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Looking at the World Through Red, White and Blue Colored Glasses: Commercial Network News Programs’ Depiction of International Events

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Abstract

The following research study gathered transcripts from ABC, NBC and CBS evening news broadcast over the two weeks of November 14th and December 19th of 2005. Using a coding scheme, data regarding the topic, perspective of the foreign peoples, US involvement and masculinity were gathered and analyzed. The results confirmed the need for a greater span of international news with more separation from American interests. The author also makes suggestions as to how to change the nature of network news so that it can better include the world.
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Introduction

How many Vietnamese casualties would you estimate that there were during the Vietnam war? The average response on the part of Americans today is about 100,000. The official figure is about two million. The actual figure is probably three to four million. The people who conducted the study raised an appropriate question: What would we think about German political culture if, when you asked people today how many Jews died in the Holocaust, they estimated about 300,000? What would that tell us about German political culture? They leave the question unanswered, but you can pursue it. What does it tell us about our culture?

Noam Chomsky: Media Control: The spectacular achievements of propaganda (1997, p. 12)

“...every nation will at every moment strive to keep its armament in an efficient state as required by its fear...”

Salvador de Madriaga: Morning Without Noon (1974)

It is not challenging to find fear in the American media. One only has to turn on the television and watch a segment of national or international news. On a day such as Thanksgiving, the viewer is sure to encounter heartfelt tales of philanthropy and the occasional parade, though perhaps only peppered between tales of abduction, corruption, and international turmoil. The old news axiom, “If it bleeds, it leads,” suggests that the public’s desire for the negative far eclipses its craving for positive news. While this adage has aided editorial decisions in what constitutes news, what do we know about the public’s appetite for these tales? What does this approach to news coverage teach us about the world and our place in it?

In many ways, the new millennium presents an entirely new series of international issues that command the attention of the American public. In the post September 11th world it is critical to analyze the messages that major network news are conveying to the public regarding the world outside of this nation. There are several reasons for the need to attend to news broadcasts of international affairs. First, the U.S. does not offer much in-depth education
regarding foreign nations or cultures, with the majority of states requiring no more than one credit of world history or geography to graduate high school, while some such as Colorado, Iowa, Kansas and North Dakota have no specific stipulation and allow local districts to determine requirements (Education Commission of the States, 2002). With little background in international affairs being taught, students may not have an adequate frame of reference to disseminate this type of information. Even with constant national involvement in certain regions, young Americans lack the geographic and foreign affairs literacy to understand the nature of the world outside U.S. borders (National-Geographic-Roper Public Affairs, 2006). Since television news is such a convenient source, this medium becomes the lens to clarify and learn about international affairs (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorelli, 1994). But this lens is a tinted one, as the coverage is often limited to events considered significant to the newsmakers; stories involving tragic occurrences, such as natural disasters (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2002). Presented in the immediate and dramatic frame, the broader history and culture of the locale is lost.

From an academic perspective, the study of media is of great importance, particularly in an era of almost complete media saturation in the United States. From early studies that feared a hypodermic needle effect (Lasswell, 1927) to simple agenda setting theories (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), media and its effects on the public’s perception of the world have been under examination. Theories such as cultivation theory (Gerbner, et al. 1994) have shed light of late on the impact of the public “growing up with television” and how the messages from this
medium affect the audience’s assessment of the actual world. Cultivation theory posits that individuals who consume a great deal of television will overestimate the likelihood that they will be a victim of violence or the amount of violent occurrences in the world. As previously stated, knowledge of international affairs is limited, and it is critical to analyze the messages that the media are using to indirectly educate the American public about the outside world. If these messages are riddled with violence and catastrophe, what will the average viewer learn?

The impact on the social world is also important to appreciate. Perhaps because of inadequate understanding or knowledge of foreign cultures, reactions to these peoples are often disdainful or mocking. In the wake of September 11th 2001, the Middle East received the brunt of the United States' backlash in pop culture. One clear example of this was the much-heralded song by country music star, Toby Keith (2002) titled, “Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue (The Angry American)” whose lyrics expressed rage and retribution toward the people held responsible: “Hey Uncle Sam put your name at the top of his list/ And the statue of Liberty’s started shakin’ her fist,” the chorus begins, going on to explaining to the perpetrators that it will feel “like the whole wide world is raining down on you.” Toby Keith’s lyrics also foreshadow the oncoming barrage of masculine aggressiveness that pop culture would display, “You’ll be sorry you messed/ with the U. S. of A./ We’ll put a boot in your ass/ it’s the American way.”

The popularity of this song begs the research to analyze what information
Americans are provided by the news media and how it can contribute to this effortless hostility toward the outside world.

The following research study gathered transcripts from ABC, NBC and CBS evening news broadcast over the two weeks of November 14th and December 19th of 2005. Using a coding scheme, data regarding the topic, perspective of the foreign peoples, US involvement and masculinity were gathered and analyzed. The results confirmed the need for a greater span of international news with more separation from American interests. The author also makes suggestions as to how to change the nature of network news so that it can better include the world.
CHAPTER ONE

Literature Review

Nations need a story and a set of beliefs to reinforce themselves, and these act to define community relationship. Nations are less built out of physical borders than socially constructed ones, which include what is desirable and exclude what does not fit in the nation’s self concept. This identity is in constant flux and determined by what Flores (2003) describes as “conversations about who we are and who we should be” (p. 362). Max Weber (1948) reminded us in an era of shifting borders that it is also true that the people of a country are not necessarily included in the national thought, or would not include themselves if asked; nor does a common language or bloodline necessitate affiliation or exclusion. Often, however, a common ideology or shared narrative regarding the nation is a unifying factor. This story defines the nation and its origins and its image internally to the world outside its “borders.” The narrative is well-spread and can be “impossibly romantic and excessively metaphorical” (Bhabha, 1990, p. 306), yet this is the sacrifice made to satisfy the resulting vision of the nation in the world. Undesirable facts may be omitted to legitimate the nation’s existence and reify its integrity.

The United States, as the world knows it, was born as much out of the narrative of democracy and great men as the reality of a bloody revolution. From the beginning, the English speaking colonies were symbolic of separation from the oppression of Europe and the term “New World” hints at the isolationism to come. The stories told after independence and western expansion justified and
took pride in the “conquering” of the Native Americans while omitting any notion of atrocity. In fact, according to Humphrey (2004), the epic Lewis and Clark expedition received very little documented coverage in American newspapers, leaving much of the story of settling beyond the Mississippi open for narrative embellishment. Once the United States had matured into its modern political state in the 1800’s, immigration began to accelerate. As the existing states organized and modernized, an American identity began to establish itself. Along with the influx of immigrants came peoples that did not fit into that new forming national identity and the nation responded with regulations and laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (Murphy, 2004). Immigration became largely portrayed as a problem, one that undermined the purity and individuality of the United States as a nation. The concept of a ‘melting pot’ insinuated assimilation to the American way, including language and social norms. Old world immigrants were to be “Americanized” as soon as possible in order to strongly institute that very concept; and once integrated into the American life, according to Richmond (1984), “the maintenance of strong ethnic loyalties was seen as unpatriotic” (p. 296). The emergence of the homogenized American was launching itself in these formative years and English was the language that an American would speak.

The United States government, backed by those who seek to keep English as the dominant language attempted to enforce the assimilation into American culture by creating policies to force immigrants to learn the language. These English-only policies are once again gaining favor in the new era of immigration
with ordinances requiring rudimentary English skills in order to gain access to healthcare and welfare services (Barker & Giles, 2004). As immigrants learned, it was not so much how their new nation treated them, but how well they became patriots in their new nation (Flores, 2003).

Presently, one definition of patriotism has been held as a necessary quality in the notion of being a good citizen or to be categorized in the “Blame America First” crowd (Barnes, 2005). Since the attacks on September 11th 2001, displays of the Stars and Stripes have become even more prolific than before in a nation that pledges allegiance to its national symbol. After the World Trade Center was destroyed, the United States appeared unified under patriotism and criticism of foreign policy was all but silenced. The nation needed no further narrative to strengthen its borders; a crisis of this magnitude became the national story. Journalists were almost expected to report with editorials rather than facts. When ABC News president David Westin responded that journalists should keep their opinions to themselves when asked about the attacks, he was instantly attacked by political commentators as unpatriotic (Rosen, 2002). Open expressions of patriotism were heavily favored over the old journalistic notion of neutrality. Simply stating the date of 9/11 is still enough to invoke conceptual imagery of heroism and national pride. Along with this demonstrative patriotism came a glaring cynicism about the outside world.

Much of that cynicism has been directed at the Arab world. The conflation of this race with Islam and terrorism continues with racial stereotypes, radical religious beliefs, aggressive tendencies and general hatred for Americans
portrayed as accurate (Lind & Danowski, 1998). In her study of newspaper coverage of Arab-Americans, Weston (2003) found that people of Arab descent living in the United States have long been fighting against stereotypes and profiling. After September 11th, the rhetoric shifted and Arab-Americans were given a sympathetic portrayal as victims of unjustified retaliation. In the articles they studied, the Arab-Americans cited were eager to disassociate themselves from the attackers and the Middle East in general. Privately, however, they offered explanations behind the attacks. The articles sought to avoid stereotypes and provide sympathetic narratives of Arab-Americans. Simultaneously, the coverage overcompensated with pro-Americanism. As Weston (2003) writes, “While highlighting their dual suffering, many stories also depicted Arab-Americans as loyal and patriotic” (p. 99). As in early tales of immigration, the assimilated foreigner who favors America over his or her heritage is rewarded with positive exposure.

Race is often a noticeable issue in the United States, and foreigners can feel its effects immediately. Immigration provides insight into this phenomenon since immigration laws were originally designed to categorize individuals by their “racial fitness” to adapt to the nation (Flores, 2003, p. 365). Race divided immigrants into acceptable and unacceptable classes and the ability to speak English gives a clear advantage, not just for practical purposes but for social tolerance as well (Barker & Giles, 2004). A Caucasian immigrant from an English-speaking nation such as the United Kingdom, Ireland or Australia, could perceivably adapt easily into American culture, even if the individual’s social practices are considerably
different. The reaction to the influx of non-English speaking immigrants, especially those who are non-white, is an example of the backlash to the claimed multi-cultural level of acceptance in the United States. Flores (2003) displays an example of this in the past stating that, “Although Mexicans comprised only one percent of the immigration population during the 1930s, they constituted half of those formally deported and 80 percent of voluntary departures” (p. 363) and also points out that they were the first to be given the label “illegal” (p. 375). Instead of opening arms to the weak and oppressed, Flores states that those who dare to enter are susceptible to vilification and demonization and will be cast into the same light as criminals.

Why do Americans hold such negative stereotypes of Arabs and other foreigners? One explanation for general mistrust of those culturally or even physically different from us is what Furedi (2002) calls a “culture of fear.” Americans are increasingly susceptible to the fear campaigns of the media and other organizations. The public are constantly in wait of the most unlikely of perils because they are depicted as commonplace on the news. In Craft and Wanta’s 2004 research on post 9-11 journalism, they explored the connection between media users’ highest public concern and the amount of coverage and type of framing of that topic in local newspapers. They found that the greatest concern for the public was that of future terrorist attacks, a topic that was second in frequency in the two months following September 11th 2001. Although the length of the war had been the most frequent category, the fear of “personal consequences” attached to the prospect of future attacks suggested that the
negative extreme of international coverage detached the consumer from identifying with the people in the foreign nations and created instead a sense of impending problems for Americans themselves (p. 461). When an event as cataclysmic as the September 11th attacks occurs, a nation’s worst fears are realized and thus the public becomes more fearful of unlikely catastrophes. The compounding of these anxieties could easily contribute to more willing acceptance of negative stereotypes. Even journalists who are attempting to put out a non-threatening image of their subjects may use generic words such as “Arab” or “Latino” that are peripheral rather than detailed and can conjure up stereotypical images (Weston, 2003). Viewers or readers pick up on cues of what and who should be feared, be it radical anti-Americanism or simple strangers in local communities. Furedi (2002) defines this notion of “stranger danger” as the perceived threat of unfamiliar people and their potential harmful intentions to individuals and their families.

Fear on primetime television has been analyzed thoroughly by media scholars and many theories have been posited, particularly in the study of its effects. One theory specifically dealing with Furedi’s (2002) “culture of fear” is Cultivation Theory (Gerbner et al., 1994) which describes the “mean world syndrome” that frequent consumers of television develop. These theories speculate that the media portrays a world much more violent and sinister than the one in which we actually live. The authors go on to illustrate the public’s reaction to these depictions, and how saturation in television media increases the audience’s likelihood to extrapolate these negative illustrations of the world into
reality. Romer, Jamieson, and Aday (2003) found that when there was an
increase of crime reporting in television news, the general public’s fear of crime
also increased, and this fear is often disseminated further through social
networks. Their study used Cultivation Theory to analyze the effects of crime
reports in the United States, in both local and national news, without analyzing
the impact on international perceptions. Local and national news often have the
tendency to go far more in depth with stories involving the local area or the
United States in general, and post segments that may counter the mean world
belief with positive and human interest pieces. International stories, however,
are more than likely to be narrow and violence focused (Beaudoin & Thorson,
2002) leaving little to erase the image of an extremely violent outside world.

This image can allow for justification for taking action against the perceived
dark forces that exist outside US borders. When advocating the war in Iraq, the
administration had help from media sources reporting the implied information
connecting the aforementioned regime with al-Qaeda terrorists (Williams, 2004).
Lundsten and Stocchetti (2005) analyzed the difference between the coverage
leading up to the war on two international networks, CNN international and BBC
World, and found that the former appeared more resigned to the inevitably and
necessity for war while the latter took a more critical approach and questioned
the intelligence that was forwarded as grounds for war. The authors uncovered
how CNN journalists reportedly demonstrated hostility towards those nations who
opposed the decision to engage in conflict with Iraq. France, In particular,
received a media drubbing which led to a backlash for their withdrawal of
support. The frenzy about the French reversal of policy reached a fever pitch in the U.S. when businesses and government agencies changed the name of ‘French fries’ to ‘freedom fries’ and some even removed French selections from their food and wine lists (Lazo, 2003). This outrage was perhaps fueled by a breakdown of what Anderson (1991) calls “imagined communities” given that the U.S. expected support from Western Europe. Anderson states that we tend to see ourselves as unified with those who share our language or ethnicity. The United States did not just treat White and English speaking immigrants more favorably, but it also thought of these peoples home nations as allies, especially those who were aligned with the US during the Second World War. While in the weeks following the September 11th attacks the world had shown such solidarity with the United States with statements of shared grief and unity, in the onset of war and later, when misinformation and corruption in the process were exposed, it was clear that Europe was more than willing to stand up to America and its policies (Ates, et al., 2005). This divergence from complete collaboration was met with a level of hostility.

The idea of nationalism can be revisited when considering the reaction to this collapse of perceived alliances. The United States was largely on its own, isolated from the world in an effort to promote the war. With much of the world speaking out against the war and U.S. foreign policy, the taboo of opposing a wartime president was overridden and the administration and its objectives were questioned by its citizens. Now that the country is at war, the unity of the nation has broken down; however, rampant flag display continues as a reminder that,
despite protests and dissent, the importance of patriotism in the United States on both sides remains. The objection to war is not so much advanced in the name of foreign diplomacy, but as a balking of the cost of the conflict, both to troops’ lives and fiscally. Nationalism is now used as a right to dissent in order to preserve the nation and objectors to the conflict often must reiterate their love for the United States under threat of being undercut.

At present the Middle East is clearly important to the U.S., yet it too receives often distorted coverage. Although there is sporadic conflict in the area, the Gaza Strip is often depicted as contentious and violent, with Palestinians as the aggressors (Lind & Danowski, 1998). Iraq, of late, has been the crux for the United States’ involvement in foreign affairs and a battlefield in the Middle East. In the new media era of embedded journalists and camera crews, images accompany stories to give viewers an idea of the situation. Unfortunately, if the story is willing to penetrate the issue, the supplementing image is often provocative and shocking, involving ruins, gunfire or hostile individuals.

Petty and Cacioppo’s (1986) Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) addresses the amount of motivation and ability individuals have to process messages that they receive, identifying two routes of processing: the central that involves in-depth processing, critical thinking and long term memory, and the peripheral route, where processing is low and the receiver relies on tangential cues to understand the message. Images such as the ones often relayed from journalists in the Middle East are rife with peripheral cues. Regardless of the depth of the story, viewers will absorb the images and take the sight of these
situations to heart, rather than learn more about the subject, causing them to cultivate the messages sent by those images, especially if they are provocative (Gerbner, et al. 1994). The ELM goes on to posit that the more arguments an individual receives on the same topic, the higher the likelihood that the same individual will “elaborate” on this topic. In other words, the more information presented, the better the chance that an individual will think deeply and critically about a news story. However, since many international stories are brief and shallow, often with only one side presented, the individual does not receive the benefit of multiple arguments and may have to rely on the cues in imagery or trigger words. Hale, Lemieux, and Mongeau (1995) found that when fear levels were high in individuals, they seek high cognition but will process peripheral messages that are less relevant. These individuals find themselves inundated with greater fear input than the original message would provide. Coverage of the Middle East is rarely without these representations, giving the American audience an incomplete picture, based upon the carnage that exists in the region, rather than a comprehensive look at its peoples.

With the outside world depicted as endemic with violence, the ideology that the Western world is the only safe haven for civilized people and the rest is a world full of dangerous strangers can be perpetuated. Media hegemony will reinforce this notion by presenting only superficial messages about the world to support an ideology which, as Gans (1979) states, itself is “of only partially thought out values…neither entirely consistent nor well integrated; and since it changes over time, it is also flexible on some issues” (p. 68). Often the ideology
of a nation is born out of the notion of nationalism. Anderson (1991) posits that a nation’s borders are reinforced by the commonly held beliefs of its citizens. When nationalism is emphasized by national events that spurn patriotism, these borders become the protection of the only safe haven that appears to remain. This perspective continues when there is distortion or complete lack of coverage of all things international.

The content and impact of American network news and its coverage of foreign affairs has been analyzed for decades. The content analysis by Larson (1982) studied the three major networks’ (ABC, NBC, CBS) coverage of international news from 1972 to 1981 and found that it made up forty percent of the overall news programming. At a time when Vietnam was winding down and the Cold War was winding up, television news was focused on areas of the world that posed a significant challenge to United States policy. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the greatest expansion of the U.S. economy in history, the tone of the latter nation changed, and so did its television news coverage. As Riffe and Budianto (2001) note, there has been a decrease of late in international coverage as a whole and the focus had been placed on domestic happenings with networks “devote only half as much time to international news as they did before 1989” (p.21). With this decline in international perspective, U.S. citizens receive an even more limited view of the world, with critical potential consequences. Both of these studies precluded the shift in international news coverage that came after the September 11th attacks, something that will be examined in the research.
Criticisms of practices of American network news have voiced concerns of hegemony in the images presented of the United States juxtaposed to the rest of the world. As Beaudoin and Thorson (2002) point out, news professionals and the general public have voiced concerns about the nature of international coverage. First, they note that this type of news tends to focus on disasters, conflict and crises in the world. Riffe and Budianto (2001) found that “bad news” is increasing in the international news window giving the audience reports of “coups and earthquakes” (p. 26). The result of this coverage leaves the viewer with an image of the world as “rife with violence and war but bereft of humanity and culture” (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2002, p. 54). Even this narrow coverage has its geographic biases. According to William Adams (1986), the coverage of natural disasters displayed this prejudice and he powerfully demonstrates that coverage often had no real relationship to the severity of the tragedy, or loss of life suffered due to it. In one example, an earthquake in China resulted in an estimated loss of 800,000 lives received an average of 8.5 minutes of network coverage. Curiously, an earthquake in Italy which caused less than 10% of the number of Chinese fatalities (946) received 7.6 minutes of air time (Adams, 1986). Adams’ study illustrates how journalism concentrates its energies on some nations, perhaps disproportionately on the Western orientation. This pattern was repeated in the tsunami of 2004 that affected South East Asia. In that instance, the lives of locals lost were often glossed over in favor of addressing the impact on the lives of English-speaking tourists (Pederson, Prole, Reymann, Mortensen, & Nat-George, 2005). As Mitzi Pederson and her
colleagues note, the mere presence of American or Western European tourists can prompt more extensive tourism-oriented coverage than the affairs of local people in that same region. As a result of this tendency, they argue that disproportionate attention was paid to the tsunami in tourism rich areas of South-East Asia while relatively little attention was paid to a devastating earthquake in Pakistan.

Larson (1982) found that, in his nine year time frame, nations such as Great Britain, Russia and South Vietnam took the limelight in international coverage. The same time span revealed that there was a hierarchy of coverage that privileged Western Europe while leaving Africa and Latin America with minimal exposure. Adams (1986) asked the question of whose lives were worth more in the eyes of American media, after finding that, based upon the level of coverage of natural disasters, “the death of one Western European equaled three Eastern Europeans equaled nine Latin Americans equaled 11 Middle Easterners equaled 12 Asians” (p. 122).

With less time devoted to certain areas, newsmakers are likely to cut corners and details, leaving a generic perspective of these regions. The second critique that Beaudoin and Thorson (2002) posit is that the news tends to depict certain geographic regions in a repetitive and even stereotypical manner. If true, such portrayals may invite or perpetuate misconceptions about those regions and their inhabitants. Lind and Danowski (1998) point out that the Middle East is often portrayed as a violent area inhabited solely by fundamentalist Muslims. In their cluster analysis of American television and radio news, Arabs and Muslims were
often lumped together, associated with terrorism and violence, and most often depicted as the aggressors in the conflict with Israel over the Gaza strip. This kind of coverage has sparked a reaction that “Muslim” and “Arab” are presented as synonymous. This is a troubling portrayal because only 12% of the Muslims on Earth are Arab (Weston, 2003). Conflated in this fashion, neither Arabs, Muslims, nor the Middle East are presented in a nuanced or complete manner.

The third critique voiced centers on elitism. Frequently, television news relies upon a politicized, state-driven model of story-telling. While this perspective effectively conveys notions of territories and borders, it does so at the expense of explaining everyday life (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2002). Because the news focused most often on government leaders rather than ordinary people, Americans might not be able to relate to a nation’s citizens or understand the culture or everyday life of the people represented. When the views of a foreign nation are limited to its government affairs, it is likely that American observers will extrapolate the political ideals of the governing regime. As Lundsten and Stochetti (2005) point out, this was apparent when Americans regarded the United Kingdom as a supporter of the Bush Administration’s foreign policy vis-à-vis Iraq. Because the television news drew upon the statements and actions of Prime Minister Tony Blair, as a frame of reference, viewers were invited to make an inference that the U.S. and the U.K. were operating in tandem. However, a closer examination of the British citizenry would show a far more chaotic and dissenting view than the political perspective revealed (Lundsten & Stochetti,
2005). It is precisely this more complex and opposing standpoint that was not comprehensively covered on U.S. television.

Crisis oriented and elitist coverage can reduce the perceived importance of foreign nations, but this consideration is intensified when exposure is all but omitted due to perceived lack of significance to the United States. Beaudoin and Thorson’s (2002) fourth cited criticism involves the tendency of the U.S. media to only focus on stories that involve the United States. If America is not implicated in the story, it is often not considered newsworthy. Often, as identified in Adams’ (1986) study on natural disasters, the nations that are given exposure are linked to the U.S. through certain ideals.

The world around the U.S. is often portrayed as either a threat or tourist attraction to Americans and sometimes by extension, Western Europeans. Because of shared language and general culture, Americans share a set of cultural assumptions with Europeans. Benedict Anderson (1991) argues that these perceived connections or “Imagined Communities” create a false sense of commonality. Anderson conjectures that common language assists this speculation and nations such as Britain, Canada and Australia could be annexed into the American “imagined community.” Historically, the advent of colonialism brought an inclusion/exclusion polarity that shifted conceit from Western Europe’s internal class systems to colonized nations. Anderson (1991) explained the transition as a relief to those who lacked status at home because, even as “English Lords were naturally superior to other Englishmen, no matter: these other Englishmen were no less superior to the subjected natives” (p. 150). In the
modern era, racism is not a directly stated factor, but the hierarchy of coverage and the privilege given American related stories displays a concept of importance and who is afforded the benefit of exposure. Currently the war in Iraq dominates the United States’ news radar and the situation holds significance worldwide, but in expanded coverage, American news media gives priority to stories that involve U.S. interests, as shown in recent reporting on Iran, Pakistan and Dubai (MSNBC, CBS News, ABC News, 2006).

Even those news events that do contain U.S. concerns are not always addressed in an in-depth manner. A fifth criticism cited questioned the US news media’s habit of dealing with international stories on a vague, shallow and often out of context manner (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2002). This final critique appears to address the previous four and has implications toward the business side of news. A network news program only has so much time to cover all the news of the day or weekend. There is such a limited space for significant stories to fill and often foreign affairs are pushed to wayside simply for the matter of time. The question remains; who is included and who is excluded? It is not that simple to blame and, as Adams (1986) brings up as an excellent point in his work, when one country or area is given the coverage they had lacked in previous years, another area must naturally receive less attention. This often occurs when the US is involved in conflict or debate with a foreign region or nation, as now with the war in Iraq. Although troops are still on an active mission in Afghanistan, the Iraqi conflict has been takes precedence as the primary situation in US foreign
diplomacy while the search for Osama Bin Laden has become a lower priority, until something occurs, such as a new Bin Laden tape (CNN, 2006).

There is a cumulative effect to all of these biases. American news coverage repeatedly highlights some foreign locales and ignores others. According to Althiede (2001) western prioritization cultivates a “class biased” news force (p. 484). Althiede suggests that the “Third World” is given the least coverage, especially in Africa, and when it comes, it is often negative or “crisis-oriented” (p. 484) attention that is often out of context and shallow (Adams, 1986; Wanta, Golen, & Lee, 2004). This hierarchy of coverage in US media can be analyzed from another angle: that of masculinity.

The reasoning behind including masculinity as a qualifying factor in this study comes as changes in attitudes occur in society. The era of the Bush administration is one that is accompanied with a resurgence of the notion of masculinity in the United States. In response to the September 11th attacks, the president became a beacon of strength and retribution and it seemed that it was exactly what the nation was seeking in the wake of the tragedy. Patriotism was often displayed in a masculine aggressive way. President Bush used statements such as, “We will bring the evildoers to justice” and “We’re gonna get ya” when addressing those responsible. Thus, when the administration decided to go to war with Iraq, although the reason was ambiguous, it fit with the strong arming that had come before. When the American media informed the public that diplomacy had been fruitless and the UN was unwilling to do the manly thing and take “real action” (Lundsten & Stochetti, 2005). In response to the fear that arose
at the thought that a foreign organization that was little understood by the US public, the nation turned to anger and retribution as demonstrated in the popular Toby Keith song (2002).

This type of “hyper-masculine” behavior was in strong contrast to the Clinton era where researchers uncovered a notion of “masculinity in crisis” (Horrocks, 1994; Robinson, 2000). This was a time when women had risen higher in the ranks of the public sphere than ever before, and femininity posed a threat of emasculation to the common man. Other authors such as Ashcraft and Flores (2000) uncovered a backlash to this crisis in film depictions of a return to what they call a “primitive/civilized” masculinity of the “hardened white man who finds healing in wounds” (p. 2). The ushering in of a new Republican White House and its more heavy-handed foreign policy seemed to correspond with the backlash and openly reinforce it.

Of late, revitalization of hyper-masculinity became the response deemed necessary to the hostility found in the Middle East. News articles express the fact that America “will not tolerate” many forms of opposition in the world (Bush, 2004; Sanger, 2003 Trivedi & Heins, 2005). Patriotism and aggression went hand-in-hand and resistance to the latter could leave the voice of such a position under accusation of weakness or lack of masculinity. Any sign of a so-called “feminine perspective” would be considered a flaw in the representation of this nation’s position in the world.

bell hooks (1981) reminds us that this sentiment has its roots firmly held in the social structure of the past
Institutionalized sexism, that is, patriarchy – formed the base of the American social structure along with racial imperialism. Sexism was an integral part of the social political order white colonists brought with them from their European homelands (p. 15)

Although under a more liberal government, the United States was able to establish more comfortable relationships with foreign nations, the reversion to hostility and aggression towards the outside world was more accepted by the newly emboldened “real men” who had lashed against threats to masculinity.

Masculinity in this study is not what may typically be considered for the term. It is more attached to Antonio Gramsci’s (1978) early concepts of hegemony of the dominant group in society that disseminates its will and ideology throughout society. Connell (1987) explored “hegemonic masculinity” as a dimension of society where the collection of power such as neo-colonialism is rationalized as satisfying the innate maleness of a Western society such as the United States. Connell goes on to examine the more subtle working of masculinity in the state (most likely disseminated by televised media) in the form of exclusion of certain ideas. This study will scrutinize exclusion as an element of masculinity, as well as the existence of masculine rhetoric used to discuss foreign nations in relation to the United States.

The examination of hyper-masculinity is a possible sixth criticism to add to Beaudoin and Thorson’s five, and when analyzing United States media these six factors can be identified. The messages in network news are potential learning tools for the United States television viewing public. It is important to study this medium for the implications of a slanted or hostile view of the international world.
CHAPTER TWO: THE STUDY

Research Questions

The following research questions are based upon the criticisms of televised media presented by Beaudoin & Thorson (2002) with variations tailored for the study at hand.

RQ1: What topics does U.S. network news cover of international events?

To analyze this question, the researcher studied the segments of the news stories for images and discussions of war, drought, famine, genocide, natural disasters and similar negative and tragic circumstances. The findings will factor in with the concept of Furedi’s “culture of fear” (2002) and cultivation theory (Gerbner, et al., 1994) which both discuss the contribution of crime and violent images in primetime television to the public’s perception of a mean world. The second research question continues to discuss this fear and how it is often assigned to certain areas of the world.

RQ2: How are different geographic regions portrayed and which areas receive the most and least coverage?

The second criticism scrutinizes the generalization of certain areas when they are depicted on television. In analyzing this research question, word choice is important, such as using terms such “Arab” or “Latino” rather than a specific nationality, or simple stereotypes such as religious zealots, men brandishing guns, or cultures in stereotypical garb or practicing traditional rituals. Since the people of foreign nations are often shown in a generalized light, focus shifts to
the political arena and nations’ leaders are given the spotlight, leading the third question.

**RQ3: From what perspective is news coverage of international events given?**

This question centered on the third criticism which claims that news is often based upon political happenings, giving less of an everyday view of particular cultures. Analysis focused on the perspective from which the segment is presented. This question also gave an idea to the depth a story can achieve when the included parties are strictly political. Perspective was defined as the voice of the foreign nation; whether it be a direct quote or simply the mention of groups or individuals of a certain status (i.e. military officials, terrorist groups).

**RQ4: To what extent does national network news coverage of international events focus primarily on stories that directly involve the United States?**

This fourth criticism asks whether events in the international scope are considered newsworthy if they do not involve the United States. The research will analyze what percentage of stories involve American interests, whether directly or indirectly. It will also identify which stories, if any, which do not mention the U.S. are covered.

**RQ5: What dimensions of masculinity are displayed in U.S. network news coverage of international events?**

This question focuses on the way the United States is juxtaposed to the rest of the world. The research will look at the language used to describe the United States’ relationship with the nation discussed and analyze it for elements of domination, power and patriarchy
Method

In order to assess the international content of network news, it was important to select a collection of news days that would be indicative of the nature of United States news media. Agenda setting theorists look at what the news presents to the public and how the audience reacts to it. The programming does not assign meaning for the audience in every story it covers, but it has been shown to form a schema that determines what the audience will consider. If Darfur is not on the media’s spectrum, then the general public is not likely to consider it, let alone consider it important (Knickmeyer, 2005). The stories that make it into the everyday network news realm are those that will receive the attention and consideration of the American public.

In the events following September 11th 2001, the focus of international news centered on the Middle East, which had held much U.S. scrutiny in the past. The U.S. is involved in the area once again, and the media follows. However, the attention paid to international news, even those stories that directly involve the United States, are given minimal coverage in comparison to national events. The three major networks, ABC, NBC, and CBS, are the most popular for nightly news coverage. Despite the steady decline in network news viewership since the 1980s (State of the News Media, 2006), these evening broadcasts have been thought of as the lynchpin of objective news. Trusted network anchors with household names disseminate factual information into American homes. It is critical to analyze the types of messages about the rest of the world that are being transmitted from these channels.
The data collected for this study was taken from 2 weeks in late 2005; the first from November 15th to the 19th and another from December 19th through the 23rd. The data included video recordings and transcripts from the “big three” networks’ evening news broadcasts: NBC, CBS, ABC. The timing of the two weeks was significant because of two factors, sweeps week and Christmas. The researchers considered what kind of news would the networks report in a time of ratings analysis. Would international news be more of a focus in this November week than in the week prior to the Christmas holiday? It was also regarded that the December week might contain more human interest pieces in both national and international news as the time of season was one of celebration and family. This theory would be tested in the analysis of the coding by looking at topics and amounts of international news.

After the first round of coding with the transcripts, the researchers concluded that the video data would be kept as back-up only as the transcripts gave a significant amount of information that would suffice for analysis. The transcripts originated from the two aforementioned weeks’ programming of NBC Nightly News, CBS Evening News and ABC World News Tonight, all broadcasting from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. EST on their respective networks.

The transcripts were collected from the Lexis Nexis news transcripts service. Two transcript days (NBC and CBS, 11/17) were purchased from BurrellesLuce transcript service when they were unavailable on Lexis Nexis. The Lexis Nexis transcripts included word count listings which were used to determine the length of the stories. The BurrellesLuce were transferred into
Microsoft Word ® for word tallying using an application within the program. Each story was individually considered, except for certain ABC stories which were “buried” within the main segment. These stories were checked for word total and then subtracted from the stated length of the initial segment. At the outset, PBS was included in the data set and a week of NewsHour with Jim Lehrer was recorded and transcripts obtained from Lexis Nexis. During the coding, however, it was noted that, due to PBS’s longer program and unique segment format, results including NewsHour might skew the data. NewsHour remained as a comparative data set to juxtapose with commercial network news.

The first round of coding involved listing the 316 segments on Codesheet A (Appendix A) by recording the network (NBC = 1; ABC = 2; CBS = 3), date, day of week (M = 1, T = 2, W = 3, R = 4, F = 5), title and length in words. Each sheet represented a day of the week for a particular network and these days were given an overall program identification number ranging from 101-115 (November) or 201-215 (December). On this form, each segment was given a story identification number and a segment number. The story ID number was either from 1001-1150 for the segments from November, or 2001-2147 for those from December. The segment number reflected the order of the segments within the news broadcast. Segment order is important to note due to the primacy recency effect (Insko, 1964; Brunel & Nelson, 2003) which states that individuals are most likely to recall information that is presented first and last and are most easily persuaded by said information. This effect has been primarily studied as a persuasion technique, especially in advertising. Yet, with news and business
merging, the order of stories can also suggest an agenda setting aspect. News broadcasts call their leading segment the “top story” of the program, suggesting that primacy is held in high regard in the news business. Which stories would be more likely to get the top billing, national or international? Although message order is not included in the research questions, placing a story in the middle of a program and giving it minimal length may have an agenda-setting effect (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), in essence minimizing the importance of the story or event. This effect can be tied to the second research question which asks about the portrayal of specific regions. Being portrayed as a passing thought rather than an area worth discussing is quite a provocative message about a region.

In this first round of coding, segments were categorized as either national or international (N=0, I=1). International stories were not limited to those events that occurred on non-US soil, but also included segments that merely discussed international matters, such as Congressional debates over the policy of the United States in Iraq. This expanded the number of international stories that existed in the given weeks.

Once the categories were determined, those segments that were dubbed international went through a second round of coding on Codesheet B (Appendix A). Here the more in-depth research question based analysis began with questions about content, region, perspective, U.S. involvement and masculinity. A previous codesheet had existed that included an additional code for story depth. When this sheet was piloted, however, it was found that depth, even with explicit instructions, was a quite subjective variable. It was difficult to for the
coders to place into a specific category because of the continuum on which it lay. The emergence of types of generalized perspectives would help to analyze the depth of character into which the segments delved.

Codesheet B included 10 content codes, each with explanations to help guide the coder into the correct category. The first code, War/Terrorism, was initially only included war until the emergence of many terrorism segments. The codebook explains to include mentions of war, conflict or acts of terrorism, either current or historical. The second code, Natural Disasters, included hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes and the like. The third code, Man Made Disasters, was adapted from National Television Violence Study (1997) codebook for television programming. This code includes car and other transportation accidents, oil spills and other occurrences that would not happen without human engineering. The fourth code, Religion, became prevalent as a secondary subject matter, where religion was mentioned in the course of civil conflict and political occurrences. Individual, the fifth listed code, subsisted for segments that were personal stories about characters or small groups engaged in activity around the world. This code was used to describe the fallen soldier profiles that one of the networks ran daily. Business and industry made up the sixth code and was included with international trade discussions, profiles of foreign manufacturing industries and employer worker disputes. The seventh code, Human Suffering, incorporated the oppression and affliction of peoples around the world. Disease was included in this category as it is often described by its human toll rather than on a scientific basis. Another large category was that of Politics, the eighth code.
It included stories of treaties, congressional debates, elections and other political occurrences. The ninth code of *Science* included technological and pharmaceutical breakthroughs, as well as any mention of research studies in both physical and social sciences. The final code, *Education*, existed for segments with mention of school reform, types of training, or higher-learning issues in the world.

These codes were often listed in tandem with one another, as segments were not necessarily exclusive to a single subject matter. Once the coder had completed the codesheet for these items, marking 1 for *yes* and 2 for *no* in each box to answer whether or not the story contained the topic, he or she was asked to circle the “Main” topic for the segment. Inter Coder reliability showed that coder decisions on the main topic were quite high (Cohen’s Kappa = .786), so this step of individual judgment did not interfere with the results. For example, a story involving a US Senate debate regarding US policy in Iraq could involve both war and politics but could be considered a political story because of its setting and the actual content of the segment. If a story did not fit into the given categories or included a second context which was not listed, an *Other* category was created, which yielded emergent codes of *judicial* (1), *women’s rights* (2), *royalty* (3), *charity and philanthropy* (4), and *culture* (5). If one of these categories was considered the main topic, the coder would circle the *Other* box and it was entered as code 11 in the data set.

Once the subject code was determined, the coder moved on to the geographic setting of the story. Since countries are innumerable, the world was
broken up into nine geographic regions: Eastern Europe (1), Eastern and Southeastern Asia (2), The Middle East (3), Northern Africa (4), North America (5), Southern Africa (6), South and Central America (7), Western Asia (8), and Western Europe (9). These areas were given specific boundaries and major nations were listed with each to guide the coder to the correct setting. The setting consisted of the area where the majority of the story was located. A political story about a congressional hearing on troop reduction in Iraq, for example, would be given a code of 5 for North America. The next question on the codesheet asked for involved countries and provided a space for the coder to write in the names of all the nations mentioned in the story, including the setting. This provided a more detailed view of which nations were most often included in international coverage, even within a specific region. A handful of stories had no clear setting, which was listed as *Undefined* and coded as 0.

Once the topic and region were determined, the sheet asked for the perspective of the foreign nation. For many of these codes, the codebook (Appendix B) did not go into great detail, thus a coding “line by line instruction guide” was created (Appendix C). This manual goes into greater detail with certain codes that may have created pause for the coder. Because, perspective was a cause for concern, it was fleshed out in greater specificity in the line by line instructions. The five major perspectives listed were *political*, *royalty*, *military*, *civilian* and *terrorism*. These categories are designed to describe the main point of view of the foreign nation in the story and were coded as such. Each category is explained in full in the line by line so as to not cause confusion, but some
stories inevitably fell outside of the five predetermined. The *Other* category laid way for the emergent codes of business and science, and more importantly the code of *none given*. This popular code was evident when the foreign nation was discussed thoroughly but only as an object rather than given a perspective of its own. The *Other* category also played an important role as a location to define secondary perspectives with the main perspective remaining in the previous category. Since some segments were long, they may have had more than one that were included in the list of five.

The next code was that of U.S. involvement and to answer this question on the sheet, the coder simply entered 1 for *yes* or 2 for *no* dependent on if the United States was mentioned in the segment, either directly as in quotes from political, military or civilian personnel, or indirectly in a story that implicates U.S. participation. The final code in Codesheet B is that of the context of U.S. involvement. This could also be considered the perspective of the U.S. in the segment. *Presidential, Military, Civilian, Political* and *Business* contexts made up the main codes for this question, a combination of previously existing and emergent categories. These were also expanded in the line by line instructions and given more specific boundaries. The *Other* category yielded emergent codes of *judicial* and *women’s rights* contexts, while providing a space to supply a secondary code if a story has varying contexts, just as in the foreign nation’s perspective question.

The context of U.S. involvement is the last code for Codesheet B. If the coder answered yes to the question of involvement, he or she would have
entered this final code and move on to Codesheet C where a content analysis of specific sentences occurred. Here coders were asked to identify sentences that included both the U.S. and the foreign nation(s) involved and analyze them. First they ascertained which nation was the subject of the sentence and entered either a 1 for the United States or 2 for the other nation mentioned. Then the question of masculinity was studied, with specific examples cited in the line by line instructions to help guide the coder in order to keep sentences within the parameters set by the study. The coder looked for rhetoric that described the U.S. as a teacher, dominator, patriarch or controller, as well as converse rhetoric that depicted the foreign nation as submissive, lesser or lacking, while some sentences might have contained both representations. If masculine rhetoric was present in the sentence, the coder entered a 1 on the codesheet. If the sentence contained no such language, a zero was entered. Because the masculinity code was considerably subjective, gathering the collection of sentences was important to gather to determine what was regarded as masculine rhetoric within the guidelines set up for the coders. The examples in the instructions helped guide the coder, but analysis of the recovered sentences proved to be the qualitative data needed to determine patterns within broadcasts.

Two primary coders analyzed the 104 international stories that required Codesheet B. A third coder had assisted with the dividing of stories into national and international categories on Codesheet A, but to ensure reliability, this coder did not proceed to the next phase. The intercoder reliability for Codesheet B proved high enough to continue data analysis. For the shared data set of
international stories \((N = 20)\), the Cohen’s Kappa reliability for the main topic was statistically good \((\rho = .786)\). For perspective, the question that referred to the angle given to the foreign nation, the reliability was also good \((\rho = .703)\), and the perspective noted for the United States had high reliability \((\rho = .906)\). When it came to individual sentences, the reliability for sentence identification was high \((\rho = .889)\), and in identifying the subject nation in the sentences, the reliability was also high \((\rho = .813)\) while even the subjective identification of masculine rhetoric was good \((\rho = .794)\).

Individual segment topics had low to medium reliability ranging from \(\rho = .252\) \((\text{Science})\) to \(\rho = 1.0\) \((\text{Natural Disaster, Individual})\). It became necessary to combine the \text{Science} and \text{Education} topics as they shared the lowest reliability. Since the coders’ selection on each story for the “Main” topic registered a Cohen’s Kappa reliability of \(\rho = .786\) (generic average of .841), the segment topic analysis proved to be valid.

The data was initially entered into a Microsoft Excel ® file with each variable, from the program identification number to the sentence by sentence masculinity entry. Each segment’s code was entered into its respective cell with 99 entered for categories that were left blank for reasons of applicability. All 297 stories were entered into the spreadsheet. The data was tested for reliability by eliminating the word-driven data (title, countries involved), and transferring the data set into a PRAM reliability measurement which yielded the above results.

For the final analysis, the Excel spreadsheet was transferred into an SPSS data document where certain figures necessitated adjustment. For
example, “buried” stories from certain ABC broadcasts had been labeled with letters (ID # 1010a Segment 2a), which classified the variables as “string” data which caused problems in computation. These codes were modified to be decimals which proved more effective for analysis. Each variable that contained a represented code required a value to be assigned to each of the possible codes for that question. Each variable was verified for its necessary codes before frequency analyses began.

In order to better sort the information, the data was aggregated to organize it around the key factors: percentage of international stories and content. In its original form, the data was listed by specific sentences. This led to the repetition of certain codes in the spreadsheet as segments were copied down to accommodate the sentence analysis. With this type of input, results were skewed, yielding much higher frequencies of events than were actually occurring. By utilizing the story identification numbers, the data was aggregated in order that accurate figures could be ascertained from the computed analysis. Once the data was in a reliable format, it was analyzed per the research questions and sub-theories occurring in the study.

Results

As data began to be filtered through frequencies and crosstabs, initial questions found their answers. Of the 316 stories, the greater part (n = 209, 66.1%) were national, almost double the international (n = 107, 33.9%). The majority is not a surprising result taking into consideration the sheer magnitude of
the United States and the number of domestic stories to cover. The discrepancy is large, however, with national stories outnumbering international 3:1. These international stories are distributed disproportionately over the days analyzed. In November, 59% (n = 64) of the stories were present, while the remaining 41% were broadcast in the late December week. In December there were days when news was overwhelming national. For example, on December 20th, n = 23 national stories made the airwaves compared to the five international stories that were shown, this included all of the networks. On this day, ABC showed only one international segment out of its eight total stories for the day, while NBC chose not to report any international stories on that date and focused all of its coverage on national events.

The networks were all similar in nature in the frequency and ratio of international to national segments. CBS had the greatest overall percentage and count of international stories with 38.6% (n = 44 to its 70 national); ABC followed with 28.6% (n = 52 to 80 national) then NBC 28.6% (n = 31 to 59 national). These numbers fluctuated on given days, varying especially from November to December, and were not statistically significant from network to network.

Before answering the research questions, it is important to look at the general order of the segments. These revelations are relevant to the second research question about region since they display the amount of importance attached to each country whose story is placed in either a prominent or an obscured position within the broadcast. Although there were significantly fewer international stories in the data, a good size group of these segments (n = 12,
11.2%) were presented as the lead story in the broadcast. The majority of the stories \((n = 64; 59.8\%)\) appeared in the top four segments of the news program. This could be evidence that international news is considered important enough to earn lead coverage. This conclusion is supported by primacy theory, which states that the first thing a person sees is most likely to be remembered (Insko, 1964). In fact, it was statistically significant \((p = .005)\) that international stories were distributed so unevenly throughout the broadcasts, with what one might call “frontloading” – a term usually reserved for business plans defined by Merriam-Webster as “assigning costs or benefits to the early stages of [as a contract, project, or time period]” (Online dictionary, 2007). However, from the content of the lead story segments, it is clear that the world itself does not qualify for top billing unless the United States is involved. Of the 12 lead stories, all of them directly implicated the United States, and of the 64 stories in the top four segments, only eight were independent of U.S. involvement and three of the eight were short buried segments. These results had high statistical significance \((p = .003)\). Before U.S. involvement results are analyzed, the type of international news can shed light on how a Cultivation theory based “mean world syndrome” might occur (Gerbner, et al., 1994).

The first research question asked which topics were covered in international segments. The answer to this question can be found in the frequency data on segment topics. The majority of the stories described the War/Terrorism category \((n = 37, 34.6\%)\) as the main topic while Political followed closely as the second most frequent subject of discussion \((n = 31, 29.0\%). Of
the political stories, most were actually U.S. Congressional debates ($n = 14$, 45.9%, $p = .000$) rather than portrayals of foreign governments. The third most frequent topic was Individual ($n = 11$, 10.3%), but all but one of these stories were portrayals of US soldiers, as will be noted below. Human suffering ($n = 6$, 5.6%), Business and Science (both $n = 5$, 4.7%) were the main topics for a small handful of stories and Natural Disaster ($n = 3$, 2.8%) had the least frequent mention of the pre-selected main topics. Interestingly, of the five Science segments, not one involved the United States, while all other pre-selected topics had at least one US interest. Nine segments (8.4%) were unable to be classified into the preset categories and were listed as Other as the main topic. Within the Other was a subset of categories that included Judicial ($n = 4$, 3.7%), and these consisted of retellings of the December trial of Saddam Hussein. The Philanthropy/Charity topic yielded two stories (1.9%) that described it as a main topic and they will be described in greater detail below. Along with the importance of what kind of stories made it on the air, where these segments took place was of interest.

The second research question asked, “How are different geographic regions portrayed and which areas receive the most and least coverage?” The answer for the latter part of the question most likely varies from decade to decade depending on happenings in varied settings. However, the fact that a study in 1986 by W.C. Adams produced no Latin American stories and the two weeks of this current study yielded only one insinuates that the South American region historically has received a dearth of attention from US news sources.
Africa has fluctuated with international news, receiving a great deal of consideration in the 1980’s during the Ethiopian famine and the ensuing benefits, which petered off into the 1990’s as attention shifted to struggles in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The single story unearthed by this researcher’s study illustrated the continuing trend of disregard for this area. The stories from Kenya and Guatemala also centered on content that concerned American individuals rather than giving focus to the cultures in which they had their dealings. With business and philanthropy as the topics for these two segments, answering the first half of research question two requires analysis of the data set for the main topic. To draw greater conclusions from this dearth of African and Latin American coverage, a larger sample of stories would be necessary to determine whether this trend would continue.

The Middle East dominated the airwaves for the two weeks of the study, with articles that focused primarily on war and terrorism. The results show that out of the 37 citations of War/Terrorism as the main topic, 94.6% (n = 35) occurred in the Middle East. The second most frequent topic for that region was Politics, with 12 mentions as the main topic, but even those stories were inclined to have war undertones as the War/Terrorism category was cited as a subtopic an additional 15 times. The Middle East was by far the most frequently mentioned region for the category of War/Terrorism with 71.5% of the total positive responses (n = 50, p = .000). Fifteen more positive codes were attributed to the setting of the United States with the Middle East as an involved region in the story. With this knowledge, it is possible to attribute 92.9% of War/Terrorism
selections as both a main or subtopic to the Middle East \((n = 65)\). The 35 original segments set in the Middle East reflect 94.6\% of the total stories with \textit{War/Terrorism} as the main topic in the entire international scope. Only two other stories, both set in Western Europe, claimed this code as their main focus. Additionally, \textit{War/Terrorism} represented the highest amount \((n = 37, 57.4\%)\) of the Middle East’s main topics, with politics trailing \((n = 12, 19.7\%)\). Of the 61 stories that occurred in the Middle East, most directly involved the US \((n = 54, 88.5\%)\), perhaps lending reason for this area’s disproportionate amount of coverage.

An interesting finding that arose from the data was that 81.8\% \((n = 9)\) of the stories in all of the segments that claimed the \textit{Individual} category as their main focus occurred in the Middle East. Unfortunately, upon closer examination, the individual nature of the stories did not represent the voices of the people in this troubled area. Instead, the stories were all from a CBS Evening News nightly segment named “CBS honors American Heroes” that gave a brief profile
of a fallen, injured or generally heroic serviceman or woman. The reason that only nine instances occurred in the Middle East in the data was that one of the stories did not define the setting for the individual’s death. The Middle East could possibly have been assumed from the context, yet for the sake of being true to the code, such an assumption was avoided. These Individual stories advance the view that the Middle East is portrayed in a violent and war torn area, which many would agree is true to the events that transpire there. Regrettably, the media does not garner sympathy for those who live in such turmoil, but rather gives voice to Americans who take part in the area’s occupation. In the discussion section of this study, greater scrutiny will be paid to the wording of these depictions and the implications of such a perspective.

While the networks devoted much of their international news time to the Middle East, other regions received little coverage. What existed in many of the remaining territories centered on ongoing occurrences that concerned the United States. For example, Eastern and Southeastern Asia’s 17 segments, five were political, with discussions of oppression in China based mostly around President Bush’s visit. Another four fell into the category of Human Suffering, but were all accounts of the disease Bird Flu and its effects in the region, a major concern to the United States whose citizens greatly fear epidemics (Furedi, 2003). Three more included retellings of the tsunami of 2004 and Southeast Asia’s recovery in its wake while another three made up a series of stories on Chinese business practices among issues of the United States’ trade deficit with China. China received more coverage than even Western Europe, a region that Anderson, B.
(1991) might have considered part of the United States’ “Imagined Community” due to racial proximity.

While Eastern Europe was not represented in the two weeks of coverage, Western Europe was given a variety of stories, mainly positive, with only two falling into the War/Terrorism category (an update on an old terrorism case). Western Europe had seven segments all in the month of December and many of them could be considered “human interest” stories. For example, a short story documented the kidnapping of a baby penguin from a British zoo, and another buried segment briefly described a research study on Harry Potter books. A research study on the development of the perfect bed and a Christmas themed segment on a cultural festival in Finland round out the “soft news” segments that made up the majority of the stories from that region. Although coverage of Eastern Asia did produce one such story in a buried segment that chronicled a princess giving up her crown for marriage, the remaining stories of this genre were directly associated with the United States, as in the philanthropic stories described above. Mostly “hard news” was dedicated to the heavily featured regions of the Middle East and the United States (in political discussions of the Middle East).

The Middle East’s prevalence in this study is poignant to the ongoing “War on Terror” in that region. As the data has shown, a great deal of stories was devoted to the war in Iraq, yet even these stories did not match the length of the stories that covered national events. The word length of stories with international content was significantly lower ($M = 282.6$) than national stories of the same
week \( (M = 355.5, \ p = .004) \). Although depth is a difficult variable to measure since it is subjective in nature, mere length can shed some light into the priority given to national stories. With a mean average of nearly 75 words for stories directly focused on domestic issues, it appears that the scope with which the news media analyzes international segments is much less in depth. Another interesting finding involving length is that of the discrepancy between the word count of international stories that involved the U.S. \( (n = 86, \ M = 297.9) \) and those that did not \( (n = 21, \ M = 220.0) \). Although these findings are not statistically significant \( (p = .122) \), it is noteworthy that this difference in length is similar to the disparity of national versus international stories. The length could be accounted for by the fact that most of the stories are accounts of the war in Iraq in which the U.S. holds a great stake.

One might argue that the Iraq war is of utmost importance for all nations to analyze due to its implication on world affairs. However, when addressing these top stories, the third research question is important to consider: “From what perspective is news coverage of international events given?” Since the U.S. was involved in most of the stories, the perspective of the nation in question, primarily Iraq in these initial articles, is limited to what the U.S. coverage allows. Out of the aforementioned twelve stories from the top of their programs, five gave the foreign nation a military perspective, three terrorism and one civilian. The remaining three stories were Congressional debates about the war which did not provide a perspective from the Iraqis; they were not mentioned as a people in any context. Of the total stories \( (n = 64) \) in the top four segments, the
qualification of “none given” code for perspective was applied nine times, and a total of twenty times in the entire data set, representing roughly 18.7% of the 107 international segments.

Other perspectives of the 64 stories in the top four segments were disproportionately distributed between the given codes. The standpoints of politics and terrorism shared the most frequent mentions, with twenty stories apiece in the top four. Nine were given a military view and civilian perspectives were in minority with five stories. Only one story in the entire data set involved the royal point of view as the leading perspective and this piece was buried within the sixth segment of an ABC broadcast. The infrequency of the civilian perspective was not limited to the top stories. In fact, only 16.8% of the 107 stories were presented from the angle of the common people \( (n = 18) \). This number is quite surprising, considering that a complete lack of perspective composed a higher percentage of the stories. Even as a secondary perspective, the civilian voice was only heard one more time for the entire analysis. The depiction of citizens of foreign nations as terrorists ranked quite highly throughout the stories, taking up almost a quarter of the total \( (n = 25, 23.3\%) \), with that number rising even higher (29%) when taking secondary perspectives into account. This depiction ranks only a few points behind the leading perspective of politics (25.2% as the primary perspective) and the aforementioned percentage for terrorism viewpoints matches the amount of total mentions of political perspective including secondary viewpoints \( (n = 31, N = 107, 29\%) \).
It is evident that the third research question can be answered with these results. The most common perspectives of foreign nations tend to center on political voices and equally the portrayal of international citizenry is heavily focused on terrorism. George Gerbner and his associates (1994) would likely affirm that this variety of coverage would help to cultivate a “mean world syndrome” in the minds of the media saturated American public by presenting them a foreign world full of terrorists and unfriendly governments. Furedi (2002) would doubtlessly also note that this depiction of the world outside US borders fosters the fear of foreign cultures that has been advanced of late by the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 and the ensuing media coverage.

The perspectives in question are not evenly distributed to all regions of the world. It was discovered that 84% of the segments that were given from a terrorism point of view occurred in the Middle East ($n = 21, p = .017$). Three more were set in the United States as political discussions of Middle Eastern affairs bringing up the collective percentage to 96%, while the remaining single story addressed a terrorism arrest in Europe. Another noteworthy discovery was that of the 55% stories that qualified for the “none given” category, eleven occurred in the Middle East ($n = 20$) and six more took place in the United States as discussion of the abovementioned region (combined 85%). The reality seems to show that the Middle East, an area that is wrought with violence, is given full responsibility for this fact, portrayed as terrorists or simply talked about without being given a voice.
Although the Middle East made up the large majority of all of the international stories \((n = 61, 57.0\%)\), interesting dimensions of perspective arise in the other regions analyzed by the data. For example, the segments that occurred in Eastern and Southeastern Asia \((n = 17, 15.8\%)\), six were from a political viewpoint, often as government critiques by U.S. politicians. Five segments were from a civilian perspective, mostly stories of deaths from “Bird Flu.” Four stories discussed business matters, including lengthy features on China’s business districts and one involved royalty while the last offered no perspective.

Contrary to the ideas held in Adams’ hierarchy of lives (1986) and suggested in Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* (1991) that Western European occurrences are considered more newsworthy than other non-U.S. regions, there were only seven segments that took place in that area \((6.5\%)\). Most of those stories \((n = 4, 57.1\%)\) were told from a civilian standpoint, while the others involved science \((n = 2, 28.6\%)\), politics \((n = 1, 14.3\%)\), business \((n = 1, 14.3\%)\), and the aforementioned tale from a terrorist perspective. The lack of presence of Western European stories does not discredit Adams’ (1986) hierarchy of worth of certain regions since his study analyzed reports of natural disasters. When looking at the content of all of the international stories, the lives lost in each region do show precedence given to Americans, in particular the servicemen and women who were killed abroad. Western Europe did not produce stories that could compete with the drama of the war in Iraq, as will be examined in the discussion section of this report.
The most underrepresented regions in this study were South and Central America and the entire continent of Africa, which had just a single story apiece \( n = 1, 0.9\% \). Both were stories of philanthropy, not that of the citizens of the area, but of Americans who have come to the region to aid locals. The first of these tales was of an American optometrist teaching women in Guatemala how to sell eyeglasses; the second chronicled wealthy American high school students who brought livestock to the needy in Kenya. Both stories gave the foreign nation a civilian voice, although the former used a business viewpoint for much of the dialogue. The segments were chiefly told from the standpoint of the visiting Americans rather than giving much depth to the perspectives of the native people. This infrequency of reporting events in South America is poignant as it echoes comments made in September 2006 by Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez stating that the United States neglects its Southern neighbors (Chavez, 2006). Additionally, this neglect was not restricted to South America given that the entire continent of Africa, although separated into two distinctive codes featured only one story for the duration of the research. The lack of coverage of African news is especially troubling considering significant happenings in Sudan during the time of the study. Africa ranked as the lowest value on the hierarchy of worth when Adams studied reports of lives lost in natural disasters (1989). He theorizes that there exists an inability of Westerners to identify with peoples who are physically unlike them or at least lack “social proximity” as tourism hubs might retain (p. 120). These ideas correlate with Anderson’s “Imagined Communities” (1991) determined by race or language commonalities. Inclusion
was not, however, based upon similarities between a nation’s culture and American culture. Air time was mostly devoted to actual U.S. participation in international events.

These revelations answer the fourth research question which asks, “To what extent does national network news coverage of international events focus primarily on stories that directly involve the United States?” With 80.4% of all of the international features that were broadcast in the two weeks of the study including United States interests ($n = 86$), the data shows that U.S. involvement is a strong determining factor of “world news” that makes the evening network broadcast.

As mentioned early in the section, twelve international stories took the rank of the leading segment of the broadcast. Of those top segments, all twelve directly involving the U.S. were set in either the Middle East or the United States. Upon analyzing the content of the aforementioned twelve stories, all involved the war in Iraq, either reporting troop activity in the region or political debate in the US Congress over the war. The perspective of the United States was evenly split between military and political the twelve stories were evenly split between the two regions along those lines with the former in Iraq and the latter in the United States. The second ordered segments totaled 13 and were also split between the Middle East and United States, this time more focused on the former with nine and four set in the latter. The top four segments (including those that were buried in certain ABC stories), only involved six reports that were outside of the two most covered regions.
Although the depth of stories did not vary significantly with the inclusion or exclusion of U.S. interests, the involvement of the United States makes up a great majority of the total stories. As mentioned above, of the 107 international stories, 80.4% incorporated the U.S. in their content ($n = 86$). This amount clearly shows the bias to report that which directly addresses this nation’s matters. The topics on which these segments focused were overwhelmingly those of War/Terrorism and Politics. The former topic is nearly completely centered on U.S. involved conflicts in the Middle East ($n = 35, 97.2$%), while more than half of the latter is composed of U.S. Congressional discussions of the same situations ($n = 14, 53.8$%). Although not statistically significant ($p = .163$) but worth noting, out of the 51 stories that included a mention of politics, not necessarily as the main topic, and included the U.S., nearly three quarters ($n = 38, 74.5$%) also involved aspects of war or terrorism, insinuating that these two topics go hand in hand in foreign lands. Also interesting in the matter of content, all 11 stories that claimed Individual as their main topic involved the United States in some way. As was indicated by the previous analysis, ten of these stories are short narratives of U.S. military personnel in CBS’s tributes. The eleventh segment told the story of a former U.S. marine that had returned to Iraq to bring aid to the children he had seen suffering there.

A segment such as the above mentioned is one that can be uplifting to viewers of international news filled with violence and bloodshed. It can also, however, perpetuate the conception of the United States as a patriarchal figure in the world. The fifth research question asks, “What dimensions of masculinity are
displayed in U.S. network news coverage of international events?” Masculinity in this sense is taken from the Connell’s (1987) concept of Hegemonic Masculinity which is explained as the diffusion of a dominant male ideology through all aspects of society. This definition includes the concept of patriarchy and perceived superiority that ensues from it. As Anderson (1991) states, a nation is created often by its perception of its separate identity from the rest of the world. The United States was well-known in the past for its policies of isolationism as it resisted entering the first and second World Wars and the development of strict immigration policies (Barker & Giles, 2004). Now, with its military deeply embroiled in international situations, this nation’s attitude about its position to and within the nations with which it deals is crucial to the depiction of these regions.

The first coded analysis of the individual sentences that included perspectives of both the U.S. and the foreign nation was enacted to record which nation received the status of subject. Of the 261 sentences that qualified for the analysis, \( n = 172 \) (65.9%) gave the United States the role of subject nation. Of these 172 sentences, \( n = 103 \) contained undertones of masculinity (59.9%). The code of masculinity, although proven reliable by the Inter Coder Reliability figures, is still one that requires a closer look. In order to better understand the type of language that was included in the category, analysis of the content of the particular sentences is necessary.

In the coding line by line instructions (Appendix C), the qualifications for masculinity were outlined for the coders. The explanation included an example of sentence that fit the criteria.
The coder will place a 1 for yes or 0 for no in the box labeled “Masculinity” after determining if the sentence contains the following criteria:

Masculinity is identified as discussion of power, patriarchy or domination. Here the United States would be described as aiding a lesser nation, teaching/training often in a fatherly way, or having control over a country’s assets or development.

Subjects that incurred these types of results were those of military training, philanthropic efforts and governmental critiques. From the text, types of this masculine rhetoric emerged. All could be classified as “roles” that the United States was portrayed as playing in world affairs. The most prevalent role was “United States as guide and trainer.” This position was most often enacted in rhetoric discussing the United States military training the Iraqis to adequately maintain their own police force in their nation. Examples of this included statements that defined the progress of US efforts:

“Our job is to enable them and, and [sic] create a circumstance so that they have sufficient political and economic and security capability and confidence to manage their own affairs…” Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense (ABC World News Tonight 12/22/2005).

Approximately 27,000 others [Iraqi troops] are deemed capable of taking a lead role in combat, but only with strong support from US forces (ABC News Tonight 11/15/2005).

Here US forces are taking the lead, clearing out insurgents and terrorists and for the first time in this region, large numbers of Iraqi forces move in to hold the area (NBC Nightly News, 11/15/2005).

Those [US] troops could be sent to Kuwait and kept ready to go back in if Iraqi forces fail to hold their own against the insurgency (CBS Evening News, 11/18/2005).

These examples display the US as teacher, trainer or overall support for an inferior military organization.
A second emergent role of the US is that of “generous provider.” The above mentioned philanthropic individual stories from Kenya and Guatemala fell into this category. Another sample of this rhetoric occurred in revisiting Pakistani earthquake victims:

“We’re doing this because it’s the right thing to do, and—and [sic] we, as Americans, always step up to help when people are in crisis and need humanitarian help across the world.” – Ms. Karen Hughes Special Envoy (NBC Nightly News, 11/15/2005).

The language of this story is notable, considering the US was originally criticized for minimal contributions to victims of the 2004 tsunami. The story of Virginia students sending cows to Kenya contained a rather patronizing statement that stood out in the article:

The kids could have simply raised cash and then sent those donations....but the reality is in this part of the world, the money would have been siphoned off partially to corruption and another significant amount would have been wasted on a popular vice here, booze (NBC Nightly News, 11/14/2005).

And the segment discussing Guatemalan women selling glasses for a US foundation had similar condescending overtones. “For the women, it's a life-changing opportunity to learn the fine art of sales,” the reporter explains (NBC Nightly News, 11/18/2007).

The third emergent category was that of the US as a critic of a foreign government. This occurred often as direct attacks from administration officials directed at the opposition nation. Examples of this included China in both a political and business sense:

“We encourage China to continue down the road of reform and openness because the freer China is at home, the greater the welcome it will receive abroad.” – President George W. Bush (NBC Nightly News, 11/16/2005).
Knockoffs, from everything, from watches to cars, counterfeiting costs US firms and estimated $250 billion in sales each year, and China is a major culprit (ABC World News Tonight, 11/17/2005).

This same reaction to governmental issues was directed toward voters during Iraqi elections.

The US used every inch of leverage it had here to get the Sunnis to join in the political process…(CBS Evening News, 12/20/2005).

As opposed to the Iraqi elections, involvement with the Afghanistan elections was presented as more subdued and only warranted mention of the attendance of Vice President Cheney and his wife.

A fourth category that served as an undertone for many of the stories with masculinity in their content was that of U.S. as aggressor. Examples of this include warning Iraq troops that the U.S. will be waiting in the wings to take over if they fail, and Bush’s comments regarding China and North Korea.

In a cautious provocation of China, Bush held up that country’s bitter rival Taiwan as a better model of freedom in the region… Such comments may irritate the Chinese ahead of the president’s weekend meetings in Beijing, but they underscore the administration’s desire to rein in China’s growing dominance of this region (NBC Nightly News, 11/16/2005).

But North Korea tricked America once and this White House insists the US won’t be fooled again (CBS Evening News, 11/16/2005)

These sentences are an appropriate introduction to the overall attitude of segments that describe international events, especially those that include US interests. Building upon significant findings, discussion of these results brings light to the general impression of the outside world projected by network news media.
CHAPTER THREE – CONNOTATIONS

Discussion

The research shows that there is still a significant dearth of international coverage in weekday network news programs. This raises a concern as to the message this absence of attention sends to the United States public about the necessary amount of consideration that should be paid to the world outside its borders. It is known from agenda-setting research (McCombs & Shaw 1972; Craft & Wanta, 2004) that public opinion about certain news topics are not necessarily shaped by the media, but the idea of what should be considered newsworthy is influenced.

McCombs and Shaw (1972) tested the theory of first level agenda-setting in which the public is not told what to think, but what to think about. The results of this research imply that the public is informed overwhelmingly about international stories only if they directly include the United States. This message is telling people to see the world through an American lens instead of seeing the nation in question from its own perspective. When this idea is sent to the second level of agenda-setting, the notion of framing of the issue becomes the question. Not only should we be seeing the world through the eyes of American political and military interests, but how does this perspective portray the issue?

The great concentration of international stories as the lead story of the news broadcast seemed to show heightened interest in the regions in these segments, but the data show that these stories always included direct U.S.
involvement and were usually told from the perspective of U.S. interests. The twelve stories were evenly split between military efforts in Iraq and political discussions of the war in the US Congress. The perspective of the foreign nation, in this case Iraq, is limited to passing mentions, and is presented in an often negative light. This skewed representation of the Middle East can add fuel to the growing distaste the United States public has for this region and aid apathy toward the people that live there. Evidence might be obtained through a polling of viewers of these broadcasts and how they feel about the residents of the Middle East. This apathy may mollify the public’s concern about the turmoil and destruction as it affects the citizens of the Middle East, but in-depth coverage of the cost to U.S. troops has caused public outcry about U.S. involvement in this region, but mostly to alleviate the loss of American lives.

Research question 1 yielded the answer that American news media looks at the outside world through the lens of conflict and government; the latter frequently consisting of the U.S. government discussing foreign policy, specifically concerning the war in Iraq. The high significance of this inequity displays the slanted view of the foreign world that is mainly told from a secondary perspective rather than through the voices of its citizenry. The topics that are covered outside of the context of war and political occurrences (which seemed to almost exclusively co-exist when the U.S. was involved), are limited in frequency, suggesting that the aforementioned subject matters are considered more newsworthy than international business, science or individual stories that might be of consequence to the U.S. and the world community.
However, it is not simply that conflict and politics (usually U.S. politics) dominate the networks’ coverage of international affairs, but also the reporting is limited chiefly to one specific conflict and political situation. The second research question asks for the regions that make up international exposure in these broadcasts and how these areas are treated. The results show that the Middle East overwhelmingly leads the world in network coverage, with the majority of its segments including direct references to the United States’ relationship to the area. As mentioned in the Results section, one might argue for the significance of goings-on in this region and the potential outcomes for the world community. However, the results that answer the second half of Research Question 2 display a typical trend of vague or nonexistent perspective assigned to the people of Iraq, Afghanistan and other included nations of this turbulent area. Without the voices of the inhabitants of the Middle East embroiled in this conflict, the filter through which the American public views this highly contested area is distorted by Western bias and does not give an accurate or complete picture of the situation.

The research shows that Latin America and Africa receive the least amount of coverage, making them the most under-represented regions in this research time window. The regions are not only limited to one segment apiece, but both segments are essentially narratives describing the charitable work of Americans in the areas. The fact that these segments are accounts of U.S. citizens’ patronage makes the existence of them in the research even more pejorative. Not only did these areas receive the least attention, they were only
considered newsworthy in relation to the endeavors of American philanthropists, thus giving their peoples lesser roles in the segments than that of the Americans in question. Since the Americans are given the primary voice in the stories, the nations of Kenya and Guatemala are treated with a certain level of patronization. For example, as Dr. Jordan Kassalow’s goal for women in Guatemala in the work of Scojo Foundation selling eyeglasses worldwide: “Kassalow gives 5 percent of US eyewear sales to support Scojo, but the plan is to let the women sell on their own” (NBC Nightly News, 11/18/2005). The women he discusses are given one opportunity to have their voices heard. The single line from a local woman named Yoli Garcia states, “My people are the people of these villages” (NBC, 2005). This statement does not relate directly to the story where the doctor is being celebrated for giving the prospect of selling his product to the women of this community. The phrase is merely a sound bite that does not lend itself to the opinions of those working with that opportunity, be they positive or negative.

An example of the nature with which Kenya’s was handled is given in the Results section, but a better way to put the gravity of this lack of coverage is to look at events that transpired in Africa at the time of the study. The ongoing human rights crisis in Darfur received no coverage during these weeks and has been conspicuously missing from broadcasts from its onset, despite international outcry (Knickmeyer, 2005). Another historical story was that of the first female president elected in Liberia, a story that was covered on PBS’ NewsHour at the time of its occurrence. Even in Latin America, a pressing election in Bolivia that
was set to tip the balance of economic practices in that nation was ignored by the commercial network news.

While Latin America and Africa were being talked about, Asia was being spoken to by President George W. Bush as he toured the area. Bush spoke to the inadequate civil rights appropriated to Chinese citizens, and these stories did not include a fixed perspective or response from the government or other officials. China did, however, receive an in-depth three part series of stories on ABC concerning business practices in the nation. These segments were laudable since they reveal varying perspectives of Chinese citizens and go far beneath the usually shallow discussion of a foreign nation. The length of these stories is indicative of the atypical style of these narratives since they consecutively numbered 459, 524, and 509 words when the mean of all international stories fell considerably lower than those figures at 282.6 words. Even with these exposés, important stories were still falling through the cracks in Chinese coverage. For example, the Man-made Disaster category was not once identified in the commercial news programs, but an oil spill that endangered the water supply of seven million people occurred in China, according to a NewsHour report on PBS (12/22/2005). Why this story did not even make a footnote in the news coverage of the region is inexplicable.

China was the only country in Eastern and Southeastern Asia to receive the in-depth breed of coverage of the “China Inc” reports, while the remaining reports included only brief mentions of South Korea related to President Bush’s visit, one story of Pakistan updating on earthquake relief, and two short
informational segments on Japanese affairs. All but the Japanese stories had direct US involvement while those that did not were of minimum length (62 & 40 words) and one was a buried segment. Although it would seem that that Japan is a country of great interest to the United States given the mutual exportation of culture and products between the two nations, events that occurred in Japan were given minimal attention.

The lack of press dedicated to Western European events was another surprising result of the analysis. Adams’ (1986) hierarchy of importance of nations would suggest that this area is given precedence over others due to the cultural and racial commonalities between the region and white America. It is important to note that Adams’ study was limited to coverage of natural disasters, not what might be considered newsworthy at any given time. Even European soldiers injured or killed in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan did not receive specific national assignments if they were mentioned at all; showing another lack of international perspective. These results are also related to the networks’ limited news budgets and what capacity the short broadcasts could hold in terms of international news – although perspective could be given to the foreign nation even within strict time parameters.

The third research question asks for the perspective given to the foreign regions that were portrayed in the segments. The results indicate that, as primary perspectives, political views led the field in mentions. Beaudoin and Thorson (2002) included this criticism of network news in their analysis, warning that the focus on the political sphere could result in a skewed perception of the
nations under discussion. For example, the depiction of a threatening or unstable government might malign the inhabitants of a nation who may have quite opposite mindsets from their politicians and have opinions that vary greatly from group to group. The opposite is just as salient, when a government is portrayed as sympathetic to US interests, while its people are less than enthusiastic about allying with the latter nation’s administration. An example of this is the repeated reports of Britain’s Prime Minister Tony Blair’s unwavering commitment to President Bush’s efforts stating that “we… here in Britain stand shoulder to shoulder with our American friends” (Silberstein, 2002, p 13), while British citizens protested Blair and Britain’s involvement in the “War on Terror.” The pictured painted by US media suggested that Britain was a strong ally despite the incongruity between its government and its people. An example from the data that has the same effect is that of Afghani election coverage from December 19th. Although establishing its first democratically elected parliament since 1969 was quite a milestone for the Middle Eastern nation, the coverage of this event temporarily smoke screened the turmoil and unrest that continues to this day in Afghanistan. The story did, however, put the US in a good light as Vice President Cheney and his wife attended the event that represented “true democracy just four years after the official fall of the Taliban” (NBC Nightly News, 12/19/2005). The attention paid to this revealed a certain level of self-congratulation that will be further discussed in terms of masculinity.

Another perspective that revealed the depiction of foreign peoples was that of terrorism. Although the political perspective was spread out on a
worldwide basis, the terrorism viewpoint was limited to the citizenry of the Middle East, the crux of the “War on Terror.” It is not surprising that the words “Arab” and “terrorist” often co-occurred in media even before the September 11th attacks and the Iraq war (Lind & Danowski, 1998). This concentration of one representation is considerable and the topic would benefit from a second level agenda setting analysis to reveal whether or not Americans instantly think of the Middle East when the word “terrorist” is spoken.

The Individual perspective was mostly limited to the profiles of US soldiers and philanthropists, but also included brief accounts of victims of Bird Flu. On the whole, stories from a civilian perspective were few and far between and the benefit of this point of view was mostly reserved for Americans. These results once more pose Adams’ (1986) question in the title of his research: “Whose lives count?” The tens of thousands of Iraqis killed or injured in the war consist of a footnote in the coverage by network news, but individual American soldiers in the same situation are given the label “heroes” as well as an entire segment dedicated to remembering their service. As in the philanthropy stories, local voices are subdued while American voices are given precedence and thus shape the interpretation of the events or region. The United States’ participation in a country is how viewers learn about that nation and often is the prerequisite for coverage at all.

The fourth research question has been briefly discussed in relation to the first two questions, but does warrant further attention. It is evident from the data that greater import had been placed on segments that directly involved the
United States than on those that were independent of it. This suggests that the network news actively pursues US interest pieces and largely minimizes the importance of world events that do not hold that direct relationship, regardless of their implications for the world community. With over 80% of the international segments containing US involvement, there is a significant gap between what is occurring in the world and what is being reported. Some segments included in the international category were actually set in the United States while international issues were discussed regarding foreign nations. It was decided to include these stories since the debates concerned nations that were sometimes given a perspective thus qualifying the segments for international status. The fact that at least six stories of the 107 that were deemed international could have been dismissed as national is a meaningful indicator of the importance of US involvement for the prospect of a story to make it to the nightly news broadcast among the major networks. Another series of stories that had the possibility of eluding inclusion were the ten segments that consisted of tributes to fallen or noteworthy servicemen and women in the US military. These were given international status due to the abroad setting of the personnel. If these two sets of stories had not been included, merely 91 international stories would have been present for analysis in the study, yielding a mere 28.8% international coverage as opposed to the 33.9% that the 107 stories had produced. US involvement still played a large part in the consideration of the remaining segments for broadcast and the difference in length (which could be translated in some sense to depth) between those that were independent of US interests and those stories that
provided a connection was not statistically significant but still palpable. The fact that the mean length of the 86 US involved story was over 75 words more than the mean length of the 21 that did not include American association, suggests that not only are the former more frequent, but they are also bestowed with deeper attention.

Since the United States’ participation in foreign affairs deems stories more newsworthy and the perspective is usually told through the American voice, what that voice says is of great import. The fifth research question deals with the notion of masculinity in the form of hegemonic patriarchy. The results give us examples of the emergent categories of US in the subject role within situations more often than not, leaving the foreign nation as an object. This can be compared to the dominant/submissive paradigm of any relationship. The United States is the active member of the relationship, enacting change in the sometimes passive world. The world is depicted as often defiant and the news will scold nations if they do not comply with US requests or assertions. The quote in the Results section from December 20th CBS Evening News report which explains the effort of the US to garner participation in election is a pertinent example of this patriarchal attitude toward resistance to US policy from foreign nations. The treatment of stories from China, although often in-depth, is another instance of the US as critical fatherly figure, warning China to shape up lest it incur American opposition.

By treating the outside world as a recipient of US aggression, assistance, training and criticism rather than giving it its own individual legitimacy without
American participation, the network news programs disseminate a message of ethnocentricity. In these broadcasts, the planet is divided into the United States and the world and the latter has little importance without the involvement of the former. This separation can breed the same idea that masculinity in a gender sense provokes: that the United States is the stronger, better and more important nation while the rest of the world is the weaker feminine with less to offer without the aid of America. Feminist standpoint theory posits that the dominant group in a position of power does not need to learn about the ways and needs of those who are ‘below’ them, while those who are subjugated must know the dominant culture in order to survive (Hartsock, 1983). American educational systems do not require much world history knowledge (Education Commission of the States, 2002), and network news generally does not delve deeply into the background of the nations that are covered on their segments. This sends a message that, in conjunction with standpoint theory, the US considers itself the dominant ideology in the world and although it will extend its hand to aid or train foreign nations in order to help them emulate superior American military, government and business practices, the US does not see a need to understand those whom it assists. The US is the more powerful nation and other nations are urged learn the ways of America in order to survive in the world rather than vice versa.

Limitations

The most significant limitation of this work was the inability due to time restraints to use the videotaped broadcasts. Future research would benefit from
the visual imagery that accompanies the text of the reports. Even the least inflammatory coverage can be skewed with a concurrent image that stereotypes the region in question. As Petty and Cacioppo (1986) alluded to in their Elaboration Likelihood Model, most television viewers would be more susceptible to peripheral cues such as violent imagery and short headlines rather than fully process the facts of the story as told through correspondents and interviewees. This research would suggest that no matter how in-depth a segment might go into explaining foreign circumstances, the accompanying image or abbreviated headline (e.g. “Upsurge in violent protests in China” CBS 11/14/2005; “Ready or not? Iraqis policing Iraqis” ABC 11/15/2005) may have the greater impact on the viewer. A follow-up to this study would require the analysis of the tapes to identify the tone of images and the correlation or incongruence with the spoken report. The tapes would also yield a time length for each individual segment, something that had to be surmised by word counts in the current study.

Another theory that might agree with using visual context as a back-up for transcript data is Cultivation theory (Gerbner, et al. 1994). Because Gerbner and his colleagues focused exclusively on the effects of televised media on perceptions of real world statistics, the visual aspect of network news segments are quite valuable to understanding how these perceptions can be exaggerated. The research has already revealed a correlation between terrorist perspective and the Middle East. Coupling that verbal connection with images of bomb blasts, rubble and protests against the US on daily news reports, the stereotype of an Islamic Arab as terrorist is continually perpetuated in the minds of the
American public. A content analysis of the types of images that co-occur with segments in a given region would aid understanding of how the world is presented to Americans.

Extra time would have also allowed for a complete comparative analysis of PBS’s *NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer to the network news broadcasts. The fact that *NewsHour* is twice the length of CBS, ABC, and NBC news programs, and also lacks the commercial interruption that is necessary on those networks, allows for a unique style of reporting that is greatly different from that of the networks. PBS devotes a short period at the onset of the program to address the top stories of the day in what is labeled the *News Summary*. This is comparable to an abridged version of the entire network broadcasts, except that it often includes quick international subjects that are not usually covered by the “Big Three.” After the conclusion of the *News Summary*, the PBS news program contains three or four *Focus* pieces; in-depth reports and editorials of top stories, complete with interviews with interested parties. *Focus* stories from the time of the study ranged from slightly over 500 to nearly 3000 words, compared with an average of 330.8 words in the network data set. Evidently, much greater depth can be achieved with this amount of time and absence of commercial interruption. The reason that the lack of this analysis is considered a limitation is the fact that the short segments that reached the *News Summary* were peppered with an array of topics and perspectives that were not seen on the network news. For example, a story concerning Saddam Hussein’s trial made it onto all four news broadcasts but only *NewsHour* included direct quotes from Hussein about his alleged abuse
while the networks just summarized his statements as him “throwing a fit” during the trial (CBS Evening News; 12/21/2005). Also unique about _NewsHour’s_ coverage was that of certain nations that received no attention from network news such as Bolivia, Cuba, France, Australia and even a _Focus_ segment on Liberia. PBS makes an interesting foil for the three network news half-hour programs because it seems to encapsulate the potential for American news and could be held as an example for how to approach the array of international events in a thorough and balanced manner.

Another inclusion for comparison that the study fails to examine is that of the increasingly popular 24-hour news networks such as Fox News Channel, CNN Headline News, and MSNBC. On these channels, more in-depth coverage takes place as entire hours are spent discussing one topic. Networks such as these tend to give voice to a great deal of editorial opinions however, making them less thought of as objective news sources as the “Big Three” evening news programs are considered. With the pre-existing knowledge of bias, it is difficult to criticize the channels from presenting the stories from a skewed angle since that is the nature of their format.

While the data itself could have been expanded to include 24 hour news networks, PBS and visual imagery, the approach to analyzing the data proved quite successful with a mix of predetermined and emergent codes. The inter-coder reliability for these variables proved acceptable, even for the subjective content analyses of individual sentences for shades of masculinity. Nevertheless, there is always a question of validity with qualitative research such
as the masculinity portion of the study and fears of coder bias as well as researcher bias when formulating the emergent categories mar the objectivity of the results. In spite of this, the findings that came from this analysis were of solid foundation and there are numerous examples within the text of the transcripts to support the categories and figures that resulted from the codes.

To improve the validity of the masculinity analysis, the researchers might have benefited from use of a computerized content analysis program that looked at word groupings and subject/order assignments within the sentences. However, the mechanical nature of the computer program lends itself to error and can miss subtle cues that are only perceptible when consuming the sentence as a gestalt message. It is difficult to ascertain whether the sentence by sentence analysis could have been perfected through different codes or methods, but the results suggest that a suitable method was employed and, with a reasonable amount of specific citation, the findings can be defended as valuable.

A final limitation is that of the weeks chosen for the study. Because these were consecutive days, not weeks constructed from random Monday through Friday broadcasts over a multi-month span, the reports were limited to news that was occurring at the time of the study. Network news broadcasts have an obligation to follow up on stories that had been presented in previous programs and over a week’s span, many of the international segments were restricted to retellings of the same circumstances only with slight progression. The benefit of this type of linear analysis was that the researchers could compare stories from
network to network and also were able to pinpoint the stories that were omitted from the broadcasts over that week’s span. A constructed week might have given a greater array of regions and topics, but the comparison between the November and December weeks revealed similar trends in the types of stories and the regions addressed.

The proximity of the two weeks is an additional concern, since limited change had occurred in that period of time in Iraq and Afghanistan with regard to the US led conflict in that region. Critics may propose that a week in early 2006 may have provided greater contrast for the investigation. However, the selection of the two months went beyond mere convenience; they were chosen for their varying roles for the business angle of the networks. November is “sweeps” month, when the networks seek to obtain their highest ratings and determine which types of programming are most desired by the viewing public. The dates in December, on the other hand, made up the week preceding the Christmas holiday when programming tends to be more optimistic to match the overall ambience of the season. If time had been permitting, it would likely have been beneficial to add a third week of broadcasts in a completely separate month that could have added further contrast to the frequency and type of international news that is shown on any given day. The ideal would have been to construct a week out of random days throughout a variety of months. From the time frame available came data that still holds water despite the passage of time. The highest frequency international events reported, the two conflicts in the Middle East, are yet to become outdated as the war goes on. The information from this
study provides a noteworthy cross-section of American network news as it continues to give an incomplete picture of the world.

**Implications for future research**

The need to analyze the state of international news is palpable in today’s globalized economy, and the findings of this study show a need to examine the possibility for potential improvements and further analysis. More attention paid to the rhetorical separation of the United States from its world may shed light onto how the podium of the news media can be utilized to blur these borders while teaching its viewers to understand and respect the myriad of cultures that inhabit the world.

Riffe and Budianto presented their findings in 2001 months before the September 11th attacks of the same year. The researchers had found that there had been a steady decline of devotion to international events since the early 1990’s and that what remained was rife with “concentration on disruption and the sensational” such as “coups and earthquakes” (p. 28). Since the terrorist attacks, there has been a surge of international stories, yet, as indicated by the research, it is limited to national interests.

In order to create a more inclusive network news industry it would be necessary to lengthen the broadcast from a half hour to an hour with limited advertising interruptions. The advertising itself is also emblematic of the problem of merging news with business. James W. Carey (2002) suggests that to ensure
the prevention of pre-selected topics, the news must become independent from
the profit-seeking business of the network.

The reform of journalism will only occur when news organizations are
disengaged from the global entertainment and information industries that
increasingly contain them. That is the only way of removing journalism
from the profit expectations and opportunity costs that rationalize global
enterprise (p. 89).

This separation would aid the objectivity of reporting to return, and once news
editors are less concerned with ratings and what it is assumed that the public
wants, the public can get the information that it needs in order to understand the
world around them. Without an independent media, a Catch 22 of supply and
demand will continue. Broadcasters claim that the American public does not
want to see international stories so they will not cover them and thus the
audience will not develop curiosity, interest or understanding and will report this
apathy when asked if they want to see additional international coverage.

Research into the business side of news can expose where the line blurs
between news and marketing and whose opinions dictate what international
stories merit airtime and from where. It is interesting that a story such as the
election of the Bolivian President on December 19th and 20th which was covered
extensively on NewsHour, did not receive a mention on any of the three network
programs. The new President, Socialist Evo Morales, had continually denounced
the United States' foreign policy in Latin America during his campaign, according
to PBS's December 20th report. It is necessary to ask if this was a motivating
factor in keeping this story from making network airwaves. Studies into what
does not make it onto the evening news (Darfur in particular) and analysis of
deciding factors could expose gatekeeping on a grand scale and would further promote the argument for a free press separated from corporate interests.

In an age of globalization and international conflict, now more than ever it is imperative for Americans to develop an understanding of the world at large. When one sees images of demonstrators in the streets of a foreign nation shouting protests and burning US flags, can one truly pass judgment without understanding the reasoning for such dissidence? Ignorance of foreign cultures, customs and beliefs is not necessarily out of the hands of the individual. A person can easily attain information through written and electronic resources in the information age, but many are not willing or able to personally research something that is unfamiliar or uncomfortable. Media can serve a negative purpose by asking the questions of foreign affairs and then as quickly dismissing them, giving their audience no more motivation to learn about the complicated nature of the world. Worse still, with perspectives minimized or eliminated, questions to the ideas of foreign citizens are never asked and their lives are diminished to collateral damage in the movement of Western democracy.

American nationalism is powerful and inspirational, but it also dangerous since it can isolate the US from the rest of the world. Affirmations that the United States is “#1” or “the best country in the world” are uttered without question while a stream of images of a violent outside world flood into US homes. Some Americans may believe that the United States is the only country where one can have freedom because they know only of political turmoil out in the world and have not ever learned about other democracies with perhaps even greater
freedoms than the US. The National Geographic Study (2006) showed that young Americans (18 - 24yr-olds) were not only unsure about geographic locations or international events, they also tend to overestimate statistics about the U.S.

Choosing from four possible answers, three in ten respondents (31%) accurately say the U.S. population falls within the range of 150 million to 350 million, in keeping with the 2002 study. The Census Bureau currently estimates the total U.S. population to be over 298 million. As in 2002, three in ten respondents put the U.S. population at an astounding one to two billion people, and an equal number estimate the U.S. population to be in the range of 750 million to one billion (p. 30).

The report also found that 70% of those participating had never traveled abroad, something the researchers found to be detrimental to answers on international questions. Those who had traveled abroad, as well as those who used secondary news sources (such as the Internet) or had college experience scored better on the complete test (p. 11).

Many Americans do not have the funding to take a trip outside of the U.S. but others may be hesitant to travel with the negative images and fear tactics used by media painting the world outside the U.S. as embroiled in conflict and above all dangerous. Although there are “bad news” stories to report (Riffe and Budianto, 2001), international news should not be bounded by only “if it bleeds it leads” segments. It is an obligation of the news to use its platform to inform the audience of the whole picture as much as is feasible. It would be impossible to present every international occurrence of the day, especially not in the standard half-hour news broadcast. Nonetheless, televised news can have the potential to present a variety of topics from a variety of regions, particularly if the programs are expanded to hour-long broadcasts.
Commercial network news is now a profit-making business and it is questionable if that status allows it to continue as an official public service. As with any other communication source with an overarching and decision-making media company, there are restrictions on what is acceptable to broadcast for the public to consume. Although the world can be a profitable place for businesses that seek to outsource and produce their products, certain international affairs may not be seen as beneficial for public knowledge. Although media sources can claim that American audiences are not really interested in international affairs, the duty to report the facts remains an adage of journalism. In order to usher the average American into the global age, the news may have to share in the great responsibility of educating the nation about the outside world and to balance depictions of fearful and dangerous environments with stories that do not bleed. Perhaps the integrity of commercial network news can be preserved by helping the American public to view the world through a neutral lens and to watch with interest, compassion and inclusion.
APPENDIX A
CODESHEETS
**CODESHEET A**

News Segment Coverage  

Network:  
- NBC (1)  
- ABC(2)  
- CBS (3)

Date:  / /2005  
Day of week:  M (1)  T (2)  W (3)  TH (4)

List sequentially as each segments appear beginning at the point the program starts

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CODESHEET B

News Segment Coverage

Network: NBC (1)  ABC (2)  CBS (3)

Date: _____ / _____ /2005

Day of week: M(1)  T(2)  W(3)  TH(4)  F(5)

ID Number: __________  Segment Number: __________  L

__________________________

Segment Topics:

☐ War/ Terrorism  ☐ Natural Disaster  ☐ Man-made Disaster  ☐ Religion  ☐ Individual
☐ Business  ☐ Human Suffering  ☐ Politics  ☐ Science  ☐ Education

☐ Other: ____________________

__________________________

Geographic Region:

☐ Setting  ☐ Involved Countries: ____________________________

__________________________

Perspective: ☐ If other, specify: ____________________________

__________________________

U.S. Involvement:

☐ U.S. Mentioned  ☐ Context (If other, specify: ____________________________

__________________________
### CODESHEET C

**U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN SPECIFIC SENTENCES**

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APPENDIX B

CODEBOOK
Codebook

Codes:

RQ1:
Types of stories:

A) Does the segment describe scenes of war/ conflict or acts of terrorism?
   Yes-1    No-2

B) Does the segment describe a natural disaster {drought, storms, earthquakes}? 
   Yes-1    No-2

C) Does the segment describe a man-made disaster {includes transportation accidents, chemical spills, etc}? (NTVS, 340)
   Yes-1    No-2

D) Does the segment describe a religious context {changes in religious leadership, public vs. state prayer, etc}? 
   Yes-1    No-2

E) Does the segment cover a story of individual interest {stories that relate a personal or family experience}?
   Yes-1    No-2

F) Does the segment describe issues of business or industry?
   Yes-1    No-2

G) Does the segment depict human suffering {genocide, famine, disease}? 
   Yes-1    No-2

H) Does the segment describe political occurrences {treaties, changes in leadership, etc}? 
   Yes-1    No-2

I) Does the segment describe issues science, medicine and technology?
   Yes-1    No-2

J) Does the segment describe issues of education?
   Yes-1    No-2

Other –  
1-Judicial  4. Charity/philanthropy
2 – Women’s Rights  5. Culture
3 - Royalty

RQ2:
Geographic Regions

A) Setting:
   Eastern Europe (01)
   Eastern & South Eastern Asia {China, Japan, Mongolia, Thailand, Indonesia, etc} (02)
   The Middle East (03)
   Northern Africa {Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Somalia, Sudan, etc.} (04)
   North America {United States, Canada, Mexico} (05)
   Southern Africa {South Africa, Madagascar, Zimbabwe, etc.} (06)
   South & Central America (07)
Western Asia {Russia, Former Soviet States, Turkey} (08)
Western Europe (09).

B) **Involved nations:**
Please record all nations that are mentioned within this story.

**RQ3:**
Perspective of foreign nation:
- Political (01)
- Terrorism (05)
- Royalty (02)
- Military (03)
- Civilian (04)

Other: Business (06) Science (07)

**RQ4:**
**U.S. Involvement**
- U.S. mentioned: Yes (1)
  - No (2)
  - If YES, how is U.S. mentioned:
    - Presidential – (04)
    - Political (07)
    - Military - (05)
    - Business (08)
    - Civilian -- (06)

Other – **Provide a secondary context from the above listed or:**
- Judicial (01)
- Women’s Rights (02)

**RQ5:**
**Masculinity (Use only if answered YES to RQ4)**

Provide any sentence from the story that discusses the United States.
1. Give the sentence an ID# (typically from 1-10, which coded sentence it is from that segment).
2. Identify whether the United States (01) or the other nation discussed (02) is the subject in the sentence rather than the object.
3. Answer whether or not the story contains masculine rhetoric. (1 = yes, 0 = no)
3. Supply a verbatim transcript of the sentence in the space provided.

(If sentence is lengthy, highlight it within the passage and make a note of it on the codesheet)
APPENDIX C

CODING

LINE BY LINE

INSTRUCTIONS
Coding Line By Line Instructions

The initial sheet (Codesheet A) is designed to list all of the segments within a news broadcast. The coder will enter the length in words, the title of the segment and whether it is a national or international story.
Only international stories are coded on the second sheet (Codesheet B).

RQ1 – Answer yes and no and then circle what you consider to be the main topic -

A) Answer yes if the news story mentions war or terrorism; either current or historic.
B) “ ” mentions a natural disaster(s).
C) “ ” mentions an accident or disaster that is of human cause, such as those involving machines, vehicles or “man-made” chemicals.
D) “ ” mentions religion as a factor of the story, such as religious zealotry, religious leaders or the influence of religion on some other aspect of the area.
E) “ ” is what many would call a “human interest” piece, involving individual experiences.
F) “ ” mentions a corporate interest such as mergers, outsourcing, and industrial development.
G) “ ” mentions human suffering not directly caused by disaster (man-made or natural) but by economic or political factors such as poverty (leading to famine that a drought might worsen) or genocide.
H) “ ” mentions political happenings in an area such as changes in leadership, elections, or peace negotiations.
I) “ ” mentions medical, scientific or technological advances or discoveries in the area discussed or having such topics affect that area.
J) “ ” mentions education as a factor in the area.

Other: Judicial – international or foreign courts are the main focus of the story
Women’s rights – this cause is the main focus of the story.

RQ2- Pick the region in where the story takes place and then list the other countries/areas involved.

RQ3- Perspective is the viewpoint from which the story is told and the main figures mentioned.

- Political (01) The major players in the story are political figures such as a president, ambassador or member of parliament.
- Royalty (02) A king, queen, emir, czar or other monarch is given the viewpoint for the nation
• Military (03) The nation’s military and/or ranking officers are the main focus of the story.
• Civilian (04) The common peoples of a nation are given the viewpoint.
• Terrorism (05) Extremists and terrorists are the main focus of the story.

Other: **Provide a secondary context from the above listed or:**
- Business (06)
- Science (07)

None Given (00) – the nation is discussed as an object with no representation from its members.

RQ4 – *If the US is mentioned in the segment, go on to answer the subset; if not, STOP-coding is complete.*

The context in which the U.S. is given involvement depends once again on perspective:
1) Presidential – a visit or simply a statement from the U.S. president or vice-president.
2) Military – U.S. forces are/have been expect to be present in nation/area or spokesperson for the military is quoted as the primary source.
3) Civilian – U.S. citizens are involved in area (such as in humanitarian aid, sporting events, hostages, etc.)
4) Political – U.S. politicians such as members of Congress or Ambassadors are the major players in the story.
5) Business – U.S. businesses’ involvement overseas are the greatest factors in the story.

Other – **Provide a secondary context from the above listed or:**
- Judicial – the US courts are the main perspective
- Women’s Rights – US patrons of this cause are the largest context.

RQ5 – *Only if answered “yes” to RQ4*

**All answers should be recorded on Codesheet C**

For the last question, the coder should record each sentence that mentions the United States along with the other nation. Sometimes the U.S. will be referred to as “it,” “us,” “the administration,” or simply “President Bush.”

**The coder will identify whether the United States or the other nation(s) discussed is given the subject role in the sentence.**

*Masculinity levels depend on language used in the segment.*
Coder will enter 1 for the United States as subject and 2 for the other nation as subject.
Subject vs. Object verbs – who is doing the action (subj) and who is receiving (obj).
Example: The United States had peace talks with Iran. (1)
Vs.
Iran had peace talks with the United States. (2)

The coder will place a 1 for yes or 0 for no in the box labeled “Masculinity” after determining if the sentence contains the following criteria:
Masculinity is identified as discussion of power, patriarchy or domination.
Here the United States would be described as aiding a lesser nation, teaching/training often in a fatherly way, or having control over a country’s assets or development.

Example: The United States troops are working to bring the Iraqi police and army to an acceptable level before they are left in control of the nation.
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