



# **White News: Why Local News Programs Don't Cover People of Color (Routledge Communication Series)**

*Don Heider*

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Is TV news racist? If the purpose of local news is to cover individual communities and to present issues of interest and concern to local audiences, why are local newscasts so similar in markets around the country?

These are the questions that motivated Heider's research, leading to the development of this book.

Recognizing that local news is the outlet through which most people get their news, Heider ventured into the local television newsrooms in two moderate-size, culturally diverse U.S. markets to observe the news process. In this report, he uses his insider's perspective to examine why local television news coverage of people of color does not occur in more meaningful ways.

Heider examines the perceptions of racism and ethnicity, and addresses such dichotomies as "white" news (content determined by white managers) being delivered by non-white news anchors, thus giving the appearance of "non-white" news. He also considers how coverage of minorities influences viewers' perceptions of their minority neighbors. Heider then sets forth a new theoretical concept--incognizant racism--as a way of explaining how news workers consistently ignore news in significant portions of the communities they cover.

This contribution to the minorities and media discussion provides important insights into the newsroom decision-making process and the sociology and structure of newsrooms. It is required reading for all who are involved in news reporting, mass communication, media and minority studies, and cultural issues in today's society.

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