

# Initial Remarks

## FCC Media Ownership Workshop

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# Topics covered

- Brief responses to a few of the questions the FCC sent panelists
  1. Meaning of competition
  2. Meanings and measurement of diversity
  3. Approach to localism
  4. Ongoing studies worth watching

# Is the competition goal best conceptualized as economic competition?

- Should restate this goal in terms of economic efficiency
  - Due to the nonrival character of content, there is no simple characterization of a competitive equilibrium that might be used as a benchmark for welfare comparisons for media
- Plus, for many crucial questions current theoretical models are too simple to deal with the complexities of actual media markets

# Diversity

- Are outlet, viewpoint, source, program, and minority/female diversity concepts all relevant to media ownership?
  - Yes, and probably more.
- Need to explicitly link diversity concepts to more primary goals of media policy like an informed citizenry, political participation, access to minority views, rights of expression
  - This approach is needed to identify complementarities and tradeoffs among goals
  - And should identify other important measures of media performance related to diversity goals like depth and breadth of coverage of issues

# Localism

- Should localism be characterized in terms of selection of programming responsive to local needs and quality and quantity of local news?

**YES**

- But recognize that the laundry list of local needs is very long (if not infinite), so failure to cover some should not be taken as evidence of media failure
- Plus, diversity concerns are local concerns

# Measure diversity and localism performance at market or station level?

## Definitely Market

- To measure at the station level presumes failure at the market level, which can't be determined until market performance is measured
- Plus, structural solutions easier to implement than behavioral solutions
- Costs and effectiveness of regulation and oversight would have to be assessed before taking the behavioral route

# Ongoing studies worthy of FCC attention?

Scale and Complexity of Media Markets as a Determinant of Local Government News Coverage\*

Bergen, Baldwin, Fico, Lacy, and Wildman  
Principal Investigators

\* *Preliminary findings reported in following slides are based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. SES - 0819519.*

# Goal and Scope of Study

- **Goal:** Examine local media coverage of local government and institutions and relationship of coverage to market structure and other factors influencing media markets like population, income, and number of political units
- **Scope**
  - TV, radio, cable, newspaper (daily and weekly), and online coverage of local government institutions for the central city and a suburban city for 120 randomly selected MSAs
  - Content analysis based on 9 sample days from early 2009
  - Identifies news items and editorials relating to 8 categories of local news coverage
  - 2 subsamples identify sources (7-day DMA subsample) and coverage of city council meetings (2-day CC subsample)



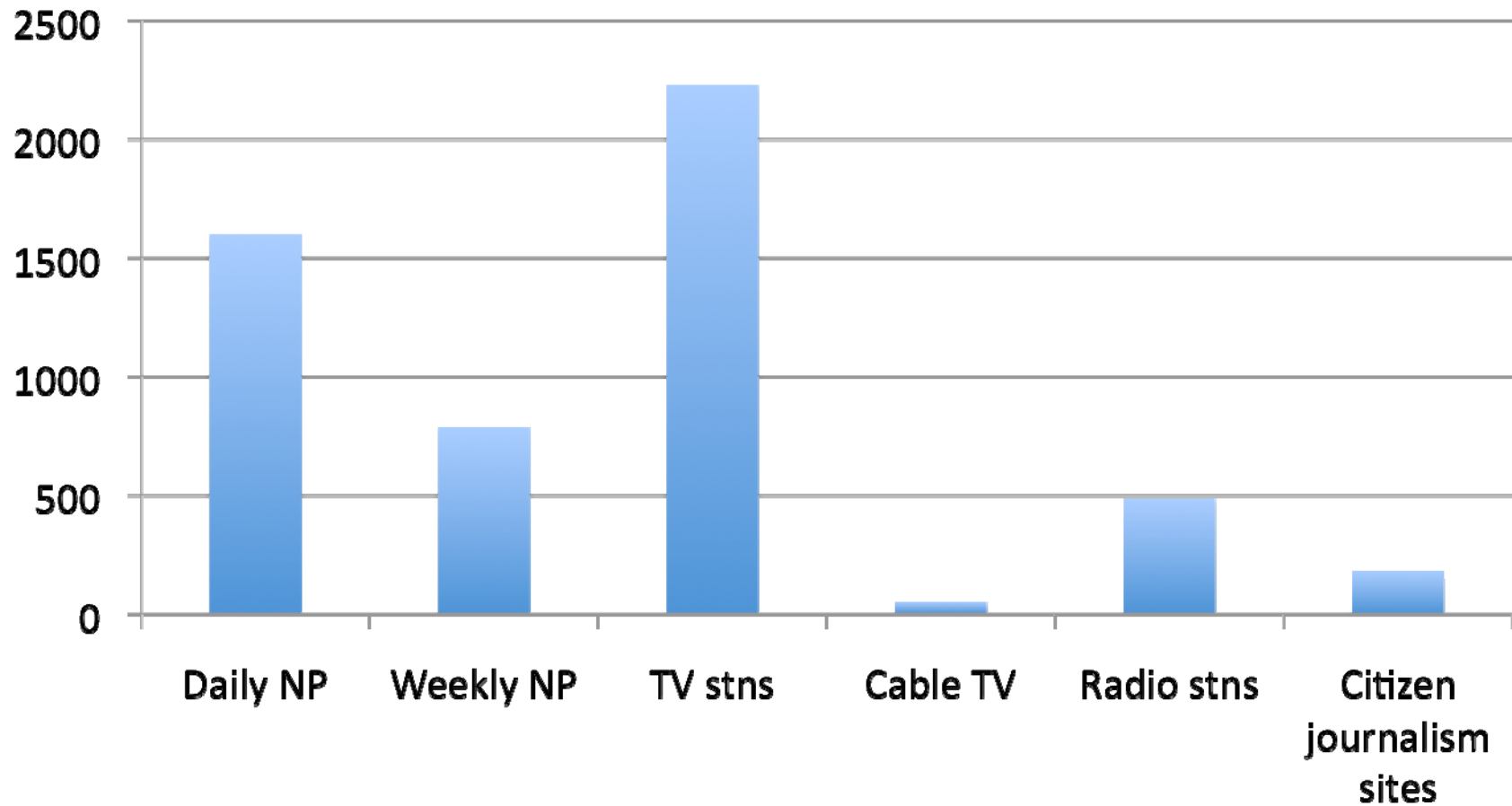
# Where we are

- City Council content sample collected, coded, and mostly checked
- DMA sample collected and coding may continue until early next year
- Market variables data set nearly ready
- Serious statistical analysis with City Council sample before end of year
- Can report some patterns apparent in the City Council sample

# Notable patterns in CC sample data

- Newspapers and TV stations dominate in local news coverage while cable TV and citizen journalism sites contribute very little
- Local government receives much greater coverage in central cities than in suburbs
  - 4775 news items for 118 central cities vs 549 items for 68 suburbs (89.7% vs 10.3%)
- Broadcast media and newspapers emphasize different types of local news.
- In markets with lots of stations, most broadcast outlets don't offer news
  - E.g., 5 of 15 TV stations in Chicago have news
- Offering news does not equate to offering local news

# Number of local news items by medium

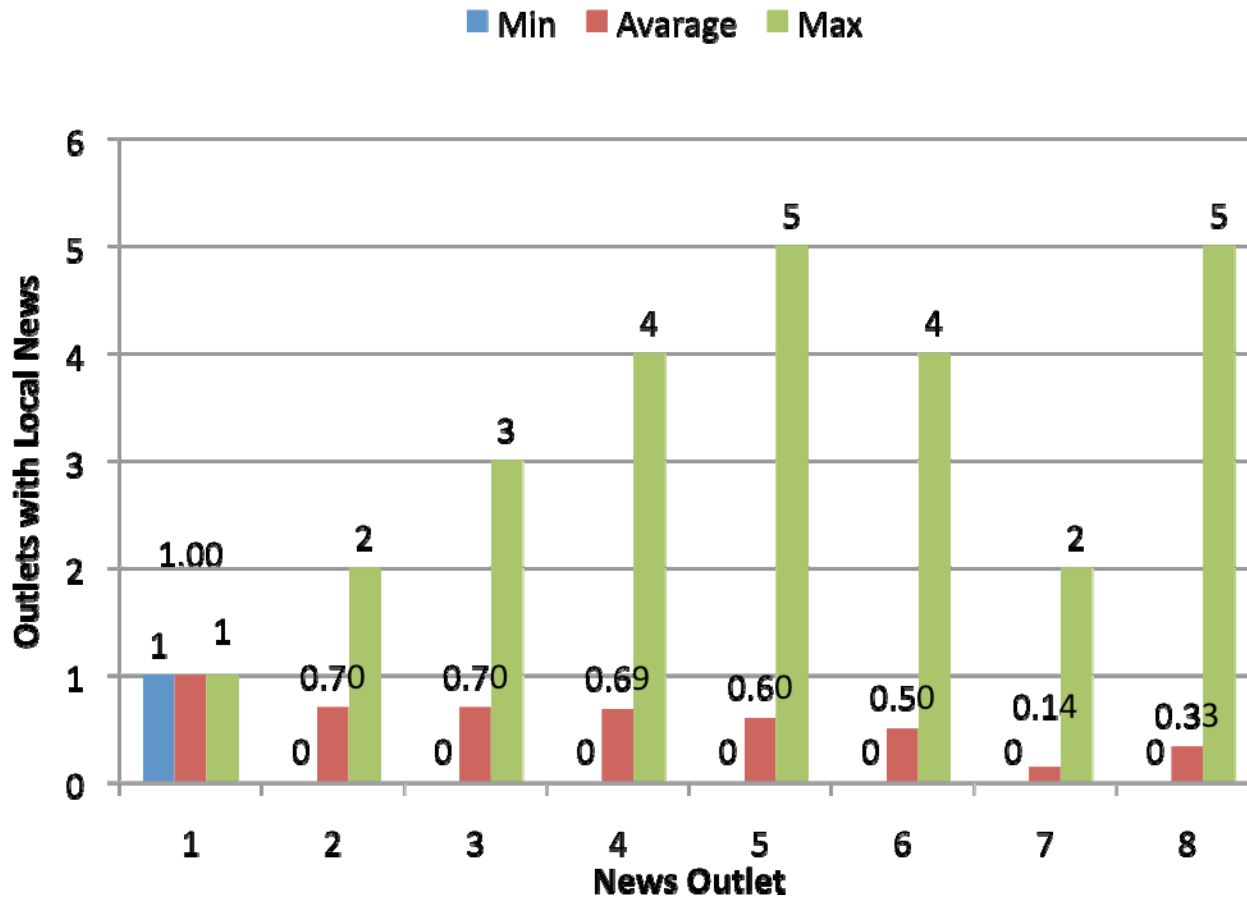


# % allocation of local news items by type

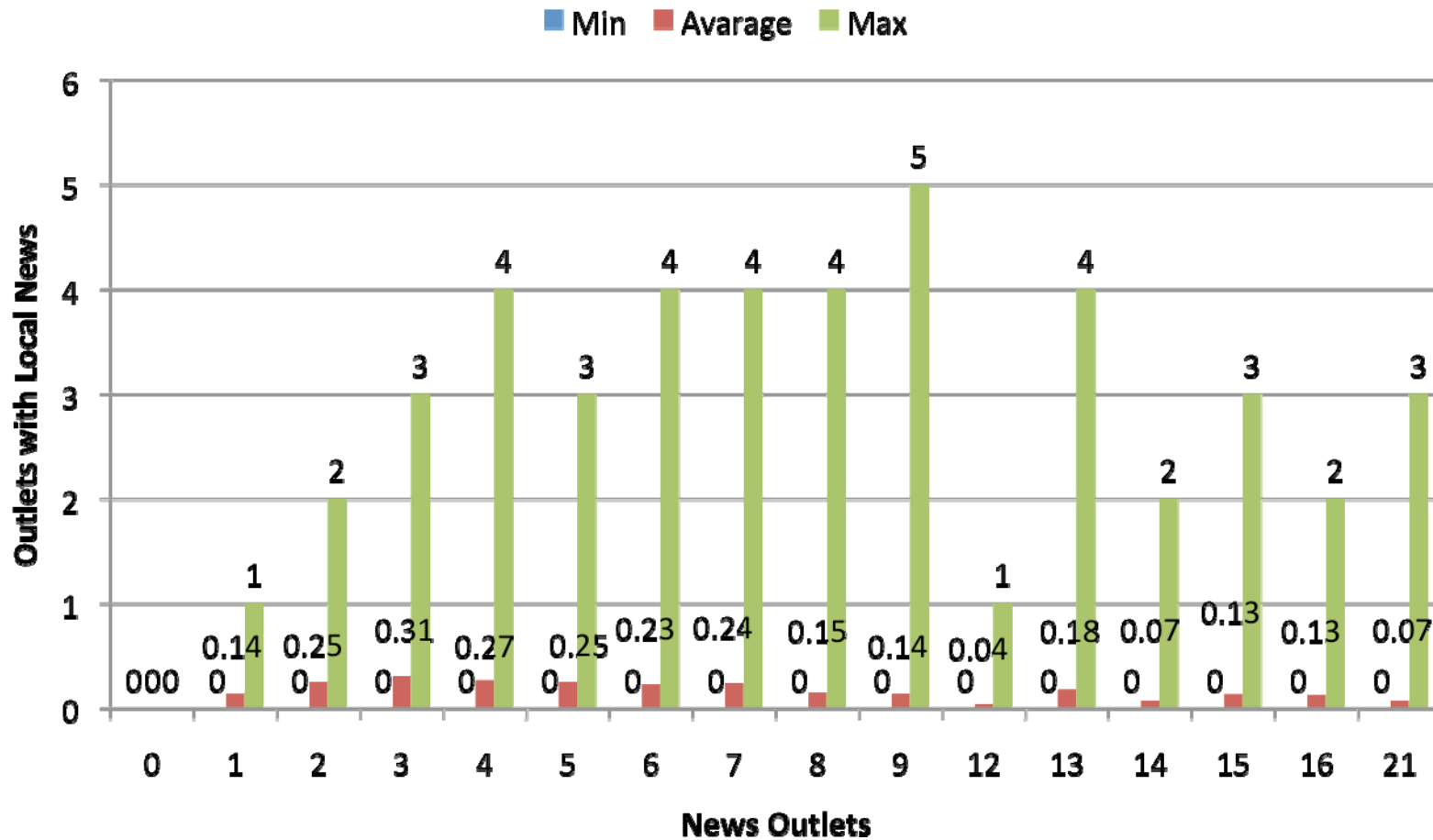
Type of news	Daily NP	Weekly NP	TV Stns	News-Talk Radio Stns	Other Radio Stations
City gov't	24.0	20.6	16.4	19.4	19.4
County gov't	2.8	2.5	3.9	5.4	5.4
Reg. gov't	0.8	0.1	0.3	1.0	0.5
Education	7.8	10.7	4.5	5.4	4.3
Crime/Courts	23.2	8.2	31.1	28.1	26.3
Accidents/Disasters	5.6	1.0	11.6	9.7	11.8
Human/Community interest	16.3	41.3	12.7	14.0	11.3
Business/Economy	17.0	14.4	16.7	15.7	17.2
All else	2.6	1.1	2.7	1.3	3.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100

# News Outlets vs Outlets with Local News

## TV Stations

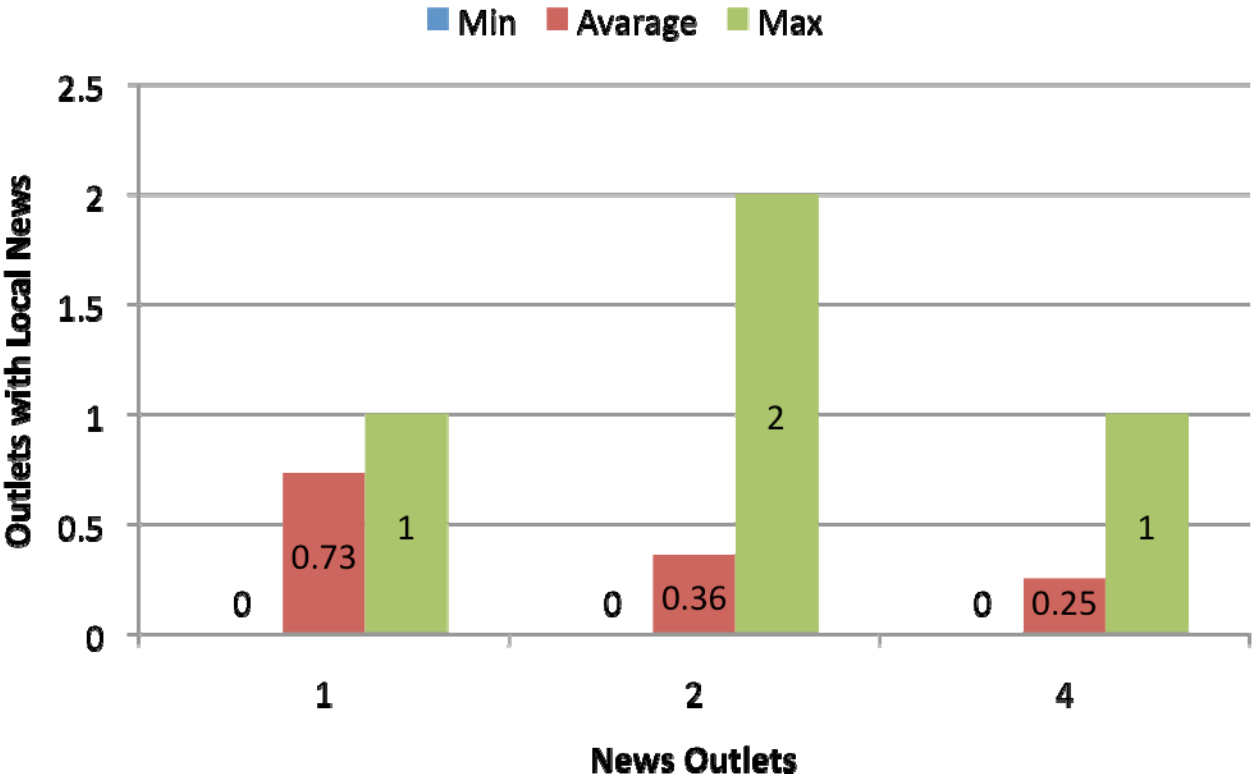


# News Outlets vs Outlets with Local News Radio



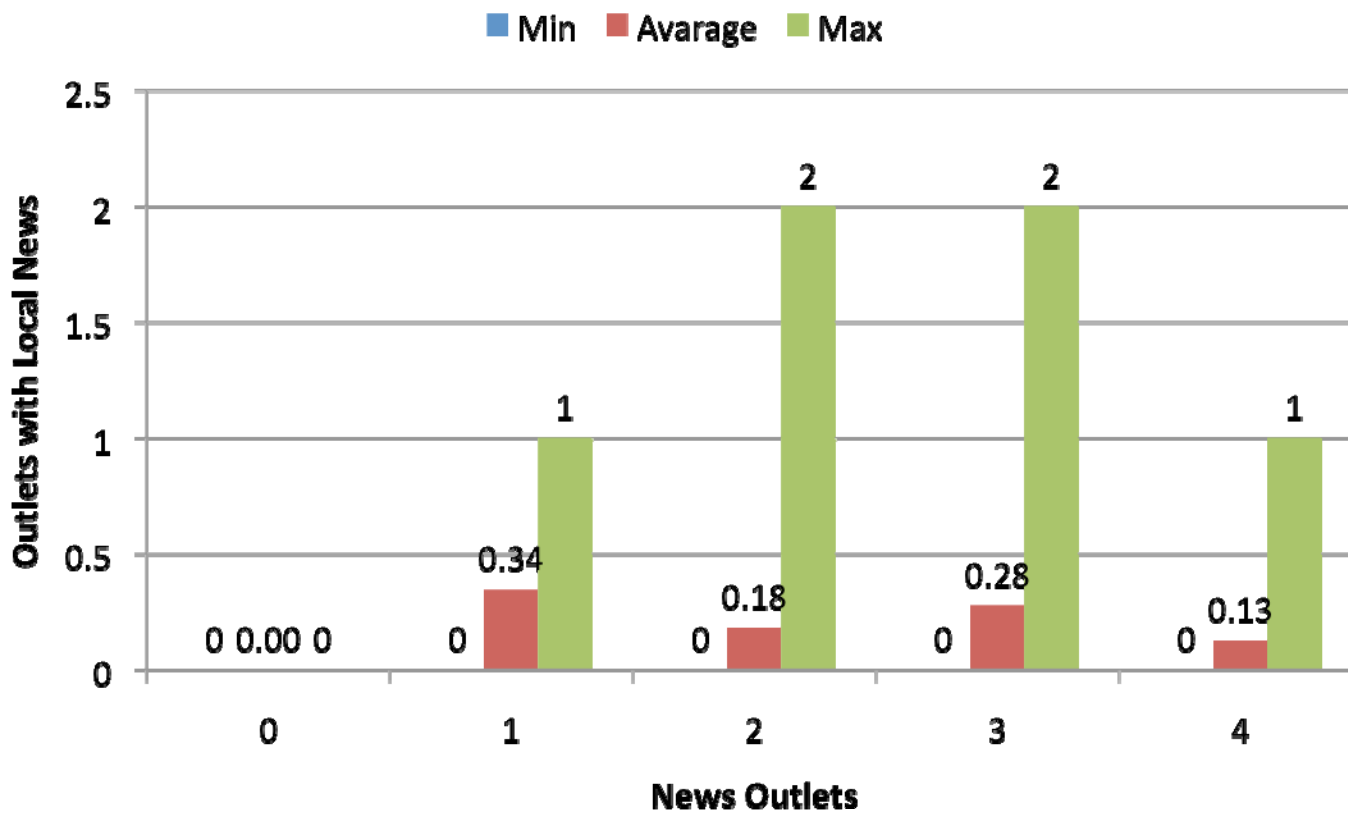
# News Outlets vs Outlets with Local News

## Daily Newspapers



# News Outlets vs Outlets with Local News

## Weekly Newspapers





# News Outlets vs Outlets with Local News

## Citizen web news and blog sites

