

## More of the Same Old Story? Women, War, and News in *Time* Magazine

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*From a feminist standpoint, this study provides an updated analysis to the age-old subject of women and war reporting. A content analysis of 406 stories from Time magazine explores the intersection of U.S. war reporting and gender in the coverage of the U.S. war in Iraq. Relying on feminist theories, this research dissected the normative method of war coverage to emphasize the reality of women's silence. The results demonstrated that women's perspectives—from official sources to private civilians' voices—are still scarce in war reporting. Women also accounted for only a fifth of the bylines and were mostly quoted as private individuals—representing less than a tenth of the subjects cited. The data showed that women, when it comes to war, are still symbolically annihilated through omission. Feminist ethics must be integrated into journalists' work to rectify the masculine perspectives and viewpoints found in war coverage.*

**Keywords** feminist theory, gender, Iraq war, news, news routines, war coverage

Men's perspectives have long dominated war coverage, which has perpetuated and sanctioned war violence and injustice (Ferris, 2004). This silencing of women's perceptions of war has serious consequences. One of the most detrimental outcomes of women's invisibility in war is that females are left out of international aid provided for rebuilding post-war livelihoods (Ferris, 2004). Without the aid usually guaranteed to men, more women are pushed into situations of further oppression resulting in an escalated number of female fatalities (Ferris, 2004). Another consequence of this silencing is the reinforcement of women as less than equal to men in public affairs.

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Currently one out of every seven U.S. soldiers in Iraq is female (Wertheimer, 2005), marking this as the highest number of females in the U.S. military during any war. Similarly, there has been an unprecedented increase in the number of female war correspondents in recent years (Tumber & Webster, 2006). Our research questions whether the increase of women participating in and covering war is altering the dominant masculine perspective of war coverage.

Drawing from previous research on women, journalism, and war coverage, this research investigates the convergence of women and war in one of the most widely read news magazines in the United States during one of the most recent U.S. wars—Operation Iraqi Freedom. News media have historically discussed and framed war as male territory (Barker-Plummer & Boaz, 2005; Del Zotto, 2002; Lahav, 2010; “Women and War Reporting,” n.d.), and U.S. journalists’ reliance on official sources feeds this framing, typically offering news from a White and male perspective (Ross, 2007). In 2002, media watchdog Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) conducted a study of the three major network news organizations and found that “92 percent of all U.S. sources interviewed were white and 85 percent were male” (Howard, 2002). Newsroom values, including definitions of news, and norms, like the fact that men are more likely to cover hard news, contribute to this viewpoint (Lehman-Wilzig & Seletzky, 2010). Further, women are most likely to be seen in news as private individuals, as supportive wives and mothers, or as victims—or not seen at all (Byerly & Ross, 2006; Carter, Branston, & Allan, 1998; Meyers, 1999; World Association for Christian Communication [WACC], 2000).

Through a quantitative examination, this study examines gender in terms of the production and reporting of news. By applying a quantitative analysis our research provides a picture of the current landscape of women in a stereotypically male arena. Indeed, a string of feminist scholars have relied on quantitative approaches to gain a deeper understanding of feminist concerns. Examples of such research, providing a valuable and clear snapshot of important topics, are Scott’s (2010) research on gendered resource allocation in productive and reproductive activities; Hester and colleagues’ (2010) data on domestic violence in same sex relationships; Crocker’s (2010) research on women abuse, and Williams’s (2010) analysis that examined the lack of engagement with feminist theory and demographic research. These types of numerical analysis are important because they provide a benchmark from which to measure change and women’s progress toward equality.

Our study in particular builds upon this tradition, offering knowledge, from a gender standpoint, about who constructs news, who is allowed to speak, and in what capacity. Drawing from a feminist theoretical framework, we looked at *Time* magazine from 2003 to 2007 and analyzed 406 stories and columns. This research not only contributes to perceptions of women, journalism and mass media, it adds broadly to our understanding of women’s voices within the public sphere and how women construct and are used to construct knowledge.

## **Feminist Theories**

Feminist theories offer a framework for understanding women’s role in the production of journalism. Feminist media scholars have drawn attention to the problematic history of journalism and gender. Often segregated to the margins of the mainstream media, women have struggled to be treated equally in the newsroom (Beasley & Gibbons, 2003; Harp, 2007). News content has either made women

invisible in the public sphere—one aspect of what Tuchman (1978) termed “symbolic annihilation”—or presented them in stereotypical roles as wives, mothers, or victims. The omission, trivialization, and condemnation of women continue to occur in news coverage (Lundell & Ekstroumlm, 2008). For example, female world leaders are treated differently from male politicians, with much more focus on their outward appearance (Benedict, 1992; Norris, 1997; Ross, 2002), while women in sports receive less news coverage than their male counterparts (Koivula, 1999).

Feminist theorizing focuses on the ways gender and power organize the material and symbolic worlds (van Zoonen, 1994). Media scholars contend, from within a feminist theoretical framework, that the media provides ideological support for hegemonic power structures (Meyers, 1997; Vavrus, 2007). Rather than simply identify these problems, however, feminism is committed to actions that are transformative and interventionist when it comes to discussing media’s practices and content (Steiner, 2009). Fraser (1986) has indicated how dominant groups by gender, race, and class control the ways society interprets and communicates. The hegemonic group drives the use of official vocabularies, rhetorical devices, idioms for communicating one’s needs, and the paradigms of argumentation accepted as authoritative (Fraser, 1986). In the case of war coverage in the United States, this has meant a White, masculine perspective.

## War Coverage

Given that men dominate the public sphere regarding war, women have long been absent from debates on war (Byerly, 2005). This is dangerous because although women may not dominate the front lines in war, they are still very much affected and a part of war in different capacities. The media industry not only tends to ignore women’s involvement in matters of peace and war but also treats females inside the industry differently. It was almost 40 years ago that women totaled a mere 6% of foreign correspondents (Andersson, 2003), and in 2003 The Brookings Institution estimated that still only approximately one-third of foreign correspondents were women (Hess, 2003). Has women’s presence, however, been shown to influence the overall tone and topics of war coverage in recent years? Have more stories of displacement and crisis been brought to the forefront by female reporters, who might pay more attention than their male counterparts to the consequences and destruction of civilians’ homes—dwellings of those who have had little or no power in influencing the decision to go to war?

Some argue that even with the increase in numbers of female war correspondents, reporting is still considered one of the last bastions of male dominance in journalism (Barker-Plummer & Boaz, 2005; Del Zotto, 2002; “Women and War Reporting,” n.d.). Critics have argued that male reporters are the reason war coverage in most countries is still a very macho territory (“Women and War Reporting,” n.d.) and in line with media narratives that connect masculinity to war and violence (Lahav, 2010; Lemish, 2005). A study of U.S. media investigating the context in the buildup to the war in Iraq found that female news professionals were less likely than males to appear in national coverage about the invasion (Armstrong, Wood, & Nelson, 2006). Accordingly, we posit the following:

- H1: Despite increasing numbers of U.S. female reporters of the Iraq war, male reporters will still dominate war coverage in *Time* magazine.

With war reporting still a male-dominated territory, we also sought to investigate how female reporters' stories produced in a dominant male space differ from their male counterparts, which leads us to the following research question:

RQ1: How do stories in *Time* magazine written by female reporters about the Iraq war differ from those written by males?

One of the most important aspects when considering coverage of any news topic is to focus on the choice of sources reporters rely on to tell their story. With the increase in female war reporters, it is important to study the change (if any) that female reporters have spurred in the selection of sources. Previous research has shown that female sources were omitted from sharing their experiences in war coverage. In a study on the conflict in Kosovo in 1999, women were left out of sharing their perspectives and experiences of the war beyond the stereotypical images of them as passive victims or refugees (Del Zotto, 2002). Del Zotto found a significant level of women's experiences and activism in the conflict being "blackened out." Del Zotto argued that reasons for this "blackout" can be traced back to the patriarchal tradition of conventional war reporting in addition to the male corporate control of mainstream media (2002).

This erasure of women's war experience censors many crucial issues that would otherwise contribute to a better public understanding of war (Del Zotto, 2002). Women's experiences in war often differ significantly from those of men. Unlike men, women's bodies are utilized as weapons in war through violence such as rape and human shields. Many women also serve behind the scenes and in supportive roles: sustaining families while husbands and children are fighting wars, supporting war efforts, and taking part in resistance movements (Del Zotto, 2002). They are "survivors with active strategies of survival" serving as community leaders and peacemakers during times of war (Thompson, Toro, & Gómez, 2007, p. 436). Women are heavily involved behind the scenes by providing care for families and the war effort. They also challenge wars through various organizations and actions (Del Zotto, 2002).

These behind-the-scenes activities that women are so often involved in are not covered well or, in many cases, are completely invisible in the mainstream news. At times sensationalized in insensitive ways to attract sympathetic audiences, women are used as story matter to further the patriarchal construction of war reporting (see, for instance, Andersen, 2005; Lemish, 2005). The increasing numbers of women in the military and in newsrooms, however, calls for an investigation into whether female sources for the war in Iraq are portrayed in *Time* magazine more diversely compared to findings in previous research, which has consistently supported the portrayal of women in war coverage as passive victims. This leads to our second research question.

RQ2: What roles do male and female sources hold in *Time* magazine stories about the Iraq war?

### **Newsroom Routines, Values, and Norms**

Although increasing the number of women in male-dominated newsrooms is one way to promote gender diversity, it is not *the* solution for genuine gender equality if newsroom values remain the same. A newsroom norm includes how gender has

played a central role in news media's coverage and promotion of war (Cloud, 1994; Enloe, 1994, 2000a, 2000b). Stereotypically gendered media reports are a common trait in war coverage, and differences in framing male and female sources in war coverage are apparent (Fröhlich, 2010). An observation of war coverage by news portrays men in accordance with traditional gender images. Men are depicted as active participants or advocates of the war. On the other hand, women are portrayed as subjects of the war—ones who disapprove and who suffer as a result of the war—rather than agents (Fowler, 2007).

Too often, an emphasis on objectivity as a normative journalistic value and routines that emphasize telling “both sides” of a story result in anemic and dichotomous journalistic stories. War reporting regularly emphasizes two perspectives: official sources who are predominantly male and victims who are predominately female—or “us versus them.” Alternative perspectives from peace activists are too often absent, especially if their point of view questions the dominant patriarchal perspective that military force and violence are the best way to strengthen national security and resolve conflict (Del Zotto, 2002). Ideological pressures compel news media to present stories on war from the government's perspective as alternate views questioning or criticizing the war are attacked as “unpatriotic” (Del Zotto, 2002).

Mainstream news media's almost exclusive focus on the discourses of official sources and treatment of all nonofficial sources as casualties completely ignores a crucial aspect of war in which the conflict is actually a very intimate affair. It is in the uncovering of the intimacy of war that the root causes of conflict are often pinpointed and where women are seen as central players to the conflict rather than shown in the peripheral roles to which news media too often relegate them (Fröhlich, 2002). Because war coverage is so gender stereotypical, the experiences of women during war are reduced to an emotionalizing function of women who are used as actors to give war coverage an “affective impulse” (Fröhlich, 2010; see also Andersen, 2005; Enloe, 1994). Recent research has shown this gendered perspective contributes to the marginalization of women in war reporting (Fröhlich, 2002).

Even though female reporters from U.S. media participated in record numbers in the war in Iraq, this is still an extremely male-dominated territory with the increase in numbers insufficient to make a real change. Because past research has indicated the dominance of men in war reporting, we posit that even though the war in Iraq has been the most encouraging for female reporters in terms of an increased presence, the dominant structure of how war is reported is still practiced. In other words, adding female reporters will not significantly change how war is reported.

Thus, we pose these additional hypotheses:

- H2: Regardless of the presence of female reporters, there will still be an overwhelming use of male and official sources in *Time* stories.
- H3: A majority of female sources in *Time* stories will still remain in the group that possesses little agency in how the war is dictated—such as victims and family members of the military.

## Method

To conduct the analysis, the authors examined five years of *Time* coverage on the war in Iraq, using the March 2003 invasion as the starting point. The goal was to examine how media texts intersected with gender in the production of war news and the discourses and depictions of the conflict. We focused primarily on gender

because we are interested in voices and representations of males and females in war coverage and thus get a more nuanced understanding of current perspectives and truths on women's experiences (see, for instance, Ardizzoni, 1998; Dow & Condit, 2005; Gallagher, 2003), in particular in situations of conflict. Building on a broad range of research investigating women in the news, we used a quantitative approach to fill a void in current research regarding the presence and visibility of women in the news.

The most widely read national news publication in the United States (Audit Bureau of Circulations, 2010), *Time* magazine has the advantage of a weekly news cycle that allows for more elaboration, analysis, and in-depth reporting. *Time* reporters have more time to develop their articles and, at least in theory, more possibilities to select from a wider and more diverse pool of sources. Working for a news magazine, these journalists can craft and improve their pieces for longer periods than their colleagues from news organizations with tighter deadlines. Further, weekly news publications can serve as a news digest, "compressing, recapitulating, elaborating upon, and sometimes even critiquing" the work of other media (Griffin, 2004). Also important for the purposes of this study, *Time* is a major news organization with both the journalists and financial means required to provide strong coverage of the Iraq war, including having the presence of several correspondents and bureaus in Iraq and neighboring countries.

We conducted a search at Time.com for all the stories in the printed edition of the magazine between 2003 and 2007 that mentioned "Iraq" and included any of the following keywords: *war*, *invasion*, or *occupation*. The search excluded obituaries, letters to the editor, and the Question and Answer feature in every issue. These types of content fell outside of our focus on news coverage, defined as the production and reporting of news.

We used quantitative data from a content analysis as generalizable evidence and thus three coders, including two of the authors, read all the stories. In addition to several identifying variables (such as date, issue, and page), the coding scheme also called for coding of up to three authors per story and their genders, as well as the first five human sources cited in the stories. To improve the accuracy in identifying the authors' genders, the coders did a Google search of the authors to confirm whether they were male or female. Regarding the sources and following examples from the literature (e.g., Fröhlich, 2010; Harp, Loke, & Bachmann, 2010), the coders also had to identify whether the sources cited were primary (directly interviewed by the reporter) or secondary (secondhand information), as well as their gender, citizenship (American, Iraqi, or other) and type (government official, military, civilian or soldier family member, scholar or expert, militia member or insurgent source, and other). Considering both the influence of news media in shaping public understandings of political and social issues—including conflicts—and given the shift in public opinion over the first years of war in Iraq (see Fahmy & Johnson, 2005; Fried, 2005; Harp et al., 2010), the coding scheme also called for coding of the overall tone of the story (positive, neutral, or negative), the story tone regarding the war (i.e., whether the story reflected a positive, neutral, or negative attitude toward the invasion and the war in Iraq, for instance, legitimizing the invasion), and the story tone regarding the troops (positive, neutral, or negative attitude toward the military, as in portraying soldiers as violent and unaccountable for their actions), as well as the pro- or antiwar stance of the sources cited. Thus, the stories were coded as negative if they focused on problems in Iraq, crises in securing Baghdad, or interest conflicts in establishing a new



Iraqi government (instead of, for example, collaborative efforts to rebuild the nation), or consisted mostly of criticism about the invasion, the war efforts, or the role and performance of U.S. troops.

Based on a random sample of 15% of the stories, intercoder reliability was measured using Cohen's *kappa* and ranged from .89 to .99. Early preliminary tests led us to amend some conflicting instructions and adjust some of the categories before continuing with further coding. Descriptives and cross-tabulations helped analyze the results and thus answer the research questions and test the hypotheses.

## Findings

Of the 406 stories, 95% listed at least one author. Of those, a woman penned 81 stories as either the first or a solo author. In addition, the stories accounted for 1,591 human sources. These were mostly primary sources (70%), American (69%), and either government officials or military (37.3% and 25%, respectively). On average, 29% of the stories had at least one female source.

### *Authorship: Writing the War*

Female reporters were either the first or solo author in 20% of the *Time* stories about the war in Iraq. In other words, just like H1 predicted, men wrote an overwhelming majority of the stories (295 out of 406). Further, they were also the ones who reported most from places where troops engaged in combat, authoring 64 of the 70 stories filed from cities like Baghdad, Fallujah, or Mosul (91.4%). Female reporters were more likely to file their articles from cities in the United States, most notably Washington, DC. This geographic difference could explain why male reporters cited insurgents as sources in greater numbers than did female reporters.

Overall, female reporters' stories tended to be more negative than those written by males, although both male and females wrote more negative than positive stories (see Table 1). Thus, 68% of the stories by female reporters were negative, in contrast to 65% of the stories written by male reporters. Female reporters were mostly critical of war efforts in general (63%) but more likely than males to have an antitroop tone.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, female reporters had, in general terms, more diverse sources than their male colleagues. As Figure 1 shows, in comparison with stories written by males, female reporters included fewer official and military sources, and a greater

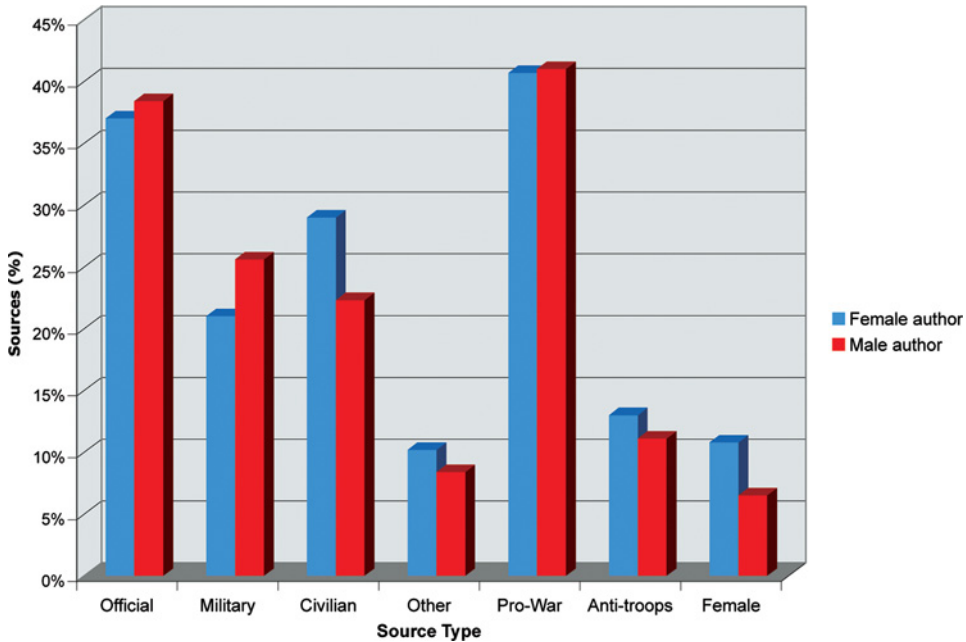
**Table 1.** Story tone by author gender in *Time* coverage of the Iraq war

Story tone	Male reporter			Female reporter		
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Overall story tone <sup>a</sup>	19.3% (57)	14.6% (43)	65.4% (193)	21.0% (17)	11.1% (9)	67.9% (55)
War tone <sup>b</sup>	20.3% (60)	15.9% (47)	60.7% (179)	17.3% (14)	17.3% (14)	63.0% (51)
Troop tone <sup>c</sup>	43.4% (128)	40.3% (119)	8.8% (26)	44.4% (36)	38.3% (31)	14.8% (12)

<sup>a</sup>Cramer's  $V = .145$ ;  $p < .01$ .

<sup>b</sup>Cramer's  $V = .126$ ;  $p < .05$ .

<sup>c</sup>Cramer's  $V = .146$ ;  $p < .01$ .



**Figure 1.** Source categories by author gender in *Time* coverage of the Iraq war. (Color figure available online.)

number of civilians and other types of sources. Further, the stories written by women also included more female sources than those filed by male authors: women represented 6.5% of the sources cited by men, whereas for female reporters, the numbers increased to almost 11%. Female reporters also included more sources with an anti-troop tone—a rather unpopular position in all the years since the 2003 invasion. Still, male reporters were the ones including more sources with another unpopular stance—support for the invasion and war.

### *Sources: Speaking in the News*

Women were 121 of the 1,591 human sources cited (7.6%). Another 62.1% were identified as men. We were unable to identify the gender of the rest of the sources (30.3%). In any case, the numbers suggest a great marginalization of women as sources in the war in Iraq, at least as *Time* magazine reporters focused heavily on men's experiences and accounts and relegated women's experiences to the sidelines. More so, women (not all of them different individuals) had a diminished visibility. None of the stories included five female sources, whereas 33 stories (8.1%) had only males as the first five sources cited (see Table 2).

Interestingly, a breakdown by year shows that female sources steadily increased over the time frame analyzed. In 2003, at the beginning of the war, women were almost 5% of the sources cited; by 2007, their presence had risen to 11.2%. The presence of women in the bylines, however, was remarkably more irregular, with a peak in 2004 (31.5%). One possible explanation is that the changes in policy and the increasing violence in Iraq in 2004 led to more Washington-based stories, which were more often written by females.



**Table 2.** Same-gender sources in *Time* coverage of the Iraq war

Type of story	Male source	Female source
Stories with 1 male or 1 female source	16.0% (65)	19.5% (79)
Stories with 2 same-gender sources	23.4% (95)	3.0% (12)
Stories with 3 same-gender sources	23.6% (96)	1.2% (5)
Stories with 4 same-gender sources	17.2% (70)	0.2% (1)
Stories with 5 same-gender sources	8.1% (33)	0.0% (0)

$$\chi^2 = 145.184; df = 4; p < .001.$$

RQ2 asked about the role played by male and female sources in the text. While the females cited had different nationalities and differing opinions toward the war, a breakdown by type shows that most of these women fell into the category of citizens without an affiliation (see Table 3). Only 12.5% of the female sources were members of the military, while more than half of them were either civilians or soldiers' family members—usually mentioned because of their relation to men, such as mothers, wives, and girlfriends of soldiers. The prominence of one single female in the Bush administration—then Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice—may explain why almost one-fifth of the women sources were identified as government officials. In any case, as predicted by H2, most of the sources were male.

The female sources were overwhelmingly American (76%); of all the Iraqi sources, only 7% were women. In other words, in five years of coverage, there were only 26 female Iraqi sources cited. Further, this breakdown by type also shows women's lesser position in terms of agency and newsworthiness, supporting H3, which predicted that most female sources would possess little agency in how the war is dictated. For example, in a 2007 article titled "Victims of an Outsourced War," Katy Helvenston was interviewed about losing her son in Iraq. "She [Helvenston] talks to others who have survived their kids. She wonders whether she could have done more to keep him out of harm's way. She breaks down in tears at random intervals" (Bennett, 2007). Such a portrayal exemplifies how women's experiences are often diminished to affective roles within a gendered coverage.

In another example of how women sources are often civilians, an unnamed woman was interviewed about her living situation in the green zone since she lost her job: "One woman, who used to do laundry for a British security firm and now lives in an abandoned market stall with her three children, has received

**Table 3.** Source type by gender in *Time* coverage of the Iraq war

Source type	Male source	Female source
Government official	35.4% (349)	17.4% (21)
Military	30.0% (296)	12.5% (15)
Civilian or soldier family member	21.9% (216)	53.7% (65)
Expert or scholar	2.9% (29)	3.3% (4)
Insurgent	2.5% (25)	2.5% (3)
Other	7.3% (72)	10.7% (13)

$$\chi^2 = 67.142; df = 5; p < .001.$$

messages on her cell phone telling her ‘Your blood will wash all over your body.’ She’s afraid to go out of the Green Zone because of the threats, and since she lost her job and handed in her ID badge, she wouldn’t be able to get back in without an escort” (“Inside the Green Zone,” 2007, p. 2).

In a classic example of featuring females as victims, an Iraqi girl was interviewed about a recent explosion: “Eman Waleed, 9, lived in a house 150 yards from the site of the blast, which was strong enough to shatter all the windows in her home. ‘We heard a big noise that woke us all up,’ she recalls two months later” (McGirk, 2006, p. 2). These examples also stress women’s lack of agency and how their experiences are sensationalized in a way that ends up reinforcing patriarchal understandings of war and war reporting.

In general terms, the females cited in the *Time* magazine stories tended to be more neutral towards the war (40%), while males (42%) were more likely to favor the war efforts. Civilians, whether males or females, were mostly neutral toward the war. Additionally, while women were more likely than men to be a primary source—and thus quoted out of a direct interaction with the journalists—only four of the females cited were described as scholars or experts in all of the 406 stories analyzed. In other words, not even women who could speak authority on the subject had a say in the stories about the Iraq war.

## Discussion and Conclusions

Overall our study’s results highlight the still problematic relationship of journalism and gender. The findings demonstrate that women are still treated differently by and in one of the most-read news magazines in the United States when it comes to war reporting. Even in the 21st century, the exclusion of women’s experiences is the norm instead of the exception. Considering that news media contribute decisively to the construction of reality, and that mediated depictions affect cultural practices (Rakow & Wackwitz, 2004; Vavrus, 2002), this type of coverage and marginalization sends important messages about women’s place, women’s role, and women’s lives (Norris, 1997; Ross, 2002). Despite recent inroads in gender diversity in both the U.S. military and newsrooms, when it comes to war, women do not have a say. The omission of women’s presence in an area is crucial as warfare contributes to the message that women’s lives are insignificant and that they are merely passive instruments of war.

Feminist theory is important to consider in this analysis as it challenges traditional coverage of war. Relying on feminist theory to analyze the coverage of war allows the analysis to dissect and interrogate the normative method of voices represented in war coverage. In Operation Iraqi Freedom, 85% of troops serving in Iraq are men, and 100% of the top military officials are men (U.S. Department of Defense, 2010). Ostensibly, it is not surprising that a masculine perspective on the war dominates over other perspectives. Our results show that when it comes to newsmakers and sources in war coverage in the United States, women are a marginalized minority, forcibly absent—symbolically annihilated through omission—from the discussion on matters of war and peace. This is both as producers of news and as voices within news, as women were 20% of the reporters and not even 8% of the sources.<sup>2</sup> These numbers are inexcusable. Arguably, such an omission of women’s voices not only affects what stories get reported and how but also has an impact on public perceptions of the place of women in international events (see, for instance, Sutcliffe, Lee, & Soderlund, 2005).

Feminist scholars have long stressed the relationship between news and the interests of men (Holland, 1987; Rakow & Kranich, 1991). The constant reliance in news coverage on official voices—mostly men—serves only to reinforce our understanding of war from a traditional masculine perspective. With this research it is evident that journalists for *Time* magazine too often ignore the fact that war not only affects the troops fighting directly in the war but also changes the lives of men *and* women. Women certainly are left behind to tend to matters at home in the United States during war, but men are left behind too (fathers, brothers, sons). In other words, women also participate in war. Unfortunately, too often news coverage continues to present men as the makers of war and women as the victims. And even as victims, women are nearly invisible—not even 8% of overall sources. While women in the coverage are allowed a voice to speak about the consequences of the U.S.-led war on the streets of their cities, even that voice is barely heard.

Further, when women's voices are heard in *Time* magazine's war coverage they are structured in the stories to be from passive reactors rather than active participants (Holland, 1987). It is very telling that most of the female sources included in the *Time* stories were civilians. These private individuals are mostly relegated to the private sphere, disenfranchised from organizations or situations of power. For the most part, they do not make decisions but are indeed affected by them. It is true that wives are left behind to suddenly become single mothers, mothers grieve over the loss of their sons and daughters, and grandmothers are taking on the role of caring for children whose parents are serving in the war. But these are not the only ways women encounter war. Plenty of other women can speak about war, many of whom are not just victims of circumstances. Constantly portraying women as victims, as demonstrated by the examples provided in the findings, is problematic as it minimizes the important roles women are involved in during wartime and casts them as merely helpless subjects. Along with serving in the military, women have been integral to the war process by providing vital daily maintenance of war such as feeding the troops, serving as voices of resistance, and challenging war through various organizations (Leahy, 1997; Tickner, 1996). Women's perspectives on war, then, are as crucial as those of men.

Particularly disturbing in regard to women's voices in these stories is the ethnocentrism that occurred in the U.S. news magazine. It is difficult to comprehend that during five years of coverage and 1,591 human sources there were only 26 female Iraqi sources cited. The fact that most of the female sources found in this study were American further suggests the marginalization of another form of victims in U.S.-led wars on other nations' soil—those whose homes have become a battlefield. In line with past research (e.g., Klaus & Kassel, 2005; Stabile & Kumar, 2005), most of the time this analysis showed the inclusion of women by the media does not include equal reporting *about* women, let alone women's issues, rights, or opinions, which are rarely discussed. Evidence from this study stresses the importance of including women's insight, as women reporters and sources tended to exhibit more defiant and counter-hegemonic viewpoints. Indeed, most stories written by women had a negative tone about the war, and were more critical of the military's action than those stories penned by a male author.

The gender demography in the U.S. military is overwhelmingly male, particularly at the top ranks, which offers some explanation for why so many of the official and military voices cited in the analyzed stories were men. Journalists and editors, however, have a choice in how they contribute to the discourse of the entire war. Even though men mostly fight wars, the everyday realities and effects of the war

are hardly segregated to the male realm. Journalists need to rethink how they cover war and their reliance on official voices. When news media opt to consistently rely on official sources to cover the war, two immediate issues related to gender arise. One is that the male perspective will continue to dominate because official sources, for the foreseeable future, are invariably men; second, it inevitably silences and deemphasizes female voice and perspectives.

Interestingly, female journalists were more likely to include not only more women but also more diverse sources. While most of these female journalists writing for *Time* were not war correspondents and filed their stories from the United States, they managed to enrich the narrative with new voices expressing both support and opposition to the war. These findings contribute to a debate about whether women journalists matter in newsrooms. Some have argued that the sex of a journalist does not affect coverage because of the norms, values, and routines of the profession. This study counters that argument and lends strength to the importance of diversifying newsrooms. But simply hiring more women to cover wars is not the only necessary change.

The war in Iraq witnessed the largest number of female reporters, but the evidence here shows that in order to have a true change in how things are done in this masculine sphere of war reporting in U.S. media there needs to be a “transformative and interventionist” approach. As feminist ethics suggests, the simple act of adding more female reporters, as important as it is, is not enough. While there is often a visible change in sources and the way the story is reported from a female reporter, the dominant structure of war reporting is deeply embedded in journalism and is too powerful and long-standing to alter much.

All journalists (including men, women, and editors who make decisions and oversee the news) must become cognizant of if and how women are part of the story—all stories. What seems a fruitful solution would be to adopt feminist ethics in the newsroom. Grounded in feminist theory, feminist ethics acknowledges women’s historical experiences but also recognizes and wants to correct the problems stemming from power inequalities (Steiner, 2009). Feminist ethics applies to news in that it helps analyze and resolve problems that emerge in media content, research, and the workplace (Steiner, 2009). Feminist ethics challenges women’s subordination, recommends ways to resist oppressive practices, and subscribes to alternatives that promote emancipation (Steiner, 2009). Western feminist ethics is rooted in concerns about contingent inequalities and draws from a multitude of different approaches to contribute to human knowledge (Jaggar, 2000).

Further, feminist ethics spotlights issues related to knowledge production. For example, when conducting research the following questions become points of interest from a feminist ethics standpoint: who is allowed to speak, who is considered the voice of authority, and whose knowledge evolves to become an authoritative voice, whose concerns or responses are valued with constructing knowledge, who has accessibility to resources, and how are these authorizations of knowledge able to alter lives? (Rouse, 2004). Journalists should transfer these questions from the world of academic research to their own work and seek to rectify gender inequities. If journalists—both men and women—would adopt this ethical standpoint then news audiences would see a change in the construction of war coverage. In turn, how we as a society come to understand war is likely to change.

While not delivering results illustrating change, our study is important because it gauges the state of the intersection of news reporting, women, and war. This type of state-of-affairs research helps focus attention on how little news is changing in

relation to women's voices in war news. This is significant to note at a time when so much of the discourse about news focuses on the changes in the industry. Research like ours serves as an important reminder that, while much has changed, when it comes to gender (in)equity much is staying the same. In doing so, this research provides an update on the interconnection of gender, news media coverage, and violent conflict. This research also highlights the importance of applying feminist theoretical frameworks to the analysis of news.

Future analysis should consider if other news outlets are including more women's voices in their war coverage and, if so, how. It is important to determine whether *Time* magazine stands alone in its gender practices or if what is found here will be replicated in other mainstream news outlets. Of course, past research in conjunction with this new data does not offer much hope that these results are an anomaly. Similar examinations into alternative media and the online environment would also offer important information in the context of this study. Also very important within this line of research is that which looks more closely at the intersectionality of identities. While this study took some note of the nationality of sources, it has left much room for exploration. More research in the field of journalism studies should consider the intersections of multiple identities, including race, class, nationality, and religion. It is important to not only ask how women fit into and affect the world of journalism but how women of diverse races, religions, and backgrounds affect news work. While work such as this study that looks specifically at gender builds on an important body of research, intersectional identity research is just as crucial for understanding the diversity of women.

## Notes

1. For example, an article by Sally Donnelly was titled, "Did Marines Kill in Cold Blood?" and she then proceeded to discuss how U.S. marines had killed innocent civilians while hiding details of the actual incident in the official military report.
2. A study about the link between gender and international crisis reporting on television network news during the 1990s found that on average 31% of reporters and 11% of sources were women (Sutcliffe, Lee, & Soderlund, 2005). These findings indicate that improvements are yet to happen.

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