

# Hip-Hop through the lens of Madison print media

Authors: Aiyana Groh, Jennifer Holland, Mari Verbeten, Iffat Bhuiyan



## ABSTRACT

At the request of local non-profit Urban Community Arts Network (UCAN), undergraduate students at University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Department of Community and Environmental Sociology analyzed newspaper articles to understand local media portrayals of Hip-Hop. We collected and analyzed 348 newspaper articles for a variety of characteristics, ranging from location of content, to race of individual or groups in the article, to overall attitude of the author towards Hip-Hop. These findings indicate a potential bias in the way Hip-Hop articles are written in the Madison print media, though there is variation by publication. These findings are consistent with the racialized dominant narrative that Hip-Hop in Madison is perceived as violent.

## METHODS

- We collected all newspaper articles from 2008-2017, using *the Newspaper Archive from the Madison Public Library* database and Isthmus.com
- We created a coding scheme using Google Forms with the following variables:

Newspaper	Wisconsin State Journal, The Cap Times, Isthmus
Date of Article, Title of Article, Page of Article	--
Location of Content/Subject	Local (Madison), Greater Madison, Wisconsin, National, International
Source	Staff Writer, Newswire
Story Type	Event Advertising, Media Advertising, News, Interview, Letter to the Editor, Opinion Piece, Names and Faces
Photo	Neutral, Negative photo, Positive photo, No photo
Crime Education UW-Madison Community Branding of Hip-Hop	Doesn’t fall in category, Falls in this category as restricting, Falls in this category as expanding, Falls in this category as mixed
Overall Attitude	Neutral , Very restricting, Somewhat restricting, Mixed, Somewhat expanding, Very expanding
Race	Focus of the article was not a person/people, White, Person/People of Color (POC) (83% Black), Combination, Unknown

- We divided the articles and researchers up by year groups and had each member code articles individually
- Pairs within each year group reconciled any codes that were different to produce a reliable data set

## KEY TERMS

**Neutral:** no bias towards Hip-Hop  
**Restricting:** limiting of Hip-Hop, diverse subgenres within Hip-Hop, or of Hip-Hop culture  
**Mixed:** both limiting and encouraging of Hip-Hop, diverse subgenres of Hip-Hop, or of Hip-Hop culture  
**Expanding:** encouraging of Hip-hop, diverse subgenres of Hip-Hop, or of Hip-Hop culture

## DATA ANALYSIS

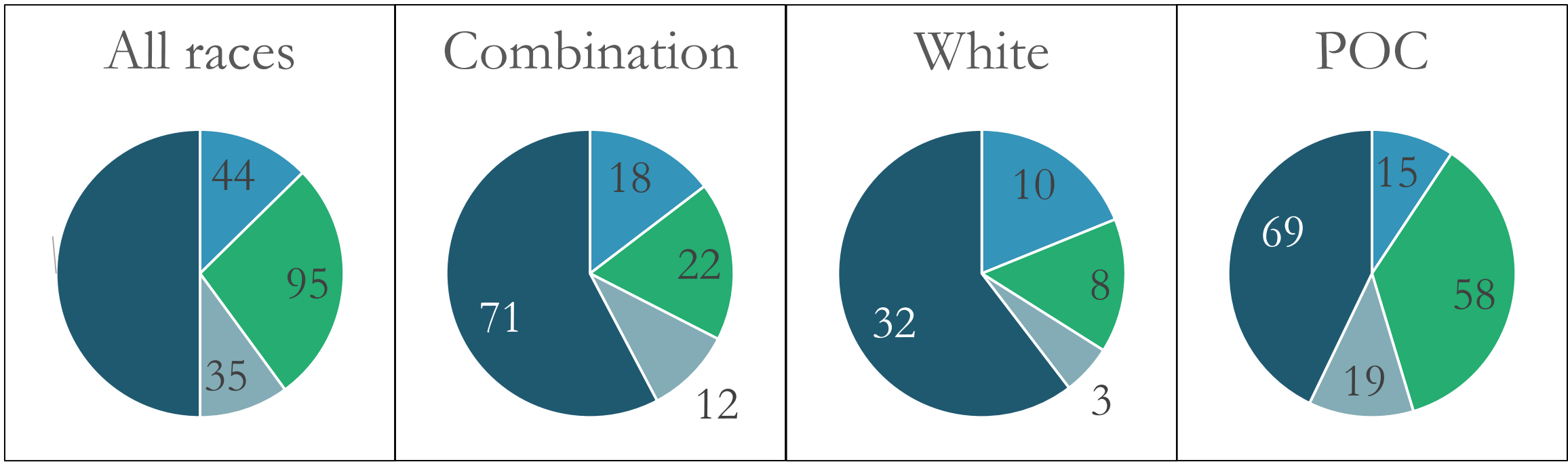
- We analyzed the data using Excel using count and sum functions
- No significance tests were performed on the data because it was a population rather than a sample

Number of stories written about...	
White People	53
People of Color (POC)	161
Mixed	123
Number of stories written by...	
Wisconsin State Journal	189
Madison Capital Times	73
The Isthmus	86
Number of stories written about...	
Local events/artists	159
National events/artists	166

LEGEND			
	NEUTRAL		RESTRICTING
	MIXED		EXPANDING

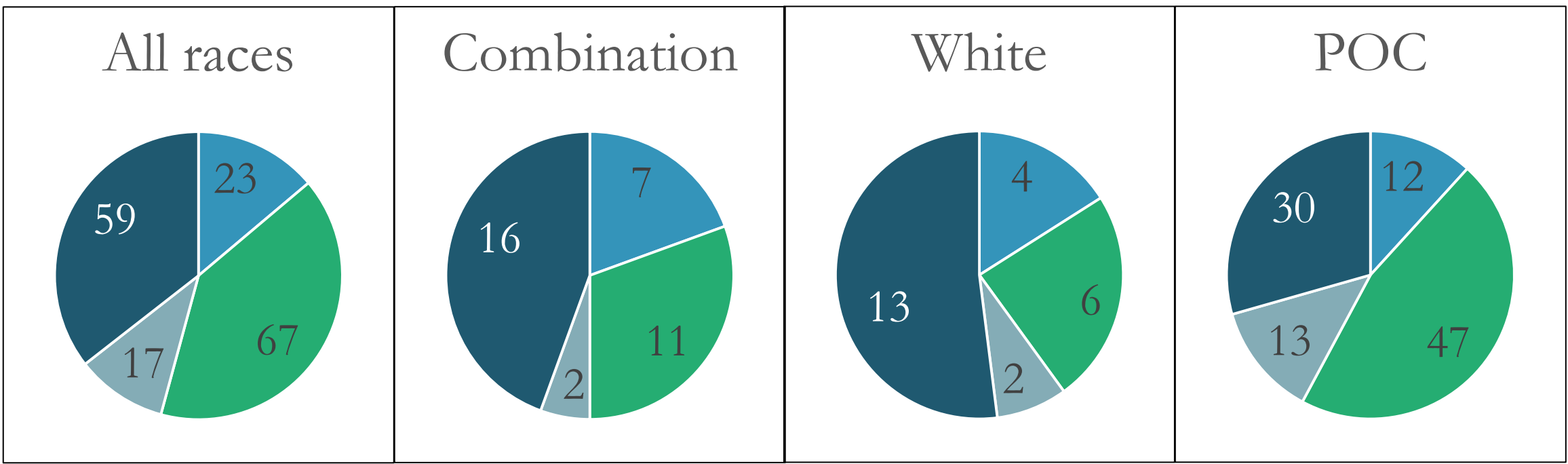
## OVERALL ATTITUDE

- We compared overall attitude with race

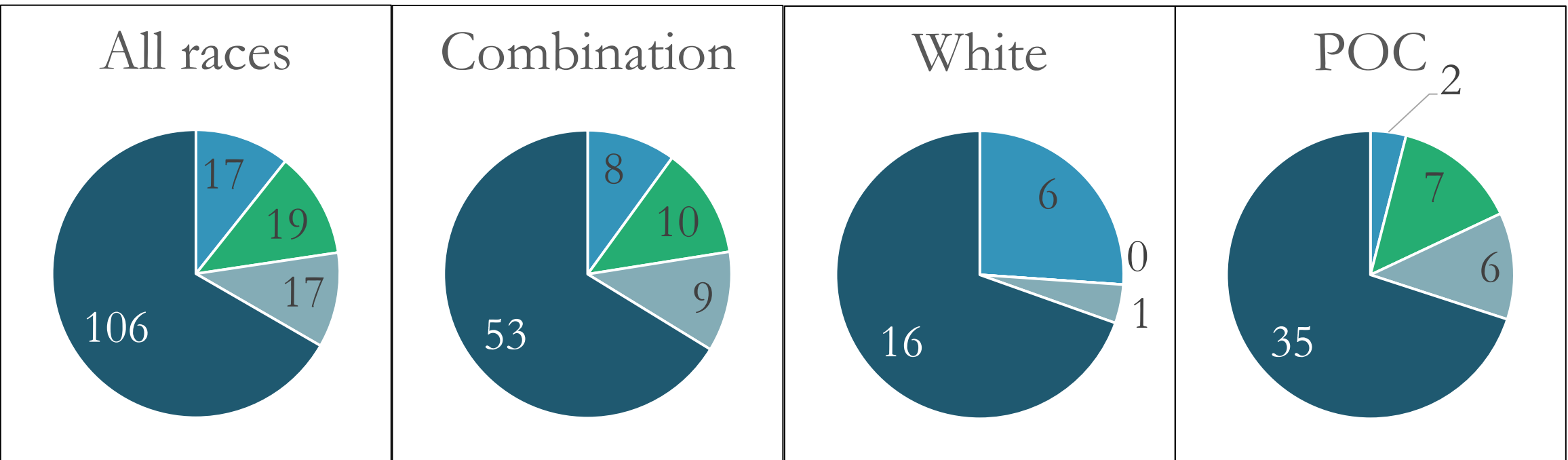


## LOCATION, OVERALL ATTITUDE AND RACE

- We compared national stories with overall attitude and race

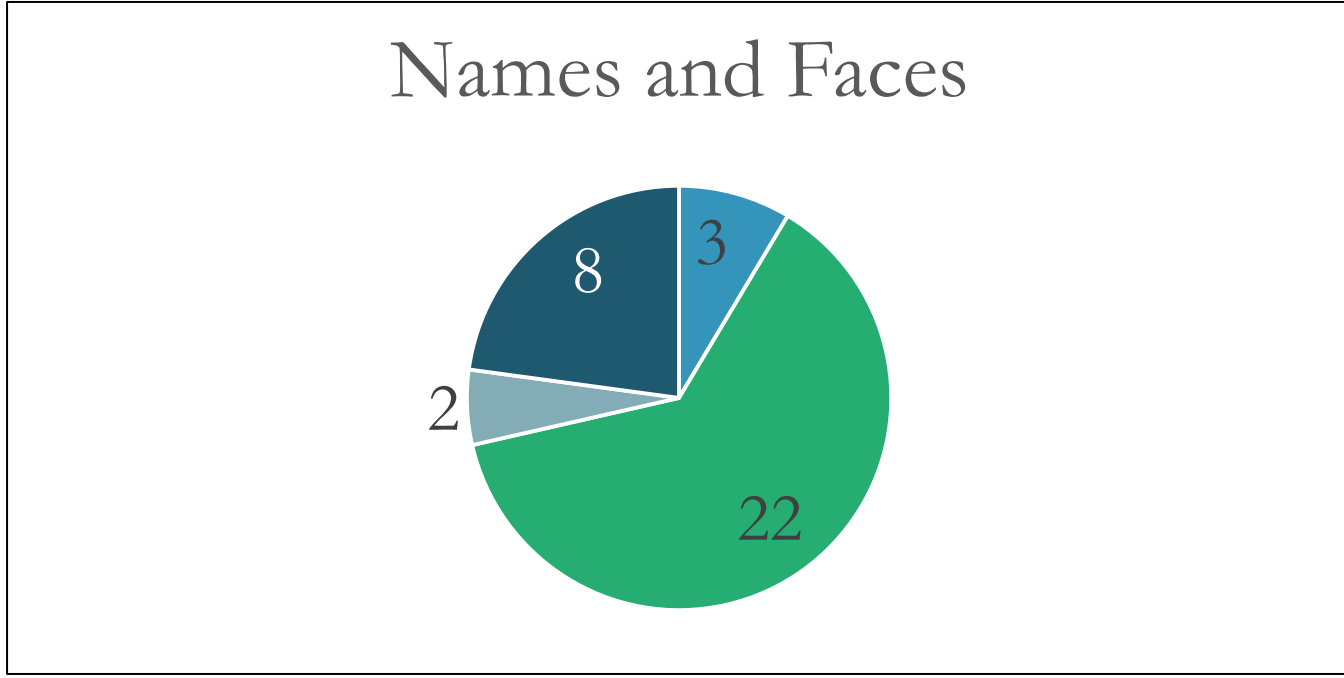


- We compared local stories with overall attitude and race



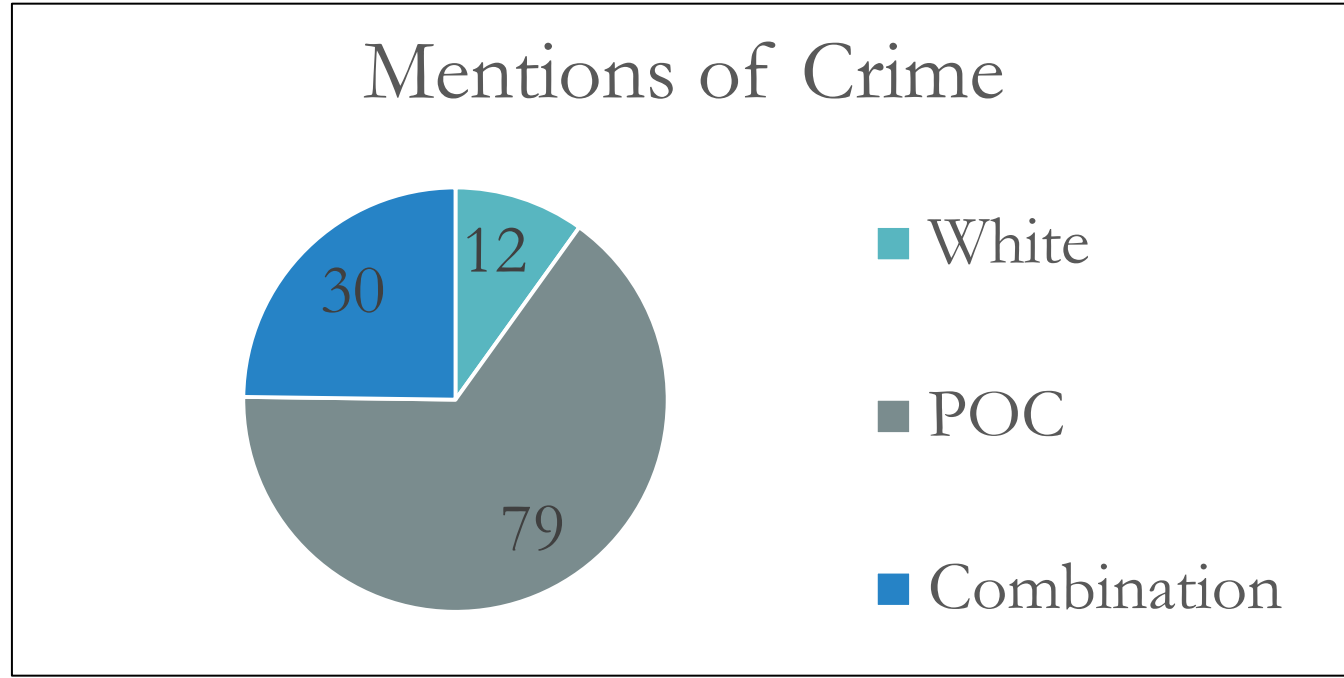
## NAMES AND FACES

- We focused in on the story type Names and Faces and the way the articles interacted with People of Color. Names and Faces is a syndicated column that runs in the Wisconsin State Journal.



## CRIME

- We counted the number of articles that mentioned crime, regardless of its status as expanding, neutral or restricting



## RESULTS

- Overall, 50% of articles written about all people are expanding. Articles written about People of Color have the smallest percentage of expanding stories, at 43%. In comparison, 60% of articles written about white people are expanding
- National articles were found to publish the least amount of expanding articles about People of Color, at 29%. Overall, articles about national news were less expanding (36%) than local articles (67%)
- Articles on local artists were generally much more expanding towards Hip-Hop, no matter the race of the person in the story
- Names and Faces of the Wisconsin State Journal used a newswire for national news and 63% of these articles were coded as restricting
- Out of all of the mentions of crime throughout the news articles used in this report, 65% of the articles were about People of Color. The least amount of mentions of crime were within articles about white people, at 10%

## DISCUSSION

Based on our findings, the Madison media is following the perceived racialized narrative about Hip-Hop. However, stories about local events and artists were more expanding than stories about national events and artists. The story type Names and Faces was most restricting.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Dr. Karen Reece, Dr. Randy Stoecker, Pacal “DJ Pain 1” Bayley, and Mark “ShaH” Evans for your constant support and gracious collaboration.

Thank you to the students of the Capstone Experience, Kate Giguere, Grace Spella, Sydney Weiser, Sydney Courier-Oaster, Bobbie Briggs, Rachael Goldbaum, and the community based learning fellow, Mehak Qureshi for contributing to this project.