

U.S. ELITE NEWSPAPERS' PRE- AND POST-TSUNAMI COVERAGE, 2003-
2006: A CASE STUDY OF SRI LANKA

A dissertation presented
to the faculty of
the Scripps College of Communication of Ohio University

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Renuka Suryanarayan

August 2008

This dissertation entitled
U.S. ELITE NEWSPAPERS' PRE- AND POST-TSUNAMI COVERAGE, 2003-
2006: A CASE STUDY OF SRI LANKA

by

Renuka Suryanarayan

has been approved for
the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism
and the Scripps College of Communication by

Anne M. Cooper

Professor of Journalism

Gregory J. Shepherd

Dean, Scripps College of Communication

ABSTRACT

RENUKA, SURYANARAYAN, Ph.D., August 2008, Mass Communication

U.S. ELITE NEWSPAPERS' PRE- AND POST-TSUNAMI COVERAGE, 2003-2006: A CASE STUDY OF SRI LANKA (153 pp.)

Director of Dissertation: Anne M. Cooper

This study's focus, the tragic December 26, 2004, Indian Ocean tsunami, took more than 31,000 lives in Sri Lanka alone. All 543 stories about the island nation in 3 elite and influential U.S. newspapers—*The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Christian Science Monitor*—were analyzed 18 months before and 18 months after the tsunami (excluding the tsunami itself) by comparing *Keesing's Record of World Events* (the “menu”) to covered events (the “diet”).

Results showed that 43% of pre and 76% of post-tsunami *Keesing's* events were covered. Military/defense was the number 1 topic both pre and post-tsunami. After grouping 4 topics into a violence dimension, the researcher found a four-fold increase in the violence coverage post-tsunami, due to a sharp increase in actual violence.

Research questions addressed 3 levels of the Shoemaker and Reese Hierarchy of Influences model. Regarding Level 2 (news routines), results indicated a spike in coverage on the anniversary of the tsunami, December 26, 2005. Regarding Level 3 (the organization), the study examined organizational differences, Level 3 of the Shoemaker and Reese Hierarchy of Influences model.

Each news organization's coverage of Sri Lanka was found to be unique, reflecting different newsroom policies and different economic realities.

In addition to many more newsworthy events being covered post-tsunami, the significant post-tsunami increase in discretionary coverage — feature stories, editorials, and local news — likewise shows a heightened attention to Sri Lanka. Finally, the study found that U.S. elite newspapers had more prominent (e.g., page 1) coverage of Sri Lanka post-tsunami than pre-tsunami. In other words, the tragedy seems to have pushed Sri Lanka onto the media agenda. Thus this study posits the addition of a new element, a (cataclysmic) event itself, to Level 4 (extra-media influences) of the Shoemaker and Reese model.

Approved: _____

Anne M. Cooper

Professor of Journalism

To my mother,
Kuppuswamy, Kasturi (1926–2008)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have to express my deepest gratitude to several people who encouraged and supported me. Many inspired this work. My greatest appreciation goes first to Dr. Anne Cooper-Chen, my academic adviser, committee chair, and mentor. From the first day of my arrival in Athens for my doctoral program, she has given her scholarship, time, and encouragement most generously. Her smiling patience and cheerful mentorship were precious gifts that made my days at Ohio University memorable.

My gratefulness is extended to my committee members Dr. Hong Cheng, Dr. Drew McDaniel, and Dr. Patricia Weitsman for their valuable comments. Always proud to be a Scrippster, I shall remain thankful for having been a student at the E. W. Scripps School of Journalism.

I began work on this research when Ohio University was at its blooming best, in the summer of 2007. But for the encouragement and support from my colleagues on the beautiful campus of CalPolyPomona in Los Angeles, the completion of this dissertation would not have been possible.

Particularly, I could not have completed this work without the assistance of my husband Suri and my daughter Jayanthi. I must express a special thanks to my son-in-law Dave for encouraging me to complete this project. I thank them for their crucial support during tense and frustrating moments. Last but not the least, I owe special thanks to my mother without whose support I would not have reached a doctoral program.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract.....	iii
Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgments.....	vi
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures.....	x
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2 Related Studies.....	11
Chapter 3 Method.....	41
Chapter 4 Results.....	56
Chapter 5 Discussions and Conclusions.....	87
References.....	102
Appendix A.....	126
Appendix B.....	127
Appendix C.....	129
Appendix D.....	132
Appendix E.....	135
Appendix F.....	136
Appendix G.....	137
Appendix H.....	139
Appendix I.....	140
Appendix J.....	141
Appendix K.....	142

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: Timeline of the sampled periods, pre-tsunami and post-tsunami.....	46
Table 2: Stories sampled in the pre-tsunami (PRE) and the post-tsunami (POST) periods by newspaper	48
Table 3: Overall coder agreements calculated with Simple Percent Agreement (SPA) and by Scott’s Pi.....	55
Table 4: Sri Lanka frequencies, percentage of coverage, and story averages (per day and per month) by newspaper.....	58
Table 5: Sri Lanka stories during two periods by newspaper: Increase in post-tsunami coverage.....	60
Table 6: Included and excluded Sri Lanka pre-tsunami events by newspaper	76
Table 7: Rank order frequencies and percentages of pre-tsunami Sri Lanka topics by newspaper.....	66
Table 8: Rank order frequencies and percentages of post-tsunami Sri Lanka topics by newspaper.....	68
Table 9: Violent and non-violent Sri Lanka topics in pre and post-tsunami coverage overall.....	71
Table 10: Violent and non-violent Sri Lanka topics in pre and post-tsunami coverage by newspaper.....	71
Table 11: Pre and post-tsunami coverage of non-Keesing’s Sri Lanka stories.....	74
Table 12: Overall prominence for journalistic markers by photos, graphics, placement, and length in pre and post-tsunami Sri Lanka stories.....	80

Table 13: Prominence for journalistic markers by photos, graphics, placement, and length in pre and post-tsunami Sri Lanka stories by newspaper.....	81
Table 14: Frequencies for prominence scores based on journalistic markers by total, by newspaper, and by time period for the sampled newspapers.....	83
Table 15: A summary of the answers to research questions and the hypothesis test of Sri Lanka coverage	84
Table 16: Pre-tsunami Sri Lanka coverage by newspaper: Universe of events matches vs. non-matches.....	95
Table 17: Post-tsunami Sri Lanka coverage by newspaper: Universe of events matches vs. non-matches	96

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: Sri Lanka anniversary frequencies December 25-27, 2005, compared to preceding-succeeding days.....	64
Figure 2: Included and excluded Sri Lanka post-tsunami events by newspaper.....	78
Figure 3: Pre and post-tsunami Sri Lanka stories matching Keesing's events and those that did not match Keesing's.....	98

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

It's very difficult, perhaps impossible, from the outside to understand the conflicting undertones that go through you as a journalist. Flying out, I'm saying to myself, "They're talking about death tolls that are practically impossible to imagine." At the same time, you are saying to yourself, "What a story."

Dan Rather of CBS News reporting from Sri Lanka after the 2004 tsunami.

(Steinberg, 2005)

At 7:58:53 a.m. local time on December 26, 2004, approximately 100 miles off Banda Aceh on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia, the largest earthquake since 1964 erupted; it caused a sequence of waves moving at speeds of up to 500 miles per hour to hit the shores of Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, India, and Africa (Ramos & Piper, 2005). With varying intensity, the disaster affected 12 countries (see map, Appendix A): Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Maldives, Malaysia, Thailand, Seychelles, Tanzania, Somalia, and Kenya (see Appendix B for death toll).

The United States, among many other countries, rushed in aid and relief measures ("Tsunami reconstruction," 2006). The U.S. assistant secretary for South and Central Asian economic affairs has said that the policy of the United States with regard to Sri Lanka is to give highest priority to tsunami reconstruction; U.S. tsunami aid for Sri Lanka was \$134.6 million. The Sri Lankan

reconstruction will cover emergency reconstruction (health, water, food, and shelter projects), employment aid, and assistance for rural development (Boucher, 2006).

U.S. media covered the disaster extensively. Within weeks, U.S. media brought places such as Banda Aceh in Indonesia, Tirukkovil in Sri Lanka, and Nagapattinam in India into viewers'/readers' minds. Downman (2005), who interviewed reporters covering the tsunami, quoted an Australian reporter as saying that he found 300-500 journalists at the height of the coverage in Banda Aceh.

Disaster reporting in the U.S. news media has inspired researchers to study its various facets (Adams, 1986; Gaddy & Tanjong, 1986; Larson, 1983; Sood, Stockdale, & Rogers, 1987; Stevenson & Cole, 1984; Van Belle, 2000). The dramatic nature of disasters and their impact make disasters newsworthy (Van Belle, 2000). Moreover, media coverage has implications in human terms, since "every *New York Times* article on a foreign disaster correlates with approximately \$1.2 million in U.S. aid" (Van Belle, 2000, p. 50). Research has shown that, of the already limited U.S. international coverage, the Third World¹ is least covered (Larson, 1983). Speaking of media attention in his book *Public Opinion*, Walter Lippmann (1949) observed:

¹ Applied during the Cold War to less developed countries, the term is still used, but has become outdated following the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Second World (McLean, 1996). Larson (1983) and several post-Cold War researchers referred to the "Third World," but this paper will use the term "developing nations" unless quoting researchers' terminology.

The press . . . is like the beam of a searchlight that moves restlessly about, bringing one episode and then another out of darkness into vision. Men cannot do the work of the world by this light alone. (p. 229)

Purpose

How does the media searchlight function regarding media disaster coverage about the developing world? The objective of this research is to see if and how a disastrous event can act as an extrinsic influence on the U.S. news diet. It will study the relationship between properties of events—the menu—and properties of reports of events—the diet (Rosengren, 1974). Three elite newspapers with different geographic emphases—*The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Christian Science Monitor*—will provide the diet of potential news stories and *Keesing's Record of World Events* monthly editions will provide the menu. The primary aim is to see if the extrinsic influence of the tsunami led to more and different non-tsunami coverage of news (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996) from Sri Lanka long after the disaster reporting was done. Once on the agenda, does a low-profile country revert to near invisibility in U.S. media? Other than the tsunami, Sri Lanka has minimal connections with the United States.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka (literally a Sanskrit word meaning “resplendent land”), a socialist republic, is an island to the south of India in the Indian Ocean. Within 65,610 square kilometers, it has a population of 20,222,240 made up of various ethnic groups including Sinhalese, Tamils, and Muslims. The people belong to

religious groups such as Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, and Christians. A civil war between the Tamils and the Sinhalese-dominated government has been going on for decades (“Sri Lanka: Economy,” 2006). In 2002, there was a ceasefire. In 2006, however, tensions rose again in Sri Lanka. As Kurukulasuriya (2006) states, the billions of dollars in aid for the tsunami have not been used because of problems over the amount to be given to the north and east provinces controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE).

Ethnic conflict

The LTTE leads a group of Tamil-speaking Sri Lankans who have been fighting the government for a separate state since 1983. In the 20 years that followed, 65,000 deaths have been caused by the civil war between the government and the LTTE, despite a peace agreement brokered by Norway in 2002 (Sri Lanka: Economy, 2006). The LTTE claim to represent the Tamils, who comprise 12.6% of the population; 74% percent of the population is Sinhalese, and 7.1%, Muslim (Kurukulasuriya, 2006, p.24).

A large number of those affected by the tsunami live in the eastern parts. According to Kurkulasuriya (2006), Mahinda Rajapakse, the current president (elected in 2005), though openly aligned with the Sinhalese, says he is interested in creating peace in the north and east even as the regions are being rebuilt after the tsunami. “To this end, he has set up a new Reconstruction and Development Agency to replace all previous relief and reconstruction agencies,” states Kurukulasuriya (2006, p.24). The president is interested in involving the

opposition parties—the United National Party and the Muslims—to bring peace. The largest ethnic group in the eastern part of Sri Lanka is Muslim—a fact that has caused tensions between the Muslims and the LTTE.

The charismatic LTTE leader is Velupillai Prabhakaran. Violence escalated in 2006, stopping the peace process initiated in 2002. In early 2006, negotiators for the LTTE and the government of Sri Lanka met in Geneva. But in 2007, peace still seems far away, as almost every day some fresh violence escalates the animosity.

As Asian researchers Dias and Seneviratne (2006) describe it:

Initially high hopes were raised that the tsunami might help to bring the country's two warring ethnic communities—the Sinhalese and the Tamils— together, when Buddhist monks took humanitarian aid to Tamil communities in the east, and the military and the militant separatist group LTTE showed signs of working together to clear up the debris left by the tsunami in the east. (p. 195)

Sri Lanka's economy

According to the *World Fact Book* ("Sri Lanka: Economy," 2006), the government's effort in 1977 spearheaded progress in Sri Lanka's food processing, textiles, communications, insurance, and banking sectors. Although the 1990s saw an increase of 5% in GDP, it touched a low of 1.4% in 2001. Exports of textiles and garments spurred the economic recovery in 2003. Sri Lankans worked abroad in greater numbers and sent billions of dollars into the

country, resulting in a 5% growth recovery by 2005. However, the tsunami destroyed \$1.5 billion worth of property.

The tsunami in Sri Lanka

According to a World Bank joint study, the tsunami affected about 2 million of the approximately 19 million Sri Lankan population. Reports said that the first tsunami waves hit a city called Kalmunai, on the east coast of Sri Lanka (see Appendix E for tsunami map of Sri Lanka), at 8:06 a.m. local time. The nearly 25-meter-tall waves struck, leading to unprecedented mass destruction in Sri Lanka's 25-century history. Some major districts affected along the coast were: Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Amparai, Hambanthota, Matara, Galle, Kalutara, and Colombo.

Sri Lanka was struck 2 hours after the first earthquake in Indonesia occurred. It affected more than 1,000 kilometers, or one-thirds of the coastline—from Jaffna city in the North, the eastern and southern coast, and parts of the west coast as far north as Chilaw (See Appendix E for tsunami map of Sri Lanka). Waves, moving up to 500 meters, thrashed structures, killing or injuring thousands. Coastal infrastructure systems, including roads and railways, power facilities, means of communication, water supplies, sanitation facilities, and fishing ports were all severely damaged. (Dias & Seneviratne, 2006)

The tsunami waves hit different parts of Sri Lanka from 8:06 a.m. till 10:30 a.m. (Dias & Seneviratne, 2006). *The Washington Post* staff writer Michael

Dobbs (2005), describing being caught in the tsunami that hit Weligama Bay in Southern Sri Lanka, noted:

I noticed that the water around me was rising, climbing up the rock walls of the island with astonishing speed. The vast circle of golden sand around Weligama Bay was disappearing rapidly, and the water had reached the level of the coastal road, fringed with palm trees . . . The speed with which it all happened seemed like a scene from the Bible, a natural phenomenon unlike anything I had experienced.

The major global event that it was, the tsunami even triggered a drama series called “Tsunami” on television. China Central Television signed a pact with a Malaysian production firm to co-produce the television serial, which tells some moving stories about a group of tourists when the tsunami hit. The filming of the \$1.3 million drama titled “Sea Providence” is scheduled on Pulau Redang, a renowned tourism island in Malaysia (“TV Drama,” 2007).

Tsunami coverage

A week after the tsunami, American networks anchored their programs from the tsunami zones. For example: The “Today” show broadcast from Sri Lanka; “Good Morning America,” from Thailand; Dan Rather, as CBS news

anchor, from Thailand; the “ABC Nightly News” from Aceh; and “American Morning” on CNN from Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Aceh.

Even as the tsunami became a global media fixation for weeks, U.S. journalists were coping with ethical dilemmas of “relishing unpleasant things,” and combating accusations of using gory photographs of bodies in the Asian tsunami, while the September 11 coverage had not shown even one dead person’s photograph. *Indian Express* journalist Malik (2004, p.1) wrote, “Unlike the aftermath of 911, when not one dead body was shown on screen, not one image recorded for posterity, and about the only objectionable visual was of a man jumping to his death,” Asia’s tsunami coverage had rows and rows of dead bodies.

Despite such criticisms, how are newspapers superior to television for the study of coverage? Compared to fleeting coverage on television, newspapers offered in-depth coverage. The newspaper reporting gave television viewers, shocked by the day’s tsunami visuals, more details and analysis of tsunami events. For instance, *The New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* newspapers regularly used detailed maps, pictures, and statistics for the benefit of U.S. readers, unfamiliar with the affected developing countries. Even small newspapers have the luxury of space, even if they only use wire-service copy. Only a handful of papers had on-site reporters.

Elite U.S. newspapers

The elite press has serious journalistic standards, is read by opinion leaders, and strives to bring the world together by stressing similarities rather than differences through international reporting (Merrill & Fisher, 1980).

These newspapers:

are interested in ideas and issues, not in mere facts . . . they are stubborn and outspoken—no matter what their circulations may be . . . The aim of the elite press, then, is directing in a reasonable way instead of reflecting in a fragmented and distorted way . . . It sees itself as a leader, an interpreter, a pioneer into the frontiers of human and international relations (Merrill & Fisher, 1980, pp. 6-7).

A hallmark of elite newspapers is their emphasis on international news. According to Merrill (1999, p. 13), “The global-elite paper covers the news and points of view from many countries . . . (and) global ramification of cross-national events and problems.” *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Christian Science Monitor* have consistently ranked among the best newspapers in the world (Hachten & Scotton, 2007; Merrill, 1990; Merrill, 1999; Merrill & Fisher, 1980). Each of these papers had reporters covering the tsunami first hand.

Organization of study

Chapter 1 traces the purpose and the background of this study. Chapter 2 refers to the theoretical framework and related studies. Chapter 3 describes the method and design. Content analysis has been used to compare three major U.S. newspapers and two time frames. Chapter 4 discusses the results. Chapter 5 is the discussion and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2 RELATED STUDIES

The theoretical framework of this study has 3 bases—the Hierarchy of Influences Model on news content, agenda building, and framing. Along with these is the research tradition that examines inclusion/exclusion, a comparative approach.

The Hierarchy of Influences

Shoemaker and Reese (1996, p. 50) state, “Countries are concerned with how they are covered, and, as a result, perceived by others in the world community. This is particularly true of underdeveloped countries.” The concern increases among those suffering from disasters, since the greater the media coverage, the greater an increase in aid donations (Van Belle, 2000). What, then, affects content? What causes spikes in coverage? The Shoemaker and Reese hierarchical model of media content includes 5 levels: individual (the least powerful), media routines, the organization, extra-media factors, and ideology (the most powerful). Levels 1 and 5 of the Hierarchy of Influences Model are hard to discern from content and will not be studied in this dissertation. At Level 1, the individual has very little influence on content, while the influence of ideology, at Level 5, is subtle, pervasive, and hard to capture. Levels 2, 3, and 4 relate to this study.

Media routines

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) posit journalistic routines as Level 2 in the Hierarchy of Influences Model. Routines force journalists to adhere to typical

ways of conveying news. Thus a major disaster leads to more stories on the media agenda about the affected nation. The job is easier when a foreign reporter is sent to a tsunami-hit locale on December 2005, and December 2006, the tsunami anniversaries. The reporter would then “generate” news, and therefore, such a news routine would “reinforce and certify the newsworthiness of those happenings that fall within it” (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 120).

Routines decide what is to be covered. Routines are convenient. For instance, the routine of objectivity serves to give autonomy to reporters and organizations (Gans, 1979; Tuchman, 1977). Presentation techniques, such as making the story readable, having a photo placed in order to draw attention, and writing headlines designed to direct reader attention are all journalistic routines (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Media, particularly television, routinely portray as melodrama incidents such as the Iranian hostage crisis with days of continuous coverage (Nimmo & Combs, 1983).

Audience appeal is an important aspect of news routines. “Thus, the story represents a routine way of processing what happened and guides the reporter in deciding which facts to include in transforming events into a news commodity” (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 114). The term “news net” refers to a system of sending reporters to locations expecting to generate news events (Tuchman, 1979). Gandy (1982) argues that journalistic selectivity “meters” and “censors” information leading to its inclusion or exclusion in the media (p. 56-57).

Media organizational routines influence content. In other words, the manner in which media professionals and their organizations work decides which news stories are given importance (Gans, 1979; Gitlin, 1983). Another instance of a routine is the social responsibility approach that stresses a desire to give audiences what they need rather than what they want (Shoemaker et al, 1991). To help write stories that are clear and easy to understand, journalists have habitual patterns such as deciding what news gets into the paper, giving importance to official sources, and being objective (Tuchman, 1979; Tuchman, 1977). "These routines ensure that the media system will respond in predictable ways and cannot be easily violated" (Shoemaker et al, 1991, p. 86).

Routines may be considered a means to an end but often these means, having become institutionalized, take a life of their own... We can ask: What are the stable, patterned sets of expectations and constraints that are common to most media organizations? (Shoemaker et al, 1991, p. 86)

What routines are fixed about developing nations' news? Even as an international story gets attention for its emotion-stirring qualities (FitzSimon, 1993), negative or violent conflicts and crises get emphasized in a greater proportion of news about developing countries (Wilhoit & Weaver, 1983). Thus "deviance" is an aspect of international news that finds attention in media (Gersh, 1992; Jamieson & Campbell, 1992; Shoemaker et al., 1991). The present study

argues that a country in the limelight because of a major disaster such as the 2004 tsunami continues to fall into the patterned routines of reporters and editors even after the disaster reporting is done. The present study then argues that routines may be “institutionalized,” but are not unchangeable. A new extra-media factor, a major disaster, is suggested as one that may bring about changes in the way a developing country is viewed and consequently covered by elite U.S. media.

Organizational influences

While they speak of media routines common to journalists, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) also posit, as Level 3, the traits of organizations that influence news content—specifically, economic motives and social constraints.

Sociologist Warren Breed (1955), in a classic newsroom study, explored how reporters instinctively infer a newspaper’s unwritten policies. Policy refers to a newspaper’s “consistent orientation” with reference to issues and events, class, and racial divisions (Breed, 1955, p. 327). Breed points out that this policy is adhered to even when it goes against journalistic principles such as objectivity, or when editors and reporters do not wish to follow it.

Social control is also apparent in editing practices that enforce the policies. At times, editors exert control by changing some parts of a story or by omitting parts of a story. This policy enforcement sometimes takes the form of better visibility for a reporter who conforms to the written and unwritten rules. Journalists must adapt if they want to succeed in an organization. Do *The New*

York Times, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Christian Science Monitor* have different policies regarding coverage of Sri Lanka?

Economic constraints also affect the selection of news. Media workers wage a constant struggle between news gathering, audience needs, and advertising revenue. Sigal (1973) argues that thus bureaucracy is indirectly involved in news selection. If one finds more picture stories and more press release stories, it is probably because of budget cuts in the organization. News organizations, through the rise and fall of advertising, reflect their local economies. The organizational structure of media organizations also affects content. "A decision to maintain a news bureau in Washington, D.C., ensures that news from the capital has organizational value, and clearly affects content" (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 155).

Extra-media influences

After showing how media content is affected by both media workers' and media organizations' characteristics, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) posit the following extra-media factors (Level 4): sources (special interest groups, public relations campaigns, and even news organizations themselves); advertisers; audiences; government; the economic environment (the marketplace); and technology.

Interest groups influence policy making by getting their views on the media agenda. For instance, (Gitlin, 1983) showed how interest groups such as political parties, advertisers, and audiences influence media content. Some interest

groups use publicity campaigns to push their agenda. For instance, those interest groups not able to afford to advertise will use “pseudo events” demonstrations, and protests to bring their point of view on to the media agenda (Wolfsfield, 1984; Boorstin, 1971). “Interest groups play to the media’s need for new content by providing interest group-created events for the media to cover, which are more likely to be covered than real events” (Shoemaker et al, 1991, p. 160).

For most reporters and editors, as it was for this author who worked as a journalist at the *Indian Express*, one of the first routines of the day was to read the competitor’s newspaper as also other important newspapers and magazines. Thus, other media organizations are good at building the media agenda. For instance, the elite newspaper *The New York Times* is a definite agenda setter for other media (Danielian & Reese, 1989); and even for television network evening news (Golan, 2006). So also, advertisers often influence news content and become agents of power over news organizations (Altschull, 1984; Gitlin, 1983).

Advertisers become an influence on media content when media try to have content suitable for targeted buyers of their products (Fink, 1989; Gitlin, 1983; Kessler, 1989). This author while working at a newspaper had been in charge of sections—health and education— with specific targeted audiences. Most stories in these sections would be meant to attract advertisers to place products on those pages.

Governmental regulations control and influence content in several ways. Gandy (1982) speaks of government “information subsidies” whereby the nation’s media are able to pass on the messages of the government. Foreign coverage can be influenced by U.S. government policies (Chang et al, 1989). The marketplace in which the media operate is an important influence on the media content — for instance, an increase of competition (Lacy, 1988); institutional affiliations such as the one raised by Rupert Murdoch’s recent takeover of *The Wall Street Journal* (Carr, 2007).

Finally, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) posit technology as another extra-media influence on news content. For instance, traditional newsrooms are now threatened by user-based content from the internet (Christopher, 2007). Shoemaker and Reese do not posit an event as a factor. This study will explore whether a disaster can act as an extra-media influence on coverage about a developing country—Sri Lanka.

Agenda building and the Hierarchy of Influences

This study is concerned with agenda building—the formation of a media agenda, which in turn may be reflected in the public agenda via a process called agenda setting (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Particularly, this study concerns itself with the agenda built up regarding a developing nation, Sri Lanka. Funkhouser (1973) and Zucker (1978) showed that media coverage often does not correspond to reality. The question that Shoemaker and Reese (1996) ask about influences on content is tantamount to one facet of agenda setting theory

(McCombs & Shaw, 1972) called agenda building. In other words, a key question is, who or what sets the media agenda?

Agenda building—who builds the media agenda about developing nations?

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) suggest several powerful agenda builders such as sources, and special interest groups. How do sources build the media agenda? Competition between media, media practices, and the influence of interest groups place the opinions of certain sources speaking out on the media agenda (Cassara, 1998). Interest groups are effective in setting the media agenda (Zhu, 1992). According to Zhu, “Interest groups initially identify, define, and raise social issues.” Similarly, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) speak of agenda building when they speak of influences on media content from outside the organization. As Gandy (1982) describes it, the agenda-setting process involves audiences, journalists, political, and other interest groups who provide “information subsidies.” So it is obvious that politicians, bureaucrats, audience, and media form the agenda (Megwa & Brenner, 1988).

Agenda setting and agenda building

Agenda setting theory

The agenda setting metaphor caught people’s imagination in 1963 when Cohen suggested that the media do not tell us *what* to think, but what to think *about*. “An agenda is a set of events and issues given at a point of time a hierarchy of importance” (Rogers & Dearing, 1988, p. 556). Scheufele (2000) argued that agenda setting has to be viewed on two levels of analysis—media

agendas and audience agendas, and called the formation of a media agenda as “agenda building.” The formation of an audience agenda is called “agenda setting.”

A major disaster has a news value that immediately places even a remote country on the media agenda and then onwards on the public agenda.

Researchers have proved that newspapers are not only the prime movers in organizing the public agenda (McCombs, 1977), but they can also be persuasive in focusing public attention on events, issues, and persons (Shaw, 1979). Not surprisingly then, much research has viewed agenda setting theory as a basis for understanding the effects of news on public opinion (Althaus & Tewksbury, 2002; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987; McCombs, 2004; McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Wanta, 1997; Weaver, Graber, McCombs & Eyal, 1981).

The public agenda does not get set as a mass phenomenon. Individual characteristics such as political knowledge play an important part in the agenda setting process (McGuire, 1969; Nueman, Just & Crigler, 1992; Price & Zaller, 1993; Zaller, 1992).

Wanta, Golan, and Lee (2004) analyzed if coverage of foreign nations had an agenda setting influence and found that the more media coverage a nation received, the more likely that the public perceived a nation as more vital to U.S. interests. Negative coverage of a nation resulted in negative public opinion about the nation. Agenda building research has been called the “fourth phase of agenda setting research” (McCombs & Shaw, 1993), and “media agenda setting”

(Rogers, Dearing & Bregman, 1993). Lang and Lang (1983) studied agenda building as a complex process and suggested that it comprises several steps. The frames that media place upon issues, the words that are used to describe an issue, and who speaks out about an issue are all important processes in agenda building. Through agenda building, the policy agendas of the political elites are influenced (Rogers & Dearing, 1988). According to political researchers Elder and Cobb (1984), the agenda building process is responsible for issues getting serious attention for policy implementation by policy makers. Some researchers say that agenda building is, in fact, the larger process when compared to agenda setting:

The ingredients for the day's news are largely supplied by individuals and events quite independent of the press . . . Agenda setting, the creation of awareness and the arousal of public concern, is but one aspect of the larger process of agenda building, a collective process in which media, government, and the public reciprocally influence each other (McCombs & Gilbert, 1986, p. 13).

Besides interest groups, news values are powerful agenda building factors. An earthquake in a developing country has the right news value to shoot it to prominence on the media agenda. Sometimes we learn more about how people and institutions operate by looking at the unusual case than at the typical

one (Shoemaker, 1989). So also this study of the agenda building effects of the 2004 tsunami with its dramatic news values could help us learn about the overall process of agenda building. Speaking of the agenda building function of news values, Perloff (1998) notes, "The media are quick to cover fast onset issues, like earthquakes and bombings" (p.224). He further comments that the media are quick to build the agenda for events with dramatic news values, particularly prominence and human interest. Lang and Lang (1983) found a step-by-step process, and the importance of elite involvement in agenda building. One such political elite is the president of the United States. Agenda building by presidents who relentlessly keep repeating a single theme is not uncommon (Wanta & Foote, 1994).

Similarly, an undeniable link exists between policy-making and agenda building. "The choices made in the agenda building process have potentially profound consequences both in the sense of affecting the material realities of people's lives and in the sense of influencing their interpretations of those realities" (Elder & Cobb, 1984, p. 115). This effect becomes even more of a reality during "media events" such as Watergate, or the death of the Pope, or the 2004 tsunami.

Where international agenda building is concerned, world trade has been looked at as a way to measure interest group politics and agenda setting. Press coverage in Belgium, France, Germany, and the Netherlands of issues dealt with in the World Trade Organization (WTO) was compared to a dataset on the

involvement of interest groups in WTO. The results showed that interest groups had the ability to build the agenda and give high visibility for their issues and concerns (Beyers & Kerremans, 2007). On the other hand, research has shown that in countries such as Sweden, journalists, indeed, are powerful forces in the formation of a media agenda. A Swedish study found that journalists had more power than their political sources over the process of news making, the media agenda, the content, and framing of news (Stromback & Nord, 2006).

Speaking of negative representation of developing countries, Trivundza (2006) studied press coverage in Slovenia, and found that it was not only international news agencies but also journalists and editors who formed the media agenda. What agenda setting and agenda building literature “have not considered is *how* the public, press, and policy making elites *interpret* and *organize* the issues of the day” (Perloff, 1998, p. 237). Research that talks of how the issues are interpreted is called framing.

Second level of agenda setting

First-level agenda setting entails media creation of a list of key issues (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). McCombs and Estrada (1997) suggest that second-level agenda setting takes place when the media give these issues or objects attributes and characteristics. For example, when the media give importance to an election, a candidate’s characteristics, as emphasized by the media, can affect the way in which people judge a candidate (King, 1997). The second level, agenda setting II, is also called media framing of issues.

Negative/violent framing of developing countries

Framing refers to the way in which media give salience to an object. Reese (2001) defined frames as “organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world” (p.11). Edelman (1993, p. 152) states, “Far from being stable, the social world is . . . a kaleidoscope of potential realities, any of which can be readily evoked by altering the ways in which observations are framed and categorized.” Journalists make framing judgments in the course of selecting and conveying information (Entman, 1993). Agenda setting, framing, and priming fit together as tools of power, following Entman’s (2004) classic definition of framing as the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation. Fully developed frames typically perform four functions: problem definition, causal analysis, moral judgment, and remedy promotion (Entman, 1993, 2004). The basic idea behind framing is the creation of *bias*.

The importance given to the selected information in the media could lead to the formation of public opinion (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). Media framing is something that happens at every step of the process, from deciding what is to be covered to the way in which it is covered (Gans, 1979). For instance, a story buried in the inside pages is not framed as being as salient as a story on page 1. Entman (2004) defines frames—framing of *causes*; framing of the degree of *generalization* about an event; framing *conclusions* about perpetrators of an

event; framing *categorization* of events; and framing the *descriptions* of the *victims* of troubling events.

Another instance of framing is given by Galtung (1998) when he speaks of peace frames and war frames. By the reporter's decision to choose as sources those who would speak for war as against those who would speak in a more balanced manner, a peace framing or a war framing takes place. Galtung (1986, 1998) viewed peace journalism and war journalism as two competing frames in the coverage of a conflict. Galtung (1998) characterized conflict reporting as having "us-them" frames and "win-lose" frames. He proposed a model of peace frames, one in which the reporting is "win-win" oriented and saw peace as being realized through non-violence and creativity. For example, he urged reporters to seek out peaceful sources actively, rather than indulge in reporting that frames incidents as a tug-of-war between two opposing sides. Frames, however, cannot be oversimplified as they contain a mix of cognitive and affective elements (McCombs & Ghanem, 2001).

Prominence frames, journalistic markers—small/developing nations' coverage

The story's size, pictures, placement, and pull quotes are all considered "framing mechanisms" (Ghanem, 1997). Measures of prominence are commonly used in agenda setting studies. Kioussis (2004) identified three measures of media salience—attention, prominence, and valence. Researchers have generally measured attention by the number of stories about an issue, and

prominence by the issue's page placement, size of the headline, amount of time or space, and whether it is mentioned in the lead or headline. As Kiousis (2004) states, "Prominence refers to the positioning of a story within a media text," (p. 74). Many studies including McCombs and Shaw's 1972 seminal agenda setting study measured prominence of the agenda by looking at the stories by their front-page placement. "Prominence plays a crucial role in shaping media salience (Kiousis, 2004, p. 75). This is because, "Among readers, attention levels are much higher for illustrations (photos) or for stories accompanied by illustrations than they are for straight text. Cartoons, comics, and graphics fall in between" (Bogart, 1984).

Visibility has been identified as a dimension of media salience (Manheim, 1986). An object's salience hinges on how it is compared to other objects in the environment (Kiousis, 2004). Thus a story's salience hinges on the way it is positioned, and presented when compared to other stories. Front-page coverage indicates salience (McLeod, Becker, & Byrnes 1974; Wanta, 1997). Bogart (1984) notes that front page stories get much better readership than the average stories. The total number of stories and the total space given to an issue have been measured as indicative of salience by many scholars (Burns, 1998; Funkhouser, 1973; Benton & Frazier, 1976).

According to Watt, Mazz, and Snyder (1993), "Stories in the media indicate their importance to the audience by virtue of their placement, length, or

treatment” (p.414). Smith (1987) used column measures, and front-page story measures to assess media coverage of issues.

Budd (1964) coded the use of photographs to measure attention to a story. The mere presence or absence of certain photographs represents a manifestation of visual framing (Entman, 1993). Visual frames and the use of graphics in U.S. media validated the U.S. administrations claims in the news coverage of the U.S. downing of an Iranian plane when compared to the Soviet downing of Korean jet as depicted in *Time* and *Newsweek* magazine stories (Entman, 1991). Lauchlan (2007) studied the use of photographs of white males to measure the way in which photographs are used to push the political, social, and cultural agenda. The media frame politics, and racial stereotypes by the use of photographs (Abraham & Appiah, 2006; Fahmy, 2007). Ostgaard (1965) researched how the media simplify news by using devices such as pictures. According to researchers, during military conflicts, visuals in news coverage epitomize the Shoemaker and Reese (1996) Hierarchy of Influences model of news content.

Covered/not covered events—building the agenda for developing nations

Chang, Shoemaker, and Brendlinger (1987) looked at the covered and not covered events in international disaster coverage and suggested that 4 determinants affected coverage—relevance to the United States, normative deviance of an event, potential for social change, and geographical distance. The deviance of an event occurring in countries with shared national and political values contributed to coverage (Shoemaker et al, 1991). “Events have qualities which make them more or less valuable when regarded as potential news. These qualities are called news factors” (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p. 70).

Rosengren (1977) called for comparing “a universe of events” (what really happened) with coverage to draw inferences about influences. The use of extra-media data helps better explain international coverage. “Extra-media data are used to establish a universe of events, and this universe of events, rather than the universe of news reported during a given time period, provides the starting-point for the investigation” (Rosengren, 1970, p. 99). Researchers speak of differences between “real world” happenings and the “news world” (Wu, 2000). Chang et. al (1987) argue that it is important to find out through research why certain international events are covered and some are not. The study of international news flow can be based on the context of coverage or on the “events” that are covered (Chang et.al, 1987).

The event-oriented approach suggests that, irrespective of the external factors, some characteristics inherent in foreign events, such as the degree of deviance and the negative nature of the events, tend to determine whether a foreign news will be covered in the mass media. (Chang et. al, 1987, p. 400)

Many studies typically use some extra-media source to sample real world events. Rosengren, McLeod, and Blumler (1992) have advocated comparing differences and similarities in parameter values and structural relationships over *space*, and looking at these parameters and relationships over *time* as representing the *essence* of comparative research. Extramedia data have been taken from the Gallup Polls, the Harris polls, and several other sources for studies by researchers. When using polls, researchers have studied the inclusion, exclusion, and agenda setting effects of the MIP question (the most important problem facing the nation today). Using Rosengren's conceptual framework, Adams (1986) compared U.S. television coverage of different international natural disasters. He used the extramedia data of 35 natural disasters occurring between 1972 and 1985 listed in the *World Almanac*. Cooper (1984) studied developing nations' coverage by using inclusion/exclusion analysis.

While the 3 theoretical bases drive this study's hypotheses and research questions, this dissertation falls into the sub-field of foreign news coverage by

U.S. media. The following sections view coverage of foreign news research in its many facets: disaster news coverage, determinants of foreign news, conflict studies, and tsunami studies.

Previous studies: Disaster news

Adams (1986) built on previous research on proximity and coverage of disasters and found that geographic distance from New York and the number of tourists were statistically significant factors in U.S. TV coverage of major disasters. He found that the severity or death toll of a disaster did not determine coverage.

Van Belle's later (2000) study of *the New York Times* and TV news coverage of foreign disasters disagrees with Adams (1986) and supports Gaddy and Tanjong's (1986) earlier conclusions, stating, "The number of people killed is unquestionably the most important independent variable" (p. 65). Deaths are an intrinsic variable (a characteristic of the news event). Van Belle (2000) agreed with Adams (1986), finding distance as an extrinsic variable to predict amount of coverage. He also spoke of how natural disasters can be identified through extra-media sources. Since the reporting of a disaster controls the way in which countries and people react to it, media coverage of disasters is a topic of vital interest (Van Belle, 2000, p.50). Van Belle added that the number of U.S. tourists traveling to a country is not a significant variable.

Besides determinants of coverage, other issues have interested researchers. Research conducted between 1979 and 1984 by Sood, Stockdale,

and Rogers (1987) revealed that the news media employed several strategies for covering disasters: pulling available personnel off their normal tasks and re-assigning them to cover the disaster; making substantial changes in news flow; and seeking specific types of sources. Gaddy and Tanjong (1986) indicated that Western media more likely reported earthquakes in the developing countries than earthquakes in developed countries, when taking into account physical magnitude and human consequences. Stevenson and Cole (1984), in research on foreign news dissemination in 17 countries and 4 major Western news agencies, found no evidence that news about the developing countries emphasized crises and natural disasters. They also suggested that the dependence on news agencies is far less pervasive than is generally believed by critics.

By contrast, in a study of network TV coverage, Larson (1983) found that 7 out of 17 stories on average were international stories; of these, the developing countries was less covered than industrialized nations, especially considering the much larger developing countries population. The coverage tended to be crisis oriented (27%), defined as unrest/dissent; war, terrorism, crime, coups, and assassinations; and disasters. The Larson (1983) study further found that South Asia was among the under-reported, crisis-driven areas. There is “known differentiation between reporting local, domestic, and foreign disaster” (Quarantelli, 1981).

In order to study such differentiation, researchers tend to look at 3 or 4 major disasters. For instance, Rogers and Chang (1991) studied the amount of media coverage to the 1984 Ethiopian drought, the AIDS onset, the 1986 U.S. Challenger explosion, and the 1986 Ukraine Chernobyl explosion. They looked at determinants of coverage, and effects of the coverage on public opinion. For AIDS, they found that writings in science journals by reporters, public opinion polls, and television coverage had an agenda setting influence. Further, the media agenda setting had an important impact on government policy decisions. More similarities than differences across nations were found when a study compared disaster news in Japan and the United states (Quarantelli & Wenger, 1991). This study compared the coverage given to a Houston hurricane; a major flood in Tulsa; the 1982 tsunami floods around Nagasaki; and an earthquake in the Tohoku district in Japan. The researchers, Quarantelli and Wenger (1991) found that though the mass media in both countries relied heavily on official sources, U.S. television networks covered the disasters with different frames such as helplessness, technological enlightenment, damage, and destruction.

Studies of myths during disasters have led researchers to look for the ways in which journalists handle myths. Myths abound during disasters, so the outcome is that journalists rely upon official sources; something that is needed for planning how to handle disaster victims' irrational behavior (Quarantelli, 1981). The bulk of international disaster studies has been obsessed with the determinants of coverage.

Previous studies: Determinants of foreign news

Similar to Adams (1986) and Van Belle (2000), Wu (1998) found that news flow within North America (about Mexico and Canada) is highly related to geographic distance from the border. Later, Wu (2003) studied the determinants of international news flow and found differing systemic determinants of coverage about developed and developing nations. For developing countries, traits of nations, interactions and relatedness, and logistics of newsgathering and distribution affected coverage. International news flow had little connection with ancestral ties to the United States (Golan & Wanta, 2003). An important factor determining coverage of a nation is military spending (Golan & Wanta, 2003).

U.S. international news coverage often tends to seek out a few chosen nations while ignoring most nations of the world (Chang, Wang & Chen, 1998). Riffe and Shaw (1982) found data to support the criticisms about Western coverage of the developing countries, noting that a difference existed in topic emphases between the news treatment of the developing countries and the developed countries. When covered, developing nations mostly received negative coverage with many developing countries being ignored. On the other hand, in a collection of studies (Stevenson & Shaw, 1984), the editors noted that news flow inequities could not be laid at the door of Western dominance and that journalistic routines were responsible for the way in which countries were covered.

Cultural proximity in the form of democracy, religion, language, and ancestry are important determinants whether a nation is covered by the U.S. media or not (Golan & Wanta, 2003; Hester, 1973; Kariel & Rosenvall, 1984; Shoemaker et.al, 1991; Van Belle, 2000). A threat to the United States and U.S. involvement are important determinants of news selection (Chang & Lee, 1992). Trade with the United States is a predictor of coverage (Golan & Wanta, 2003; Wu, 2003). As Soroka (2003) comments, "There is a gap between real-world foreign affairs and news content" (p. 43).

Previous studies: Violent/negative developing nation news

In the first several days of the tsunami, *The New York Times* published 53 front-page stories on the tsunami, and the *Los Angeles Times*, 38 front-page stories (Hachten & Scotton, 2007). As mentioned earlier, Larson (1983) found that developing nations' coverage stresses negative news: giving more exposure to unrest/dissent; war, terrorism, crime, coups, and assassinations. Negative or violent conflicts and crises get emphasized in a greater proportion of news about developing countries in Western media (Atwood, 1987; Weinberger, Allen & Dillon, 1984; Wilhoit & Weaver, 1981).

Gans (1979) stated that violent/negative news such as excesses of dictators, coups, and revolutions are given greater play than other types of international news in U.S. news coverage of foreign countries. Even photographs of the developing countries tend to revolve around crises and conflicts (Langton, 1991).

The problem is accentuated when developing countries are singled out for such attention. Riffe and Shaw (1982) asserted that news projected developing nations as conflict ridden. They found that when compared to news about developed countries, developing nations' news predominantly dealt with conflict or upheaval. While, in general, news coverage is crisis-oriented (Paraschos, 1988), "television showcases violence with inadequate attention to context, giving those who rely on the medium a limited, distorted, and unremittingly threatening picture of the world" (Hoge, 1994, p. 144).

The negative news of the developing nations is so pervasive that what was said in the '70s holds well even today. Leaders in developing countries accuse that cultural differences lead the Western press to emphasize only crisis. "The traditional emphasis on the dramatic, the emotional, and the amusing—the "coups and earthquakes" syndrome—is seen as not only unbalanced, but detrimental to the development process" (Rosenblum, 1977, p. 816). Because of a lack of experienced people covering the developing countries, fresh reporters are sent to gain experience in developing countries; only to be promoted and sent to Western countries, notes Rosenblum. Thus, imported news mostly dealt with crime and courts, accidents and disasters, war and defense, human interest, and amusements (Carroll & Tuggle, 1997). In a study of 2 major U.S. news wires and foreign coverage by major and smaller newspapers, Weaver and Wilhoit (1981) reported that the major difference in conflict coverage is that the developing country is subject to more news of crisis, conflict, and death. They

noted that while there is a good mix of news for other countries, for the developing countries, the news is a portrait of conflict and violence.

Previous studies: Conflict

Though no known studies have looked directly at the tsunami disaster as an influence on news content, Norris (1995) conducted interesting research about post-cold war conflict news. The study proved that the dramatic change away from a conflict “lens” in the erstwhile Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) resulted in networks’ lessened coverage of Russia and greater coverage of developing countries. The role of the media as storytellers becomes an important element in international conflict (Arno & Dissanayake, 1984), when a major global catastrophic event such as September 11 leads to a shift and change in news coverage (Ross & Bantimaroudis, 2006).

Fried (2005) found terrorism frames in *Time* and *Newsweek* before the beginning of the Iraq war. Stories of pro-war demonstrations and anti-war demonstrations before and during the U.S.-led Iraq War showed partisan frames in pro-war stories (Luther & Miller, 2005). The media in different countries, such as Sweden and the United States, used different frames for the Iraq war (Dimitrova & Stromback, 2005). Though studies of the Iraq War are abundant (Haumann & Peterson, 2004; Hiebert, 2003; Livingston & Van Belle, 2005; Lule, 2004; Luther & Miller, 2005; Maslog, Lee & Kim, 2006; Stromback & Nord, 2006), studies of international conflicts such as the civil wars in Indonesia and Sri Lanka are fewer (Jenkins & Bond, 2001; Klaehn, 2002; Lee & Maslog, 2005; Uyangoda,

1996). Given the fact that the media cover developing countries negatively, it is not surprising that the wars in India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Philippines are framed as war journalism rather than as peace journalism (Lee & Maslog, 2005). Sometimes, the coverage goes into misleading reporting. Both headlines and content in 2 Canadian newspapers misinformed the people systematically about East Timor war crimes (Klaehn, 2002). As earlier mentioned, conflicts in the developing countries are accented frequently in the news (Wilhoit & Weaver, 1981).

The poor coverage of foreign affairs (Lang & Lang, 1994; Markham, 1961) and the fact that U.S. media pay scant attention to most nations of the world have been well documented in research. U.S. television news coverage differs significantly across different geographic regions of the world. Twenty nations dominated more than 80 % of international news coverage on 3 major television networks (Golan & Wanta, 2003). Their analysis revealed that the majority of developing nations received limited or no coverage. The majority of international news stories in both network news and *The New York Times* focused on a relatively small number of nations (Golan, 2006).

Previous studies: Tsunami research

Weberling (2006) found that the tsunami in India received much more *New York Times* coverage, and more mobilizing information, than the Pakistan earthquake coverage. She posited coverage as a factor that contributed to the amount of relief. Another study about the tsunami compared the countries

affected and their coverage, and found minimal coverage given to Somalia, which had more deaths than Malaysia, but had near invisibility (Waititu & Cooper-Chen, 2008).

A tsunami blogger study (Suryanarayan, 2006) looked at the sources used in tsunami coverage. It found only 1 out of 441 sources was a blogger. The study found that government sources dominated the coverage. A framing study of the Indonesian military and rebel group GAM in Indonesian media's tsunami coverage suggested that the government was framed as deserving more attention than the rebel group (Suryanarayan, 2006).

Knight (2005) found spikes on certain days of tsunami coverage with government sources dominating. Next only to government sources, NGO sources ranked high in attention, prominence, and treatment in tsunami coverage of 4 countries— the United States, Britain, Sri Lanka, and India (Suryanarayan, 2007). Following Lippmann's (1949) view of media attention, Suryanarayan (2007) found that the media searchlight remained on the tsunami-hit countries continuously for about 5 weeks, after which the attention tapered off. None looked at the tsunami as an extra-media influence on news content.

Hypotheses and research questions

Level 4, of the Shoemaker and Reese (1996) Model, extra-media variables, is multifaceted. Could an event act as an additional facet? Could the tsunami itself act as an extra-media variable affecting non-tsunami period

content? This impact may be directly observed if a change occurs in U.S. elite newspapers' coverage of pre-tsunami and post-tsunami Sri Lanka. Hence:

RQ1: Will U.S. elite newspapers have greater coverage about Sri Lanka post-tsunami than pre-tsunami?

Level 3 (organizational influences) of the hierarchical model is based partly on the idea of inferred policies as affecting news content (Breed, 1955). The organization's economic policies, instituted to keep the organization alive (Sigal, 1973), also affect content. Hence:

RQ2: How do specific news organizations, each with unique policies, differ in their coverage? Do these differences have an economic basis?

Level 2 (news routines) of the model explores how news-gathering practices cause differences in media content. This level might impact pre- and post-tsunami Sri Lanka content in the newspapers. Based on news media routine literature (Bantz, McCorkle, & Baade, 1981; Hallin, 1992; Nimmo & Combs, 1983; Schlesinger, 1978; & Tuchman, 1979, 1977), one could expect practices that make a journalist's job easier (e.g., make use of predictable events) to be evident in content. Hence:

RQ3: Will a spike in coverage occur on the anniversary of the tsunami, December 26, 2005?

Based on previous research, one would expect violent/negative news to characterize coverage of a nation that is both small and developing (FitzSimon, 1993; Gans, 1979; Gersh, 1992; Jamieson & Campbell, 1992; Langton, 1991;

Larson, 1983; Perry, 1981; Shoemaker et al., 1991; Wilhoit & Weaver, 1981;).

One would expect Sri Lanka, as a small, developing country to receive more violent/negative coverage pre-tsunami. Hence:

H1: Pre-tsunami Sri Lankan coverage will dwell more on violent/negative incidents than post-tsunami coverage, which is expected to have a richer news diet.

To explore violent, negative coverage more fully, the topics of coverage (Cline, 1983; Glassner, 1999; Okeefe, 1996; Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1984; Welch et al, 1997) can indicate the nature of content. Hence:

RQ4A. Which pre-tsunami topics, including violence/negativity, are covered?

RQ4B. Which post-tsunami topics, including violence/negativity, are covered?

RQ4C. How do post and pre-tsunami topics compare?

Based on previous studies of news flow, the context of the coverage could be compared to the actual “events” that are covered (Chang et.al, 1987; Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Rosengren, 1970; Shoemaker et al, 1991; Wu, 2000). Some of these studies have used *Keesing’s Record of World Events* to compare coverage with actual events (Cooper, 1984; Rosengren, 1977). One would expect to see that impact of coverage in the number of actual events covered about Sri Lanka. Hence:

RQ5A. Out of the universe of specific happenings, which pre-tsunami events did the newspapers cover?

RQ5B. Out of the universe of specific happenings, which post-tsunami events did the newspapers cover?

The literature on framing (Entman, 1974) discusses how media elevate and subordinate various issues, a process which one can extend to countries. Based on Budd (1964) and Rosengren (1974), measures of prominence can include page 1 placement, presence of photos and graphics, and length of stories. Hence:

RQ6. Will journalistic markers (photos, graphics, page 1 placement, and story length) accord more prominence in coverage post-tsunami than pre-tsunami? Do the newspapers differ?

CHAPTER 3 METHOD

Content analysis has been described as an important method for the study of messages (Lombard, Snyder-Duch & Bracken, 2002). This method works as an efficient alternative to public opinion research and as a way to explore the individual human mind (Krippendorf, 2004). Content analysis has been used extensively in research, masters' theses, and scholarly publications, and has been a well-used method—the others being experiment and historical research (Riffe & Freitag, 1997) and surveys.

The tsunami in Sri Lanka

The single-disaster focus of the tsunami story overcomes the problem of studying various types of natural calamities at different times that are only roughly comparable (Van Belle, 2000). This study will be a comparative content analysis of two different periods—an 18-month period before and an 18-month period long after the tsunami of December 26, 2004. Rosengren (1974, 1977) calls for comparing “a universe of events” (what really happened) with coverage to draw inferences about influences. “Agenda setting studies often include in their analysis a ‘real world indicator’ of the importance of an issue” (Rogers & Chang, 1991). In the present study, the author uses *Keesing’s Record of World Events*, as a month-by-month, real-world indicator. *Keesing’s* lists the events in Sri Lanka in a month-by-month report for each year. Following Chang et. al (1987), each listing was considered an event.

Natural disasters provide an excellent set of events for studying the contextual factors influencing the reporting of international events. The website of the *National Geographic* has described the tsunami as the worst disaster in history. According to the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences Hazards and Disasters (2005), the 2004 tsunami was the third largest-ever recorded earthquake. “Controlling the social and political response to these events, the news media coverage of disasters is, in and of itself, an important area of study” (Van Belle, 2000, p. 60). Sri Lanka was chosen because it had more than 31,000 dead, the second-highest toll.

Media and story selection

The New York Times, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Christian Science Monitor* were content analyzed. The 3 newspapers have a primary readership base in the East Coast, the West Coast, and nationally. All three newspapers are known for excellent international reporting (Hachten & Scotton, 2007; Merrill, 1990; Merrill, 1999; & Merrill & Fisher, 1980) and have distinguished themselves by winning the Pulitzer Prize for international reporting. Therefore, they afford a best possible case for the reporting of Sri Lanka news. There are reasons for not choosing *USA Today*, and *the Wall street Journal*. While national, *USA Today* – the nation’s largest newspaper – does not pretend to have stellar international coverage. The business-oriented, nationally circulating the *Wall Street Journal* does not pretend to have general-audience appeal. *USA Today* describes itself as the nation’s local newspaper.

The New York Times

An elite daily published from New York City, but distributed nationally, *The New York Times* is the largest metropolitan newspaper in the United States. This national “newspaper of record” has a circulation of 1,037,828 (Audit Bureau of Circulation, September, 2007). *The New York Times* is the third largest circulated newspaper in the United States, after *USA Today* and the *Wall Street Journal* (Audit Bureau of Circulation, 2007).

A revered newspaper, *The New York Times* is known for accuracy and in-depth coverage of national and international issues. According to Hachten and Scotton (2007), the newspaper is known for its complete eyewitness coverage of foreign affairs using its 40 reporters in 26 bureaus abroad. Since 1980, the paper has won 11 Pulitzer Prizes for international reporting. During these years, John Darnton, Thomas Friedman, Bill Keller, Nicholas Kristof, Sheryl Wu Dunn, Serge Schmemmann, John Burns, Barry Bearak, Joseph Kahn, and Jim Yardley of *the New York Times* have won the Pulitzer Prize for international reporting.

The New York Times holds importance for researchers as an important source of international news with a global influence that sets the news agenda for regional media (Shah & Thornton, 2004) and other national media (Dimitrova & Stromback, 2005). *The New York Times* News Service sends more than 50,000 words daily to 550 clients, of which 130 are newspapers abroad (Hachten & Scotton, 2007).

Los Angeles Times

Coming a close U.S. fourth with a circulation of 779,682 (Audit Bureau of Circulation, 2007), the *Los Angeles Times*, is the second largest metropolitan newspaper. The *Los Angeles Times* is ideal for a content analysis of international news because of its efforts and intent to improve foreign news coverage for a diverse audience (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2001). Since 1998, the paper has made a significant effort to upgrade its international news coverage (Case, 1998). In 2007, the *Los Angeles Times* had 30 reporters in 20 bureaus abroad. Since 1980, the paper has won Pulitzers for international reporting in 1987 and 2005 by Michael Parks and Kim Murphy. Merrill and Fisher's 1980 assessment still rings true: "The *Los Angeles Times* is thought of as respectable, independent, thorough, and up-to-date . . . one of the nation's most serious, best-reported dailies" (p. 183). The Los Angeles Times News Service transmits about 60,000 words daily to 50 nations or about 600 newspapers, half of which are outside the United States (Hachten & Scotton, 2007).

Christian Science Monitor

A good foil for this study involving two large, metropolitan newspapers based on each coast, the *Christian Science Monitor* is a Monday through Friday newspaper published in Boston, MA. The newspaper has numerous stringers and bureaus overseas (Hachten & Scotton, 2007). Since 1980, the *Monitor* has won one Pulitzer for international reporting in 1996 by David Rohde. With a print circulation of 53,191, the paper is unique in its interest in stories behind the

event, the excellence of its journalistic reporting and writing, and detachment of its interpretations. One of the few owned by a church, the newspaper has an instant appeal to the literate and involved citizen (Merrill & Fisher, 1980).

The politically independent *Monitor* emphasizes background explanation, as evidenced by its symbol, a growing stalk of wheat. *The Washington Post*, with its several Pulitzer prizes for international reporting, was a strong contender to be included in this study, but the *Christian Science Monitor* was chosen for its quality as a national newspaper of repute—not rooted in a specific urban locale. It was also chosen for its emphasis on unique international stories with a distinct perspective by using its bank of international stringers as against newspapers that emphasized their coverage based on what the major news agencies covered.

Story analysis

The stories were selected searching each newspaper's database using the keyword "Sri Lanka." The appearance of the word "Sri Lanka" in the headline, lead, or the first five paragraphs, identified a story as depicting Sri Lanka. The unit of analysis was the story. All news stories, analyses, features, and editorials during this time frame were collected. Letters to the editor were not included. A pretest determined the coding protocol (Appendix C). The list of stories was found on the respective newspaper databases. Then all the actual stories—the entire population with no sampling— were studied on microfilm.

Time periods

See Table 1 for the 2 time frames used:

Before tsunami: July 1, 2003, to December 25, 2004.

After tsunami: July 1, 2005, to December 25, 2006.

Table 1

The timeline of the sampled periods, pre-tsunami and post-tsunami

Pre-tsunami Period	Number of Days
July 1, 2003 - December 31, 2003	184
January 1, 2004 - December 25, 2004	360*
Total days	544
Post-tsunami Period	
July 1, 2005 - December 31, 2005	184
January 1, 2006 - December 25, 2006	359**
Total days	543
Total days in both periods	1087

*Leap year had 29 days in February

** February had 28 days

Time has often been used as a measure to convey a sense of change in perceptions. Communication studies have looked at a comparison of time periods to measure influence. In studying the influence of a Hearst takeover of a women's magazine in China, two periods of 49 and 60 months before and after were used by Pan (2004). Five historical time periods were used as T1, T2, T3, T4, and T5 for comparison in a study of war songs as a means of communication (Sugita, 1972). An analysis of *McCall's* magazine looked at the issues before and

after the redesign and an editorial makeover (McDonald, 1965). Third party politics coverage by magazines was examined in 3 different campaign periods (Aldrich, 1971). Two time periods were used in a study of the economic coverage given to China before and after the Cold War (Huang, 1995). Even pictures have been measured for change over time periods, as one study content analyzed Associated Press wire report photographs of Taliban women during the Taliban regime and after the Taliban regime (Fahmy, 2004). Three points of time were used in a study of the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal (Youitas & Segvic, 2003). No known communication study has compared the period before the tsunami with the period after the tsunami.

An exploratory study (Suryanarayan & Cooper-Chen, 2007), to test the Lippmann (1949) quote about the media searchlight beaming on an event, revealed that the duration of maximum tsunami disaster coverage was between 6 and 8 weeks after December 26, 2004, and by mid-March, tsunami news had tapered off. To be safe, the post starting point was pushed even further to July 1, 2005, for the full tsunami coverage to elapse. December 25, 2006, was chosen as the end point to steer clear of the 2nd anniversary of the disaster, for a total of 18 months. Eighteen months before the tsunami equalized the pre and post periods of study.

The total number of stories for the time periods found on each newspaper website database with search word "Sri Lanka" is on Table 2.

Table 2

The stories sampled in the pre-tsunami (PRE) and the post-tsunami (POST) periods by newspaper

	PRE (%)	POST (%)	Total (%)
The New York Times	81 (53.65)	171 (43.66)	252 (46.4)
The Los Angeles Times	37 (24.5)	106 (27)	143 (26.35)
The Christian Science Monitor	33 (21.85)	115 (29.34)	148 (27.25)
Total	151 (100)	392 (100)	543 (100)

Keesing's Record of World Events

Keesing's World News Archive was started in 1931. Since then, it has recorded events all over the world, using the latest research. The news is collected daily in many languages from a vast number of sources and published as a series of articles every month. The latest monthly number of articles is 150. The reports are known for accuracy and objectivity. The most significant developments in each country are recorded in each month's issue of *Keesing's Record of World Events*, formerly *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*. Data is collected on government, wars, treaties, appointments, and diplomacy, terrorism and internal security; legislation, budgets, economic developments and international agreements; actions by the UN and other international

organizations; natural disasters, environmental issues, and scientific discoveries (*Keesing's Record of World Events*, 2007).

Keesing's Contemporary Archives: Record of World Events is one of the often used sources for sampling real-life world events (Chang et.al, 1987; Cooper-Chen, 1984; Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Powell, 1981, 1982; Rosengren, 1970; Wallensteen, 1968). As Chang (1987) observes:

Keesing's collects information from world media, government, and other sources and therefore it does not provide a purely extra-media data source, but as Rosengren pointed out, such archives are frequently the only available way of measuring the range of world events, and, although they are not independent of mass media reports, they provide a much larger source of media events to sample than we would expect any individual U.S. mass medium to cover. (p. 401)

Inclusion/exclusion

The list of pre-tsunami and post-tsunami Sri Lanka coverage was compared to the already listed *Keesing's* diet of actual happenings before and after the tsunami in Sri Lanka. This process yielded the inclusion and exclusion of events in U.S. media coverage about Sri Lanka. The rank order analysis along with the inclusion and exclusion percentages yielded data to show whether an extra-media influence such as a disaster affects U.S. media coverage about Sri

Lanka. The statistical analysis showed if the before and after coverage differed or were significant.

To summarize, the researcher proceeded via the following steps:

1. Selected the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Christian Science Monitor* as geographically elite and geographically distinct news sources;
2. Located pre and post-tsunami news of Sri Lanka in those mainstream U.S. media, 2003-2005 (except early 2005);
3. Created a universe of non-tsunami events occurring in Sri Lanka, 2003-2006 (see Appendix D for a list of events in Sri Lanka from *Keesing's*);
4. Determined which events are covered/ not covered by U.S. media in the two periods before and long after December 26, 2004;
5. Categorized the covered stories before and after, with 2 topics coded for each story;
6. Plotted the stories on a continuum and looked for spikes;
7. Created a prominence index for each story;
8. Isolated the violent/negative stories;
9. Compared each time frame to infer the effect of the tsunami, specifically in terms of:
 - a. percent of actual events covered
 - b. categories (topics) of events
 - c. violent/negative stories
 - d. prominence of stories.

Coding: Topics

The topics (2 per story) for the coding were based on a study by Sreberny-Mohammadi (1984) that dealt with international news, except that topic number 21 was separated out from topic number 3 into “peace negotiations,” to isolate negative/violent news. Violent/negative news is defined as topics 3, 7, 17 and 20.

The topics for coding (Appendix C) are:

1. Diplomatic/political activity between countries of the world
2. Politics within states of one country or other similar units
3. Military defense: armed conflict or threat*
4. Economic matters: trade, tariffs, imports, exports, output, business, sales
5. International aid: relief, military, education (not disasters)
6. Social services: health, housing, illiteracy, status of women
7. Crime, police, judicial, legal, and penal code*
8. Culture, arts, archeology, history, language
9. Religion
10. Scientific, technical, medical
11. Sports
12. Entertainment, show business (except personalities)
13. Personalities (not politicians): sports, entertainers, others
14. Human interest, odd happenings, animals, sex
15. Student matters, education
16. Ecology: energy conservation, pollution
17. Natural disasters: floods, earthquake, drought (including the 2004 tsunami)*
18. Other
19. Weather
20. Accidents*
21. Peace negotiations

*Violent negative news

Prominence

Prominence for the stories was constructed by giving each story a score.

That is, a story was given:

1. Two points if it was placed on page 1.
2. One point for each photo.
3. One point for each graphic such as a map or a drawing.
4. One point if the story was short (1-250 words).
5. Two points if the story was medium in length (251-750 words).
6. Three points if it was a long story (750 words and above).

Various researchers have created a score to judge prominence or attention (Budd, 1964; Rosengren, 1974). Appendix C, the coding sheet, shows that items 6-9 are the prominence variables. A Spearman's rank order for the prominence score was performed with the data set containing the coded pre-tsunami and post-tsunami stories. These measures will help the researcher determine the before and after rankings of coverage about Sri Lanka in the three U.S. elite newspapers.

Tsunami anniversary

This study observed tsunami anniversary coverage to look for spikes during these periods. Journalistic literature emphasizes reporters' and editors' penchant for routine coverage of disasters. For instance, the September 11 attacks would attract a spike in coverage on that date. So also Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings invite coverage every year decades after the event. From

the developing nations, the Bhopal gas tragedy that happened in India invites coverage regularly on its anniversary day. Anniversaries are the exact dates on which an event occurred. The 2004 tsunami anniversary fell on December 26-28 in the years 2005, 2006, and 2007. The Asian tsunami happened on December 26, 2004. Therefore, this study analyzed the coverage on these 3 days in each newspaper to predict coverage of a nation on an anniversary of a major disaster.

Intercoder reliability

Procedure

About 10 percent of the sample was taken for checking intercoder agreement (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, and Bracken, 2004). Two coders were trained to do the coding: a female graduate of engineering, 29, and a female doctoral student, 57, the researcher. The training took about 2 hours. The maximum training was given for identifying the country mentioned in the story and for identifying a *Keesing's* event. Another variable that needed extra training was the topic of the study. Since there were 21 categories for the topics, the instruction sheet was given and explained. Based on Lacy and Riffe (1996), the researcher selected 10 percent of the stories from each newspaper within each period: pre-tsunami and post-tsunami. Neuendorf (2002) and Lacy and Riffe (1996) indicate that this sample used for checking intercoder reliability should not be fewer than 50 units or 10 percent of the full sample.

Thus a total of 55 stories were selected for checking intercoder agreement. That is, 10 percent of the stories were chosen from each newspaper.

As a result, 25 stories were from *The New York Times*, while 15 stories each were from the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Christian Science Monitor*. Care was taken to include stories from each time period from every newspaper.

To solve the problem of stories differing in the online editions and in the print editions, the actual stories were checked in the print editions on microfilm at Ohio University library at Athens, Ohio, and at California State Polytechnic University library in Pomona, Los Angeles, CA, by the doctoral student coder.

The Internet links to the stories thus checked on microfilm as present in the same manner in the print edition were given to the second intercoder in a Microsoft word file. After a debriefing and training session, the coders conducted the coding independently. Each coder received the Microsoft word file containing the links to the 55 stories. In addition, another Microsoft word file containing the list of historical events as recorded in *Keesing's Record of World Events* from 2003-2006 was given to them. Each coder recorded information independently following the coding instructions. The coders coded the data based on a coding sheet (Appendix C). The two coders independently recoded the information in Microsoft excel files.

Results

Intercoder reliability was calculated using the Simple Percent Agreement (SPA) and Scott's Pi (Pi) tests to examine coders' agreements (Riffe et al., 2005). Both tests proved the validity and the reliability of the measurements and

the coding instruments because the overall agreements by both methods exceeded the desired .80 as suggested by Riffe et al., 2005.

Neuendorf (2002) cites several earlier researchers to conclude that coefficients of .90 or greater would be acceptable to all. In the present analysis, using the SPA method, the overall agreement was .984. Among all the variables, the agreement ranged from 1 to .96. Researchers suggest using a second index such as the Scott's Pi that accounts for agreement expected by chance. In this analysis, using the Scott's Pi method, as Table 3 shows, the overall agreement was .981.

Table 3

The overall coder agreements calculated as Simple Percent Agreement (SPA) and as Scott's Pi

Intercoder agreement	
SPA	.984*
Scott's Pi	.981*

* indicates the agreement exceeded the desired .80 and was acceptable

After the intercoder agreement, the author (researcher) coded all the stories in the sample.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the content analysis in 2 sections: an overall description of the sample, followed by a discussion of the research questions and hypotheses. This study sampled 3 U.S. newspapers: *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Christian Science Monitor*. Chapter 3 explained that the newspapers were elite, had circulations exceeding 50,000 (Audit Bureau of Circulation, 2007), maintained foreign bureaus, and received Pulitzer prizes in recognition of their international reporting. According to the *Editor & Publisher International Yearbook* ("Top 100 Daily Newspapers," 2007, *The New York Times* was the third largest-circulation newspaper in the United States, followed by the *Los Angeles Times*, the fourth largest-circulation newspaper. *Editor & Publisher* estimated the circulation of all U.S daily newspapers at 7,027,000 at year's end (2006). The Audit Bureau of Circulation on September 30, 2007, put *The New York Times*' circulation at 1,037,828, or 14.778% of that total. The *Los Angeles Times*' circulation was 779,682 (11.096%), and the *Christian Science Monitor's*, 53,191 (.756%).

Among the newspapers sampled, at least a few stories about Sri Lanka appeared every month over the 36-month span of the study. Post-tsunami, stories about Sri Lanka were widely used in each of the 3 newspapers sampled. Visuals, particularly graphics (such as maps or statistical tables) and photographs, appeared with some of the stories in all the newspapers. Specifically, the use of visuals was evident in *The New York Times*' coverage.

Table 4 shows that this content analysis examined a total of 543 stories about Sri Lanka from the newspapers in the two time periods: **Pre-tsunami**, July 1, 2003, to December 25, 2004 (544 days) and **post-tsunami**, July 1, 2005, to December 25, 2006 (543 days). *The New York Times* (NYT) carried the most—a total of 252 (46.4%) stories about Sri Lanka. The *Los Angeles Times* (LAT) depicted Sri Lanka in a total of 143 (26.3%) stories, and the *Christian Science Monitor* (CSM) had a total of 148 (27.3%) stories about Sri Lanka. Pre-tsunami, a total of 151 Sri Lanka stories were found. Of those, *The New York Times* had 81 (53.6%), the highest number of pre-tsunami stories. The 37 stories in the *Los Angeles Times* (24.5%) about equaled the *Christian Science Monitor's* 33 stories (21.9%). Post-tsunami, out of a total of 392 stories, *The New York Times* doubled its coverage with the highest number of 171 stories (43.6%), followed by the *Christian Science Monitor* with 115 (29.3%) stories. The *Los Angeles Times* had the fewest, 106 (27%) stories.

Table 4

Sri Lanka story frequencies, percentage of coverage, and story averages (per day and per month) by newspaper

	NYT	LAT	CSM	Total*
Number of stories	For Both Periods			
	252	143	148	543
Total (percentage)	(46.4%)	(26.3%)	(27.3%)	(100%)
Per day average	0.23	0.13	0.14	0.5
Per month average	7	3.97	4.1	15.08
$\chi^2 = 32.142, d.f. = 1, \rho < .001$				
	Pre-tsunami			
Total	81	37	33	151
	(53.6%)	(24.5%)	(21.9%)	(100%)
Per day average	0.15	0.07	0.06	0.28
Per month average	4.5	2	1.8	8.3
$\chi^2 = 33.293, d.f. = 1, \rho < .001$				
	Post-tsunami			
Total	171	106	115	392
	(43.6%)	(27%)	(29.3%)	(99.9%)
Per day average	0.31	0.19	0.21	0.72
Per month average	9.5	5.8	6.3	21.6
$\chi^2 = 45.432, d.f. = 1, \rho < .001$				
Pre-tsunami average per newspaper = 50 (SD=26.31)				
Post-tsunami average per newspaper = 130 (SD=35.44)				

* $\chi^2 = 106.963, d.f. = 1, \rho < .001$

The study used SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for Windows to perform statistical tests. Before the data analysis, the author used a series of explore commands found on SPSS. This command is used by researchers to check their files for errors or incorrect entries. For example, 20 for photos with a story would be an outlier, as no story would have 20 photos; since the researcher forgot to make the entry, one outlier was replaced with the mean. Four cases with missing values were removed from the analysis.

Post-tsunami coverage of Sri Lanka

RQ1 asked whether U.S. elite newspapers would have greater coverage of Sri Lanka post-tsunami than pre-tsunami. That is, the 2004 tsunami itself was likely to act as an extra-media variable affecting non-tsunami content and that the impact might be directly observed in U.S. elite newspapers' coverage of pre-tsunami and post-tsunami Sri Lanka. According to the analysis of content in 3 newspapers, 18 months before and 18 months after the tsunami, the answer to RQ 1 is that there was greater coverage of Sri Lanka post-tsunami than pre-tsunami.

Post-tsunami increase showed that *The New York Times* doubled its coverage, while the *Los Angeles Times* almost tripled the coverage, and the *Christian Science Monitor* more than tripled its coverage. Overall, the coverage had more than doubled post-tsunami. The average stories pre-tsunami per

newspaper was about 50 (SD=26.31), while the post-tsunami average per newspaper was 130 (SD =35.44) stories.

Table 5 repeats the data from Table 4, i.e. that pre-tsunami coverage had 151 stories, and post-tsunami coverage had 392 stories. Table 5 then highlights the changes—an increase of 241 stories in post-tsunami coverage, indicating the newspapers more than doubled their coverage. *The New York Times* had pre-tsunami 81 stories, and post-tsunami 171 stories; the difference was 90 (112%) more post-tsunami stories. The *Los Angeles Times* had 37 pre-tsunami and 106 post-tsunami, the second period contributing 69 (186%) more stories. The *Christian Science Monitor* had 33 pre-tsunami and 115 post-tsunami, a difference of 82 more stories, more than double its pre-tsunami coverage, * $\chi^2 = 106.963$, d.f. = 1, $\rho < .001$.

Table 5

Sri Lanka stories during two periods by newspaper:

Increase in post-tsunami coverage

	Total	Pre-tsunami	Post-tsunami	Increase Post-tsunami	
	Freq.	Freq.	Freq	Freq	%
NYT	252	81	171	90	112
LAT	143	37	106	69	186
CSM	148	33	115	82	242
Total*	543	151	392	241	159

* $\chi^2 = 106.963$, d.f. = 1, $p < .001$

indicates the association between pre- and post-tsunami coverage is significant at the .001 level.

Thus, post-tsunami coverage in 3 elite U.S. newspapers 18 months after the tsunami far exceeded the pre-tsunami coverage. Total pre-tsunami coverage, across the newspapers, was significantly lower at the .001 level compared to post-tsunami coverage. The U.S. newspapers not only carried many stories during the 2004 tsunami (Suryanarayan & Cooper-Chen, 2007), but also continued to give importance to Sri Lanka in a period beginning 6 months after the tsunami coverage.

Influence of organizations

RQ2 asked what influence each specific news organizations have on tsunami coverage. The answer to that question is that the 3 news organizations differed in their coverage of Sri Lanka. As Table 4 indicates, *The New York Times* had 252 stories total, with a monthly average of 7; the *Los Angeles Times*

had 143 stories total with a monthly average of 3.97; and the *Christian Science Monitor* had 148 stories total with a monthly average of 4.1 stories. These differences show the emphasis that *The New York Times* still gives to international news.

The *Los Angeles Times*, which is close to *The New York Times* in circulation, however, does not seem to have the same policies of international coverage emphasis. Indeed, it even lagged behind the tabloid-sized *Christian Science Monitor* in international coverage. This lack of coverage may not be an oversight on the part of the *Los Angeles Times*, but a reflection of a policy (driven by the economic realities) of that organization that international news is not considered to have audience appeal for its average reader. This newspaper relied mostly on wire reports.

The *Christian Science Monitor* (see Appendix J) emphasizes its international coverage. Most stories were written exclusively for the *Monitor* by stringers employed by the organization. The pre-tsunami totals for the newspapers were: 81 for *The New York Times*, 37 for the *Los Angeles Times*, and 33 for the *Christian Science Monitor*. The post-tsunami coverage was 171 for *The New York Times*, 106 for the *Los Angeles Times*, and 115 for the *Christian Science Monitor*. These results indicated that each organization differs in the way in which it selected Sri Lanka news before the tsunami and after the tsunami.

Anniversary spikes

Based on news media routine literature (Bantz, McCorkle, & Baade, 1981; Hallin, 1992; Nimmo & Combs, 1983; Schlesinger, 1978; & Tuchman, 1979, 1977), one could expect practices that make a journalist's job easier (e.g., make use of predictable events) to be evident in content. **RQ3** asked if a spike in coverage would occur on the anniversary of the tsunami, December 26, 2005, as predicted by news routine literature. The answer is that this study found spikes during the anniversary period.

The tsunami struck on December 26, 2004. The author calculated stories on December 25, 26, and 27, 2005, as tsunami anniversary stories (see Appendix H for a sample of a tsunami anniversary story). Tsunami anniversary stories were generally about tsunami housing, reconstruction of people's lives, and so on. To measure spikes during the anniversary of 2005, the number of stories in 9 dates in December, 2005, was calculated for comparison. Figure 1 indicates a spike during the first anniversary of the tsunami, December 25, 26, and 27, 2005. In 2005, there were 8 stories compared to the days before and after the anniversary. (The decline on December 26 was probably due to Christmas.)

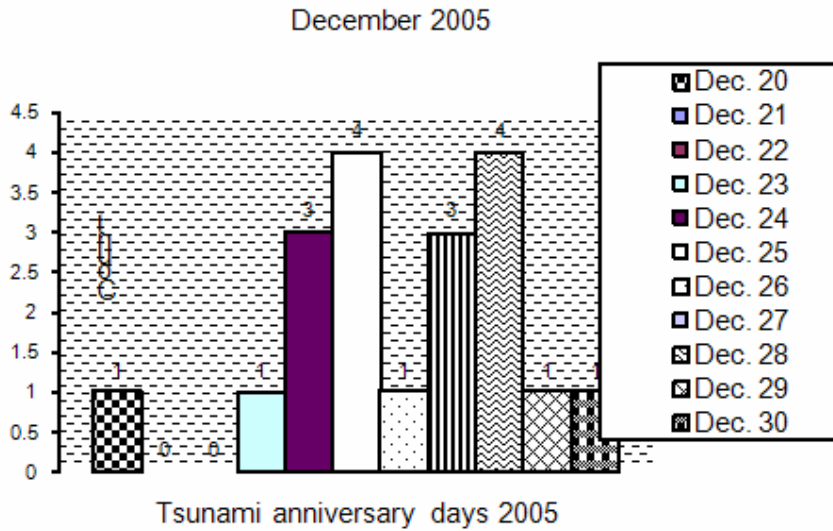


Figure 1. Sri Lanka anniversary story frequencies December 25-27, 2005, compared to preceding – succeeding days.

Violent/negative topics

Violence over time

H1 predicted that pre-tsunami coverage would dwell more on violent/negative incidents than post-tsunami coverage, which was expected to have a richer news diet. Based on literature, one would expect violent/negative news to characterize coverage of a peripheral nation (Wallerstein, 1974) like Sri Lanka that is both small and developing (FitzSimon, 1993; Gans, 1979; Gersh, 1992; Jamieson & Campbell, 1992; Langton, 1991; Larson, 1983; Perry, 1981; Shoemaker et al., 1991; and Wilhoit & Weaver, 1983). The answers to RQs 4 a, b, and c will shed light on the hypothesis, so they will be explored first.

Violence: Pre-tsunami

RQ 4A asked which pre-tsunami topics, including violence/negativity, were covered. Coders were given instructions about coding two topics per story, and, additionally, the instruction: “Negative/violent story: Mark “Yes” if it is Topic 3, 7, 17, or 20.” The topics of violent coverage were of interest in this study. Topic 3, 7, 17, and 21 were violent topics as defined by this study. Topic 3 was military defense: armed conflict or threat; Topic 7 was crime, police, judicial, legal, and penal code; Topic 17 was natural disasters: floods, earthquake, drought (including the 2004 tsunami), and Topic 20 was accidents.

Table 7 indicates that overall military/defense (Topic 3) lead all others with 74 (24.5%) stories, nearly one-fourth of all pre-tsunami stories; crime/police (Topic 7) had 11 (3.6%) stories. Therefore, violence comprised a total of 85 (28.14%) pre-tsunami stories. Next was Topic 2: “politics within states” at 67 (22.1%) followed by Topic 14: “human interest” that characterized 29 (9.6%) stories.

Two newspapers had military/defense as their top topic found in 37 stories in *The New York Times*, and 22 stories in the *Los Angeles Times*. It ranked second (15 stories) in the *Christian Science Monitor*. Note that no stories relating to topics 17 (natural disasters) and 20 (accidents) were found in the pre-tsunami coverage.

Table 7

Frequencies and percentages of pre-tsunami Sri Lanka topics by newspaper

Pre-tsunami topic	Overall	NYT	LAT	CSM
	Freq. %	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.
* Military/defense: armed conflict or threat	74 (24.5%)	37	22	15
Politics within states of one country or other similar units	67 (22.1%)	33	16	18
Human interest, odd happenings, animals, sex	29 (9.6%)	14	9	6
Other	21 (6.9%)	17	3	1
	Overall	NYT	LAT	CSM
Diplomatic/political activity between countries of the world	18 (5.9%)	8	7	3
Peace negotiations	18 (5.9%)	6	2	10
Economic matters: trade, tariffs, imports, exports, output, business, sales	13 (4.3%)	6	3	4
Culture, arts, archeology, history, language	13 (4.3%)	10	3	0
* Crime, police, judicial, legal, and penal code	11 (3.6%)	7	4	0
Entertainment, show business (except personalities)	11 (3.6%)	7	2	2

Table 7 (Continued)

Personalities	9 (2.9%)	6	2	1
International aid: relief, military, education (not disasters)	5 (1.6%)	4	0	1
Social services: health, housing, illiteracy, status of women	4 (1.3%)	1	0	3
Religion	4 (1.3%)	4	0	0
Scientific, technical, medical	2 (.6%)	2	0	0
Student matters, education	2 (.6%)	2	0	2
Ecology: energy conservation, pollution	1 (.3%)	0	1	0
Total	302 (100%)	162	74	66

* violent topic

Post-tsunami topics

RQ4B asked which post-tsunami topics, including violence/negativity, were covered. Table 8 shows the frequencies of topics with asterisks to denote violent Topics 3, 7, and 17. Note that there were no stories characterizing Topic 20, accidents, in post-tsunami coverage. Military/defense: armed conflict or threat, had the highest frequency of 306 (39%) stories, more than one-third of all post-tsunami stories; crime/police had 15 (1.9%) stories; natural disasters had 28 (3.5%) stories. Therefore, the 3 violent topics totaled 349 (44.5%) stories, nearly half of all post-tsunami stories. The newspapers emphasized military/defense, which was on top of their list. This topic was found in 123 stories in *The New*

York Times, 80 stories in the *Los Angeles Times*, and 103 stories in the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Table 8

Rank order frequencies and percentages of post-tsunami Sri Lanka topics by newspaper

Post-tsunami Topic	Overall	NYT	LAT	CSM
	Freq. %	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.
* Military defense: armed conflict or threat	306 (39%)	123	80	103
Politics within states of one country or other similar units	203 (25.8%)	86	58	59
Peace negotiations	85 (10.8%)	36	12	37
Diplomatic/political activity between countries of the world	31 (3.9%)	10	11	10
* Natural disasters: floods, earthquake, drought (including 2004 tsunami)	28 (3.5%)	16	8	4
Human interest, odd happenings, animals, sex	21 (2.6%)	7	9	5
Other	18 (2.2%)	11	7	0
International aid: relief, military, education (not disasters)	18 (2.2%)	9	4	5
* Crime, police, judicial, legal, and penal code	15 (1.9%)	8	6	1

Table 8 (Continued)

Post-tsunami topic	Overall	NYT	LAT	CSM
Economic matters: trade, tariffs, imports, exports, output, business, sales	8 (1%)	4	2	2
Culture, arts, archeology, history, language	7 (.8%)	5	1	1
Personalities	7 (.8%)	5	2	0
Ecology: energy conservation, pollution	4 (.5%)	1	3	0
Religion	3 (.3%)	1	0	2
Scientific, technical, medical	2 (.2%)	2	0	0
Sports	1 (.1%)	0	0	0
Student matters, education	1 (.1%)	0	0	2
Total	784 (100%)	342	210	232

* violent topic

Pre-tsunami vs. post-tsunami

RQ4C asked how post and pre-tsunami topics compared. Comparing tables 7 and 8, one finds politics within one country, with 203 stories (25.8%), up from its pre-tsunami levels; peace negotiations, with 85 (10.8%) stories, up from pre-tsunami levels, and diplomatic/political activity between countries of the world, with 31 (39.5%) stories, raised from pre-tsunami levels.

Table 9 shows that there were significant differences between violent pre and post-tsunami coverage.

This study found that overall (see table 9), violent topics increased four-fold post-tsunami. While pre-tsunami newspapers had covered violent topics 85 (19.58%) times, the number of violent topics was 349 (80.41%) post-tsunami. Non-violent topics increased two-fold, from 217 (33.28%) stories pre-tsunami to 435 (66.71%) stories post-tsunami. Overall, for every violent topic covered pre-tsunami, there were 4 violent topics post-tsunami. For every non-violent topic pre-tsunami, there were 2 non-violent topics post-tsunami.

Table 10 shows the comparison of violent vs. non-violent topics in each of the newspapers. *The New York Times'* coverage of violent and non-violent topics was significantly related between the periods. *The New York Times* covered 3 times (76.96%) the number of violent stories post-tsunami than pre-tsunami (23.04%). The *Los Angeles Times* carried nearly 4 times the violent stories (78.33%) post-tsunami compared to pre-tsunami (21.66%). The *Christian Science monitor* had the highest percentage increase in violent topics: more than 7 times the number of violent topics post-tsunami (87.80%) than pre-tsunami (12.19%).

Table 9

Violent and non-violent Sri Lanka topics in pre and post-tsunami coverage overall

Source	Frequency		Total
	Violent	Nonviolent	
Overall			
Pre-tsunami	85 (19.58%)	217 (33.28%)	302 (28%)
Post-tsunami	349 (80.41%)	435 (66.71%)	784 (72%)
Total	434 (100%)	652 (100)	1086 (100%)

$$\chi^2 = 24.349, \text{ d.f.} = 1, \rho < .001$$

Table 10

Violent and non-violent Sri Lanka topics in pre and post-tsunami coverage by newspaper

Source	Frequency		Total
	Violent	Non-violent	
NYT*			
Pre-tsunami	44 (23.04%)	118 (37.70%)	162 (32.14%)
Post-tsunami	147 (76.96%)	195 (62.30%)	342 (67.85%)
Total	191 (100%)	313 (100%)	504 (100%)
	* $\chi^2 = 11.692, \text{ d.f.} = 1, \rho < .001$		
LAT**			
Pre-tsunami	26 (21.66%)	48 (28.91%)	74 (25.87%)
Post-tsunami	94 (78.33%)	118 (71.08%)	212 (74.12%)
Total	120 (100%)	166 (100%)	286 (100%)
	$\chi^2 = 1.908, \text{ d.f.} = 1, \rho < .001$		

Table 10 (Continued)

Source	Frequency	Total
Pre-tsunami	15 (12.19%)	66 (22.30%)
Post-tsunami	108 (87.80%)	230 (77.7%)
Total	123 (100%)	296 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 12.396, d.f. = 1, p < .001$

Violence over time

H1 predicted that pre-tsunami coverage would dwell more on violent/negative incidents than post-tsunami coverage, which was expected to have a richer news diet. Even though the answer to RQ4A noted that violent topics dominated pre-tsunami coverage, the answer to RQ4B indicated that violent/negative topics even more dominated post-tsunami Sri Lanka coverage. Comparing pre-tsunami and post-tsunami coverage, RQ4C noted a statistically significant increase in violent topics post-tsunami.

To explore the factors leading to the use of a greater number of violent stories by the newspapers, one can turn to Appendix D and look at the events with asterisks. Appendix D shows that, according to Keesing's, much more violence occurred in the post period (11 events) than in the pre-period (3 events). All these 14 events were covered.

H1 also predicted that post-tsunami, the diet of stories would be richer. When the coder coded whether or not a story was a real-life *Keesing's* event, she also recorded: if it were not an event, what was it? Table 11 indicates comparisons of the richness of the news diet before and after the tsunami. Overall, the study indicated a richer diet post-tsunami as the total number of discretionary stories—features, editorials, and other news—increased from 46 (39%) in the pre-tsunami period to 72 (61%) post-tsunami: $\chi^2 = 64.646$, d.f. = 1, $p < .001$. While the 2 periods had an almost equal percentage of features, the percentage of editorials increased nearly four-fold post-tsunami. Other news stories such as local New York or California stories involving Sri Lanka nearly tripled. Appendix J is an example of a feature story in the post period from the *Monitor*.

Table 11

Pre and post-tsunami coverage of non-Keesing's

Sri Lanka stories

	Features	Editorial*	News**	Total
Pre-tsunami	33 (28%)	3 (2.5%)	10 (8.5%)	46 (39%)
Post-tsunami	35 (29.7%)	11 (9.3%)	26 (22%)	72 (61%)
Total	68 (57.6%)	14 (11.9%)	36 (30.5%)	118 (100%)

*Editorial $\chi^2 = 4.511$, d.f. = 1, $\rho < .05$

**News $\chi^2 = 7.111$, d.f. = 1, $\rho < .05$

** indicates local news from New York or California about Sri Lanka not found in *Keesing's*

According to comparisons of the tsunami coverage of Sri Lanka between the 2 periods, the expected decrease in violent coverage post-tsunami did not occur; instead, contrary to H1, there was a significant increase in post-tsunami violent coverage across all 3 newspapers. However, as predicted, the post-tsunami coverage of Sri Lanka possessed a richer diet. H1 was thus partially supported. The discussion in chapter 5 will explain the increase in violence.

Pre-tsunami vs. post-tsunami events

The above simple comparison does not unequivocally prove the tsunami's influence on content; an array of much more newsworthy events, including more violent ones, could have occurred in the POST period. Thus a higher level of analysis (Rosengren, 1977) was undertaken. Rosengren (1970) called for comparing "a universe of events" (what really happened) with coverage to draw

inferences about influences on international content: “Extra-media data are used to establish a universe of events, and this universe of events, rather than the universe of news reported during a given time period, provides the starting-point for the investigation.” (p. 99)

Pre-tsunami events

RQ5A asked which pre-tsunami events the newspapers covered from a universe of specific happenings. This question was examined with reference to extra-media data about Sri Lanka recorded in monthly issues of *Keesing’s Record of World Events*, 2003-2006. Appendix D gives the entire list of 79 events about Sri Lanka published in the 18 monthly editions pre-tsunami and 18 monthly editions post-tsunami. Appendix F illustrates the coding of a *Keesing’s* event. For example, if *Keesing’s* had a subhead that read “EU Bans LTTE,” that phrase was taken as an event.

Keesing’s recorded a total of 79 events about Sri Lanka in 36 months, 2003-2006. As Table 6 indicates, of 37 events pre-tsunami, 16 (33.3%) events were included in coverage pre-tsunami, while 21 (66.7%) stories were excluded. Table 6 indicates each newspaper’s inclusion of pre-tsunami *Keesing’s* events: *The New York Times*, the highest, 15 (40.9%), the *Christian Science Monitor*, 12 (32.43%), and the *Los Angeles Times*, 8 (21.62%). Conversely, the number of events excluded pre-tsunami was: *The New York Times*, 22 (59.45%), the *Christian Science Monitor*, 25 (67.56%), and the *Los Angeles Times*, 29 (78.37%). Clearly, the *Los Angeles Times* paid the least attention to events in Sri

Lanka, lending even more support to the finding of among-newspaper differences (RQ2).

Table 6

Included and excluded Sri Lanka pre-tsunami events
by newspaper*

	Included Freq. (%)	Excluded Freq. (%)	Total Events Freq. (%)
Pre-tsunami Overall coverage	16 (33.3%)	21 (66.7%)	37 (100%)
Pre-tsunami NYT	15 (40.9%)	22 (59.45%)	37 (100%)
Pre-tsunami LAT	8 (21.62%)	29 (78.37%)	37 (100%)
Pre-tsunami CSM	12 (32.43%)	25 (67.56%)	37 (100%)

* Source: *Keesing's Record of World Events*

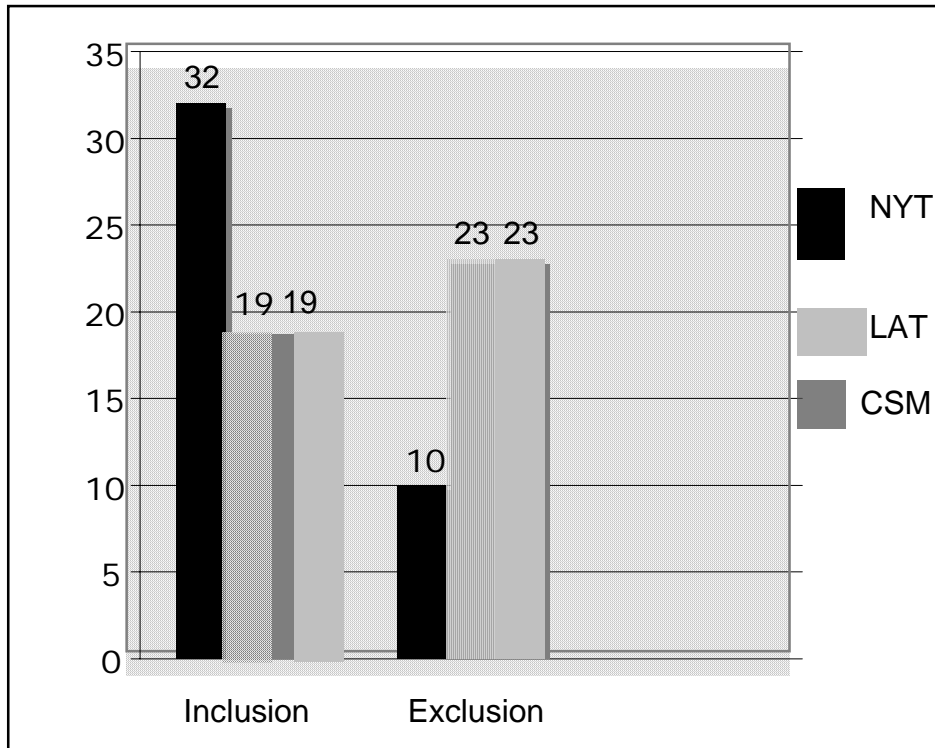
Post-tsunami events

RQ5B asked, from a universe of specific happenings, which post-tsunami events the newspapers covered. *Keesing's* recorded a total of 79 events about Sri Lanka in the months coded between 2003 and 2006. Examples of post-tsunami events in *Keesing's* would be subheads titled "Supreme Court Order" or

“Warning by International Donors High.” (See Appendix K for post-tsunami sample event.)

As Figure 2 indicates, of the post-tsunami universe of 42 events, 32 (76.19%) were included and 10 (23.8%) were excluded. Figure 2 indicates each newspaper’s inclusion of post-tsunami *Keesing’s* events. The number of events included post-tsunami was: *The New York Times*, 32 (76.19%), the highest, followed by the *Christian Science Monitor* 19 (45.23%) and the *Los Angeles Times*, 19 (45.23%).

The number of events excluded post-tsunami was: *The New York Times*, 10 (23.8%), the *Los Angeles Times*, 23 (54.76%), and the *Christian Science Monitor* 23 (54.76%). *The New York Times* excluded the fewest number of events. It is worth noting that “event covered” does not have a one-to-one correspondence with a story; one story could include more than one event, and conversely, one event could be mentioned in more than one story. For example, in *Keesing’s* of December 2006, the event titled “Death of LTTE chief negotiator Balasingham” contains a description of the untimely death of the LTTE leader, details about escalating violence in that month, and details of the killings perpetrated by a breakaway faction of the LTTE, led by the renegade Col. Karuna.



* Source: *Keesing's Record of World Events*

Figure 2. *Included and excluded Sri Lanka post-tsunami events* by newspaper.*

Journalistic markers and prominence

In addition to the discussion of violent or non-violent topic coverage, the examination of journalistic markers interprets the prominence given to Sri Lanka in the 2 periods. **RQ6** asked whether journalistic markers (photos, graphics, page 1 placement, and story length) would accord more prominence to post-tsunami coverage. Based on Budd (1964) and Rosengren (1974), the measures of prominence include page 1 placement, presence of photos and graphics, and length of stories. (See Appendix G for sample story with photos and graphics).

The answer to RQ6 is that journalistic markers accorded more prominence post-tsunami than pre-tsunami.

Only 120 stories had photos accompanying them. Most stories had one photo, while some had two photos; the maximum number used with a story was 10 photos. Table 12 shows that 188 photos were used. Only 35 stories had graphics. A total of 37 graphics were used (some stories had more than one graphic). The frequency of short stories was the highest, 293, followed by long stories, 148, and medium length stories, 102. A total of 33 stories were placed on page 1.

As shown in Table 12, in the post-tsunami phase, a significant increase was seen in photos (126/67%). In comparison, pre-tsunami coverage had 62 (32.9%) photos. Graphics, too, saw a significant increase from 12 (32.4%) graphics pre-tsunami to 25 (67.6%) graphics post-tsunami. Between the two periods, page 1 stories increased approximately four-fold. All story lengths exhibited a significant increase. While short and medium stories approximately tripled, long stories increased about one-and-a-half times between the two periods. All the changes were found to be significant. Predictably, Table 13 shows that comparison between the 3 newspapers revealed *the New York Times* topped the list in every category overall, be it photo, graphics, page 1 story or length. The among-newspaper differences lend even more support to the answer to RQ 2.

Table 12

Overall prominence for journalistic markers in pre and post-tsunami Sri Lanka stories

	Frequency		
	Overall	PRE	POST
Photo*	188 (100%) * $\chi^2 = 169.077$, d.f. = 1, $\rho < .001$	62 (32.9%)	126 (67%)
Graphic**	37 (100%)	12 (32.4%)	25 (67.6%)
Page 1***	** $\chi^2 = 419.022$, d.f. = 1, $\rho < .001$ 33 (100%) *** $\chi^2 = 129.712$, d.f. = 1, $\rho < .001$	7 (21.2%)	26 (78.7%)
Length ****			
Short	293 (100%)	65 (22.1%)	228 (77.8%)
Medium	102 (100%)	27 (26.4%)	75 (73.5%)
Long	148 (100%)	59 (39.8%)	89 (60.1%)
**** $\chi^2 = 109.801$, d.f. = 1, $\rho < .001$			

Table 13

Prominence for journalistic markers in overall Sri Lanka stories by newspaper

	NYT	LAT	CSM	Total*
Photo	125 (66.40%)	42 (22.3%)	21 (11.12%)	188 (100%)
Graphic	18 (48.60%)	7 (18.90%)	12 (32.41%)	37 (100%)
Page 1	25 (75.70%)	7 (21.21%)	1 (3%)	33 (100%)
Length				
Short	119 (40.60%)	68 (23.20%)	106 (36.20%)	293 (100%)
Medium	67 (65.70%)	33 (32.40%)	2 (1.90%)	102 (100%)
Long	66 (44.50%)	42 (28.20%)	40 (27%)	148 (100%)

* $\chi^2 = 90.2$, d.f. = 1, $\rho < .001$

Prominence measure

This author constructed a measure of prominence by giving each item a score, based on Budd (1964) and Rosengren (1974). Coders gave every story a prominence score: a total of its score based on page 1 placement, the use of photos and graphics, and story length. That is, a story was given:

2 points if it were placed on page 1.

1 point for each photo.

1 point for each graphic such as a map or a drawing.

1 point if the story was short (1-250 words).

2 points if the story was medium in length (251-750 words).

3 points if it was a long story (750 words and above).

For example, if a story had 1 picture, 1 graphic, and more than 750 words, its prominence score was 5 points. Most of the stories had a prominence score of about 1 to 5 points for each story (see Table 14). The overall prominence score increased from 388 points pre-tsunami to 843 points post-tsunami. In other words, the prominence given to Sri Lanka doubled overall.

Regarding the 3 newspapers, *The New York Times* had a prominence score between 1 and 5 points in 72 stories pre and 161 stories post-tsunami. That is, the total prominence points for *the New York Times* was nearly one-and-a-half times post-tsunami (344) compared to pre-tsunami (225). The *Los Angeles Times* had a prominence, score between 1 and 5 points in 36 stories pre-tsunami and 99 stories post-tsunami. That is, the Los Angeles newspaper increased its total prominence points from 84 pre-tsunami to 246 post-tsunami, a three-fold increase. The *Christian Science Monitor* more than tripled the prominence to Sri Lanka post-tsunami. Few stories scored more than 5 points. Thus these differences lend further support to the answer to RQ2.

Table 14

Frequencies for prominence scores based on journalistic markers in Sri Lanka stories by total, by newspaper, and by time period

Pre-tsunami	Prominence Frequency			Points	Total Score
	1-5 points	6-10 points	11-15 points		
Overall	141	9	2		388
NYT	72	8	1		225
LAT	36		1		84
CSM	33	1			79
<hr/>					
Post-tsunami					
	1-5 points	6-10 points	11-15 points		
Overall*	374	17	1		843
NYT	161	9	1		344
LAT	99	7			246
CSM	114	1			253

*Pre- and post-tsunami difference is significant,
 $F(2, 540) = 7.344, p < .001$

Summary

Table 15 summarizes the answers to the research questions and the results of testing the hypotheses in this study.

Table 15

A summary of the answers to research questions and the hypotheses tests of Sri Lanka coverage

Research questions and hypotheses	Results	
Influences on Coverage (hierarchical model)		
RQ1	Will U.S. elite newspapers have greater coverage of Sri Lanka post -tsunami than pre-tsunami?	There was greater coverage of Sri Lanka post-tsunami than pre-tsunami.
RQ2	How do specific news organizations each with unique policies, differ in their coverage? Do these differences have an economic basis?	The 3 news organizations differed in their coverage of Sri Lanka. Economic realities seem to be an influence.
RQ3	Will a spike in coverage occur on the anniversary of the tsunami, December 26, 2005, as predicted by news routine literature.	This study found spikes during the anniversary period.
Violence		
H1	Pre-tsunami Sri Lankan coverage will dwell more on violent/negative incidents than post-tsunami coverage, which is expected to have a richer news diet.	Partially supported. The rich post-tsunami diet included much more discretionary coverage, but the pre-tsunami diet had much <u>less</u> violence.

Table 15 (Continued)

	Research questions and hypotheses	Results
RQ4A	Which pre-tsunami topics, including violence/negativity, are covered?	More violent/negative pre-tsunami topics were covered. Military/defense and politics within a country dominated pre-tsunami coverage, with military/defense on top of the rank order of topics.
RQ4B	Which post-tsunami topics, including violence/negativity, are covered?	Military/defense was top in the rank order, with natural disasters ranking 5 th . There was an equal measure of violent topics and non-violent topics post-tsunami.
RQ4C	How do post and pre-tsunami topics compare?	The 3 newspapers were fairly uniform in increasing coverage of violence. Violent topics increased four-fold post-tsunami. Non-violent topics increased two-fold post-tsunami.
Universe of events		
RQ5A	Out of the universe of specific happenings, which pre-tsunami events did the newspapers cover?	16 (43.24%) of 37 pre-tsunami events in <i>Keesing's Record of World Events</i> were covered by at least one elite newspaper.
RQ5B	Out of a universe of specific happenings, which post tsunami events did the newspapers cover?	32 of 42 post-tsunami events in <i>Keesing's Record of World Events</i> were covered by at least one elite newspaper.

Table 15 (Continued)

	Research questions and hypotheses	Results
Prominence		
RQ6	Will journalistic markers (photos, graphics, page 1, and story length) accord more prominence in coverage post-tsunami than pre-tsunami? Do the newspapers differ?	Overall, journalistic markers elevated Sri Lanka in post-tsunami coverage. Each newspaper differed in the manner of elevation.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

A total of 543 stories from three elite and influential U.S newspapers were content analyzed for this study. The newspapers, all above 50,000 in circulation, were *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Christian Science Monitor*. The study examined pre and post-tsunami coverage of Sri Lanka in two periods: 18 months before the tsunami (July 1, 2003-December 25, 2004) and 18 months after the tsunami (July 1, 2005-December 25, 2006). The 2004, December 26, tsunami took more than 31,000 lives and ravaged many parts of Sri Lanka.

Rationale

The study's aim was to look at the relation between an actual disaster and media content by analyzing the nature and intensity of the coverage of Sri Lanka in U.S. newspapers known for their foreign coverage. More specifically, the researcher studied the relationship between properties of events—the menu—and properties of news reports of events—the diet (Rosengren, 1974). To explain international coverage, Rosengren (1977) had advocated the use of extra-media data, which for this study came from *Keesing's Record of World Events*.

Coverage—whether violent/negative, balanced, or absent -- can affect perceptions of a country (Dodd, 1998; Ebo, 1997; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Van Belle, 2000; Yu & Chi Mei Leung, 2005). Thus U.S elite news media coverage could influence U.S. policy and aid decisions toward this developing

country (Van Belle, 2000). Moreover, Sri Lanka exports \$7.6 billion worth of apparel, tea, rubber, gems and jewelry, refined petroleum, and coconuts to the United States, its most important market, and other nations; coverage could conceivably affect this trade. Researchers have suggested that the dynamics between the news, policy decisions, and public opinion are real (Elder & Cobb, 1984; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

Research about influences on media content provided this study with one of its theoretical bases. The notion of extrinsic influences on news media content stresses the interactions between factors outside the media organization and the news that is produced (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996), such as sources, advertisers, and interest groups. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) do not specifically posit a major disaster as an extra-media (Level 4) influence on media content; that idea is a contribution of this dissertation. This study also draws on the idea that the organization (Level 3 of the Shoemaker & Reese model) influences content through both newsroom policies and economic realities. Finally, media routines (Level 2) affect content. This study specifically emphasizes the role of a disaster in influencing media coverage at the routines level and at the organizational level.

This study was inspired by the body of empirical research literature (Adams, 1986; Budd, 1964; Chang et. al, 1987; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Riffe & Shaw, 1982; Van Belle, 2000; Wu, 2000) on portrayal of developing nations in U.S. media. Further, it drew on the inclusion/ exclusion research tradition,

discussed above as the menu-diet approach, and prominence. The prominence or salience approach, based in the literature on framing (Entman, 1991; Entman, 1993; Reese, 2001) studies visibility, attention, and valence of issues in media stories about a country. The study calculated measures of prominence accorded to Sri Lanka by assigning points to photos, graphics, placement, and story length (Budd, 1964).

Summary of results

Volume

Results showed that tsunami-hit Sri Lanka received significantly more coverage post-tsunami from all three newspapers. The 3 newspapers showed similar tendencies in covering Sri Lanka far less before it was propelled into the news due to a major disaster, the 2004 tsunami. The coverage was found to be significantly different, and several times larger in volume, than it was pre-tsunami. Post-disaster Sri Lanka loomed larger on the media agenda of the 3 newspapers. According to the framing research presented by Entman (2004), Gamson and Modigliani (1989), and Gans (1979), entities are subject to interpretations that influence the way in which they are covered. The present study's findings echo previous studies of the extrinsic influences on content (Altschull, 1984; Chang, 1989; Gitlin, 1989; Golan, 2006; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996).

This study investigated inclusion and exclusion (Rosengren, 1977) by comparing the 3 newspapers' coverage to the historical events recorded in an

extra-media source, *Keesing's Record of World Events*. Results showed that more events from *Keesing's* were included about Sri Lanka in post-tsunami coverage than pre-tsunami.

The New York Times came first in inclusion volume with 15 (40.9%) events, followed by the *Christian Science Monitor* with 12 (32.43%), and the *Los Angeles Times* with 8 (21.62%). So also *The New York Times* was first in including post-tsunami events, 10 (23.8%); the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Christian Science Monitor* tied with 23 (54.76%). Conversely, *The New York Times* excluded the fewest number of events.

Violence

The selection of negative violent topics of coverage influences public opinion of a country (Gaddy & Tanjong, 1986; Larson, 1983; Quarantelli, 1981; Rogers & Chang, 1991). This study found that military defense: armed conflict or threat was the top topic both pre- and post-tsunami.

After 4 topics (of the 21 topics) signifying violence were combined, this study found that violence dominated both pre-tsunami and post-tsunami coverage. The results indicated more violent topic coverage post-tsunami, the reasons for which are discussed below.

Prominence

The study found support for increased prominence in the form of spikes in coverage during tsunami anniversary periods, as suggested by journalistic routines literature. This study also looked at prominence — journalistic markers

such as photos, graphics, page 1 placement, and length. Results showed more photos, graphics, and short and medium length stories used post-tsunami. Page 1 stories increased four-fold. In other words, for every page 1 story pre-tsunami, there were 4 page 1 stories post-tsunami. After markers were given points to calculate a prominence score, the study found prominence given to Sri Lanka doubled post-tsunami. In an important finding, it discovered that all 3 newspapers increased prominence for Sri Lanka.

Implications of results

The finding immediately above about the newspapers' increased coverage suggests support for the idea that media affect each other, called inter-media agenda setting (Danielian & Reese, 1989). However, the author cannot infer the direction of this process —i.e., that after *The New York Times* increased prominence post-disaster, the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Christian Science Monitor* did likewise.

These findings also suggest that when millions of dollars in aid is given to a country, the media mirror that interest in their reporting of that country. Sri Lanka received \$134.6 million from the United States; subsequently, coverage increased.

The 3 newspapers were distinctive in their coverage. *The New York Times'* ownership dictates editorial policy. As the *Irish Times* ("Trends in newspapers," 2007) observed:

Many of the world's great newspapers are still in the hands of family dynasties, like . . . the Sulzbergers of the New York Times . . . And for years their enlightened ownership has helped to uphold high editorial standards. As newspaper owners, they have preferred to invest long-term in journalism rather than to opt for short-term cost cutting expedients, in response to financial pressures. While such cutbacks might help inflate earnings and lift a company's stock price, the real cost would be a noticeable loss of journalistic quality.

The ethnic war in Sri Lanka has been an ongoing strife situation since 1983. For 25 years, the same kinds of violent acts have been perpetrated, such as Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE) suicide bombers. On the other side, the Sri Lankan government has long been accused of carrying out execution-style killings. Assassinations have been frequent in the last 25 years. Therefore, the kinds of stories seen during the coding of 36 months between 2003-2006 were typical of the long-running ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka.

A matter that emerged during the coding (but was not addressed as a research question) is: Did more actual violence occur in the post period? *Keesing's Record of World Events* indicates that there were 13 violent events pre-tsunami compared to 20 violent events post-tsunami. Thus the increased violent coverage post-tsunami (RQ4B. Which post-tsunami topics, including violence/negativity, are covered?) simply reflected reality.

Matched and unmatched events

Obviously, newspaper gatekeepers do not consult a checklist of events to determine content. Neither do they limit coverage to event-oriented stories. To convey the complexity of Sri Lanka coverage, one can look at non-matches as well as *Keesing's* matches, even though the original questions did not address that issue.

The coding sheet asked whether the reported event matched a *Keesing's* event; when it did not, the sheet could be used to identify what kind of a story it was: feature, analysis, news, travel, editorial and so on. For example, one event that did not match *Keesing's* was a travel story about Sri Lanka and its roadside cuisine.

Considering pre-tsunami coverage of Sri Lanka, the matching of the universe of real-life events was not statistically significant $t = -.491$, $d.f. = 2$, $p > .001$. Therefore, pre-tsunami coverage of events among the three newspapers did not vary significantly in the matching of the universe of real-life events as listed in *Keesing's*.

Table 16 shows that of the total of 151 pre-tsunami stories, 71 stories matched *Keesing's* events, while 80 stories were other reports, analysis, editorials, travel, features and even events that *Keesing's* missed (since *Keesing's* is not perfect as an event universe). Some samples of events that *Keesing's* did not match are stories about rebuilding after the tsunami; editorials about terrorist wars. The difference between the matched and unmatched stories

was significant, $\chi^2 = 13.906$, d.f. = 1, $p < .001$, indicating a richness of coverage (beyond mere reporting of events).

Table 16 also indicates that out of its 81 pre-tsunami stories, *the New York Times* stories matched 33 (46.47%) real-life *Keesing's* events, while 48 (60%) were other kinds of stories. *Los Angeles Times* matched 19 (26.76%) events, and 18 (22.5%) did not match. On the other hand, the *Christian Science Monitor* carried matches of more real-life *Keesing's* events (19 stories/26.76%) than other stories (14 stories/17.5%).

Table 16

Pre-tsunami Sri Lanka coverage by newspaper: Universe of events matches vs. non-matches

Keesing's			
	Match	Non-match	Total
Pre-tsunami NYT	33 40.74	48 59.25	81 100%
* $\chi^2 = 7.412$, d.f. = 1, $p < .001$.			
Pre-tsunami LAT	19 51.35%	18 48.64	37 100%
$\chi^2 = 2.872$, d.f. = 1, $p > .05$.			
Pre-tsunami CSM	19 57.57%	14 42.42%	33 100%
$\chi^2 = 1.935$, d.f. = 1, $p > .1$			
Overall	71 **99.99%	80 100%	151 **99.99%
$\chi^2 = 13.906$, d.f. = 1, $p < .001$			

*indicates significance at the .001 level

** not 100 percent due to rounding

The post-tsunami period had a total of 392 stories from all the newspapers. This analysis then looked at how many of the post-tsunami stories matched *Keesing's* events. Table 17 shows that post-tsunami saw more matches

of real-life events, 253 (64.5%), while 139 stories (35.5%) were other reports, analysis, editorials, travel, features and so on.

Table 17 also indicates that out of the 392 pre-tsunami stories, *the New York Times* stories matched 101 (39.92%) real-life *Keesing's* events while 70 (50.35%) were other kinds of stories. The *Los Angeles Times* matched 71 (28.06%) real-life *Keesing's* events, while 35 (25.18%) did not match real-life *Keesing's* events. On the other hand, the *Christian Science Monitor* carried 81 (32.01%) stories that matched *Keesing's*, while it had 34 (24.46%) other stories.

Table 17

Post-tsunami Sri Lanka coverage by newspaper: Universe of events matches vs. non-matches

	Match	Non-match	Total
Post-tsunami NYT*	101 39.92%	70 50.35%	171 43.62%
* $\chi^2 = 7.412$, d.f. = 1, $p < .001$.			
Post-tsunami LAT	71 28.06%	35 25.18%	106 27.04%
$\chi^2 = 2.872$, d.f. = 1, $p > .05$.			

Table 17: Continued

Post-tsunami CSM	81 32.01%	34 24.46%	115 29.33%
$\chi^2 = 1.935, d.f. = 1, p > .1$			
Overall*	253 99.99%	139 99.99%	392 99.99%
$*\chi^2 = 13.906, d.f. = 1, p < .001$			
*indicates significance at the .001 level			

This brings us to the comparison of both periods for stories matching *Keesing's*. Figure 3 shows that the differences in the matching of *Keesing's* events is dramatic. If the pre-tsunami total real-life matched *Keesing's* stories were 80 (14.7%), in the post-tsunami period, the number was 253 (46.59%), a difference of 173 stories, $\chi^2 = 13.906, d.f. = 1, p < .001$.

A paired samples *t* test comparing the pre-tsunami and the post-tsunami matching of *Keesing's* events showed that post-tsunami coverage matches were statistically significant, $t = -13.000, d.f. = 2, p < .001$. There were significant differences in the average number of real-life events matched in the two time periods. On average, the number of matches between the pre and post periods differed by about 61 ($SD = 8$) stories.

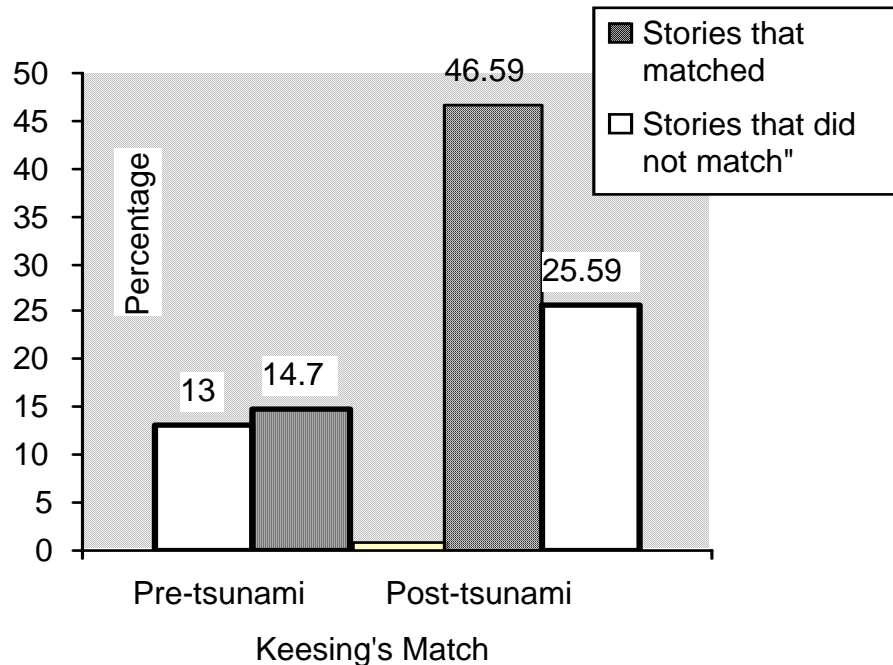


Figure 3. Pre and post-tsunami Sri Lanka stories matching Keesing's events and those that did not match Keesing's.

The Christian Science Monitor vs. Los Angeles Times

In every one of the analyses mentioned above, the *Christian Science Monitor* did well to equal, sometimes exceed, the *Los Angeles Times*, given the former's tabloid size. (The *Monitor* did not fare well in page 1 placement, but the comparison is not valid, due to the *Monitor's* tabloid size.) The quality of the *Christian Science Monitor's* international reporting was also much more in-depth than that of the *Los Angeles Times*. For instance, while the *Los Angeles Times* relied heavily on Associated Press files, every *Christian Science Monitor* story was done by special reporters stationed either in Sri Lanka or in India. The

Christian Science Monitor is unique in its policies of international coverage. The *Los Angeles Times* has seen a change of two editors in two years with ongoing frictions between editors and owners, and downsizing, while the *Monitor* is supported by a church, and this fact seems to allow the *Monitor* to take strong editorial decisions.

The *Los Angeles Times* has seen editors resign in recent years (“Editors resign after guest-edited column canceled,” 2007; O’Neal, 2006; Chediya, 2006; “L.A. Times editor resigns,” 2006). The friction was caused by economic problems, as the *Chicago Tribune* noted:

Editor Dean Baquet stepped down under pressure after publicly pushing back against demands that he cut more jobs at the struggling paper. With the Internet stealing young readers and changing the way companies advertise, revenue and circulation have been dropping at big daily newspapers across the nation. The *Times* has watched its advertising revenue drop alarmingly in recent years. This seismic shift is a large reason Tribune Co. was put into play earlier this year by its largest shareholder, California's Chandler family. (O’Neal, 2006)

Limitations and future studies

A discussion of this study necessarily includes a few caveats. First, as noted above, *Keesing’s* is imperfect as a menu of events. Further, it would be

hasty to conclude that a major disaster such as a tsunami would *always* act as an extra-media influence on U.S. media content. The present study found that one tsunami-hit country received, post-tsunami, greater coverage overall by 3 elite newspapers. However, an analysis of Malaysia coverage, for example, might yield different results pre- and post-tsunami. Thus, this single disaster is not generalizable, since a cyclone in Sri Lanka (or elsewhere) might have different results. The researcher wanted to have a generalizable study, but had to limit the study to one disaster to keep it manageable.

One other limitation was the clear tsunami connection in anniversary stories and probably in some of the other post-tsunami stories. The stories were not coded for tsunami content connection in the post-tsunami period.

Finally, only 3 U.S. newspapers were studied, yielding a small sample size (number of stories). A future larger sample would increase statistical power. Researchers who undertake future studies on this topic should consider conducting separate analyses of several disasters for media effects.

Although this study aimed to examine the extra-media influence of a disaster, it was not an effects study. The effect of this coverage on U.S. policy decisions, foreign policy, and further aid to Sri Lanka was not examined. Finally, researchers should not assume causation between the disaster and U.S. newspapers' increased coverage. It is possible that the newspapers reported more on Sri Lanka because of increased trade, for example, or because of the

tsunami's occurrence on the day after Christmas — a slow news day and one when U.S. readers may feel empathetic toward tragedies.

The present study examined the extra-media influence of a disaster on newspaper coverage in a U.S. context. The results showed that all the newspapers (though not uniformly) increased coverage of Sri Lanka after the tsunami, but the same result might not occur with U.S. newsweeklies, television news or blogs. Future research could consist of pre- and post-tsunami coverage by various media in various countries.

REFERENCES

- Abraham, L., & Appiah, O. (2006). Framing news stories: The role of visual imagery in priming racial stereotypes. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 17 (3), 183-203.
- Adams, W.C. (1986). Whose lives count? TV coverage of natural disasters. *Journal of Communication*, 36 (2), 105-112.
- Aldrich, C. R. (1971). *An analysis of newsmagazine coverage in three selected campaign periods: plus an overview of U.S. third-party politics*. Unpublished master's thesis, Ohio University, Athens.
- Altschull, H.J. (1984). *Agents of power*. New York: Longman.
- Althaus, S. I., & Tewksbury, D. (2002). Agenda setting and the 'new' news: Patterns of issue importance among readers of the paper and online versions of the New York Times. *Communication Research*, 29 (2), 180–208.
- Arno, A., & Dissanayake, W. (1984). *The news media in national and international conflict: A westview special study*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Atwood, R. (1987). News of U.S. and Japan in each other's papers. *Gazette*, 39, 73-89.
- Audit Bureau of Circulation. (2007, 30 September). U.S. newspaper-search results. Retrieved February 18, 2008, from <http://abcas3.accessabc.com/ecirc/newstitlesearchus.asp>

- Bantz, C.R., McCorkle, S., & Baade, R.C. (1981). The news factory. In G.C. Wilhoit & H. De Bock (Eds.), *Mass communication review yearbook*, 2 (pp. 336-390). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Beaudoin, C. E., & Thorson, E. (2001). LA Times offered as model for foreign news coverage. *Newspaper Research Journal*, 22 (1), 80-93.
- Benton, M., & Frazier, P. (1976). The agenda-setting function of the mass media at three levels of information holding. *Communication Research*, 3 (3), 261-274.
- Beyers, J., & Kerremans, B. (2007) The press coverage of trade issues: A comparative analysis of public agenda setting and trade politics. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 14 (2), 269-292.
- Bogart, L. (1984). The Public's Use and Perception of Newspapers. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 48 (4), 709-719.
- Boortstin, D.J. (1971). From news gathering to news-making: A flood of pseudo-events in W. Schramm & D.F. Roberts (Eds.). *The process and effects of mass communication* (pp. 116-150). Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Boucher, R. A. (2006). The United States and South Asia: An expanding agenda. Retrieved November 13, 2006, from <http://www.state.gov/p/sca/rls/rm/2006/66374.html>
- Breed, W. (1955). Social control in the newsroom: A functional analysis. *Social Forces*, 33,179.

- Budd, R.W. (1964). Attention score: A device for measuring 'news play.'
Journalism Quarterly, 41, 259-262.
- Burns, J.E. (1998). The agenda setting process in music radio: A purposive sample of listeners. Paper presented at the annual convention of the Radio Broadcasting Association, Las Vegas, NV.
- Carr, D. (2007). Murdoch gives in, so to speak. *The New York Times*, 56, C1-C2.
- Carroll, R. L., & Tuggle, C.A. (1997). The world outside: Local TV news treatment of imported news. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 74 (1), 123-133.
- Case, T. (1998, April). Newspapers. *Advertising Age* 69, 51.
- Cassara, C. (1998). U.S. newspaper coverage of human rights in Latin America, 1975-1982: Exploring President Carter's agenda building influence. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 75 (3), 478-486.
- Chang, T. K., Shoemaker, P. J., & Brendlinger, N. (1987). Determinants of international news coverage in the U.S. media. *Communication Research*, 14 (4), 396-414.
- Chang, T.K., Wang, J., & Chen, C. (1989). The social construction of international imagery in the post-cold war era: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 42 (3), 277-296.
- Chang, T.K., & Lee, J. W. (1992). Factors affecting gatekeepers' selection of foreign news: A national survey of newspaper editors. *Journalism Quarterly*, 69 (3), 554-561.

- Chideya, F. (Host). (2006, November 9). L.A. Times editor resigns. [Radio Program]. *NPR: News & Notes*.
- Christopher, L.C. (2007). Media executives fear user-generated content. *Seybold Report: Analyzing Publishing Technologies*, 7(14), 14-15.
- Cline, C.G. (1983). The myth of the monolith. *Newspaper Research Journal*, 5 (2) 17-28.
- Cooper, Anne. (1984). Third World news on network television: An inclusion/exclusion analysis. Doctoral dissertation at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
- Danielian, L., & Reese, S. (1989). A closer look at intermedia agenda setting. In P.J. Shoemaker (ed.) *Communication campaigns about drugs*, pp. 47-66. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Dias, A., & Seneviratne, K. (2006). Sri Lanka: Politicization of tsunami relief and the media's role. In K. Seneviratne (Ed.). *Media's Challenge: Asian tsunami and beyond* (pp. 195-217). Singapore: Nanyang Technological University.
- Dimitrova, D. V., & Stromback, J. (2005). Mission accomplished? *Gazette: International Journal for Communication Studies*, 67 (5), 399-417.
- Dobbs, M. (2005, 27 February). Retrieved May 10, 2008, from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A55199-2005Feb26.html>

- Dodd, C.H. (1998). *Dynamics of intercultural communication*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Downman, S. (2005). Swamped: The tsunami media coverage in Banda Aceh—when help is not helpful. Paper presented at the annual conference of journalism education, Griffiths University, Australia.
- Ebo, B. (1997). Media diplomacy and foreign policy: Toward a theoretical framework. In A. Malek (Ed.). *News media and foreign relations* (pp. 43-58). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Edelman, M. (1993). Contestable categories and public opinion. *Political Communication*, 10, 152-153.
- Editor resigns after guest-edited opinion section canceled. (March 23, 2007). *Associated Press*, international news.
- Elder, C.D., & Cobb, R.W. (1984). Agenda building and the politics of aging. *Policy Studies Journal*, 13, 115-129.
- Entman, R. (1974). Newspaper competition and First Amendment ideals. *Journal of Communication*.
- Entman, R. (1991). Framing U.S. coverage of international news: Contrasts in narratives of the KAL and Iran air incidents. *Journal of Communication*, 10 (4), 155-173.
- Entman, R. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43 (3) 51-58.
- Entman, R. (2004). *Projections of power*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Fahmy, S. (2004). Picturing Afghan women: A content analysis of AP wire photographs during the Taliban regime and after the fall of the Taliban regime. *Gazette*, 66 (2), 91-112.
- Fahmy, S. (2007). They took it down: Exploring determinants of visual reporting in the toppling of the Saddam statue in national and international newspapers. *Mass Communication & Society*, 10 (2), 143-170.
- Fink, C.C. (1989, March). How newspapers should handle upscale/downscale conundrum. *Presstimes*, pp. 40-41.
- FitzSimon, M. (1993). *The media and foreign policy in the post-cold war world*. New York: Freedom Forum Media Studies Center.
- Fried, A. (2005). Terrorism as a context of coverage before the Iraq War. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 10 (3), 125-132.
- Funkhouser, G.R. (1973). The issues of the sixties: An exploratory study in the dynamics of public opinion. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 37, 62-75.
- Gaddy, G.D., & Tanjong, E. (1986). Earthquake coverage by the western press. *Journal of Communication*, 36, 105-112.
- Galtung, J., & Ruge, H. M. (1965). The structure of foreign news. *Journal of Peace Research*, 2, 64-91.
- Galtung, J. (1986). The green movement: A socio-historical exploration. *International Sociology*, 1 (1), 75-90.
- Galtung, J. (1998). The peace movement: An exercise in micro-macro linkages. *International Social Science Journal*, 50 (157) 401-406.

- Gamson, W.A., & Modigliani, A. (1989). Media discourse and public opinion on nuclear power: A constructionist approach. *American Journal of Sociology*, 95 (1), 1-37.
- Gandy Jr., O. H. (1982). *Beyond agenda setting: Information subsidies and the public policy*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Gans, H.J. (1979). *Deciding what's news: A study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Gersh, D. (1992, August 29). Covering solid waste issues. *Editor & Publisher*, pp. 15-35.
- Ghanem, S. (1997). Media coverage of crime and public opinion: An exploration of the second-level of agenda setting. Doctoral dissertation, University of Texas at Austin.
- Gitlin, T. (1983). *Inside prime time*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Glassner, B. (1999). *The culture of fear: Why Americans are afraid of the wrong things: crime, drugs, minorities, teen moms, killer kids, mutant microbes, plane crashes, road rage & so much more*. New York: Basic Books.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Golan, G. (2006). Inter-media agenda setting and global news coverage: Assessing the influence of the *New York Times* on three network television evening news programs. *Journalism Studies*, 7 (2), 323-333.
- Golan, G., & Wanta, W. (2003). International elections on US network news. *International Journal for Communication Studies*, 65 (1), 25-39.

- Graber, D. (2005). *Mass media and American politics*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- Hachten, W.A., & Scotton, J. F. (2007). *The world news prism*. (7th ed.), Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Hallin, D. (1992). The "high modernism" of American journalism. *Journal of Communication*, 42 (3), 14-25.
- Haumann, W., Peterson, T. (2004). German public opinion on the Iraq conflict: A passing crisis with the U.S.A. or a lasting departure? *International Journal of Public Opinion*, 16 (3), 311-330.
- Hester, A. (1973). Theoretical considerations in predicting volume and direction of international information flow. *Gazette*, 19 (4), 239-247.
- Hiebert, R. A. (2003). Public relations and propaganda in framing the Iraq war: A preliminary review. *Public Relations Review*, 29 (3), 243-255.
- Hirsch, P. (1977). Occupational, organizational and institutional models in mass media research: Toward an integrated framework. In P.M. Hirsch, P.V. Miller, & F.G. Kline (Eds.). *Strategies for communication research* (pp.13-40). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Hoge Jr., J.F. (1994). Media pervasiveness. *Foreign Affairs*, 73 (4), 136-144.
- Huang, S. (1995). *Economic coverage of China before and after the end of the Cold War in the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the Washington Post and the Chicago Tribune*. Unpublished master's thesis, Ohio University, Athens.

- Jamieson, K.H., & Campbell, K.K. (1983). *The interplay of influence: Mass media and their publics in news, advertising, politics*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Jamieson, K.H., & Campbell, K.K. (1992). *Interplay of influence: News, advertising, politics, and the mass media*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Jenkins, J. C., & Bond, D. (2001). Conflict-carrying capacity, political crisis, and reconstruction: A framework for the early warning of political system vulnerability. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 45 (1), 3-31.
- Kariel, H.G., & Rosenvall, L. A. (1984). Factors influencing international news flow. *Journalism Quarterly*, 61 (3), 509-516.
- Katz, E., & Dayan, D. (1986). The battle for public opinion: The president, the press, and the polls during Watergate (Book Review). *Contemporary Sociology*, 15 (6), 848-849.
- Keesing's Record of World Events*. (2003-2006). Retrieved May 10, 2008, from http://www.keesings.com/search?kssp_search_phrase=Sri+Lanka&x
- Kessler, L. (1989). Women's magazines' coverage of smoking-related health hazards. *Journalism Quarterly*, 66, 316-322.
- King, P.T. (1997). The press, candidate images, and voter perceptions. In M. McCombs, D.L. Shaw, & D. Weaver (Eds.), *Communication and democracy: Exploring the intellectual frontiers of agenda-setting theory*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

- Kiouis, S. (2004). Explicating media salience: A factor analysis of New York Times coverage during the 2000 U.S. presidential election. *Journal of Communication*, 54 (1), 71-87.
- Klaehn, J. (2002). Corporate hegemony: A critical assessment of the Globe and Mail's news coverage of near-genocide in 1975-80. *Gazette*, 64 (4), 301-321.
- Knight, A. (2005). Covering disasters and the media mandate: The 2004 tsunami. Paper delivered at the annual conference of Asian Media Information and Communication Association Center, Beijing.
- Krippendorff, K. (Ed.). (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kurukulasuriya, L. (2006). Reconstructing peace. *New Internationalist*, (386), 24-24.
- L.A. Times editor resigns over cost cuts. (2006, November). *The Toronto Star*, C02.
- Lacy, S. (1988). Effect of intermedia competition on daily newspaper content. *Journalism Quarterly*, 65 (1), 95-99.
- Lacy, S., & Riffe, D. (1996). Sampling error and selecting intercoder reliability samples for nominal content categories: Sins of omission and commission in mass communication quantitative research. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 73, 969-973.

- Lang, G.E., & Lang, K. (1983). *The battle for public opinion: The president, the press, and the polls during Watergate*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Lang, G.E., & Lang, K. (1994). The press as prologue: Media coverage of Saddam's Iraq, 1979-1990. In W.L. Bennett and D.L. Paletz (Eds.). *Taken by storm: The media, public opinion, and U.S. foreign policy in the Gulf War*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Langton, L.M. (1991). Photo coverage of the Third World in four prestige U.S. newspapers. *Newspaper Research Journal*, 12, 98-107.
- Larson, J. (1983). *Television's window on the world*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Lauchlan, A. (2007). The Texas liberal press and the image of white Texas masculinity, 1938-1963. *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 110 (4), 486-512.
- Lee, S. T., & Maslog, C. C. (2005). War or peace journalism? Asian newspaper coverage of conflicts. *Journal of Communication*, 55 (2), 311-329.
- Lippmann, W. (1949). *Public opinion*. New York: Macmillan.
- Livingston, S., & Van Belle, D.A. (2005). The effects of satellite technology on newsgathering from remote locations. *Political Communication*, 22 (1), 45-62.
- Lombard, M., Snyder-Duch, J., & Bracken, C.C. (2002). Content analysis in mass communication: Assessment and reporting of intercoder reliability. *Human Communication Research*, 28 (4), 587-607.

- Lombard, M., Snyder-Duch, J., & Bracken, C.C. (2004). *Human Communication Research*, 30 (3), 434-437.
- Lule, J. (2004). War and its metaphors: News language and the prelude to war in Iraq, 2003. *Journalism Studies*, 5 (2), 179-190.
- Luther, C. A., & Miller, M. M. (2005). Framing of the 2003 U.S.Iraq war demonstrations: An analysis of news and partisan texts. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 82 (1), 78-96.
- Malik, A. (2004, December). Can CNN, BBC get away with this corpse show in sensitive Manhattan? *Indian Express*, A1.
- Manheim, J.B. (1986). A model of agenda dynamics. In M.L. McLaughlin (Ed.), *Communication Yearbook 10* (pp. 499-516). Newbury Park: CA: Sage.
- Markham, J. W. (1961). Foreign news in the United States and South American Press. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 25, 249-262.
- Maslog, C. C., Lee, S. T., & Kim, H. S. (2006). Framing analysis of a conflict: How newspapers in five Asian countries covered the Iraq war. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 16 (1), 19-39.
- McCombs, M. (1977). Agenda setting function of mass media. *Public Relations Review*, 3 (4), 89-95.
- McCombs, M. (2004). *Setting the agenda: The mass media and public opinion*. Malden, MA: Polity.

- McCombs, M., & Gilbert, S. (1986). News Influence on our pictures of the world. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Perspectives on media effects* (pp. 1-15). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- McCombs, M. & Ghanem, S.I. (2001). The convergence of agenda setting and framing. In S.D. Reese, O.H. Gandy, & A.E. Grant (Eds.), *Framing public life: Perspectives on media and our understanding of the social 7ygvvd world* (pp. 67-82). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- McCombs, M., & Estrada, G. (1997). The news media and the pictures in our heads. In S. Iyengar, & R. Reeves (Eds.), *Do the media govern? Politicians, voters, and reporters in America* (pp. 237-247). Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.
- McCombs, M. & Shaw, D.L. (1972). The agenda setting function of mass media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36, 176-187.
- McCombs, M., & Shaw, D. L. (1993). The evolution of agenda-setting research: Twenty-five years. *Journal of Communication*, 43 (1), 58-67.
- McDonald, E.A. (1965). *An analysis of McCall's before and after the 1959 revision*. Unpublished master's thesis, Ohio University, Athens.
- McGuire, W. J. (1969). The nature of attitudes and attitude change. In G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (pp. 136-314). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- McLean, I. (1996). *The concise Oxford dictionary of politics* (p. 496). New York: Oxford University Press.

- McLeod, J. Becker, L. B. & Byrnes, J. E. (1974). Another look at the agenda setting function of the press. *Communication Research*, 14, 435-452.
- Megwa, E., & Brenner, D.J. (1988). Toward a paradigm of media agenda setting effect: Agenda setting as a process. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 1 (1), 39-56.
- Merrill, J., & Fisher, H. (1980). *The World's Greatest Dailies*. NY: Hastings House.
- Merrill, J. (1990). Global elite: A newspaper community of reason. *Gannett Center Journal*, 4 (4), 93-101.
- Merrill, J. (1999). The global elite. *IPI Report*, 4, 13-15.
- Neuendorf, K.A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook*. Thousand oaks, CA: Sage.
- Neuman, W. R., Just, M., & Crigler, A. (1992). *Common knowledge: News and the construction of social meaning*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Nimmo, D., & Combs, J.E. (1983). *Mediated political realities*. New York: Longman.
- Nord, L.W., & Stromback, J. (2006). Reporting more, informing less: A comparison of the Swedish media coverage of September 11 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. *Journalism*, 7 (1), 85-110.
- Norris, P. (1995). The restless searchlight: Network news framing of the post-cold war world. *Political Communication*, 12 (4), 357-370.

- O'Keefe, G.J. (1996). *Taking a bite out of crime: the impact of the national citizens' crime prevention media campaign*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- O'Neal, M. (2006, November). L.A. Times editor resigns under pressure *Chicago Tribune*, business and financial news.
- Östgaard, E. (1965). Factors influencing the flow of news. *Journal of Peace Research*, 2, 39-63.
- Pan, N. (2004). *When East Meets West in Cosmopolitan: Covers, Culture and the Influence of Hearst, 1993-2003*. Unpublished master's thesis, Ohio University, Athens.
- Paraschos, M. (1988). News Coverage of Cyprus: A case study in press treatment of foreign policy issues. *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, 16, 201-213.
- Perloff, R. M. (1998). *Political communication: Politics, press, and public in America*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Perry, D. (1981). Foreign industrial disputes in Time and Newsweek, 1966-1973. *Journalism Quarterly*, 58 (3), 439-443.
- Powell Jr., B. G. (1982). *Contemporary Democracies: Participation, Stability, and Violence*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Price, V., & Zaller, J. (1993). Who gets the news? Alternative measures of news reception and their implications for research. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 57, 133-164.

- Quarantelli, E.L. (1981). The command post point of view in local mass communications systems. *International Journal of Communication Research*, 7, 57-73.
- Quarantelli, E.L., & Wenger, D. (1991). A cross-societal comparison of disaster news: Reporting in Japan and the United States. In L. Wilkins, & P. Patterson (Eds.). *Risky business: Communicating issues of science, risk, and public policy* (pp. 97-111). New York: Greenwood Press.
- Ramos, M., & Piper, P. S. (2005, May). Web waves. *Searcher*, 13 (5), 32-39.
- Reese, S.D. (2001). Understanding the global journalist: A hierarchy of influences approach. *Journalism Studies*, 2 (2), 173-187.
- Riffe, D., & Freitag, A. (1997). A content analysis of content analysis: Twenty-five years of *Journalism Quarterly*. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 74 (3), 524.
- Riffe, D., Lacy, S., & Fico, F.G. (2005). *Analyzing media messages: Using quantitative content analysis in research* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Riffe, D., & Shaw, E.F. (1982). Conflict and consonance: Coverage of Third World in two U.S. papers. *Journalism Quarterly*, 59 (4), 617-626.
- Rogers, D.M., & Chang, T.K. (1991). Media coverage of technology issues: Ethiopian drought of 1984, AIDS, Challenger, and Chernobyl. In L. Wilkins, & P. Patterson (Eds.). *Risky business: Communicating issues of science, risk, and public policy* (pp. 75-96). New York: Greenwood Press.

- Rogers, D.M., & Dearing, J.W. (1988). Agenda setting research: Where has it been, where is it going? In *Communication Yearbook 10* (pp. 555-594). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Rogers, E.M., Dearing, J.W., & Bregman, D. (1993). The anatomy of agenda setting research. *Journal of Communication*, 43 (1), 68-84.
- Rosenblum, M. (1977). Reporting from the Third World. *Foreign Affairs*, 55 (4), 815-835.
- Rosengren, K. E. (1970). International news: Intra and extra-media data. *Acta Sociologica*, 13, 96-109.
- Rosengren, K.E. (1974). International News: Methods, data and theory. *Journal of Peace Research*, 11 (2), 145-156.
- Rosengren, K. (1977). Four types of tables. *Journal of Communication*, 27 (1), 67-75.
- Rosengren, K. E., McLeod, J. M., & Blumler, J. G. (1992). Comparative communication research: From exploration to consolidation. In J.G. Blumler, J.M. McLeod, & K.E. Rosengren (Ed.). *Comparatively speaking: Communication and culture across space and time* (pp. 271-298). Newbury Park: CA: Sage.
- Ross, S.D., & Bantimaroudis, P. (2006). Frame shifts and catastrophic events: The attacks of September 11, 2001, and New York Times' portrayals of Arafat and Sharon. *Mass Communication & Society*, 9, (1), 85-101.

- Scheufele, D.A. (2000). Agenda setting, priming, and framing revisited: Another look at cognitive effects of political communication. *Mass Communication & Society*, 3 (2/3), 297-316.
- Schlesinger, P. (1978). Putting "reality" together: *BBC news*. London: Constable.
- Severin, W., & Tankard, J. (1988). *Communication theories: Origins, methods, uses*. New York: Longman.
- Shah, H. G., & Thornton, M. C. (2004). *Newspaper coverage of inter-ethnic conflict. Competing visions of America*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Shaw, E.F. (1979). Agenda setting and mass communication theory. *Gazette*, 25 (2), 96-105.
- Shoemaker, P. J., Danielian, L. H., & Brendlinger, N. (1991). Deviant acts, risky business and U.S. interests: The newsworthiness of world events. *Journalism Quarterly*, 68 (4), 781-795.
- Shoemaker, P., & Reese, S. (1996). *Mediating the message*. (2nd ed.). New York: Longman.
- Shoemaker, P.J. (Ed.). (1989). *Communication campaigns about drugs: Government, media, and the public*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Sigal, I.V. (1973). *Reporters and officials*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath.
- Smith, K. A. (1987). Effects of newspaper coverage on community issue concerns and local government evaluations. *Communication Research*, 14 (4), 379-395.

- Sood, R., Stockdale, G., & Rogers, E.M. (1987). How the news media operate in natural disasters. *Journal of Communication*, 37 (3) 1-8.
- Soroka, S.N. (2003). Media, public opinion, and foreign policy. *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 8 (1), 27-48.
- Sreberny-Mohammadi, A. (1984). The "World of the News" study. *Journal of Communication*, 34 (1), 121-134.
- Sri Lanka: Economy. *World Fact Book*. (2006). Retrieved November 13, 2006, from <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/ce.html>
- Sri Lanka. *Keesing's record of world events*. Retrieved November 2, 2006, from www.keesings.com
- Standish, K. (1989, April). Lean times continue: Painless ways to economize. *RTNDA Communicator*, pp. 18-23.
- Steinberg, J. (2005, January). Reporting Live from hell: TV scrambles for glory. *New York Times*.
- Stevenson, R. L., & Cole, R. R. (1984). Patterns of foreign news. In R.L. Stevenson & D.L. Shaw (Eds.). *Foreign news and the new world information order* (pp. 37-62). Ames, IA: Iowa University Press.
- Sugita, S. (1972). *Cherry blossoms and rising sun—a systematic and objective analysis of Gunka (Japanese war songs) in five historical periods (1868-1945)*. Unpublished master's thesis, Ohio State University, Columbus.

- Suryanarayan, R. (2006, August). Framing of tsunami bloggers: A four-country study. Paper presented at the annual convention of the Association for Journalism and Education in Mass Communication, San Francisco.
- Suryanarayan, R. (2006, August). Framing of the government and the GAM in the Indonesian civil war. Paper presented at the annual convention of the Association for Journalism and Education in Mass Communication, San Francisco.
- Suryanarayan, R. (2007, August). Framing of tsunami NGOs. Paper presented at the annual convention of the Association for Journalism and Education in Mass Communication, Washington, D.C.
- Suryanarayan, R., and Cooper-Chen, Anne (2007). The “Restless Searchlight”: The New York Times coverage of the 2004 tsunami—Attention, prominence, treatment. Unpublished paper, Ohio University.
- Top 100 U.S. daily newspapers. (2007). *Editor & Publisher International Yearbook*, 1-251
- Trends in newspapers. (2007, July). *The Irish Times*, p. 15.
- Tsunami death toll. (2005). *Tsunamihelp.blogspot.com*. Retrieved June 19, 2007, from <http://www.webarchive.org.uk/pan/10612/20050331/www.tsunamihelp.blogspot.com/index.htm>

Tsunami death toll varies. (2005, 20 January). *Washingtonpost.com*. Retrieved June 19, 2007, from http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-rv/world/daily/graphics/tsunami_122804.html

Tsunami reconstruction, two years later. (2006, 22 December). *USAID Fact Sheet*. Retrieved June 13, 2007, from <http://www.usaid.gov/press/factsheets/2006/fs061222.html>

Tuchman, G. (1979). Making news by doing work: Routinizing the unexpected. *American Journal of Sociology*, 79 (1), 110-131.

Tuchman, G. (1977). The exception proves the rule: The study of routine news practice. In P. Hirsch, P. Miller, & F.G. Kline. (Eds.). *Strategies for communication research* (pp. 43-62). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

TV drama about tsunami in Malaysia. (2007, 9 January). Retrieved August 7, 2007, from http://www.bjreview.com.cn/movies/txt/2007-01/09/content_52512.htm

Uyangoda, J. (1996). Recent attempt at ethnic conflict resolution in Sri Lanka. In F. E. Jandt & P.B. Pedersen (Eds.). (1996). *Constructive conflict management: Asia-Pacific cases* (pp. 239-245). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Van Belle, D.A. (2000). New York Times and network TV news coverage of foreign disasters: The significance of the insignificant variables. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 77, 50-70.

- Waititu, E., & Cooper Chen, A. (2008, in press). Fourth media world? US mainstream newspaper coverage of the 2004 tsunami in Somalia, Malaysia, and Myanmar. In L.K. Fuller, *Tsunami 2004: Media Coverage*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Wallensteen, P. (1968). Characteristics of economic sanctions. *Journal of Peace Research*, 5 (3), 248-267.
- Wallerstein, I. (1974). *The modern world system*. New York: Academic Press.
- Wanta, W. (1997). *The Public and the national agenda*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Wanta, W., & Foote, J. (1994). The President-news media relationship: A time series analysis of agenda setting. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 38 (4), 437.
- Wanta, W., Golan, G., & Lee, C. (2004). Agenda setting and international news: Media influence on public perceptions of foreign nations. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 81 (2), 364-377.
- Watt, J., Mazz, M., & Snyder, L. (1993). Agenda setting effects of television news coverage and the effects decay curve. *Communication Research*, 20 (3), 408-435.
- Weaver, D., & Elliott, S. N. (1985). Who sets the agenda for the media? A study of local agenda building. *Journalism Quarterly*, 62 (1), 87-94.
- Weaver, D., Graber, D. A., McCombs, M., & Eyal, C. (1981). *Media Agenda setting in a presidential election*. New York: Praeger.

- Weaver, D.H., & Mullins, L.E. (1975). Content and format characteristics of competing daily newspapers, *Journalism Quarterly*, 52, 257-264.
- Weaver, J.B., & Wilhoit, G.C. (1981). Foreign news coverage in two U.S. wire services. *Journal of Communication*, 31, 55-63.
- Weberling, B. (2006). Mobilizing information and disaster relief: New York Times coverage of the tsunami and Pakistan earthquake. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Ohio Communication Association, Perrysburg, Ohio.
- Weinberger, M. G., Allen, C.T., & Dillon, W.R. (1984). The impact of negative network news. *Journalism Quarterly*, 61, 432-435.
- Welch, M., Fenwick, M., & Roberts, M. (1997). Primary definitions of crime and moral panic: A content analysis of experts' quotes in feature newspaper articles on crime. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 34 (4), 474-494.
- Wilhoit, G. C., & Weaver, D. (1983). Foreign news coverage in two U.S. wire services. *Journal of Communication*, 33 (2), 132-148.
- Wolfsfeld, G. (1984). Collective political action and media strategy. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 28, 363-381.
- Wu, H. D. (2000). Systemic determinants of international news coverage: A comparison of 38 countries. *Journal of Communication*, 50 (2), 110-121.
- Wu, H.D. (1998). Geographic distances and U.S. newspaper coverage of Canada and Mexico. *Gazette*, 60 (3) 253-263.

- Wu, H.D. (2003). Homogeneity around the world? *Gazette*, 65 (1) 9-24.
- Yioutas, J., Segvic, I. (2003). Revisiting the Clinton/Lewinsky scandal: the convergence of agenda setting and framing. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 80, (3), 567-582.
- Yu, H & Chi Mei Leung, C. (2005). *Asian Journal of Communication*, 15 (3) 302-318.
- Zaller, J. (1992). *The nature and origins of mass opinion*. New York: Cambridge.
- Zhu, J. (1992). Issue competition and attention distraction: A zero sum theory of agenda setting. *Journalism Quarterly*, 69 (4), 826.
- Zucker, H.G. (1978). The variable nature of media influence. In B.D. Ruben (Ed.), *Communication Yearbook 2* (pp. 225-240). New Brunswick, N.J.

APPENDIX A
TSUNAMI MAP



APPENDIX B
TSUNAMI DEATH TOLL

- The epicenter of the earthquake which registered a 9.0 on the Richter scale. There was an estimated 30 meter shift in the tectonic plates in the region.
- Indonesia 131,338 confirmed dead. More than 120,000 estimated dead. Approximately 100, 000 injured. 131,479 missing. About 517,000 displaced.
- Thailand: 5,395 confirmed dead. 11,000 estimated dead. 8,457 injured. 4,499 missing.
- Malaysia: 68 to 74 confirmed dead. 299 injured.
- India: 10,749 confirmed dead. 16,413 estimated dead. 5,669 missing. 380,000 displaced.
- Sri Lanka: 31,229 confirmed dead. 15,686 injured. 23,000-plus missing. Approximately 573,000 displaced.
- Burma (Myanmar): 90 estimated dead. 45 injured. 200 missing. 3200 displaced.
- Maldives: 82 confirmed dead. 26 missing. 12,000 to 22,000 displaced.
- Bangladesh: 2 casualties.
- Tanzania: 10 casualties. More than 10 estimated killed.
- Kenya: 1 casualty.
- Somalia: 298 casualties.
- Seychelles: 3 casualties.

Appendix B References

- Tsunami death toll. (2005). *Tsunamihelp.blogspot.com*. Retrieved June 19, 2007, from <http://www.webarchive.org.uk/pan/10612/20050331/www.tsunamihelp.blogspot.com/index.htm>
- Tsunami death toll varies. (2005, 20 January). *Washingtonpost.com*. Retrieved June 19, 2007, from http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-rv/world/daily/graphics/tsunami_122804.html

APPENDIX C 1

TSUNAMI ELITE PAPERS CODING SHEET

Story serial number -----

1. Newspaper: please tick: NYT LAT CSM
2. Story title: (Please write the first five words): -----
3. Dateline (Please write) -----
4. Date (MM-DD-YY) / /
5. Section: -----
6. Photo Yes No
7. Graphics Yes No
8. Length: Short Medium Long

Prominence

9. On page 1? Yes No
10. Which country is mentioned in the headline or the lead (circle one): 1. Sri Lanka
2. Indonesia 3. Thailand 4. Malaysia 5. India 6. Somalia 7. Myanmar
8. Seychelles 9. Tanzania 10. Bangladesh 11. Kenya 12. Maldives
11. Story type: Topic 1. -----
12. Story type: Topic 2 ----- (If none or undecided, choose # 18)
12. The story matches a Keesing's event? Yes No
If you chose No, explain: -----

TSUNAMI ELITE PAPERS CODING SHEET Story serial number ---

1. Newspaper: please tick: NYT LAT CSM
2. Story title: (Please write the first three words): -----
3. Dateline (Please write) -----
4. Date (MM-DD-YY) / /
5. Section: -----
6. Photo Yes No
7. Graphics Yes No
8. Length: Short Medium Long

Prominence

9. On page 1? Yes No
10. Which country is mentioned in the headline or the lead (circle one): 1. Sri Lanka
2. Indonesia 3. Thailand 4. Malaysia 5. India 6. Somalia 7. Myanmar
8. Seychelles 9. Tanzania 10. Bangladesh 11. Kenya 12. Maldives
11. Story type: Topic 1. -----
12. Story type: Topic 2 ----- (If none or undecided, choose # 18)
12. The story matches a Keesing's event? Yes No
If you chose No, explain: -----

APPENDIX C 2

SRI LANKA: CODING GUIDELINES

FOR EACH STORY

List two topics on your coding sheet. 1 (For each story list two topics on the coding sheet. Do not be surprised if only a few topics dominate the stories.)

You are not choosing a main and subsidiary topic—just two topics.

A graphic is any map, or drawing used with the story.

Section: write only the section A and the desk. Omit column for NYT.

The story matches a *Keesing's* event means that it is recorded in *Keesing's Record of World Events*.

If you see no match of the event in *Keesing's* list of events in Sri Lanka between 2003-2006 (Appendix D) given to you, mark "No." Then explain whether it is a feature story, analysis, editorial, profile or obituary. Length:

- "Short" if word length is between 1-250 words.
- "Medium" if word length is between 251-750 words.
- "Long" if word length is above 751 words.

Negative/violent story

Mark "Yes" if the story topic is 3, 7, 17, or 20.

Sri Lanka: Topics for Coding

17. Diplomatic /political activity between countries of the world
18. Politics within states of one country or other similar units
19. Military defense: armed conflict or threat
20. economic matters: trade, tariffs, imports, exports, output, business, sales
21. international aid: relief, military, (not disasters)
22. social services: health, housing, illiteracy, status of women
23. crime, police, judicial, legal, and penal code
24. culture, arts, archeology, history, language
25. religion
26. scientific, technical, medical
27. sports
28. entertainment, show business (except personalities)
29. personalities (not politicians): sports, entertainers, others
30. human interest, odd happenings, animals, sex
31. student matters, education
32. ecology: energy conservation, pollution
33. Natural disasters: floods, earthquake, drought (including 2004 tsunami)
18. other

19. weather
20. accidents
21. Peace negotiations (Based on Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1984)

APPENDIX D

SRI LANKA EVENTS LISTED IN KEESING'S

Note: Asterisks indicate covered stories

Title	Month	Pre-tsunami	
Peace process	July		2003
Convictions for camp massacre	July		2003 Violent
Muslim farmers murdered	Aug		2003 Violent
Economic plan	Aug		2003
Kumaratunga's offer	Sept		2003
High Court sentence	Oct		2003
Criticism of LTTE by UNICEF *	Oct		2003
Constitutional Crisis *	Nov		2003
Departure of Norwegians-Visit *	Nov		2003
LTTE Plan for Interim *	Nov		2003
Budget *	Nov		2003
Political crisis *	Jan		2004
Alliance between SLFP and JVP *	Jan		2004
Attacks on Churches	Jan		2004 Violent
Kumaratunga dissolves parliament *	Feb		2004
Government changes *	Feb		2004
LTTE Threat to elections *	Mar		2004 Violent
Launch of Monk's Party *	March		2004
Pledge on presidency	March		2004
General Elections *	April		2004
Election of Parliamentary speaker	April		2004
Formation of new government *	April		2004
defeat of rebel faction of LTTE *	April		2004 Violent
Separatist announce	May		2004 Violent
Turmoil in Parliament	May		2004 Violent
Ceasefire between government	June		2004
Disruption of parliament	June		2004 Violent
Quashing of conviction for Tamil massacre	June		2004 Violent
Female suicide bomber *	July		2004 Violent
Norwegian peace bid	July		2004
CWC JOINS UPFA	Sept		2004
Reintroduction of landtax	Sept		2004
Failure of bid to revive peace	Sept		2004 Violent
Swearing in of three ministers	Oct		2004

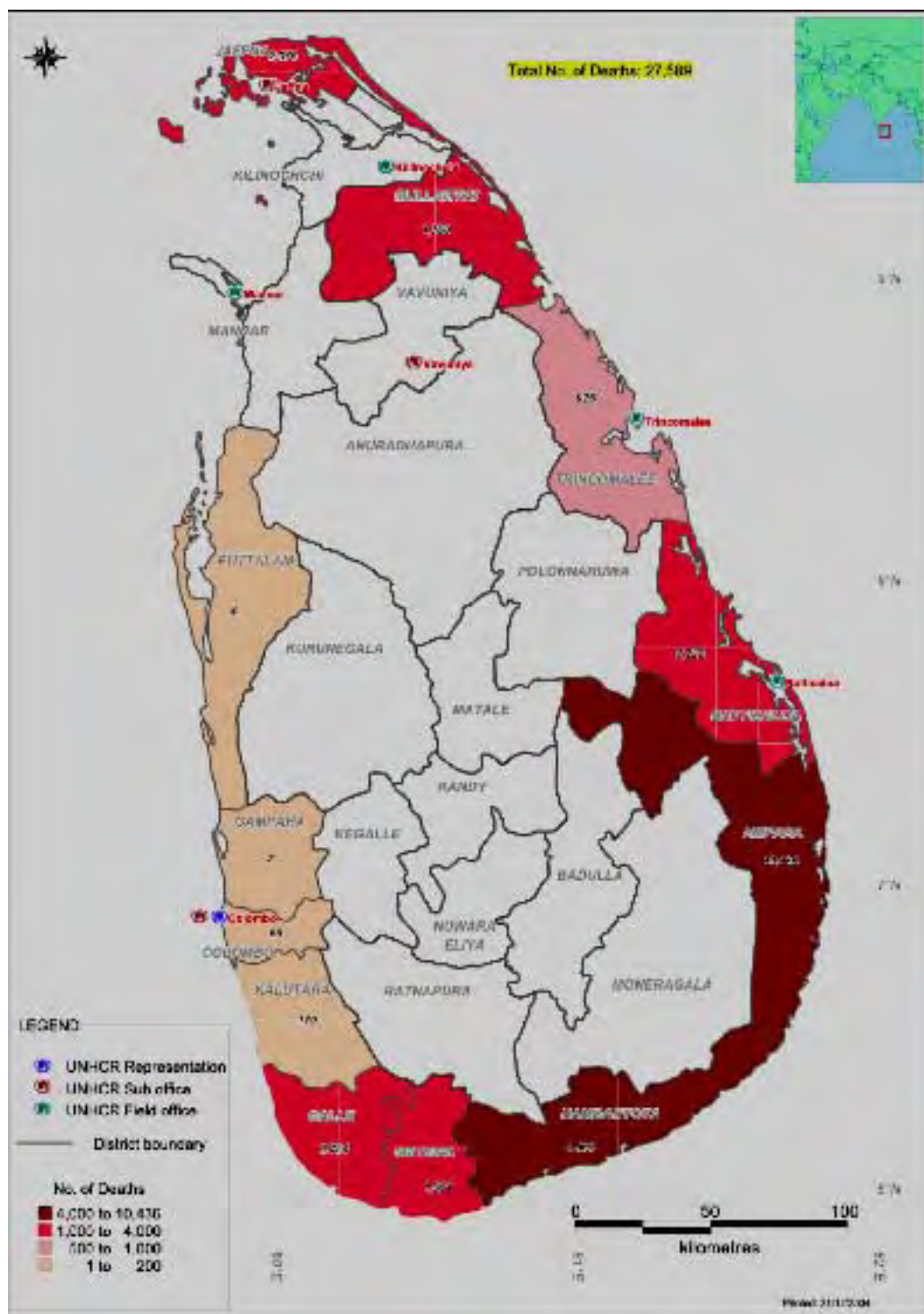
Child Soldiers *	Nov	2004	Violent
LTTE Reject proposal	Dec	2004	
Post-tsunami			
Ruling party choice for presidential	July	2005	
Warning by international donors	July	2005	
Foreign minister assassinated *	Aug	2005	Violent
New foreign minister *	Aug	2005	
Ruling of Supreme Court on Presidential *	Aug	2005	
Elections announced *	Sept	2005	
EU ban on LTTE *	Sept	2005	Violent
Tsunami aid	Sept	2005	
Presidential candidate's manifesto	Oct	2005	
Political violence *	Oct	2005	Violent
Mahinda Rajapakse wins election *	Nov	2005	
New Government *	Nov	2005	
Budget	Dec	2005	
Escalating Violence *	Dec	2005	Violent
Breakdown of ceasefire *	Jan	2006	Violent
Peace talks with LTTE *	Feb	2006	Violent
Appointment of New Norwegian *	Mar	2006	
Serious violations of ceasefire *	April	2006	Violent
Major violations of ceasefire *	May	2006	Violent
EU decision to ban LTTE *	May	2006	Violent
Death of general in suicide bombing *	June	2006	Violent
Ultimatum to SLMM *	June	2006	Violent
Expression of regret *	June	2006	
Election of Rajapakse	June	2006	
War social issues *	July	2006	Violent
Invitation to LTTE	July	2006	
Withdrawal of monitors *	July	2006	violent
War Terrorism Constitution *	Aug	2006	Violent
Atrocities *	Aug	2006	Violent
Continuing heavy fighting with LTTE *	Sept	2006	Violent
Tamil refugees - Abductions of Tamils	Sept	2006	Violent
Shortlist of candidates for new secretary *	Sept	2006	
UN performance report	Sept	2006	
Military developments *	Oct	2006	Violent
Ruling on provincial merger	Oct	2006	
Annual speech of LTTE leader *	Nov	2006	
Assasination of MP *	Nov	2006	Violent
Recruitment of child soldiers *	Nov	2006	

Commission on atrocities *
Death of LTTE Chief *
In Brief *

Nov 2006 Violent
Dec 2006
Dec 2006

APPENDIX E

TSUNAMI MAP OF SRI LANKA



APPENDIX F

ILLUSTRATION OF THE CODING OF A KEESING'S STORY

Note: The underlined portions from this event below were included in the New York Times and the Christian Science Monitor.

Jan 2004 - SRI LANKA

Political crisis

Sri Lanka's political crisis deepened on Jan 13 when President Chandrika Kumaratunga claimed that because she held a second swearing-in ceremony after her December 1999 re-election as President, she was entitled to hold office until December 2006, not December 2005 as expected. Kumaratunga asserted that as she had called the December 1999 election a year before the end of her six-year term she was entitled to a year's extension of her presidency. She said that she had been forced to hold a public swearing-in ceremony after the election to demonstrate that the injuries she had suffered in a suicide bomb attack shortly before polling day had not made her unfit to govern [see p. 43311]. Kumaratunga claimed further that a second investiture had been held in private in 2000, with only Chief Justice Sarath Silva and the then Foreign Affairs Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar present. Analysts said that the constitutionality of Kumaratunga's action was debatable but that it was likely to make her feud with Prime Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe, which had paralysed peace negotiations with the separatist Tamil Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), almost impossible to resolve [see pp. 45691-92]. (Found in both CSM and NYT)

Alliance between SLFP and JVP

President Kumaratunga on Jan. 20 signed an agreement on a "patriotic national alliance" between her Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP), the main component of the opposition People's Alliance (PA) coalition, and the hardline Marxist Sinhala nationalist Janata Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) party. The JVP, an organisation that had itself mounted bloody anti-government insurgencies in 1971 and 1988-90, was implacably opposed to concessions of autonomy to the LTTE. Both parties claimed that Wickremasinghe's government was allowing the LTTE to set up a separate state in the northern and eastern areas of the country under rebel control. Analysts regarded the effect of the SLFP- JVP pact as making the resumption of peace talks with the LTTE less likely and making the ceasefire between the separatists and the army more fragile [see also pp. 45605; 45244; 44346]. (Found in both NYT and CSM)

SAMPLE STORIES WITH PHOTOS AND GRAPHICS

THE WOLF

LOS ANGELES TIMES

SDAY, AUGUST 9, 2006

Aid Workers Slain in Sri Lanka Buried

The 17 victims were doing relief work when clashes between rebels and troops erupted.

From the Associated Press
COLOMBO, Sri Lanka — Seventeen slain workers for the international aid agency Action Against Hunger were buried Tuesday in the eastern port town of Trincomalee amid continuing violence in Sri Lanka.
The bodies of the one Muslim and 16 Tamils were found in Muttur, just south of Trincomalee.

They were doing post-tsunami relief work for the agency when fighting broke out between Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels and government troops last week.
Fifteen of the bodies were found Friday, most of them lying face down and bearing bullet wounds. Two more were found late Monday in a car apparently killed while trying to flee, the victims said.
The slayings sparked international condemnation, and the government has ordered an investigation.

carrying a former Tamil lawmaker opposed to the Tigers exploded in front of a girls school, killing an occupant and a 3-year-old girl outside, a Tamil politician said.
The apparent target of the attack, S. Sivathasan of the Eelam People's Democratic Party, was injured, party leader Douglas Devananda said. He blamed the Tamil Tigers for the bombing.
The rebels did not immediately comment.
The Tamil Tigers, who began fighting in 1983 for a separate homeland for the country's 3.2 million minority Tamils, oppose

the party.
Early today, the government said that troops reopened a silted reservoir that was the focus of weeks of fierce fighting with Tamil Tiger rebels.
The rebels announced Tuesday that they had lifted a blockade of the canal, which supplies about 60,000 people in government-held villages in northeastern Sri Lanka.
But the government said today that the waterway was opened only after a "limited military operation" by its troops. There was no way to immediately reconcile the accounts.



Relatives grieve by the coffins of S. Ganesh and other slain aid workers, in Trincomalee.

Fighting Erupts Among Rebels In Sri Lanka

By AMY WALDMAN

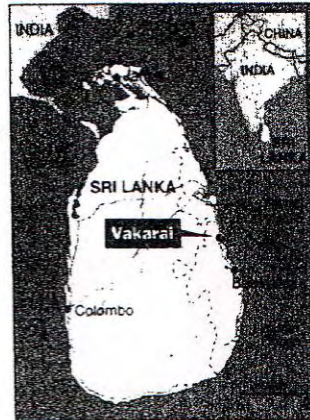
NEW DELHI, April 9 — Fighting began Friday in eastern Sri Lanka between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and a breakaway faction of the group, posing a new threat to the country's stability and its stalled peace process. Several thousand civilians were reported to have fled their homes in the area.

The Tigers, who have been fighting for a Tamil homeland in majority Sinhalese Sri Lanka for more than two decades, split last month when the eastern regional commander, Vinayagamoorthy Muralatharan, known as Karuna, said he wanted his own administration in the east. The Tiger leadership is based in the north, and Karuna accused them of discrimination against the east.

The Tigers are among the world's most fearsome and disciplined guerrilla organizations, and their leader, Vellupillai Prabhakaran, is not known for his tolerance for dissent. It was widely expected that the northern Tigers would take action against Karuna once the country's parliamentary elections, which were held April 2, were over. In March they had issued what amounted to a death warrant for Karuna, saying, "To safeguard our nation and our people, it has been decided to get rid of Karuna from our soil."

In the week before the elections, an alliance candidate loyal to Karuna was killed. Although the Tigers condemned the killing of the candidate, it was widely assumed that they were responsible for it.

The TamilNet Web site, which gen-



The New York Times

Troops were reported advancing on Vakarai, in eastern Sri Lanka.

erally reflects the northern Tigers' line, reported that troops from the northern Tigers had advanced on Vakarai, which is north of Batticaloa, Karuna's base, on Friday morning. Cadres from the two factions had been facing off across the river for weeks and began exchanging fire on Thursday night before the northern Tigers crossed the next day.

TamilNet reported that about eight fighters had been killed on each side and said a commander for Karuna had been wounded in the abdomen. Many doctors from the north who had been working in Batticaloa were driven out last week by fighters loyal to Karuna in retaliation for the assassination of Mr. Sathiyamoorthy. The Web site said the lack of medical personnel was complicating efforts to treat the injured.

The Web site also reported that 300 "young fighters" from the Karuna faction had surrendered to Mr. Prabhakaran's troops.

APPENDIX H

SAMPLE ANNIVERSARY STORY

Los Angeles Times

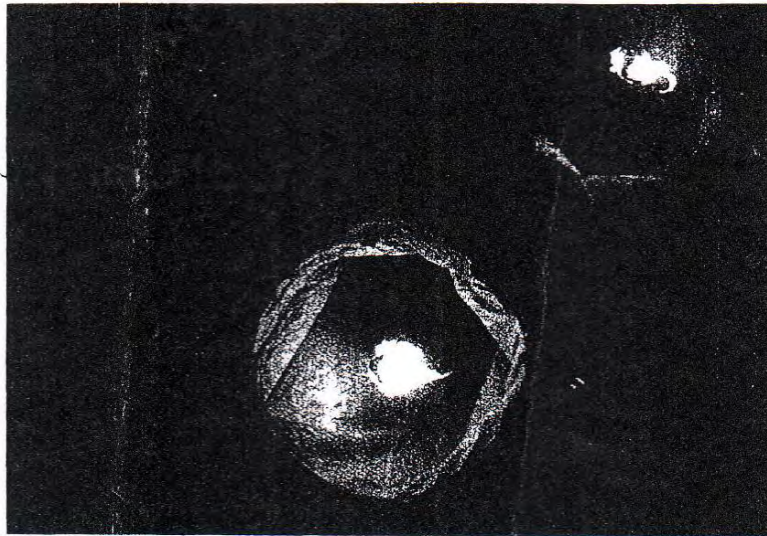
COM ↑

MONDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2005

COPYRIGHT 2005-132 PAGES/C

*'Since the tsunami, we've been praying for a boat and a house.
So far it's not coming, but we'll wait.'*

Sebba Kuttige Priyangani, a Sri Lankan who lost six family members



BAJRETI MURAMKAD/Reuters

REMEMBRANCE: Residents and tourists on Thailand's Phi Phi Island release lanterns to commemorate the Indian Ocean tsunami that claimed about 220,000 lives. Survivors in Sri Lanka have been frustrated by the slow pace of recovery.

Endless Trial for Tsunami Victims

A year later, more than 400,000 are still displaced, many with no livelihood.

By MARK MAONIER
Times Staff Writer

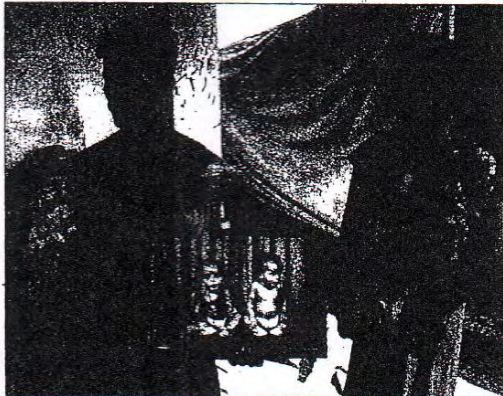
KATUGODA, Sri Lanka — Sitting in the tattered tent that has been his home for the last eight months, Pela Ketiyyage Sanjaya Premanath waves the flies away as he grips the cheaply framed photograph of his wife and reflects on what might have been.

Chandrika would be alive today, the 27-year-old widower says, if she had just ignored a mother's natural instinct and run away from the gargantuan wave. Instead, she headed toward the sea to save her child, not knowing Pela Ketiyyage had already taken the infant to higher ground.

It's been a year since the deadliest tsunami in living memory killed an estimated 220,000 people, and here in southern Sri Lanka, life has moved on. From Pela Ketiyyage's vantage point, however, it hasn't moved all that far.

Pela Ketiyyage's life underscores the plight of survivors faced with the frustratingly slow pace of reconstruction, the pain that lingers from Africa's east coast to the Indonesian island of Sumatra, and the enormous human toll of those few fateful minutes on the morning of Dec. 26, 2004.

[See Tsunami, Page A16]



MARK MAONIER/Los Angeles Times

LOSS: In Katugoda, Sri Lanka, Pela Ketiyyage Sanjaya Premanath and his mother, Sebba Kuttige Priyangani, hold photos of family members killed Dec. 26, 2004.

TODAY IS CHRISTMAS! REMEMBER THE NEEDIEST!

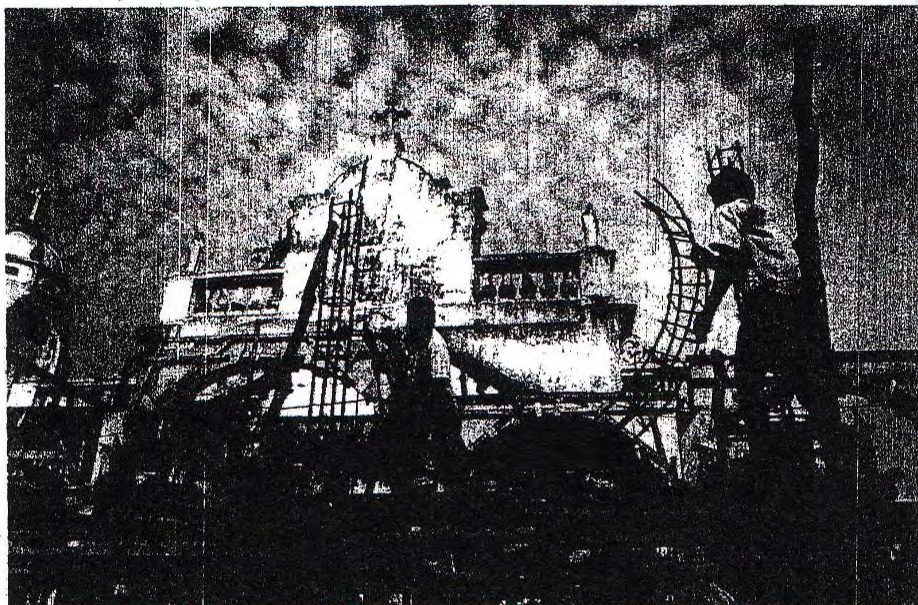
"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

VOL. CLV . . . No. 53,439

Copyright © 2005 The New York Times

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2005



Scott Eells for The New York Times

In Mullaitivu, Sri Lanka, the residents are turning a Roman Catholic Church, destroyed a year ago by the tsunami, into a memorial for its victims.

Tsunami's Legacy: Extraordinary Giving and Unending Strife

By SOMINJ SENGUPTA
and SETH MYDANS

JAFFNA, Sri Lanka — Charity came pouring in from far and wide for this island nation devastated by the tsunami a year ago. But on its fragile northern peninsula, Udayarani Sebastian Pillai today lives on the cliff-edge of uncertainty.

The government has barred her from rebuilding on the seafloor where she had lived, and there is no promise of a permanent house. For now, home is a transit camp sandwiched between army and rebel lines. From beyond the camp comes news of a possible renewal of civil war. Her mind remains ravaged: the tsunami killed three of her seven children.

At first, the tsunami seemed to dangle the

hope of reconciliation. It struck both government-held land and territory controlled by the Tamil rebels, and it brought the two sides together to heal and divide aid. Today, squabbles over aid combined with the legacy of recrimination have so worsened the conflict that Sri Lanka seems closer to war now than it has at any time since the peace process began nearly four years ago. Clashes between government troops and suspected Tamil separatist rebels have become routine.

This is not what might have been anticipated a year ago, but it is only one of a wide range of contrasting and often paradoxical effects being felt a year after the tsunami killed 181,000 people as it devastated the coastlines of Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India, Thailand and other countries around the Indian Ocean. The looming threat of war in Mrs. Pillai's country, in fact, stands in stark con-

trast to the extraordinary shift 1,100 miles away, in the Indonesian province of Aceh. There, Muhammad Idris, a former rebel commander who watched as the sea swallowed his village and family, now scoots around on a red motorcycle, tending to the business of peace. The ethnic separatist guerrillas he once led have turned in their weapons and are retooling themselves as a political party. In Aceh, the tsunami and aid helped quiet a 30-year-old civil war.

The tsunami of Dec. 26, 2004, was, of course, an extraordinary calamity. Apart from the stunning death toll, it displaced close to two million people, razed entire villages, submerged others forever, ruined some 2,900 schools, sundered families. The response was also extraordinary. The

Continued on Page 6

DATE: NOVEMBER 7, 2003

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

WORLD

Woman behind Sri Lanka's turmoil

■ Observers see the president's surprise state of emergency as a bid to remain at political center stage.

By SCOTT BALDAUF
STAFF WRITER

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA — When President Chandrika Kumaratunga decides to do something, she does it big.

Just this week, she has suspended parliament, sacked key ministers, declared a state of emergency that gave her vast powers of arrest and detention, and thrown the 20 month-long peace process with Tamil insurgents into doubt.

The woman behind all these dramatic moves is no political novice. She has been at the forefront of Sri Lankan politics — and an early advocate of peace talks with the Tamil Tiger militant group — for nearly a decade.

Now facing a presidential term limit in 2005 and a slow diminution of her power, she has made what observers suggest is a bold attempt to remain at political center stage as Sri Lanka enters a critical juncture in its history.

"It's one hell of a gamble, and it could end in disaster for her and her party," says Palkiasothy Saravanamuttu, executive director of the Center for Policy Alternatives, an independent think tank in Colombo. "She's quite a canny person, and a very good tactician, but the question is this: Does she have an idea of what to do next? She may have a broad view of her objective, but does she know how to get there?"

From the beginning of her meteoric rise to power,

dependence in favor of autonomy. Meanwhile the government has agreed for the first time to share power with the Tigers.

With Prime Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe in Washington to discuss the peace proposals, Kumaratunga made her surprise move — casting doubt on the future of the peace process. It also dealt a significant blow to the nation's economy, which had been on the rebound during the cease-fire. Sri Lanka's stock exchanged plunged Wednesday, and Mr. Wickremasinghe's spokesman said the turmoil had slowed progress on a proposed free trade agreement with the United States.

This week, as troops guard key installations around the city, it's hard to know who holds the largest support of Sri Lanka's citizens, Kumaratunga, or her rival, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe, with whom she shares a coalition government. All outward signs of protest are faint. There have been no protest marches or rallies, and Mr. Wickremasinghe's party continues to call for calm. Just as important, there have been no signs of a return to violence by the Tigers.

But even Kumaratunga's close allies say that the president may have become so isolated and reliant on advisers that she overstepped her public mandate. "She's going into a precipice which could provoke war inadvertently," says an official in Kumaratunga's party who has had close ties to the president. "I would say she is a mixture of brilliance and madness, and in fact it's a risk for the entire country as well as for her career."

Some say that Kumaratunga is carrying the weight of a political dynasty on her shoulders. Her father was a former prime minister, her mother a former president, and her husband a parliamentarian. But this dynasty has seen more than its share of grief. Her father was killed by a Buddhist monk. Her husband was killed by political rivals, and Kumaratunga herself was seriously injured in a suicide bomb attack in 1998 by the Tamil Tigers.

But it is this legacy of victimhood which forms Kumaratunga's greatest political appeal, says Jayadeva Uyangoda, a political scientist at the University of Colombo. "She comes as a victim of political violence, and people could identify themselves with her," he says, because they themselves were victims of a long political war.

Mr. Uyangoda, who once worked with Kumaratunga during the 1994 negotiations with the Tigers, says that Kumaratunga "has a combative personality, but personally I would say she is a brave woman, and I've always admired her for that."



TOM BROWNY — STAFF



APPENDIX K

SAMPLE KEESING'S POST-TSUNAMI STORY

Jul 2005 - SRI LANKA

- [Ruling party choice for presidential candidate](#)
- [Warning by international donors](#)

Supreme Court order

The Supreme Court on July 15 put an interim stay order on parts of the Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure (P-TOMS), a deal signed by the government in June to allow the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to share in the distribution of aid to areas affected by the devastating tsunami of Dec. 26, 2004 [for signing of P-TOMS see pp. 46682–83]. The court ruled that four clauses of the agreement were illegal, including the location of a regional fund headquarters in the LTTE stronghold of Kilinochchi. The court's judgment was in response to a legal action arguing that the deal was unconstitutional, filed by government ally the left-wing Sinhala-nationalist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) party and the conservative Buddhist Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU—National Heritage Party).

The court delayed further consideration of the case until Sept. 12. Although the government was optimistic that ways could be found to go ahead with implementing the agreement, aid workers said that it would further delay aid distribution and fuel suspicion between the Tamil, Sinhala, and Muslim communities. (NYT)

Ruling party choice for presidential candidate

The Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP), the leading party in the ruling United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) coalition, on July 27 announced that its high-level committee had chosen Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse as its candidate for the next presidential election. Current President Chandrika Kumaratunga was serving her second six-year term and was not eligible to stand again.

The timing of the election itself, however, was a matter of controversy. Kumaratunga was last elected President in December 1999, so opposition parties demanded that the next presidential election should be held in December 2005. Yet Kumaratunga had claimed in January 2004 that because she had held the 1999

election a year early, a secret ceremony was subsequently held to extend her second term until December 2006 [see p. [45788](#)].

Warning by international donors

The US embassy on July 19 issued a strongly worded statement on behalf of the major international donors and supporters of the Sri Lankan peace process urging both the government and the LTTE to honour their ceasefire agreement, which dated from February 2002 [see p. [44614](#)]. The USA, Japan, the EU, and Norway noted that there had been a serious escalation of violence in the areas dominated by the LTTE in the north and east of the country, including incidents between the army and LTTE fighters, a continuing feud between the LTTE and a breakaway faction, and assassinations of political opponents of the LTTE. The donors issued a similar warning in June.