jones the Pulitzer Prize Winning New York Times Magazine journalist who is scheduled to start as a professor at its journalism school in July"	

In *The WaPo* article “Journalist Is Weighing Legal Action Over Tenure,” and “UNC Plant Your Heels On The Right Side” the authors discuss Jones’ tenure through highlighting the criticism from Hussman Jr discussed earlier in this study. Both articles talk about Jones’ legal team “drawing a line in the sand” when they heard of Hussman Jr’s concerns they felt ““Hannah-Jones had no faith that the board would ever give good-faith consideration to awarding her tenure" (Sullivan, 2021). In this instance Sullivan gives Jones’ a voice that has been silenced in other newspapers and outlets, through the quote about her lawyers the article frames Jones’ as a worthy candidate for tenure. This is also seen in the *NYT* article “Times Writer Rejects UNC for Howard ” where it opens with “Ms. Hanna-Jones will start a

journalism center as Howard University, one of the country's leading historically Black colleges and universities. UNC's board of trustees had failed to consider tenure for her until she threatened legal action." From the beginning of Gross' article she addresses Jones' in a way that no other journalist has by using "Ms" and emphasizing her journalism career (2021). Later, Jones' speaks about the incident highlighting that her entire life she has attended primarily white institutions including UNC. She reiterates that she never thought about going anywhere else. She then goes on to discuss her decision making process: "'After what happened with North Carolina became public, after I started seeing the extent to which there was political intervention in this, it just became very clear to me, that this was what I wanted to do now -- that I didn't need to try to find a workaround to try to work with HBCUs that I could just go there."

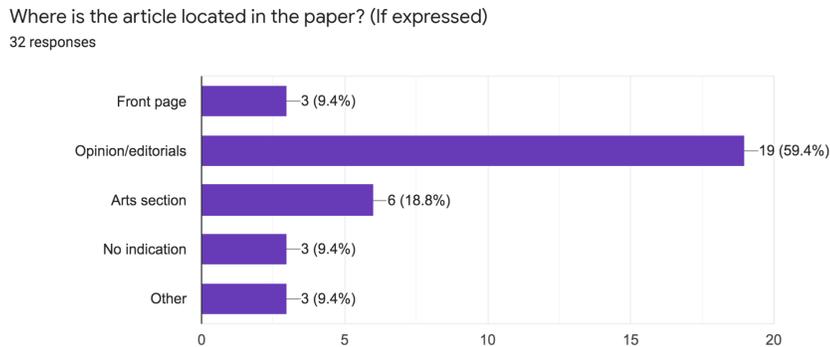
Jones was able to speak to her experience in *NYT* article "Filling in the Gaps" where she participates in a question and answer session with Gyarke where Jones' is able to discuss her motivation for creating The 1619 Project, her upbringing and her thoughts on American history. She ends the session by answering a question about the intent behind hoping children will engage with *The Project*: "What we are taught in schools or on television is not all that there is. I would love it if kids read this story, no matter their race, and decided to interview grandparents or other adults in their community to better understand what came before them. We are all a part of history and an origin story and we all have the right to explore that" (Gyarke, 2021).

This ending quote by Jones' is a rare occurrence where she is able to voice what she wants people to do with her work. She is likely well aware of the abundance of criticisms against her yet in these articles she is able to literally speak for herself whereas she is rendered silent in other papers. I will explore this along with theoretical concepts of framing, circulation and Black feminist theory in the following section.

Findings

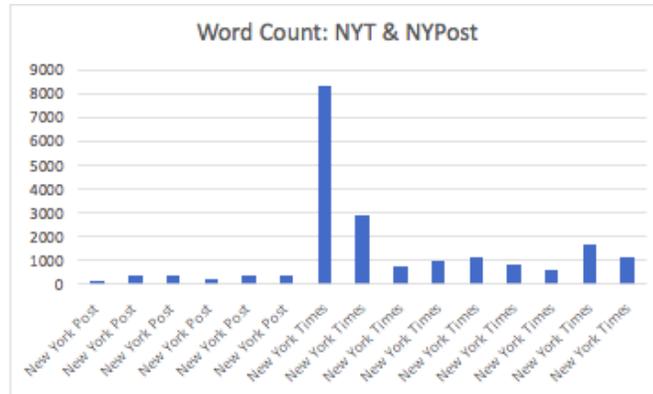
As I examined each newspaper there were stark differences and similarities in the media coverage of Nikole-Hanna Jones and her work *The 1619 Project*. 56.3% of the articles were written by men which

speaks to the unconscious bias that could show up in coverage of Jones’ journalistic contributions as a Black woman (Bailey, 2021). As shown below in the chart most articles were found in the opinion section of each newspaper with a few published in the news section when related to political actors(Framing the News, 2009).

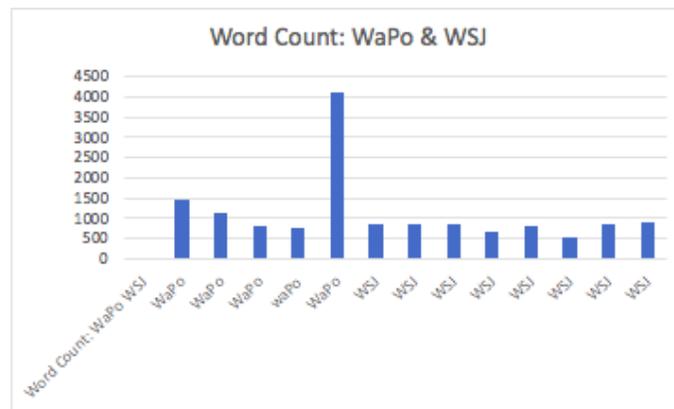


The first aspect of analysis I’d like to discuss is the word count of the newspapers:

As shown in the chart below the *New York Post* is the publication with the least number of words written and the *NYT* has the longest articles in this analysis with 8.373 words written. The *NYT* is what I like to call Jones’ journalistic home which I feel gives her an advantage in regard to the reporting about herself and the book. In this instance the *NYT* employs a type of agenda-setting that is unique as Scheufele and Tewksbury have theorized that framing as a macro construct can influence the modes of presentation that journalists use to present information to their readers. The *NYT’s* readership is comfortable with Jones’ making it easier to frame articles written at a specific time in history (2007)

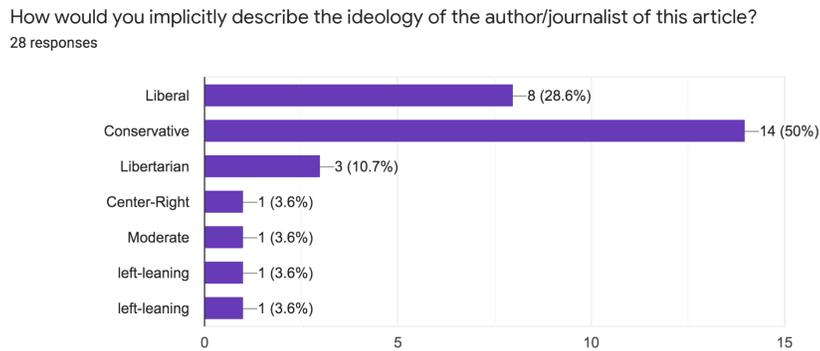


As shown below *The WSJ* and *Washington Post* were longer than *NY Post* articles but shorter than most of the *NY Times* ones. This reiterates my point about agenda-setting for the *NY Times* as they have an implicit bias toward Jones’ that may contribute to the lengthier articles. The longest Post article written was 4,112 words discussing the criticism and evolution of *The 1619 Project* becoming an education tool noting the work’s transformation into a political dog-whistle used by the right. There was certainly a trend with longer articles in the *NYT and Post* discussing Jones and the book in a way that primed the audience to be neutral in their position toward the topic (2007).



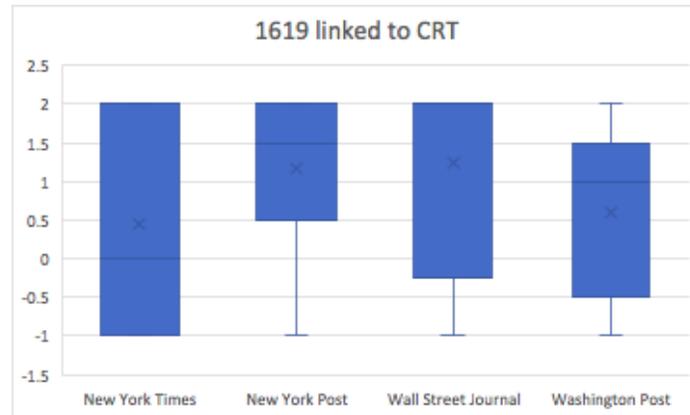
Noticeably the *NY Post* published many articles on Jones and education but the contributors wrote significantly less with the smallest article written being 170 words. Even though they were shorter they contributed to the education and cultural debate, priming their readers with exaggerated opinions from their editorial board (2009).

Each newspaper had an implicit ideology baked into its fabric that I was able to capture through my coding process and as the examination of articles progressed ideologies of the publications were reaffirmed or changed. As you can see in the chart below there were significantly more articles written by contributors assumed to be conservative or right-leaning.

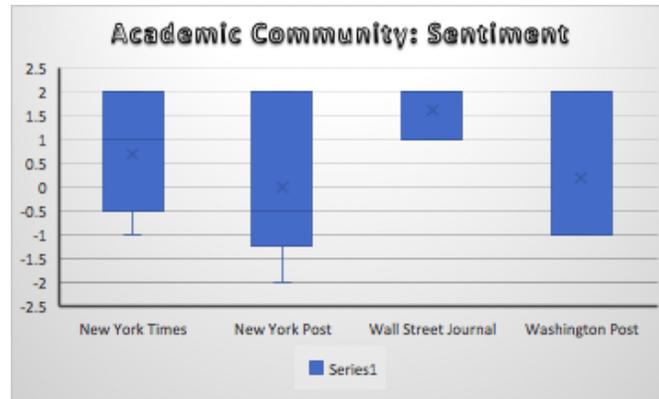


This conservative framing was seen throughout the articles examined in *WSJ* and *The NY Post* as they used discourse that implied their sentiment towards Jones and *The 1619 Project*. Their lack of naming Jones, political, academic attacks from Republicans made it clear that these publications have a conservative ethos.

For example, *NY Post* used framing and priming (2007) throughout their coverage of Jones' and *The Project*. In "Fighting for The Right to Indoctrinate" the editorial board debates the merits of the National Education Association vowing to incorporate critical race theory (CRT) in schools, they prime first by linking her to "CRT" then by stating "children should be educated about the stains of slavery and Jim Crow on America's heritage. But teaching kids that the nation and all white people are inherently racist is a destructive slur" (2021). In this instance *The NY Post* primes their audience to connect CRT to Jones and *The Project*, implying that they are a danger to the public.

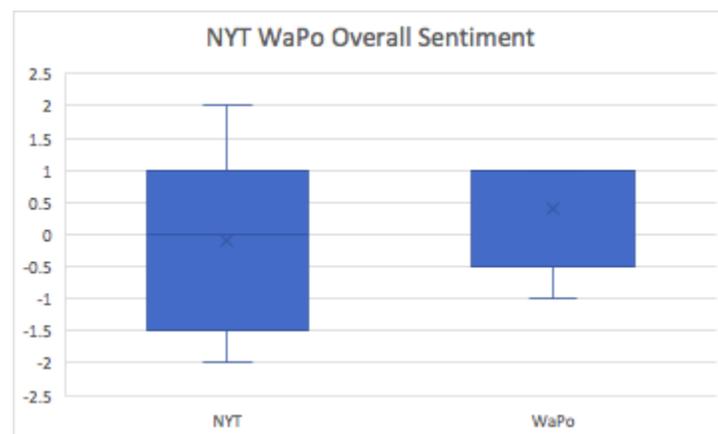


A *WSJ* that exemplifies this priming especially in articles “The 1619 Project Hurts Blacks” and “Upward Mobility: Correcting 1619’s Falsehoods About the American Founding” (2021). Both articles include commentary from prominent civil rights leader and founder of the *1776 Unites*, a direct counter to Jones’ *1619 Project*. I find the publication of his quotes indicative of the paper attempting to give an unbiased perspective regarding *the Project* from a critic within the Black political activist community. In “1619 Hurts Blacks” Woodson prompts Black parents by informing them that the aim of *The Project* is essentially to remind Black children that they are “inherently oppressed.” Rhetoric like this along with quotes such as “The *1619 Project* is not an intellectual exercise in search of truth. It’s a political exercise in search of power. More scholars could and should be calling out this false history, but let’s be grateful to the ones who have risen to the occasion” represent the media engaging in what communication scholars describe as rhetorical structures of news discourse which are stylistic choices made by journalists used to illustrate the intended effects of the article (Framing The News, 2009). Woodson and Riley use metaphors and descriptive language of historical events to emphasize the facticity of their opinions on Jones’ and *The Project*. Both authors attempt to reinforce the validity and authority of their discourse as being “impartial.” These pieces render Jones’ a silent, outspoken Black woman policed by her own community. As shown below in the chart it is clear that there is right leaning bias located in *WSJ* coverage of the topics.



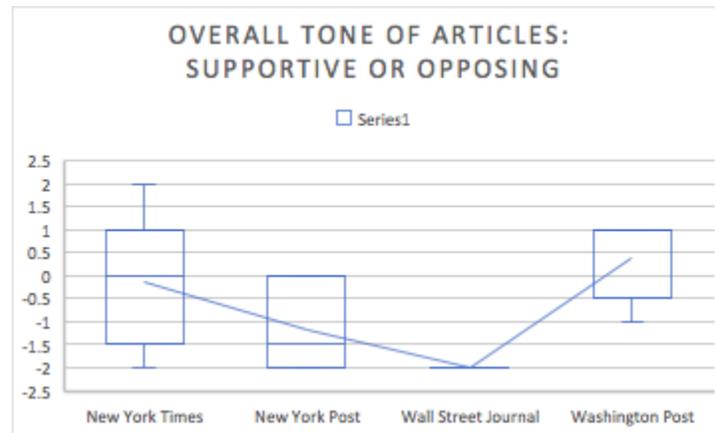
The framing of Jones' in *WSJ* and *NY Post* reflect the essence of circulation theory at work in the modern age. The academic and political sentiment in these newspapers showed an obvious bias in the way they rendered Jones' silent, the way they primed readers with their own bias, in the quotes and in the lack of overall coverage (word count) (Collins, 1990). These publications' coverage was opposing and negative with the *NY Post* having published more neutral articles than the *WSJ*.

I found that the *NYT* and *Washington Post* covered Jones' and *The Project* in overwhelmingly positive, supportive and neutral way. *NYT* in articles like that interviewed Jones', book reviews and reporting on Jones' move to Howard illustrates the agency and positive framing of Jones. Sentiment in this publication shows a range in coverage that allows Jones' to be self-defined as she names her experience as well as what other Black Americans experience everyday (Collins, 1990).



The Washington Post coverage was more neutral as contributors, journalists focused heavily on

incorporating *The Project* in schools. Various articles highlight how professors and teachers circulate articles like “Why I Teach the Much Debated 1619 Project– despite its flaws” and “Teaching About Past



Sins Won’t Scar Students. They’ll Enjoy Debating Them.” This paper also discusses the connection to the “critical race theory hysteria” when publishing articles like “Ban My Book, Please!” and “The Truth About The GOP and Critical Race Theory.” This was unique compared to the coded language used in the NYT, NY Post and WSJ through incorporating political and academic quotes. The framing used in this paper reflects the positive sentiment seen in the *NYT* as both publications aim to publish a range of opinions and news across the political spectrum (Framing The News, 2009).

Each publication showed a nuanced way of covering both Jones’ and her work with the *NYT*, *WaPo* being more supportive and positive in its coverage. The *NY Post* shows a clear ideological shift to the right as the coverage was mostly negative and neutral whereas the *WSJ* coverage is blatantly opposing, negative in reference to Jones’ and *The Project*. Based on media sentiment of Jones’ and *The Project*; *WSJ* demonstrated a clear bias in coverage whereas the other three major US newspapers published a range of sentiment expressed by contributions from politicians, professors, journalists and activists from both ideological isles.

Conclusion

Through this analysis I hope to have traced the news coverage surrounding the support or opposition of Nikole Hannah-Jones and *The 1619 Project*. After engaging with each publication it became

clear that although American news organizations aim to publish unbiased information in order to educate the public on issues they agenda-set for the masses. The effects of priming, framing contributed to the bias evident in each newspaper as it has become a common news practice to allow contributors to speak from their own educational, political and personal perspectives on issues that impact society. In the age of the 24/7 news cycle and advent of social media that incorporate new forms of news sharing, future research will need to focus on updating circulation theory and social media journalism. Print journalism has been revitalized by these technological advancements as they contribute to the recirculation of popular issues or national debates such as Jones' and the backlash to *The 1619 Project*.

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