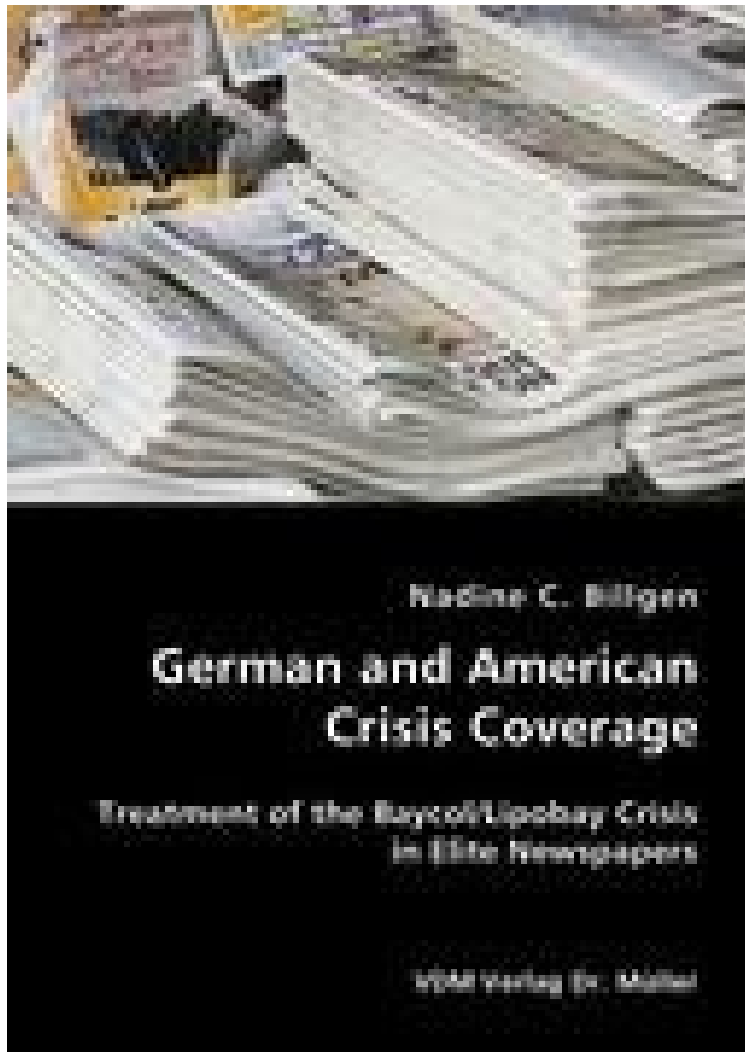


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Nadine C. Billgen

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In 2001, the German pharmaceutical company Bayer withdrew an anticholesterol drug - Baycol/Lipobay - because the

product was suspected to be connected to several deaths. The alleged side-effects of the drug caused a big PR crisis for Bayer that forced the company to respond in order to protect its image. The research of framing in public relations crises is a developing area. While previous studies analyzed how organizations frame crisis events, little research has been done on media framing of crises. This study employs quantitative content analysis to analyze coverage of the Bayer crisis in two major newspapers each from Germany and the United States. Billgen analyzes the frames used by journalists and company officials, but also focuses on the sources journalists cited when covering the crisis. Her results indicate that Bayer's crisis communication was indeed quite successful. It also poses the question whether the newspapers under investigation always adhered to ideal journalistic practices. Her research is particularly interesting for media specialists and journalists, as well as for PR practitioners or anyone involved in strategic communications.

About the Author
Magister program in North American studies, media studies and political science at Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, Germany. Graduate direct exchange participant and Fulbright scholar at the University of Kansas, United States. Master of Science in Journalism and Mass Communications, University of Kansas.