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### **A Crippling Sin: An Exploration of “Greed” in American News Magazine Discourse**

In the troughs of the boom-and-bust economic cycles, journalists have flocked to topics such as malpractice and fraud attracting readers to gawk at the corporate spectacle. Ironically, revealing the dark underbelly of capitalism has become the subject of blockbuster films, television shows and chart-topping novels. During periods of economic instability, greed has been a recurring theme developed by the news media blaming a few “bad apples”—namely, Wall Street investors and corporate criminals—for tainting the sacred space of free market competition.

Amidst the current global recession, my interest is to explore the manner in which “greed” rears its ugly head into mainstream American news, again. In this research paper, I will map the contextual transformation of “greed” discourse over the past three decades in mainstream news magazines since the rise of neoliberalism. Upon analyzing the usage of the term by decade, I argue that greed is no longer reserved for a contained group of financial scoundrels but the entire capitalist system. The resulting cynicism may debilitate public trust in a financial system supposed to protect its security and cripple the prospect for potential social change.