

# MULTICULTURAL ADVERTISING AND UPDATED BRANDING FOR WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS

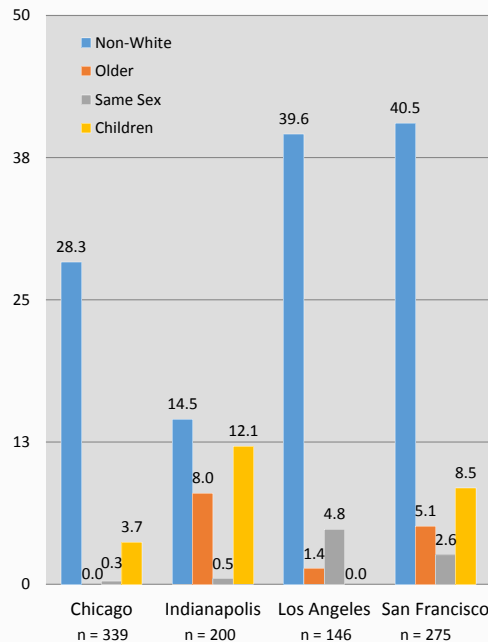
## RESEARCH QUESTION

- Do contemporary wedding photographers adhere to portrayals of the traditional image of couples when posting photographs to their websites, or is there a shift toward diversity in featured couples?

## BACKGROUND

- Changes to the broader cultural, political, legal, and market contexts can affect how consumers interpret a brand's meaning (Allen et al., 2008).
- Growing diversity in demographics has encouraged multicultural advertising targeting minorities, while trying not to alienate those in the majority population (Johnson & Grier, 2011).
- Why photography?: Photography is an extremely visual communication style, so it is easy to see how marketing occurs (Strano, 2006).
- Why wedding photos?: People choose professionals rather than smartphones for important milestones, like weddings (Cherlin, 2010; Gray, 2012).
- Traditional image of a couple in a wedding photo: one man and one woman, young, white, no children.
- U.S. demographics as well as marriage and family patterns are changing: increases in non-whites, the average age at first marriage, remarriage, blended/step-families, and same-sex marriages (Cherlin, 2010).

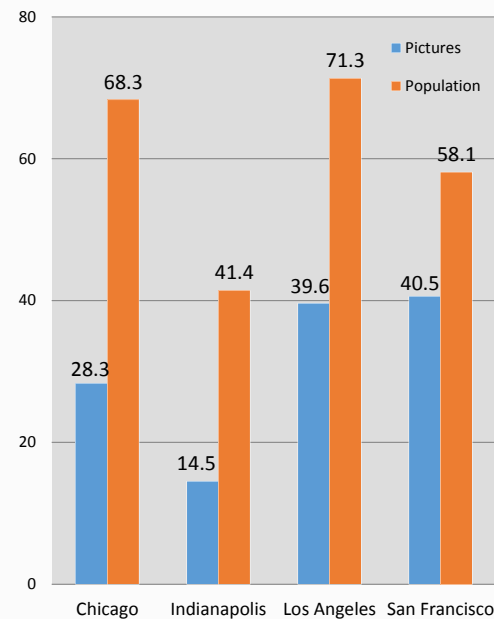
FIGURE 1. % REPRESENTATION OF NON-TRADITIONAL GROUPS IN WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHS FOR FOUR CITIES



## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- Overall, photographers are still adhering to the traditional image of couples.
- Lowest non-traditional representation: older couples (i.e., in their mid-30s or older).
- Same-sex couple representation was low in Indianapolis, but the lowest was in Chicago.
- Non-traditional age and family structure representation was highest in Indianapolis.

FIGURE 2. % NON-WHITE REPRESENTATION IN WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHS VS. % NON-WHITE POPULATION IN FOUR CITIES



## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- Highest non-traditional representation: non-white couples.
- Race-ethnicity generally represent demographics in each region (Chicago is exception with lower representation).

Note: % non-whites (all except for the "white alone, non-Hispanic" category) in the population for each city was found in the U.S. Census Bureau website, "Quick Facts."

## METHOD

- Content analysis of photos from photographers' WeddingWire profiles, personal photography websites, and professional Facebook pages (N = 960).
- Sample:
  - Four photographers from the two largest cities in the Midwest.
  - Four photographers from the two largest cities in the West Coast.
  - These photographers were selected from those who appeared on WeddingWire.com by using the highest and lowest average ratings received among those with a minimum of 20 ratings.
- % representations of four types of "non-traditional" groups were examined: non-whites, older than in their early 30s, same-sex couples, and couples with children.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Wedding photographers should look to the demographic data for their area to better represent possible clients.
- Couples' children—from delayed marriage or remarriage—and older couples are rarely shown in pictures. The changes in timing of marriage and family structure should be better represented to attract possible clients.
- This project is based on my Honors Project (HNRS 4980 & 4990). Faculty advisors: Dr. Kei Nomaguchi (Sociology) and Dr. Doug Ewing (Marketing).