

A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF *THE NEW YORK TIMES*
AND *THE TIMES* OF LONDON COVERAGE OF
THE MIDDLE EAST: A SURVEY OF
THEMES JANUARY 1, 1990 TO
DECEMBER 31, 1995

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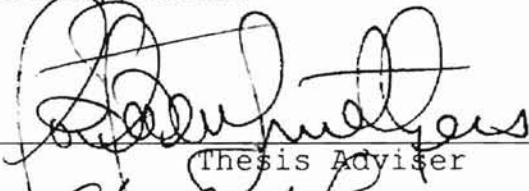
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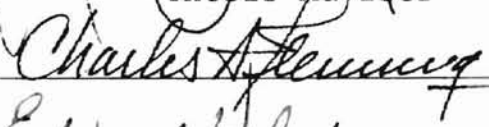
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

General

News coverage of developing nations by western media has been debated among mass media practitioners from both developed and developing nations. Several issues have been discussed, such as the flow of the news, news balance, news bias, and negative coverage of the developing nations in the western news media.

Negative coverage of a nation or culture creates a stereotyped image, since the media have great power to influence public opinion. Lippmann describes stereotypes as classes of "pictures in our heads" that are usually negative, and incorrect portrayals of individuals of various groups and cultures.¹ This kind of image leads to false assumptions. Merrill argued that: "Very few observant critics of the press would deny that news media (printed and electronic) are mainly instruments of propaganda on the international level, and are involved largely in creating and destroying images."²

Development plans and social and economic progress or non-crises news in the developing nations have received almost no attention. On the other hand, news involving violence or crises has been covered extensively. Larson found that the Western news media covered mostly crisis news and focused on the negative side of the events in the developing countries.³

The treatment of other people, cultures and values by the western news media (through the Western point of view of what culture and interest mean to them) can create misunderstanding of other nations among Western populations. Dahlgren and Chakraponi said "TV news promotes certain ways of seeing the world, and thus, of necessity, excludes other ways."⁴ Eventually, the negative treatment and images of countries and people in news is a serious issue in national and international coverage, and not is only a problem in the American news media.

Middle Eastern nations have accused the Western news media, especially the American media, of distorted and negative coverage of their people, culture and events. Since the American news media has an undisputed leadership in Western journalism, it is usually the target of such accusations. Richstad and Anderson in their book *Crisis in International News* pointed out that, "The news media of the United States present a sketchy, distorted and clouded

picture of the world, a simplistic picture and perhaps a very dangerous picture."⁵

Due to Western interest in the region, the Middle East has been the target of extensive coverage in the American and Western European press. Obviously, news consumers may form either a positive or negative image of Arab and Middle Eastern cultures, values, behaviors or attitudes, based on the type of news events being covered. The news emanating from the region may be either crisis or non-crisis in nature, but since political events in the Middle East have often been adverse to U.S. or European advantage, readers may, more often than not, form a negative image.

The Middle East, or Arab nations, as used here, refers to the 20 Arab countries of Asia and North Africa. The Middle East region is one of the most volatile regions in the world. The instability in the region has supplied the main attraction for journalists and audiences alike. It has been unstable both militarily and politically, factors which are the right ingredient to create news stories.

The Middle East is the area on the southern boundary of Asia, which can be approached from the west by the Mediterranean Sea, from the north by the Black Sea, and from the south by the Persian Gulf or the Red Sea and Indian Ocean.⁶ It is the most important land bridge in the world linking Asia, Africa, and Europe.

The Middle East stands out as an area of critical importance for westerners because the region has been considered a link between East and West for centuries. The region houses a wide variety of races, languages, religions, and social groups. What follows in this research will concern the 20 Arab States in the region.

The society which the Arabs founded has survived thirteen centuries of disasters and changes.⁷ The Arabs form a single national group of mostly Muslims and Christians, and they all speak a common language, Arabic. The governing systems in the region range between traditional kingdoms such as Jordan and Saudi Arabia, revolutionary regimes as in Libya and Syria, and the democratic systems as in Lebanon.⁸

Conflicts in the region are considered a way of life and, as stated by Mishra, "the Middle East is an area of great uncertainties."⁹ The ongoing series of events, for example, the Gulf War, the Palestinian-Israeli peace treaty, the New York City bombing, and the accusation of Middle East involvement in the Oklahoma City bombing, attracted the attention of readers everywhere to the Middle East and Arab countries.

Who Is An Arab?

Since the words "Arabs" and "Islam" mentioned in this research go hand in hand, it is helpful to understand something about them. Arabs are people who live in the Middle Eastern region and generally speak the same language. Islam is a religion that is adapted by Arab countries and many non-Arab countries, for example Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan. The next two sections should shed some light on who Arabs are and a brief introduction to the religion of Islam.

Over a hundred million people in the world call themselves Arabs. The Arabs are not a distinct ethnic group, since there are both white Arabs and black Arabs. Nor is language a sufficient guideline of Arabness since there are many Arabic-speaking Jews who are not normally called Arabs. The figure of a hundred million come from the populations of the states in the Arab League. For membership in the Arab League the primary criterion appears to be language: but, despite the presence of Lebanon, which is half Christian, this tends to be coupled with the acceptance of Arab-Islamic culture.¹⁰

Modern Arab intellectuals are well aware of the difficulty in defining an Arab. As long ago as December, 1938, a conference of Arab students in Europe, held in

Brussels, declared that "all who are Arab in their language, culture and loyalty (or "national feeling") are Arabs." Some of the same intellectuals, however, have spoken of the present disunity of the Arabs as the result of European imperialism during the last century or more.¹¹

The only time Arabs have been politically united was from about 634 to 750 AD. Before Mohammed, they were divided into feuding tribes, and not all the tribes entered into alliances with him. The so-called wars of the Apostasy that followed his death ended in unity under the second ruler (Caliph), and this unity continued until about 750, with the Arabs as a ruling elite in an empire stretching from Spain to the Punjab and Central Asia.¹²

At the same time, there was always an impressive cultural unity. Even before Mohammed there was some common cultural awareness among Arabs. The very word Arab has the connotation of "people who speak clearly." And is contrasted with Ajam, or "people who speak indistinctly." Though Ajam came to be used specifically to refer to Persians, the contrast is similar to that between Greeks and "barbarians."¹³

The beginning of the twentieth century saw many of Arab countries nominally parts of the Ottoman Empire: that is, they were under non Arab Muslim rule. This was officially the case with Egypt, although de facto Egypt was being ruled

by Britain, as was also the "Anglo-Egyptian Sudan." Algeria was ruled by the French, who also had some say in Morocco and Tunisia. World War I freed Arabs from the Ottoman Empire, but brought many of them varying degrees of European protection. Only in the early 1950's did most of Arabs become completely independent.¹⁴

The religion of Islam provided the historical driving force creating the vast society to which Arabs belonged. Intellectual disciplines associated with religion were the flywheel that maintained a steady, even movement. Within the community of Muslims, however, there was the still stronger bond of the Arabic language, which had a special status as the language of revelation. Arabic linguistic and literary standards remained remarkably homogeneous in the various regions of the Arab world and even in other Islamic provinces. This is the way it has been for centuries.¹⁵

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to examine the news reporting, editorials, headlines, photos, and political cartoons of the two elite newspapers in the Western World: *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London with respect to their coverage of the Middle East and Arab Countries from 1990 to 1995. According to James Larson, major Western news

media have repeatedly been charged with a tendency to cover Third World nations only in times of crisis or major conflicts.¹⁶ The overall objective of this research is to decide how well these two newspapers satisfied their obligation as defined by media codes and general concept of social responsibility. The research is intended to answer these general research questions:

1. What type of themes (crises or non-crises) were mostly used by the two newspapers while covering news events from the Middle east and/or Arab countries?

2. Which newspaper had the most crises related themes , and which newspaper had the most non-crises related themes while reporting about the Middle East and the Arab countries?

3. Which crises theme occurred more frequently in *The New York Times* and Which crises theme occurred more frequently in *The Times* of London while reporting about the Middle East and/or Arab countries?

4. Which non-crises theme occurred more frequently in *The New York Times* and Which non-crises theme occurred more frequently in *The Times* of London while reporting about the Middle East and/or Arab countries?

5. Are all Arab countries represented equally in both newspapers?

6. Which Arab countries were most covered and which Arab countries least covered the in each newspaper?
7. Did all the articles about Arab countries in both newspapers received equal amount of themes?
8. Are crisis and non-crisis themes equally distributed among Arab countries in both newspapers?
9. Did all Arab countries have equal frequency of themes in *The New York Times* and *The Times of London*?

The Media and Agenda-Setting

The media can play a very important role in helping an issue or problem gain access to the systemic agenda and this will make its chances of being placed on the governmental agenda even greater. As Norton Long was quoted as saying, "to a large extent, the press sets the civic agenda."¹⁷ Therein, it is necessary to realize just how important a role the media plays in the agenda-setting process.

As was the case for the Middle East and Arab countries during the 1970's, Middle Easterners, especially the Palestinians, began to gain some ground in showing themselves not to be victims of a forgotten cause, thus seeking extreme violence to draw attention. Once they have taken an interest in a controversy, the media will usually

play an important role in reinforcing or altering the existing definition of the conflict.¹⁸ It is true that many issues have not received extended coverage by the media, but Middle East media coverage is usually guaranteed if the subject is violent or crisis oriented.

Some studies have been done on the media and agenda-setting or policy-making as a whole, and it is important that the findings of these studies be given to show that the media can be a viable force in establishing a social or political agenda.

Cook et. al, discovered that the media influence views about issue importance among the general public and governmental policy-makers. They also found that there was a connection of causation between a temporal sequence of events and the capacity of the media for agenda-setting. They found that first, new reporting occurs and then, the reports influence perceptions of issue importance. But, new media reports did not influence all policy-makers in the same way. They either altered policy-makers' perceptions of the issue's importance, their belief that policy action was necessary, or their view of the public's perception of issue importance.¹⁹

Erbring, Goldeberg, and Miller wrote that the best way to approach media agenda-setting is in terms of an audience-contingent approach. In other words, as an issue gains

momentum, each added new item dealing with the issue will presumably reach an additional portion of the audience and will focus on keeping an additional measure of attention among those reached. Thus, the media impact, content effects, and exposure effects should vary systematically with the age of the issue and the sensitivity of the audience. They stated that one should not expect the impact of issue coverage to occur in a blanket sweep across the whole population because people have limited attention spans. But, they have demonstrated that the media does help shape our ideas of what is important beyond the reach of our direct involvement. However, the effect is not automatic because people tune in to only what they consider important.²⁰

According to H.G. Zucker, media influence "is variable over time according to the obtrusiveness of the issue being reported and the length of time the issue has been prominent in the media."²¹ Zucker wrote that the prominence of media coverage preceded the public's perception of an issue's importance, but reports should be unobtrusive. For example, the audience should not have had any direct experience or involvement with an issue. He also found that the audience response to issues did fall off after a period of time.²²

Watt, and van den Berg found in their research that during the initial stage of a controversy, the media did

lead audience behavior and did set the agenda to a certain degree. However, after the public was inundated with information put out by the media, their future behavior was not affected by further information. They reached a saturation point and it did not produce any further changes in the audience's behavior.²³

Lang and Lang believed that when the mass media brings attention to particular issues, they also build up public images of political figures that may be involved. Furthermore, the media present issues and problems and suggest what concerned citizens should think about, know about and have feelings about. McCombs and Shaw discovered that the media is the primary source of national political information and for most, the mass media provides the best and most readily available description of the ever-changing events in our political world.²⁴ As Cohen believes, the media may not always be successful in telling its readers what to think, but it is extremely successful in telling them what they should think about.²⁵

Gatekeeper

The term gatekeeper is basically a sociological term used in mass communication research. Kurt Lewin coined the term in 1947 to describe the process by which food items,

traveling through channels, gain clearance at certain checkpoints along the way to the consumer. Lewin referred to those checkpoints as "gates," and to the individuals who give clearance along the gates, he labels as the "gatekeepers." According to Lewin, "food moves step by step through a channel ... and does not move by its own impetus. Entering a channel and moving from one section of a channel is affected by a gatekeeper."²⁶

Gatekeepers, in the context of the mass communication process, take different forms such as magazine publishers, news editors, television news directors, radio station managers, movie producers, public relations and advertising people. All must evaluate media content in order to determine its relevance and value to the audience. The gatekeepers' powers lie in the fact that they have the power to either cut off or alter information.

David White, for example, sees any person in a newspaper office who makes news selection decisions as a gatekeeper. "A story is transmitted from one gatekeeper after another in the chain of communication."²⁷

The gatekeepers' most important function is their ability to open and close the gate. A reporter on assignment in Nigeria for example, may witness a newsworthy event but decide not to open the gate of his or her discovery to the audience. Hiebert sees "deleting or stopping a message

...the most powerful force a gatekeeper has." ²⁸ The function of the gatekeeper can thus be summarized as having the power to delete a message and increasing or decreasing the amount and importance of a certain kind of information.

According to John Maclean, a foreign correspondent notices a newsworthy event, writes a story about the event and sends it to the regional bureau. The editor at the regional bureau or the rewrite person may cut the event down for transmission to the news agency's central bureau, or may completely ignore the event. McNelly explains that at the central bureau, the desk person might forward the story intact, or may combine it with a similar story from another region or country. A resulting story then moves to the national or regional bureau where it is pruned again by another deskperson who then relays it to an editor, who may choose to publish it or completely ignore it.²⁹

Gatekeepers, therefore, can influence the coverage of international news found in the American media. If a newspaper's gatekeeper fails to include an international news item on his or her evening news, the item, irrespective of its importance to the United States or any other country, might not be published.

Sophia Peterson cites un-ambiguity as another consideration in the gatekeeper's perspective. "Un-ambiguity concerns the clarity or simplicity of an event." According

to Peterson, "Complexity makes the interpretation of an event more difficult and reduces its newsworthiness."³⁰ David White's 1950 gatekeeper study supports Peterson's point. He found that the editor, the subject of the research, was disinclined to publish complicated stories.³¹ Researchers Dunn and Sigal conducted similar but separate studies in 1969 and 1973 respectively. Their findings also showed gatekeepers' preference for unambiguous news events.³²

Some studies have found cultural proximity between nations as a factor influencing the coverage of international news. Ostgaard, for example, has identified cultural affinity as a factor affecting international news flow.³³ Johan Galtung and Marl H. Ruge acknowledged Americans' European cultural orientation as one of the influences on both news gatherer and processors in story selections.³⁴ However, Peterson adds that,

One can only conjecture as to the possible effects of cultural difference between newsmen and individualized, complex, modern cultures of Europe and North-American region may predispose them to select news about their (almost all the home office staff and correspondents) and those of the cultures of the rest of the world (a large proportion of stringers."³⁵

Bogart notes that if an editor has identified with a story culturally there will be more likelihood of the story's being selected and sent through the news flow channel between countries.³⁶

According to Ostgaard,

things or issues with which those handling and those receiving the news are most familiar, find its way through the news channels easily than news concerning unfamiliar persons, or issues....³⁷

Anthropologists such as Heibert and Goodman have suggested that modern western culture is different from others in the world in terms of the stress on individualism. This kind of value orientation may affect news selection and influence the preference of newspeople from Europe and North America.³⁸ Since individualism entails greater competition and a great desire for change as compared to traditional societies', there is bound to be more conflict orientation. The consequences for news selection is that newsmen from conflict-oriented cultures (Europe and U.S.) will be more prone to select reports that are conflict-oriented than other issues.

A study of foreign news flow in Israel and United States by Hicks Gordon found elitism and ethnic to be the determining factors in news selection.³⁹

The notion of "elitism" is mentioned, but is not well defined by Galtung and Ruge, as a factor in international news flow.⁴⁰ Sande identifies that the volume of foreign trade is an indicator of an elite nation and that the Super Powers as the elite nations.⁴¹ Because the gross national product and per capita income closely relate to the economic and political aspects of a nation, Hick and Gordon see these

indices as factors that determines the flow of international news.⁴²

"The world flow of foreign news" they say, "deals chiefly with a group of highly developed countries which are dominant in the world politics."⁴³ Ostgaard, concurs that gross national product and a country's per capita income are determining factors in the flow of international news.⁴⁴ Welch attributes the disparity in the flow of news in terms of "organization constraints." That is, every organization has characteristics and attitudes which its workers have to follow. For example, key officials and others, irrespective of their own judgments, must make decisions that fall "within organizational context . . . organizations in their division of labor and responsibility inherently specify a set of limits on member's definition of reality."⁴⁵ In other words, whatever a reporter or a stringer perceives as real depends on his or her role in the organization. Bogart argues,

The reliance upon traditional news criteria by the home office would presumably be challenged least frequently by actual confrontation with events. This is in contrast to the staff correspondence and stringers who, at least part of the time, directly observe the events they report and thus need rely somewhat less on traditional news criteria.⁴⁶

Significance of the Study

A number of important news events have taken place in the Middle East and have received considerable news coverage by the Western news media since Israeli-Arab war in 1967. Coverage by *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London helped shape reader's opinions about the Middle East and/or Arab countries by the amount of crisis and non-crisis themes reported.

Using content analysis, this research will help readers examine how *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London treated Middle East news events emanating from the international and internal news and primarily stories covering events from 1990 to 1995. The study will determine which newspaper had more crises themes or conflict coverage and which newspaper had more non-crises themes or non-conflict coverage of the various events in the Middle East and/or Arab countries. This study will tell us which newspaper was more objective in its reporting about the Middle East and/or Arab nations. The study will also determine which crisis and non-crisis themes were reported the most and least in each newspaper.

Limitation of the Study

The limitation of this research is that it only examines the coverage of the Middle East and Arab countries from the perspective of two Western newspapers between 1990 and 1995. The results of this research cannot be generalized to other publications or broadcast media.

Another limitation of this study is the use of systematic sampling. According to Wimmer and Dominick, systematic sampling is susceptible to the arrangements or order of the items in the sampling population referred to as "periodicity." This may have biased the selection process. For example, it is possible that every 15th story was about the peace treaty, since it is an ongoing news story.

Organization of the Study

Chapter II, "Literature Review"

What other research studies have said about news, international news, bias, history, and press fulfillment about reporting.

Chapter III, "Methodology"

The survey population and the survey instruments are described in this chapter.

Chapter IV, "Finding"

This chapter consists of a presentation, analyses and description of the data collected.

Chapter V, "Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendation"

Conclusions drawn from the study and recommendations based on findings are presented.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

General

Substantial debates raged between developed and developing countries over the coverage of international news by prominent Western newspapers. The controversy centered around the nature of news coverage of developing countries by the Western news media.

Mustapha Masmoudi, former Tunisian information minister and a leading spokesman for the Third World communication issues, stated that the West defined Third World news and distorted or excluded authentic but non-Western values of the Third World:

Information is distorted by reference to moral, cultural or political values peculiar to certain states, in defiance of the values and concerns of other nations. The criteria governing the selection are consciously or unconsciously based on the political and economic interest of the transnational systems and of the countries in which this system is established.¹

In reporting on Third World news, Robert L. Stevenson and Richard R. Cole explain that "the values imposed are the

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values of the First World and, that their cultures and cultural evolution are seen in the rest of the world only through Western filters."²

Another complaint against international news coverage by the Western media centered on the fragile aspects of the Third World Countries. Masmoudi complains,

The present day information system enshrines a form of political, economic and cultural colonialism which is reflected in the often tendentious interpretation of the news concerning the developing countries. This consists in highlighting the events whose significance, in certain cases, is limited or even non-existent; in collecting isolated facts and presenting them as a 'whole'; in setting out facts in such a way that the conclusion to be drawn from them is necessarily favorable to the interests of the transnational systems; in amplifying small scale events so as to arouse unjustified fears; in keeping silent in situations unfavorable to the interests of the countries of the origin of these media.³

Arguments and disagreements about the flow of the news and information emerged in the early 1970s, between the developed and underdeveloped nations of the world. The flow of news between nations had always been a sensitive issue on the international agendas, but the topic failed to achieve international prominence before that period.⁴

Middle Eastern countries as well as other underdeveloped nations of the world considered themselves the recipients of a one-way flow of communication. More specific criticisms about the international news flow were raised in the "New World Information Order." The NWIO was introduced in the United Nations in the early 1970s by the

Third World countries who called for a more equitable distribution of resources in information and technology between the Western advanced nations, and the less developed and less advanced Third World countries.⁵

Complicating the problem is the fact that the poverty gap between the developed countries of the world and the underdeveloped nations is in many cases continuously widening, and the dependence on the West for technology, financing, and trade is increasing. Therefore Third World countries feel overly dependent on the Western world.⁶

The flow of news between the West and the Middle East is small in both directions; however, it is important to note that it is smaller from the Middle East to the developed nations.⁷

Definition of News

Arriving at a suitable definition of "news" has long been a headache for the mass communication practitioner because many people in the field have had different views and/or thoughts on the issue. Journalists confronted with this problem as long as the profession has existed. For example, Charles A. Dana, who owned and published the *New York Sun* from 1869 to 1879 defined news as "anything that interests a large part of the community."⁸

Stanley Walker, city editor of *The New York Herald Tribune*, was among those who resorted to wit to define news. According to Walker, news was based on three W's: "Women, Wampum, and Wrongdoing."⁹ David Brinkley, once said, "News is what I say it is."¹⁰ A contributor to the *New York Sun* defined news by saying "if a dog bites a man, it is not news. If a man bites a dog it's news."¹¹

Over the years, more concrete and systematic definitions of news have evolved. Mass communication practitioners in the West have arrived at some shared guidelines which are used today to decide what news is. The importance in determining "what is news," according to Marlan Nelson and George Rhoades, centered around the fact that the definitions media writers used determined how informed their readers were on public issues.¹²

On the classification of news, Nelson and Rhoades say that, "news can be classified as hard and soft. Hard news is straight, factual accounts of events; soft news ranges from human interest features to interpretation and analysis."¹³

In order to keep the audience well informed on public and related issues, mass communication practitioners used a list of traditional news characteristics. Nelson and Rhoades listed the traditional news characteristics as timeliness, proximity, prominence, impact, and human interest.¹⁴

Several other prominent people in the field of mass communication placed emphasis on different characteristics. Human interest is dominant for some communications. For example, William Randolph Hearst defined news as "what is interesting, not necessarily what is important."¹⁵

In reflecting Hearst's view, a commentator on the MacBride Commission's Interim Report, The International Communication for the Study of Communication Problem, remarked:

So long as news is exclusively concerned with what is out of the ordinary, the ordinary becomes invisible to the media and to the audience. The trouble is that we have been culturally attuned to the theater of news and we find non-theater boring.¹⁶

Other scholars placed more emphasis on timeliness. Edward Jay Epstein, for example, defined news as "what is new in the world since our last broadcast ... what has happened today."¹⁷ Another mass communication scholar Herbert J. Altschull, uses a simile to define news,

News is much like weather, about which Mark Twain once observed, a bit wearily, that nothing is done despite the complaining. There are, these days, almost as many complaints about the news as there are about the weather; and no one does anything about the news either. As a matter of fact, no one is sure what he is talking about when he talks about the news. Come to think of it, the news may be a greater problem than the weather.¹⁸

These definitions have come about as reporters have sought to find justification and rationality for news selection. They have translated the news values to select

international news items so as to cut across the dilemma of news definition.

These values, according to Nelson and Rhoades¹⁹, and Melvin Mencher²⁰ are: impact or importance of events; timeliness of the event; prominence of the people involved in the event; proximity of the event to the readers and listeners; conflicts and unusualness of the events; and currency of the event in the time context of world happening.

International News

The controversy surrounding the coverage of international news is another problem that confronts mass communicators today in the Western world. Like the definition of news, much has been written on international news coverage, and the Western media's coverage of international news. Developing countries have accused Western media of selecting and broadcasting only theater-like items that portray them in bad light. While the Western media put the blame on the authoritarian nature of Third World countries, Third World countries are calling for a New World Information Order to redress the imbalance of Western news dominance.

The New World Information Order (NWIO) also known as the New International Information Order (NIIIO) and the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) is a combination of two distinct sets of policy recommendations that came out of two different organizations. The origins of the New International Information Order however, are attributed to the Non-Aligned movement, whereas the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization, (UNESCO) is the organization usually associated with NWIO debate.

The Fourth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Nations held in Algiers, Algeria, North West Africa, in 1973 is deemed NWIO's birthplace.²¹ This Algerian conference called upon developing nations to rally round each other to "promote a greater inter-change of ideas among themselves."²² The other lines of action decided upon at the conference were:

the reorganization of colonially inherited communication channels that hamper information exchanges between Non-Aligned countries.²³

Article XIII of the conference stated that,

Non-Aligned countries should exchange and disseminate information concerning their mutual achievements in all fields through ... the news media in their respective countries.²⁴

The call was for the improvement of communication between all countries of the world.

Since the 1969 Algiers Conference, the NWIO has called for a fair and more balanced information flow between the

Northern industrialized countries and the Southern developing countries.

Early efforts to balance the flow of information from North to South centered on the use of the media in Third World countries to help build modern societies. The policy also expressed the need for new communication technologies that would enable the Third World to compete effectively with the Western media in supplying more balanced and accurate information about their countries. In 1976, Third World countries started a Non-Aligned News Pool to integrate the Third World news agencies and to reduce the Third World's overwhelming reliance on Western media.²⁵

UNESCO continued to sponsor a number of regional conferences to try to check the imbalance of information flow. It has not been the only organization interested in knowing what blocks the free flow of information. International scholars have tried to discover what forces might be obstructing the free flow of information.

One such scholar, John McNelly, suggest it is the unpublicized "gatekeepers," operating on international level, who regulate the free flow of news.²⁶ According to this gatekeeping paradigm, gatekeepers might decide not to include some news events in the news packages they send to their home office not because they are un-newsworthy but

because of their own personal grievances with leaders of the countries which they are assigned to cover.²⁷

Multinational News Agencies: (AP), (UPI), (AFP), REUTERS.

Most of the Middle East countries' complaints have been directed against the big multinational news agencies. The Middle Eastern countries accuse the Big Four (AP, UPI, AFP, and Reuters) news agencies of dominating the international flow of news and misrepresenting two thirds of humanity to themselves and to the rest of the world.²⁸

Critics in the Middle East contend that these big news agencies fail to serve the needs of the less developed nations of the world. They also point out that the West clearly dominates the world flow of all forms of communication.²⁹

About two-thirds of foreign news in the Middle East and Third World originates from the major wire services.³⁰ Galtung maintains that information flows from the core, but from different core states in different proportions depending on various factors, such as capital, trade and colonial ties. The information, according to Galtung is gathered by the newsgathering agencies, and eventually the information is retransmitted to the Third World. The result of this process of newsgathering and dissemination is that

Third World nations know virtually nothing about events in neighboring countries that have not been filtered through the lenses of the developed media systems.³¹

Weaver and Williot supported the Galtung theory, and concluded that the information in Latin countries retransmitted back to the Latin countries by the wire services included about 45 percent of the news about the region, while three or four percent was about other places like Africa or Asia. They also found that similar patterns were true for Africa and Asia.³²

Middle Eastern and Third World countries depend on the major wire services for international news, and by doing so they receive a lot of international news about western countries and not enough news about other developing countries.³³

These Western news agencies concentrate their coverage on other Western developed nations because of public demand, and also because of economic and cultural ties.

In support of the argument presented by the Middle East and the Third World countries, Schramm commented that it is clear that the world's flow of foreign news deals with a set of highly developed nations which are also dominant in world politics. He concluded that the exchange of news among nations is lean and lopsided and it shows heavy coverage of a few highly developed countries, and a lean coverage of the

majority of the less developed countries, and in some cases the coverage ignores important events and distorts facts presented.³⁴

The Arabs and the Big Four News Agencies

Ninety percent of the world's news that flows into the Arab world is supplied by the "big four" news agencies, a 1975 UNESCO survey found. These agencies are perceived as reflecting the interest of mostly the Western readers and nations, rather than the interests of the people and the area involved, and that in turn leads to incomplete, oversimplified and often inaccurate news coverage of events in these developing countries.³⁵

Mishra researched the flow of news between the United States and the Middle East in selected elite U. S. newspapers and in network television coverage (*New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Christian Science Monitor* and *CBS Evening News*).

His study was specifically designed to:

1. Outline the flow of news from the Middle East in the relation to the news from other regions of the world.
2. Examine the patterns of the news coverage from the region by the media in the study.

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3. Determine the direction (positive, negative, or neutral) of the coverage.

Mishra employed both qualitative and quantitative analyses of the news content. News items were analyzed under various content categories, such as the volume of hard news (measured in column inches); interpretive news and editorials (measured in number and space); pictures and illustrations; sources and point of origin; objectivity level; relative play and direction of the stories. The finding of this study indicated that five percent of all the news items in the sample media dealt with the Middle East.

The "low percentages" of the Middle East news items, according to the author, as compared with the volume of the international news, could be attributed to the shrinking news hole, low interest of readers in the foreign news in general, lack of adequate time for the network's television newscasts and the remoteness of Middle East news events.

Mishra found that almost 66 percent of all the Middle Eastern news items analyzed consisted of hard news items and news round-ups. About three-fourths of the coverage concentrated on three countries: Israel (34 percent), Egypt (26 percent) and Iran (16 percent).

The finding also indicated that the highest percentage of items was devoted to the Arab-Israeli conflict (24.28 percent). Based on his finding, Mishra concluded that most

of the items dealing with the internal and external politics, Arab-Israeli conflict and human interest were treated in a neutral manner.³⁶

The Middle East And The Western Media

A number of studies dealing with the coverage and images of the Middle East and the Middle Easterners in the media have been published in the United States. They show, generally, that knowledge and information about the Middle East is strictly limited in many instances to what is published in America's most popular media. The images of Arabs and Middle Eastern have been mostly negative Ghareeb noted:

The all-pervasive Arab stereotype embedded in the American psyche, and the ugly Arab images are found nearly everywhere from comic books to television comedies. The Arab remains the media's favorite whipping boy.³⁷

Ghareeb claims there are five main reasons for the media's failure to cover the Middle East fairly and objectively: cultural bias, the "think-alike" atmosphere within the media, the Israeli-Arab conflict, the media's ignorance of the origins and history of the conflict, and, finally, the determined and sophisticated Israeli lobby.³⁸

Dr. Michael Suleiman studied the coverage of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war in *Newsweek*, *The Nation*, *New Republic*,

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U. S. News & World Report and *The New York Times* "Week In Review." The purpose of the research was to detect any changes in the attitudes toward Arabs in these magazines as compared to the 1956 coverage of the invasion of Egypt. Suleiman concluded that all of the sample media's coverage were anti-Arab and anti-Nasser, with the exception of *The Nation*. He found that all magazines in the study except for *The Nation* described the Arabs as dishonest, unreliable and inefficient.³⁹

In a more recent article, Suleiman asserts that the Arabs have been dehumanized by the American media. He claims that the Americans are unfeeling against the miseries and concerns of the Arabs or any segment of the Arab world.⁴⁰ Suleiman summarized the three basic myths maintained about Middle Easterners as follows. First, they are fabulously wealthy; second, they are barbaric and backward; third, they are sex maniacs with a penchant for Western women. Suleiman contends that the image the American public holds about Arabs is that they are fabulously rich and squander their money on consumer products and the leisure industry, gambling, wild parties as well as stupid acts of generosity. Or they are barbaric and backward viewed as Bedouins living in tents.⁴¹

A similar study, conducted by Dr. Ali Zaghal during the same time span as the first Suleiman study, found that the

majority of the articles included in his sample were anti-Arab and even tended to distort the causes and nature of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.⁴²

Dr. Janice Terry and Don Mendanhall studied the coverage of the Middle East in *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and the *Detroit Free Press*, over the nine months before and after the 1973 Arab Israeli war. The finding revealed a consistent pro-Israeli and anti-Arab bias in the sample media during the sample dates. They also noted that the bias was more evident in editorials than in news stories.⁴³ Terry concluded that the coverage by many newspapers was colored by the journalists' personal political attitudes.⁴⁴

Most Americans consider Middle Eastern and Arabs as Muslims. Dr. Edward Said also researched the subject of covering Islam in the American media. He contends that the media portray Islam and Moslems as backward, medieval and fanatic. He also concluded that the Middle East is mostly portrayed as breeding place for terrorists and violence.⁴⁵

Mary C. McDavid, addressing what she called media myths concerning the Middle East during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, concluded that the coverage of the media in the United States was primarily governed by whichever side generated and provided press releases and battle tours, interviews and photo opportunities. In this case, Israel was

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more eager and ready to accommodate the American press than were its Lebanese and Palestinian counterparts.⁴⁶

Hudson and Wolfe in 1980 focused on television coverage of the Middle East. They concentrated on television's important role in creating the current image of Arabs. They found bias in the broadcast media.⁴⁷

Adams in 1981 presented a series of systematic studies about television's coverage of the Middle East. The volume contained eight scholarly analyses that examined issues and events that governed the treatment of the Middle East on American television.⁴⁸

Adams concluded that little attention was focused on the events in the Middle East before 1972. But from 1972 through 1976, seven to nine percent of the total news time was devoted to the coverage of that region. And by 1980, 20 percent of the news time was about the Middle East. Adams also concluded that there are low levels of coverage about small Arabian peninsula nations. Most of the attention of the Western media was devoted to Israel and the countries that border it.⁴⁹

Donald Shaw's and Robert Stevenson's study could perhaps be considered the single most comprehensive look at foreign news and the international news flow. They address the issues of communication between the Western capitalist democracies and the industrialized socialist countries, and

communication between the industrialized Western nations and Third World countries.⁵⁰

The authors concluded that many of the complaints about the Western coverage and services to the Third World were not justified. On the other hand, foreign news in the Western media is spotty, narrowly defined and uneven.⁵¹

Summary

We learned from Lippman that people learn and form opinions according to what happens around them. The most influential information they receive comes from mass media. Studies of bias about the Middle East and Arabs in mass communication have traditionally focused on the broadcast medium and how the Middle East and Arabs are portrayed. This study will focus on the thematic types of biases, positive (non-crises), and negative (crises) in the print media about the Middle Eastern and/or the Arab people which have an influence on how they are perceived by Westerners.

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CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

General

Lang and Lang observed that people generally will learn in direct proportion with the emphasis placed on the issues by the mass media. Therefore, in their view, the media force the attention of the public toward certain issues.¹

This study is designed to gather and analyze information on the major international news themes which dominated the Western news press from January 1, 1990 until December 31, 1995. Based on the finding of the study, an attempt will be made to predict themes which the newspapers might use irrespective of the geographical source of news.

This study examines the themes of news content in two elite Western newspapers, *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London over a 72 month period. Specifically, the study analyzes the thematic treatment of the subject matter of news stories, editorials, headlines, photos, and political

cartoons about the Middle East region and, specifically, Arab countries and its people.

Newspapers

Throughout the world, newspapers have been a significant force for informing people and helping to mold their opinions. In Great Britain and Western Europe, major newspapers such as the *Times* of London and the *Journal de Geneve* of Geneva have managed to maintain a long tradition of press freedom and diversification despite wars, dictatorships, and other efforts at intimidation of a free press.

Newspapers are usually published on a daily or weekly basis, their main function is specified as reporting the news. Newspapers also provide commentary on the news, advocate various public policies, furnish special information and advice to readers, and sometimes include features such as comic strips, cartoons. The newspaper publishers in the U.S. estimate that nearly eight out of ten adult Americans read a newspaper every day.²

The two newspapers selected for the purpose of this study are representative of the best journalism in America and England. The two newspapers have correspondents

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stationed in the Middle East and are committed to thorough international reporting.

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The New York Times

Founded in 1851, *The New York Times* is published seven days per week. In 1993, the newspaper had a daily circulation of about 1.25 million copies. The Saturday circulation was almost a million copies, while The Sunday circulation has often reached two million copies. Meyer Berger, in his *Story of The New York Times*, said the newspaper:

Soared from metropolitan airfields to cross oceans and wide-spreading continents, and they move by train and by other common carriers to more than 12,000 towns in the United States. Kings and presidents will scan them, rich and poor will discover in their pages the freshest track made by mankind on the road to eternity,"³

Editors and reporters of *The New York Times* followed the formula set up by the publisher of the newspaper from 1896 to 1935, Adolph S. Ochs, "to give the news impartially, without fear or favor, regardless of any party, sect or interest involved."⁴ Executive editor for about four decades, Abe M. Rosenthal, helped the newspaper expand its influence from American's leading newspaper to a world platform. People accepted what was written and reported in the newspaper as "the official version."⁵

The *New York Times'* pages include national and international news, education, entertainment, environmental, financial/business, city, food, fashion, garden/home,

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lifestyle, living, medical, sport, real estate, travel and television.

The Times of London

The Times of London was founded on January 1, 1785. From the 1960s until today, the newspaper has been published daily. In 1993, *The Times* had a circulation of more than 350,000 copies. The Sunday *Times* of London had a circulation of more than a million copies. The first publisher, John Walters, called the newspaper the *Daily Universal Register* . Three years later, he shortened the name to *The Times* of London.⁶

The section of paper which has distinguished *The Times* from its competition and made it a necessity for anyone in a public position to read has been its foreign news coverage. *The Times'* earliest issues were most appreciated for their financial and commercial news.⁷

The Times format changed in the 1960s. Placing news on the front pages, instead of advertisements, showed that the editors understood that news was more important. To make the paper more comprehensive, more specific, and more brilliant *The Times* aimed at being a paper for intelligent readers of all ages and all classes.⁸

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Past editors of *The Times* allowed themselves and the newspaper to be used by government as an instrument for molding public opinion.⁹ During the nineteenth century, *The Times* stood alone, and even when other newspapers surpassed it in popularity, *The Times* still remained influential.

In the middle of the twentieth century, *The Times* was valued for qualities such as the nature and range of its news reporting. The quality of news it prints has established a high standard of accuracy and freedom from bias.¹⁰

The pages of *The Times* of London include arts, home news, overseas news, education, sport, business, books, television and radio.

Sampling Method

While the Middle East has always been an important region to the world, these nations became increasingly important in the 1990s. The United States and the rest of the developed world were interested in this region because of various events that included the Gulf War, the Palestine Liberation Organization's peace treaty with Israel, the bombing of the World Trade Center, and the accusation of Middle Easterners in the Oklahoma City Bombing. The years selected for this study (1990-1995) include these events and

exemplify the coverage concerning the Middle East in the first half of the 1990s.

The basic research method used in this study is systematic content analysis. Kerlinger defined content analysis as "a method of analyzing and studying communication in a systematic, objective and quantitative manner."¹¹

The nature of the sample is very important in communication studies and also in social science research. Wimmer and Dominick defined sample as: "A sample is a subset or sub-segment of the population that is taken to be representative of the population."¹² The types are the probability sample and the non-probability sample. Comstock and McCombs define the probability sample as "a portion of that population made up of persons, each of whom had an equal chance of being drawn into a sample."¹³ They mention two advantages of a probability sample: first, bias can be avoided due to the assumption of representation of the population; second, due to the equal opportunity of each person to be included, the likely error of any measure can be calculated precisely. Krippendorff divided probability sample into six types:

- 1) Random sampling.
- 2) Stratified sampling.
- 3) Systematic sampling.
- 4) Cluster sampling.
- 5) Varying probability sampling.
- 6) Multistage sampling.¹⁴

The systematic sampling method is employed in this study because of its similarity to random sampling and its advantages. Wimmer and Dominick contend that systematic sampling is more accurate than random sampling in selecting the sample from the population.¹⁵ Babbie mentioned that systematic sampling is also a more practical method, although its function is equivalent to that of simple random sampling.¹⁶

Previously, it was mentioned that the main objective of this study is the assessment of a sample of the Western news media (*The New York Times* and *The Times* of London) and their treatment of news from Middle East and stories about Arabs in coverage from January 1, 1990 until December 31, 1995.

The procedure for defining the universe and selecting news stories was designed to:

- 1) Identify every news story mentioning the words "Middle East" or "Arabs."
- 2) To include any articles, editorials, headlines, photos, political cartoons or any other items that cannot be considered news stories. *The New York Times Index* and *The Times of London Index* were utilized as a sources for providing primary data. The sources for *The New York Times* and *The Times of London* news stories were obtained from microfilm at the Oklahoma State University library.

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Unit of Analysis

Selecting the unit of analysis is the first and major step in the content analysis procedure. The unit of analysis is divided into two major units of measurement: The recording unit and the context unit. Berelson defined these two units of measurements, describing the recording unit as the smallest element in content analysis, and the context unit as the largest element of content analysis. The recording unit can be a word, theme or assertion. The context is the major art of the content, and it can be anything from a sentence to an entire publication.¹⁷

According to Berelson, there are five important methods of defining the unit of analysis: first, words; second, themes; third, characters; fourth, items; and fifth, space and time measures.¹⁸

The present study will employ the thematic unit of analysis. Theme was defined by Berelson as "a simple sentence or an assertion about a subject matter."¹⁹ Budd described a theme or assertion as "a single thought unit or idea unit that conveys a single item of information extracted from a segment of content,"²⁰ so that a theme or an assertion includes one sentence, part of sentence or a word.

News stories of *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London about the Middle East and Arab populations are the main units of analysis for this study.

Themes

The following themes, arranged but modified from Larson's ten year study *International Affairs Coverage on US Evening Network News, 1972-1979*, are used in this study. The themes were categorized into crises and/or negative themes and non-crises and/or positive themes.

Crises Themes

1. *Unrest and Dissent*. Unrest and dissent, as used in this study means any kind of civil or any kind of disobedience to a constituted authority due to disagreements. Examples of this are (non-bloody) worker's strikes, street demonstrations, putsches etc.
2. *War*. Any kind of a military or armed combat involving one or more countries is regarded as an act of war. Guerrilla fighting between a legally constituted government elected or military and rebels is categorized as war.
3. *Crime*. Bank robberies, arrests involving the use/and or sale of illegal drugs are considered to fall under a "crime"

theme. In several cases, counterintelligence involving two countries was also considered as crime. In another instance, unauthorized sale of arms was considered a crime.

4. *Terrorism*. Illegal and/or unauthorized arrests and/or detention that involved killing people were considered here to be terrorist acts. The use of explosives to make any political statements that resulted in the death of innocent people were all considered terrorist acts.

5. *Coups and Assassinations*. Any overthrow or attempt to overthrow a civilian or military government by the military or other civilians was regarded by the coders as a coup. Illegal killing by people trying to overthrow a legally constituted or elected government was considered assassination.

6. *Natural and man-made disasters*. Typhoons, earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, nuclear accidents, mine cave-ins and the like were considered disasters. Collapse of a sports stadium was also considered under this theme.

Non-crises Themes

1. *Political*. This category referred to relations between nations. Talks between nations were considered political. The peaceful return of military rule to civilian administration was considered political. The recall of or

posting of ambassadors from nations was all coded under this theme.

2. *Military*. Disarmament talks, shipment of arms across countries, the sale and purchase of military hardware between countries were considered military non-crisis items. Movement of troops to or from a country in which troops themselves were not involved in the dispute was also considered military.

3. *Economic*. Economic sanctions, foreign aid to nations, trade matters, all monetary matters were classified under this thematic category. All OPEC meetings were coded under this theme.

4. *Technology-Science*. Satellite deployment, space programs, and the transfer of technology fell under this theme.

5. *Human interest and miscellaneous*. Examples of stories under this flexible category are: sale of used cars in black markets and religious pilgrimages.

Whenever doubts or questions arose regarding the theme or country in question, a vote was taken and the majority opinion of the coders prevailed. Discussion was used to establish consensus in some instances. For example, if some coders wanted to code an account of a bomb explosion as domestic unrest, while others wanted to code it as a terrorist act, and if coders could not reach an agreement, it was decided to count a story as half for terrorism and

half for civil disorder. This procedure was validated in a 1987 study by Elizabeth Schillinger and Joel Jenswold.²¹ However, the overall procedure followed throughout the process was that given by Stevenson and Shaw: "The overall rule is that the theme or reference in question should be quite clearly present in the news item in a way that would be recognized by almost anyone."²²

If a news item involved two countries, instead of splitting the item into two, awarding half to each country, the country with the most emphasis in the article was to be coded. If a news article only mentioned Israel and/or another country involved with the Middle East, the news article was counted as "Others."

Research Questions and Null hypotheses

This study attempts to answer these questions for the two newspapers' news coverage of the Middle East and/or Arab people from January 1, 1990, until December 31, 1995:

1. What type of themes (crisis or non-crisis) were mostly used by the two newspapers while covering news events from the Middle East and/or Arab countries?

2. Which newspaper had the most crisis related themes , and which newspaper had the most non-crisis related themes while reporting about the Middle East and Arab countries?

3. Which crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The New York Times* and Which crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The Times* of London while reporting about the Middle East and/or Arab countries?

4. Which non-crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The New York Times* and Which non-crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The Times* of London while reporting about the Middle East and/or Arab countries?

5. Are all Arab countries represented equally in both newspapers?

6. Which Arab countries were most covered and which Arab countries least covered the in each newspaper?

7. Did all the articles about Arab countries in both newspapers cover an equal amount of themes?

8. Are crisis and non-crisis themes equally distributed among Arab countries in both newspapers?

9. Did all Arab countries have an equal frequency of themes in *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London?

This study is directed by the following null hypotheses:

1. There is no difference in frequency between crisis and non-crisis themes among the two newspapers, *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London in their news coverage of events from the Middle East and/or Arab countries.

2. There is no difference in frequency between crisis and non-crisis themes in *The New York Times* in its coverage of the Middle East and/or Arab countries.

3. There is no difference in frequency between crisis and non-crisis themes in *The Times* of London coverage of the Middle East and/or Arab countries.

4. There is no difference in frequency among the crisis themes in both newspapers.

5. There is no difference among the frequency of crisis themes in *The New York Times* newspaper.

6. There is no difference among the frequency of crisis themes in *The Times* of London newspaper.

7. There is no difference in frequency among the non-crisis themes in both newspapers.

8. There is no difference among the non-crisis themes frequency in *The New York Times* newspaper.

9. There is no differences among the frequency of non-crisis themes in *The Times* of London newspaper.

10. There is no difference in the frequency of themes in both newspapers.

11. There is no difference in frequency of themes in *The New York Times*.

12. There is no difference in frequency of themes in *The Times* of London.

13. There is no difference in frequency of Arab countries in the two newspaper's coverage of the Middle East and/or Arab countries.

14. There is no difference in frequency of Arab countries in *The New York Times*.

15. There is no difference in frequency of Arab countries in *The Times* of London.

16. There is no difference in frequency of themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

17. There is no difference in frequency of crisis themes type among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

18. There is no difference in the frequency of non-crisis theme types among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

19. There is no difference in frequency of themes among Arab countries in *The New York Times*.

20. There is no difference in frequency of themes among Arab countries in *The Times* of London.

21. There is no difference in frequency of crisis and non-crisis themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

22. There is no difference in frequency of crisis themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

23. There is no difference in frequency of non-crisis themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

Definition of Terms

1. "News coverage" is defined as any information reported by *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London.
2. The term "developed worlds" refers to industrialized countries of the West, while "developing worlds" refers to the Middle Eastern nations, especially Arab countries.
3. "Newspaper" refers to *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London.
4. "Bias" is a preference or an inclination, especially one that inhibits impartial judgment, an unfair act or policy stemming from prejudice.²³
5. "Themes" refers to the type of bias that are crisis or non-crisis oriented.

The Quantification System

Data collected for this study are nominal. Thematic items were listed under two different categories: crisis, and non-crisis. Each Arab country is listed separately. News articles that only identified Israel and/or other countries involved in the Middle East is listed as "Others."

Coding

Three coders were be used for this study: the author and two graduate students. Each coder worked independently, reading the collection of news stories, headlines, editorials, photos, or political cartoons that *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London published about the Middle East and/or Arab people and/or countries from January 1, 1990, until December 31, 1995. Whenever doubts or questions arose regarding the theme or country in question, a vote was taken and the majority opinion prevailed.

An intercoder reliability test was conducted to examine the reliability of the three coders in analyzing the news stories, headlines, editorials, photos, and political cartoons in both newspapers.

Statistical Analysis

A chi-square test was used here because the data collected are nominal. The test was used to examine the differences in *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London newspapers. A 95 percent confidence level was used to determine the significant differences between the newspapers.

Endnotes

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- ¹ Kurt Lang and Gladys Lang. "The Mass Media and Voting," in Bernard Berelson and Morris Janowitz eds., *Reader in Public Opinion and Communication*. 2nd ed. New York: Free Press, 1966, p. 466.
- ² Robert K. Manoff and Michael Schudson, Eds. *Reading the News: A Pantheon Guide to Popular Culture*. Pantheon, 1987.
- ³ Meyer Berger. *The Story of The New York Times 1851-1951*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1951, p. 1.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 565.
- ⁵ James C. Goulden. *Fit To Print, A. M. Rosenthal and His Times*. Secaucus, New Jersey: Lyle Stuart Inc., 1988, p. 15.
- ⁶ Oliver Woods and James Bishop. *The Story of The Times*. London: Michael Joseph Limited, 1983, 9.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.
- ⁸ Anthony Smith. *The British Press Since the War*. Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1974, p. 73.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹ Joseph Dominick and Roger D. Wimmer. *Mass Media Research*. Belmont CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1983, pp. 138-139.
- ¹² Dominick and Wimmer. *Mass Media Research*, p. 139.
- ¹³ G. Comstock, and Maxwell E. McComb, "Survey Research." In G. H. Stmpel, III and B. H. Westley (Eds.), *Research Methods in Mass Communication*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1981, p. 159.

¹⁴ Klaus Krippendorff. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publication, 1980.

¹⁵ Dominick and Wimmer, *Mass Media Research*, pp. 138-139.

¹⁶ Rubin E. Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Inc., 1989.

¹⁷ Bernard Berelson. *Content Analysis in Communication Research*. New York: Free Press, 1952, p. 123

¹⁸ Ibid., 124.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 138.

²⁰ Richard W. Budd and Robert K. Thorp. *Content Analysis of Communication*. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1967, p.34.

²¹ Elisabeth Schillinger and Joel Jenswold, "Three Olympiads: A Comparison of Pravda and Washington Post," *Journalism Quarterly*, Number 64, Winter 1987, p. 828.

²² Robert L. Stevenson and Donald L. Shaw. *Foreign News and the New World Information Order*. Ames, Iowa: The Iowa State University Press, 1984, p. 1.

²³ *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

General

This research used content analysis to examine the coverage of events in the Middle East and/or Arab countries. It examined the different types of themes expressed in the articles of two Western newspapers: *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London

The target population was comprised of news articles, editorials, photographs, and political cartoons from 72 months. The survey population was comprised of 100 randomly selected articles for each newspaper, beginning with January 1, 1990, and ending December 31, 1995. Survey dates are listed in Appendix A.

The study was designed to answer questions for the two newspapers' news coverage of the Middle East and/or Arab people from January 1, 1990, until December 31, 1995, They are:

1. What type of themes (crises or non-crises) were mostly used by the two newspapers while covering news events from the Middle east and/or Arab countries?

2. Which newspaper had the most crisis related themes and which newspaper had the most non-crisis related themes while reporting about the Middle East and Arab countries?

3. Which crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The New York Times* and Which crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The Times* of London while reporting about the Middle East and/or Arab countries?

4. Which non-crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The New York Times* and Which non-crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The Times* of London while reporting about the Middle East and/or Arab countries?

5. Are all Arab countries represented equally in both newspapers?

6. Which Arab countries were most covered and which Arab countries least covered the in each newspaper?

7. Did all the articles about Arab countries in both newspapers cover an equal amount of themes?

8. Are crisis and non-crisis themes equally distributed among Arab countries in both newspapers?

9. Did all Arab countries have an equal frequency of themes in *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London?

This study is directed by the null hypotheses.

In the findings section, data generated by this study are presented to support or refute each hypothesis. Results of Chi square tests for establishing significant differences accompany each analysis.

Intercoder Reliability

An intercoder reliability test was conducted among the three coders. The intercoder reliability coefficient for every two of the three coders is 0.96. The number was calculated by using the formula where $R=2M/N_1+N_2$, where M is the number of coding decisions on which every two of the three coders agrees, and N_1 and N_2 are the total decisions made by each of the two coders. On the scale of 1.0, where 1.0 is perfect reliability or uniform agreement, 0.96 indicates high agreement among the three coders' decisions.

Findings

Table I shows the frequency of crisis and non-crisis themes for all Arab countries covered by the two news papers. Table I is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

1. There are no differences in frequency between crisis and non-crisis themes among *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London in their news coverage of events from the Middle East and/or Arab countries.

2. There is no difference in frequency between crisis and non-crisis themes in *The New York Times* in its coverage of the Middle East and/or Arab countries.

3. There is no difference in frequency between crisis and non-crisis themes in *The Times* of London coverage of the Middle East and/or Arab countries.

4. There is no relationship between the two newspapers and the frequency of crisis themes.

5. There is no relationship between the two newspapers and the frequency of non-crisis themes.

TABLE I

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF CRISIS AND
NON-CRISIS THEMES BY NEWSPAPER

Newspaper	Crisis Themes	Non-crisis Themes	Total
<i>The New York Times</i>	21	79	100
<i>The Times of London</i>	49	51	100
Total	70 (Articles)	130 (Articles)	200

Complex Chi-square = 17.231

Table Chi-square ($P < .05$, $DF=1$) = 3.84

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between the newspapers and the frequency of occurrence of specific theme types. There is a weak relationship ($C = .282$), and null hypothesis #1 is not supported. This indicates that the two newspapers did not have equal number of crisis and non-crisis in their coverage of Arab countries.

A simple chi-square was conducted on *The New York Times* to examine null hypothesis #2. The null hypothesis was not supported. This means that *The New York Times* had more non-crisis themes than crisis themes in its coverage of Arab countries, (79 compared to 21).

A simple chi-square was conducted on *The Times of London* to examine null hypothesis #3. The null hypothesis is supported. This means that *The Times of London* tends to have

an equal number of crisis and non-crisis themes in its coverage of Arab countries.

A simple chi-square was conducted on the two newspapers to examine null hypothesis #4. The null hypothesis is not supported. *The Times* of London had more crisis themes than *The New York Times*, (49 compared to 21).

A simple chi-square was conducted on the two newspapers to examine null hypothesis #5. The null hypothesis is not supported. *The New York Times* had more non-crisis themes than *The Times* of London, (79 compared to 51).

Table II shows how frequent the type of crisis themes are reported in both newspapers, the table is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

6. There is no difference in frequency among the crisis themes in both newspapers.

TABLE II

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF CRISIS THEMES
BY NEWSPAPER

Newspaper	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6	Total
<i>The New York Times</i>	9	2	1	7	1	1	21
<i>The Times of London</i>	9	8	7	18	6	1	49
Total	18	10	8	25	7	2	70

Themes:

1. Unrest and dissent.
2. War.
3. Crime.
4. Terrorism.
5. Coups and assassinations.
6. Natural and man-made disasters.

Complex chi-square = 6.323
Table chi-square ($P < .05$, $DF = 5$) = 11.07

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between newspapers and the types of crisis themes in the coverage of Arab countries. There is no relationship and null hypothesis #6 is supported.

Table III shows the frequency of type of non-crisis themes reported in both newspapers, it is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

7. There is no difference in frequency among the non-crisis themes in both newspapers.

8. There is no difference among the frequency of non-crisis themes in *The New York Times* newspaper.

9. There is no difference among the frequency of non-crisis themes in *The Times* of London newspaper.

TABLE III
PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF NON-CRISIS THEMES BY NEWSPAPER

Newspaper	Theme 7	Theme 8	Theme 9	Theme 10	Theme 11	Total
<i>The New York Times</i>	43	8	18	2	8	79
<i>The Times</i> of London	21	12	5	0	13	51
Total	64	20	23	2	21	130

Themes:

7. Political.
8. Military.
9. Economic.
10. Technology or science.
11. Human interest and miscellaneous.

Complex chi-square = 13.496
Table chi-square($P < .05$, $DF=4$) = 9.49

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between newspapers and the types of non-crisis themes in the coverage of Arab countries. There is a weak relationship ($C=.322$) and the null hypothesis #7 is not supported. This means the frequencies of non-crisis themes are not equal in any newspaper.

A simple chi-square was conducted on the types of non-crisis themes to examine null hypothesis #8. The null hypothesis is not supported. *The New York Times* used

political themes the most and technology or science theme the least, (43 compared to 2).

The simple chi-square was used on the type of non-crisis themes to examine null hypothesis #9. The null hypothesis is not supported. *The Times* of London used political theme the most and technology or science theme the least, (21 compared to 0).

Table IV shows each theme and their frequency in each of the two newspapers, it is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

10. There is no difference in the frequency of themes in both newspapers.

11. There is no difference in the frequency of themes in *The New York Times*.

12. There is no difference in the frequency of themes in *The Times* of London.

TABLE IV

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF EACH THEMES
IN EACH NEWSPAPER

Themes	<i>The New York Times</i>	<i>The Times of London</i>	Total
1	9	9	18
2	2	8	10
3	1	7	8
4	7	18	25
5	1	6	7
6	1	1	2
7	43	21	64
8	8	12	20
9	18	5	23
10	2	0	2
11	8	13	21
Total	100	100	200

Themes:

1. Unrest and dissent.
2. War.
3. Crime.
4. Terrorism.
5. Coups and assassinations.
6. Natural and man-made disasters.
7. Political.
8. Military.
9. Economic.
10. Technology or science.
11. Human interest and miscellaneous.

Complex chi-square = 35.412

Table chi-square ($P < .05$, $DF=10$) = 18.31

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between each theme in the two newspapers. There is a weak relationship ($C=.421$) and the null hypothesis #10 is not supported. This means the frequency of each theme is not equal in any newspaper.

A simple chi-square was conducted on all types of themes to examine null hypothesis #11. The null hypothesis is not supported. *The New York Times* used political theme the most and crime, coups and assassination, and natural and man-made disasters the least, (43 compared to 1).

A simple chi-square was used on the all types of themes to examine null hypothesis #12. The null hypothesis is not supported. *The Time* of London used political them the most and technology or science theme the least, (21 compared to 0).

Table V shows each theme and its frequency in each of the two newspapers. Countries that were not covered by the either newspaper are given the value of zero with an asterisk (0*) indicating that it was not used in the calculation of the chi-square. Table IV is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

13. There is no difference in frequency of Arab countries in the two newspaper's coverage of the Middle East and/or Arab countries.

14. There is no difference in frequency of Arab countries in *The New York Times*.

15. There is no difference in frequency of Arab countries in *The Times* of London.

TABLE V

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF ALL ARAB COUNTRIES BY NEWSPAPER

Country	<i>The New York Times</i>	<i>The Times of London</i>	Total
Algeria	0	7	7
Bahrain	0	1	1
Egypt	5	9	14
Iraq	20	23	43
Jordan	10	4	14
Kuwait	3	8	11
Lebanon	4	7	11
Libya	0	5	5
Morocco	1	0	1
Mauritania	0	0	0*
Oman	0	0	0*
Others	18	16	34
Palestine	18	5	23
Qatar	0	0	0*
Saudi Arabia	8	1	9
Sudan	0	0	0*
Syria	13	7	20
Tunis	0	0	0*
United Arab Emirates	0	4	4
Western Sahara	0	0	0*
Yemen	0	3	3
Total	100	100	200

Complex chi-square = 42.724

Table chi-square (P<.05, DF=14) = 23.68

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between Arab countries in the two newspapers'

articles. There is a weak relationship ($C=.462$) and the null hypothesis #13 is not supported. This means that Arab countries had different frequencies of coverage in the two newspapers.

The simple chi-square was conducted on the frequency of Arab countries in *The New York Times*, to examine null hypothesis #14. The null hypothesis is not supported. The *New York Times* covered Iraq the most and covered Morocco the least. The newspaper did not cover Algeria, Bahrain, Libya, Mauritania, Oman, Qatar, Sudan, Tunis, United Arab Emirates, Western Sahara, and Yemen, (20 compared to 1).

The simple chi-square was used on the frequency of Arab countries in *The Times of London*, to examine null hypothesis #15. The null hypothesis is not supported. *The Time of London* covered Iraq the most and covered Bahrain and Saudi Arabia the least (23 compared to 1). The newspaper did not cover Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Sudan, Tunis, and West Sahara.

Table VI shows each theme and their frequency in each of the two newspapers, it is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

16. There is no difference in frequency of themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

TABLE VI

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF THEMES BY
COUNTRY IN BOTH NEWSPAPERS

Country	Themes											Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
Algeria	2		1	1	3								7
Bahrain											1		1
Egypt				4			4	1	2		3		14
Iraq*	5	7		4	1		8	6	10		2		43
Jordan*	2			1			6		2		3		14
Kuwait	2	1	1			1	4	1			1		11
Lebanon				4		1	1	2			3		11
Libya				3		1					1		5
Morocco											1		1
Mauritania													0*
Oman													0*
Others*	1		2	5	1		11	5	4	2	3		34
Palestine*	6		1		1		12		2		1		23
Qatar													0*
Saudi Arabia			1				3	3	2				9
Sudan													0*
Syria*		1	1	1	1		15				1		20
Tunis													0*
United Arab Emirates			1					3					4
Western Sahara													0*
Yemen		1		1			1						3
Total	18	10	8	24	7	3	65	21	22	2	20		200

Themes:

1. Unrest and dissent.
2. War.
3. Crime.
4. Terrorism.
5. Coups and assassinations.

6. Natural and man-made disasters.
7. Political.
8. Military.
9. Economic.
10. Technology or science.
11. Human interest and miscellaneous.

Complex chi-square = 244.481

Table chi-square($P < .05$, $DF=140$) = 171.64

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between the frequency of themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers. There is a strong relationship ($C=.742$) and the null hypothesis #16 is not supported. This means the frequency themes were not equally distributed among Arab countries in both newspapers.

A simple chi-square was conducted between the countries and themes. Iraq had more economic theme than theme coups and assassinations theme (10 compared to 1), Jordan had more political than terrorism theme (6 compared to 1), others had more political than unrest and dissent theme, and coups and assassinations theme (11 compared to 1), Palestine had more political theme than crime, coups and assassinations, and human interest and miscellaneous themes (12 compared to 1), and Syria had more political theme than war, crime, terrorism, coups and assassinations, and human interest and miscellaneous themes (15 compared to 1). The other countries showed no significant differences.

Table VII shows each theme and its frequency in each of the two newspapers, it is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

17. There is no difference in frequency of crisis themes type among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

TABLE VII

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF CRISIS THEMES
BY COUNTRY IN BOTH NEWSPAPERS

Country	Themes						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Algeria	2		1	1	3		7
Bahrain							0*
Egypt				4			4
Iraq*	5	7		4	1		17
Jordan	2			1			3
Kuwait	2	1	1			1	5
Lebanon*				4		1	5
Libya				3		1	4
Morocco							0*
Mauritania							0*
Oman							0*
Others*	1		2	5	1		9
Palestine*	6		1		1		8
Qatar							0*
Saudi Arabia			1				1
Sudan							0*
Syria		1	1	1	1		4
Tunis							0*
United Arab Emirates			1				1
Western Sahara							0*
Yemen		1		1			2
Total	18	10	8	24	7	3	70

Themes:

1. Unrest and dissent.
2. War.
3. Crime.
4. Terrorism.
5. Coups and assassinations.
6. Natural and man-made disasters.

Complex chi-square = 94.125
Table chi-square (P<.05, DF=60) = 79.08

The complex chi-square was conducted to examine the relationship between crisis themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers. There is a strong relationship (C=.757) and the null hypothesis #17 is not supported. This means the frequencies of crisis themes are not equal among Arab countries in any newspaper.

A simple chi-square was conducted between the countries and the crisis themes. Iraq had more of war theme than coups and assassinations theme (7 compared to 1), Lebanon had more of terrorism theme than natural and man-made disasters theme (4 compared to 1), Others had more of terrorism theme than unrest and dissent or coups and assassinations themes (5 compared to 1), and Palestine had more unrest and dissent theme than crime, coups and assassinations themes 6 compared to 1).

Table VIII shows frequency of non-crisis theme and their frequency among Arab countries in the two newspapers, it is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

18. There is no difference in the frequency of non-crisis theme types among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

TABLE VIII

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF NON-CRISIS
TYPE THEMES BY COUNTRY IN BOTH NEWSPAPERS

Country	Themes					Total
	7	8	9	10	11	
Algeria						0*
Bahrain					1	1
Egypt	4	1	2		3	10
Iraq*	8	6	10		2	26
Jordan*	6		2		3	11
Kuwait	4	1			1	6
Lebanon	1	2			3	6
Libya					1	1
Morocco					1	1
Mauritania						0*
Oman						0*
Others*	11	5	4	2	3	25
Palestine*	12		2		1	15
Qatar						0*
Saudi Arabia	3	3	2			8
Sudan						0*
Syria*	15				1	16
Tunis						0*
United Arab Emirates		3				4
Western Sahara						0*
Yemen	1					1
Total	65	21	22	2	20	130

Themes:

7. Political.
8. Military.
9. Economic.
10. Technology or science.
11. Human interest and miscellaneous.

Complex chi-square = 89.298

Table chi-square($P < .05$, $DF=52$)= 69.832

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between frequency of non-crisis themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers. There is a weak relationship ($C=.638$) and the null hypothesis #18 is not supported. This means the frequencies of non-crisis themes among Arab countries are not equal in any newspaper.

A simple chi-square was conducted between the countries and the non-crisis themes. Iraq had more of economic theme than human interest and miscellaneous theme (10 compared to 2), Jordan had more of political themes than economic theme (6 compared to 2), Others (United States, Russia, and/or Israel) had more of political themes than technology or science theme (11 compared to 2), Palestine had more of political themes than human interest and miscellaneous theme (12 compared to 1), and Syria had more political themes than human interest and miscellaneous theme (12 compared to 1)

Table IX shows each theme and its frequency in each of the two newspapers, it is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

19. There is no difference in the frequency of themes among Arab countries in *The New York Times*.

TABLE IX

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF THEMES AMONG
ARAB COUNTRIES IN *THE NEW YORK TIMES*

Country	Themes											Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
Algeria													0*
Bahrain													0*
Egypt							2	1	1			1	5
Iraq	3	2		3			2	1	7			2	20
Jordan	1			1			4		2			2	10
Kuwait						1	1	1					3
Lebanon				1		1		1				1	4
Libya													0*
Morocco												1	1
Mauritania													0*
Oman													0*
Others							9	2	4	2	1		18
Palestine	5				1		10		2				18
Qatar													0*
Saudi Arabia			1				2	3	2				8
Sudan													0*
Syria				1			12						13
Tunis													0*
United Arab Emirates													0*
Western Sahara													0*
Yemen													0*
Total	9	2	1	6	1	2	42	9	18	2	8		100

Themes:

1. Unrest and dissent.
2. War.
3. Crime.
4. Terrorism.
5. Coups and assassinations.

6. Natural and man-made disasters.
7. Political.
8. Military.
9. Economic.
10. Technology or science.
11. Human interest and miscellaneous.

Complex chi-square = 139.425
Table chi-square($P < .05$, $DF = 90$) = 113.7

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between themes and Arab countries in *The New York Times* newspaper. There is a strong relationship ($C = .763$) and the null hypothesis #19 is not supported. This means that the frequencies of themes are not equal in *The New York Times* newspaper.

A simple chi-square was conducted between the countries and themes in *The New York Times* newspaper. Iraq had more of economic theme than military theme (7 compared to 1), Others (United States, Russia, and/or Israel) had more of political themes than human interest and miscellaneous theme (9 compared to 1), Palestine had more of political themes than coups and assassinations theme (10 compared to 1), and Syria had more political themes than terrorism theme (12 compared to 1).

Table X shows the frequencies of themes between Arab countries in *The Times* of London newspaper, it is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

20. There is no difference in the frequency of themes among Arab countries in *The Times* of London.

TABLE X

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF THEMES AMONG
ARAB COUNTRIES IN *THE TIMES* OF LONDON

Country	Themes											Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
Algeria	2		1	1	3								7
Bahrain											1		1
Egypt				4			2		1		2		9
Iraq	2	5		1	1		6	5	3				23
Jordan	1						2				1		4
Kuwait	2	1	1				3				1		8
Lebanon				3			1	1			2		7
Libya				3		1					1		5
Morocco													0*
Mauritania													0*
Oman													0*
Others	1		2	5	1		2	3			2		16
Palestine	1		1				2				1		5
Qatar													0*
Saudi Arabia							1						1
Sudan													0*
Syria		1	1		1		3				1		7
Tunis													0*
United Arab Emirates			1					3					4
Western Sahara													0*
Yemen		1		1			1						3
Total	9	8	7	18	6	1	23	12	4	0	12		100

Themes:

1. Unrest and dissent.
2. War.
3. Crime.
4. Terrorism.
5. Coups and assassinations.

6. Natural and man-made disasters.
7. Political.
8. Military.
9. Economic.
10. Technology or science.
11. Human interest and miscellaneous.

Complex chi-square = 147.991

Table chi-square($P < .05$, $DF = 117$) = 133.98

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between themes and Arab countries in *The Times* of London newspaper. There is a strong relationship ($C = .773$) and the null hypothesis #20 is not supported. This means that the frequencies of themes among Arab countries are not equal in *The Times* of London newspaper.

A simple chi-square was conducted between the countries and the themes in *The Times* of London newspaper. Egypt had more of terrorism theme than economic theme (4 compared to 1), Others (United States, Russia, and/or Israel) had more of terrorism theme than unrest and dissent, and coups and assassinations themes (5 compared to 1), Syria had more of political themes than war, crime, coups and assassinations themes and human interest and miscellaneous themes (3 compared to 1), United Arab Emirates had more of military theme than crime theme (3 compared to 1).

Table XI shows the frequencies of crisis and non-crisis themes between Arab countries in two newspapers, it is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

21. There is no difference in the frequency of crisis and non-crisis themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

TABLE XI

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF CRISIS AND
NON-CRISIS THEMES AMONG ARAB COUNTRIES IN THE TWO NEWSPAPERS

Country	Crisis Themes	Non-crisis Themes	Total
Algeria	7	0	7
Bahrain	0	1	1
Egypt	4	10	14
Iraq	17	26	43
Jordan	3	11	14
Kuwait	5	6	11
Lebanon	5	6	11
Libya	4	1	5
Morocco	0	1	1
Mauritania	0	0	0*
Oman	0	0	0*
Others	9	25	34
Palestine	8	15	23
Qatar	0	0	0*
Saudi Arabia	1	8	9
Sudan	0	0	0*
Syria	4	16	20
Tunis	0	0	0*
United Arab Emirates	1	3	4
Western Sahara	0	0	0*
Yemen	2	1	3
Total	70	130	200

Complex chi-square = 28.182

Table chi-square($P < .05$, $DF=14$) = 23.68

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between crisis and non-crisis themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers. There is a weak relationship ($C=.351$) and the null hypothesis #21 is not supported. This means that the frequencies of crisis and non-crisis themes are not equal in both newspapers.

A simple chi-square was conducted between Arab countries and crisis and non-crisis themes in both newspapers. Algeria had more crisis than non-crisis themes (7 compared to 0), Iraq had more non-crisis than crisis themes (26 compared to 17), Jordan had more of non-crisis than crisis themes (11 compared to 3), Libya had more crisis than non-crisis themes (4 compared to 1), Others had more of non-crisis than crisis themes (25 compared to 9), Palestine had more of non-crisis than crisis themes (15 compared to 8), Saudi Arabia had more non-crisis than crisis themes (8 compared to 1), Syria had more non-crisis than crisis themes (16 compared to 4), United Arab Emirates had more non-crisis than crisis themes (3 compared to 1).

Table XII shows the frequencies of crisis themes between Arab countries in the two newspapers, it is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

22. There is no difference in the frequency of crisis themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

TABLE XII

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF CRISIS THEMES
AMONG Arab COUNTRIES IN THE TWO NEWSPAPERS

Country	<i>The New York Times</i>	<i>The Times of London</i>	Total
Algeria*		7	7
Bahrain			0*
Egypt		4	4
Iraq	8	9	17
Jordan	2	1	3
Kuwait*	1	4	5
Lebanon	2	3	5
Libya*		4	4
Morocco			0*
Mauritania			0*
Oman			0*
Others*		9	9
Palestine*	6	2	8
Qatar			0*
Saudi Arabia	1		1
Sudan			0*
Syria	1	3	4
Tunis			0*
United Arab Emirates		1	1
Western Sahara			0*
Yemen		2	2
Total	21	49	70

Complex chi-square = 26.419

Table chi-square($P < .05$, $DF=12$) = 21.03

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between crisis themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers. There is a moderate relationship

($C=.523$) and the null hypothesis #22 is not supported. This means that the frequencies of crisis themes are not equal in both newspapers.

A simple chi-square was conducted to see which Arab countries had more crisis themes in the two newspapers. *The Times* of London had more crisis theme articles about Algeria than *The New York Times* (7 compared to 0), *The Times* of London had more crisis theme articles about Kuwait than *The New York Times* (4 compared to 1), *The Times* of London had more crisis theme articles about Libya than *The New York Times* (4 compared to 0), *The Times* of London had more crisis theme articles about Others than *The New York Times* (9 compared to 0), and *The New York Times* had more crisis theme articles about Palestine than *The Times* of London (6 compared to 2).

Table XIII shows the frequencies of non-crisis themes between Arab countries in the two newspapers, it is used to examine the following null-hypothesis:

23. There is no difference in the frequency of non-crisis themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers.

TABLE XIII

PROPORTION OF ARTICLES CONTAINING FREQUENCY OF NON-CRISIS THEMES AMONG Arab COUNTRIES IN THE TWO NEWSPAPERS

Country	<i>The New York Times</i>	<i>The Times of London</i>	Total
Algeria			0*
Bahrain		1	1
Egypt	5	5	10
Iraq	12	14	26
Jordan	8	3	11
Kuwait	2	4	6
Lebanon	2	4	6
Libya		1	1
Morocco		1	1
Mauritania			0*
Oman			0*
Others	18	7	25
Palestine	12	3	15
Qatar			0*
Saudi Arabia	7	1	8
Sudan			0*
Syria	12	4	16
Tunis			0*
United Arab Emirates		3	3
Western Sahara			0*
Yemen		1	1
Total	79	51	130

Complex chi-square = 24.611

Table chi-square ($P < .05$, $DF=13$) = 22.36

The complex chi-square was used to examine the relationship between non-crisis themes among Arab countries in the two newspapers. There is a weak relationship ($C=.399$)

and the null hypothesis #23 is not supported. This means that the frequencies of non-crisis themes are not equal in both newspapers.

A simple chi-square was conducted to see which Arab countries had more non-crisis themes in the two newspapers. *The New York Times* had more non-crisis theme articles about Jordan than *The Times* of London (8 compared to 3), *The New York Times* had more non-crisis theme articles about Others (United States, Russia, and/or Israel) than *The Times* of London (18 compared to 7), *The New York Times* non-crisis theme articles about Palestine than *The Times* of London (12 compared to 3), *The New York Times* had more non-crisis theme articles about Saudi Arabia than *The Times* of London (7 compared to 1), and *The New York Times* had more non-crisis theme articles about Syria than *The Times* of London (12 compared to 4).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Scholars continually try to explain the nature of Western media coverage of the Middle East news. This study attempted to provide new perspective on Arabic news by comparing coverage found in two leading Western newspapers, *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London.

Previous studies of media coverage from Middle East and/or Arab countries have not focused on the types of news published by Western newspapers. This study centered on the nature of themes (crisis and non-crisis) around which two Western presses have devoted their coverage. That is, it is assumed that the Western media would cover certain themes more than others. For example, more crisis themes will be covered by the Western newspapers than non-crisis themes when reporting about the Middle East and/or Arab countries.

Eleven themes were selected and modified from an earlier study by Larson, and were divided into crisis, and non-crisis themes.¹

The research questions answered in this study were:

1. What type of themes (crisis or non-crisis) were mostly used by the two newspapers while covering news events from the Middle East and/or Arab countries?

2. Which newspaper had the most crisis related themes and which newspaper had the most non-crisis related themes while reporting about the Middle East and Arab countries?

3. Which crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The New York Times* and Which crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The Times* of London while reporting about the Middle East and/or Arab countries?

4. Which non-crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The New York Times* and Which non-crisis theme occurred more frequently in *The Times* of London while reporting about the Middle East and/or Arab countries?

5. Are all Arab countries represented equally in both newspapers?

6. Which Arab countries were most covered and which Arab countries were least covered in each newspaper?

7. Did all the articles about Arab countries in both newspapers contain equal amount of themes?

8. Are crisis and non-crisis themes among Arab countries equally distributed in both newspapers?

9. Did all Arab countries have equal frequency of themes in *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London?

Data in Table I shows that there is a significant difference in the types of themes covered. That is, from the total of 200 articles examined, 65 percent are non-crisis articles compared to 35 percent crisis articles. When comparing the two newspapers, *The New York Times* had more non-crisis themes, 40 percent of all articles examined to 26 percent for *The Times* of London. *The Times* of London had more crisis themes, 25 percent of all articles examined compared to 11 percent for *The New York Times*.

A simple chi-square test conducted on each newspaper found that *The New York Times* had a significant difference. The test revealed that the newspaper had more non-crisis than crisis news articles (79 compared with 21). Table III shows that political themes received the highest overall newspaper coverage. Political articles, with a count of 64 represented 32 percent of overall newspaper coverage. The majority of these articles dealt with the ongoing coverage of the peace treaty between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel.

Table IV shows that the second most covered theme was terrorism, with 13 percent, whereas economic related stories

had a 12 percent share of the news coverage, human interest and miscellaneous themes had 11 percent, military themes 10 percent, unrest and dissent stories had nine percent, war articles with five percent, crime four percent, and coups and assassinations with four percent. The least percentage of themes covered were natural and man-made disasters and technology and/or science, which only accounted for one percent respectively.

Political themes were highest in *The New York Times*, accounting for 43 percent of its overall articles. Other themes were, economic with 18 percent, unrest and dissent themes with nine percent, military theme and human interest and miscellaneous themes with eight percent each, terrorism with seven percent, war with two percent, crime, coups/assassinations, and natural and man-made disasters with one percent each.

The Times of London's most common theme was political, comprising 21 percent of the overall coverage. Other themes included: terrorism with 18 percent, military with 12 percent, unrest and dissent with nine percent, war with eight percent, crime with seven percent, coups and assassinations with six percent, economic with five percent, and natural and man-made disasters with one percent.

One of the factors that contributed to the increase of non-crisis themes in both newspapers was that more articles

were written about the ongoing peace treaty negotiations between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel. *The New York Times* had more political themes than any other theme (43 out of total of 100). Table IX shows that the Palestine Liberation Organization had significant differences in its political articles when compared with its other articles (10 out of 18). This means that the United States government was directly involved in the peace process between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel which resulted in the interim peace deal in September 1993. The same government is still negotiating peace with other Arab countries in the region and that in turn, helps explain the amount of articles *The New York Times* devoted to this topic. Thus, *The New York Times* had more non-crisis than crisis oriented themes in its coverage of the Middle East and/or Arab countries. *The Times* of London showed no significant differences in its crisis and non-crisis themes.

The second most-covered subject in the two newspapers was terrorism. Table IV shows that terrorism accounted for 13 percent of total articles. Table VI shows Arab countries that had a significant difference in the percentage of its total articles about terrorism. Others with 15 percent (no specific country mentioned only regional, Israel and/or another country), Egypt with 29 percent, Iraq with nine percent, Lebanon with 36 percent, and Libya with five

percent of articles about terrorism. This means that the articles mentioning Egypt centered on the acts of violence by Islamic extremist groups against tourists. Iraq's articles were mostly about the Iraqi government connection with terrorism and the use of hostages at the start of the Gulf War. The articles written about Lebanon were about different terrorist groups and their activities. Libya's articles centered around two of its citizens' involvement in the downing of the Pan Am flight over Scotland.

Table IV shows that the Arab country most mentioned by both newspapers in this study was Iraq, with 22 percent out of 200 articles. Other Arab countries mentioned were, "Others" (Israel, the United States, and Russia) with 17 percent, Palestine with 12 percent, Syria with ten percent, Egypt and Jordan with seven percent each, Kuwait and Lebanon with six percent each, Saudi Arabia with five percent, Algiers with four percent, United Arab Emirates with two percent, Yemen with two percent, finally Bahrain and Morocco each with one percent.

The Arab country most frequently mentioned by *The New York Times* in this study was Iraq with 20 percent. Other countries mentioned by the same newspaper are, "Others" (Israel, the United States, and Russia) and Palestine with 18 percent each, Syria with 13 percent, Jordan with ten percent, Saudi Arabia with eight percent, Lebanon with four

percent, Kuwait with three percent, and Morocco with one percent.

The Arab country most mentioned by *The Times* of London in this study was Iraq with 23 percent. Other Arab countries mentioned by the same newspaper are, "Others" (Israel, the United States, and Russia) with 16 percent, Egypt with nine percent. Kuwait with eight percent, Algiers, Lebanon and Syria with seven percent each, Libya with five percent, Jordan and United Arab Emirates with four percent each, Yemen with three percent, finally Bahrain and Saudi Arabia with one percent each.

The country most mentioned by the two newspapers is Iraq. Table VI shows that the dominant theme in Iraq's articles was economics with 23 percent of its total articles. This means that the Gulf War that began in early 1990, generated a considerable amount of news about Iraq for a short time. Articles about economic sanctions and the oil embargo against Iraq contributed to the increased number of this theme. The country (in this case, organization) that received the second most articles is the Palestine Liberation Organization. As mentioned before, the on-going peace treaty with Israel contributed to this large number of articles.

Table VI shows countries that had significant differences in the type of themes for the two newspapers.

One hundred percent of the articles about Algeria were crisis themes. This means, out of seven articles about Algeria, three had to do with assassination, two about unrest and dissent, while crime and terrorism each had one article. Iraq's news coverage was 40 percent crisis oriented and 60 percent non-crisis, Jordan was 21 percent crisis and 79 percent non-crisis, Libya was 80 percent crisis and 20 percent non-crisis, "Others" (Israel, the United States, and Russia) were 26 percent crisis and 74 non-crisis, 35 percent of Palestine coverage was crisis and 65 percent non-crisis, Saudi Arabia's coverage was 11 percent crisis and 89 percent non-crisis, Syria had 20 percent of its articles about crisis and 80 percent non-crisis, and United Arab Emirates received 33 percent crisis and 64 percent non-crisis. The rest of the Arab countries showed no significant differences.

An assumption at the outset of this study was that the Western press generated more crisis oriented articles when writing about developing countries in the Middle East. For example, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the Palestine Liberation Organization and its struggle against Israel, Syria's accusation by other countries in promoting terrorism, Egypt's struggle with Islamic fundamentalist, and Lebanon's internal struggle, were thought to dominate the news agenda from the Middle East in tables V, VI, IX, X, and XI. This

assumption is incorrect. Western newspapers wrote about events that happened in that part of the world regardless of the type of event.

Conclusions

It is understood that different criteria for news selection at a given newspaper make it difficult to attain a balance in any newspaper's coverage of both crisis and non-crisis events. In addition, even when the sample is randomly drawn, as was done in this study, there is a chance that a coincidence of crisis or non-crisis events may have skewed normal coverage patterns. A good example of this is the Gulf War which lasted only a few months, while the political negotiation for peace in the region between the Palestine Liberation Organization and other Arabic countries with Israel is an ongoing process.

Another fact that may provide information about the validity of findings was a trend toward current events that were obscure during the time in which the data was computed and analyzed. Examples of these events are, the 1994 civil war in Yemen and the suicide mission and other disruptions in the peace process between the Arabs and Israel by the group Hamas. It appeared that the two newspapers were most likely to give coverage to certain topical issues of the

time. For example, more coverage was given to the peace treaty between the Palestinian Liberation Organization and Israel, terrorism, and the Gulf War. The consequence of the peace treaty, terrorism and the Gulf War on the people in the United State and United Kingdom seemed to focus on maintaining the flow of oil to the West.

The Middle East is considered by Westerners to be the breeding place for terrorism that manifests itself in the destruction of U.S. and other Western property and businesses. Economic stability is vital to developed nations such as the United States and Great Britain. Table IV shows that the third most mentioned theme is economy with 23 articles out of total of 200. The Persian Gulf is the route followed by many ships sailing under the U.S. and other Western flags. The presence of ships from this area and other Western nations and general business activity in that region, indicate the interest of the people or governments of the United States and the United Kingdom, hence, the need for the coverage of the peace treaty and Gulf War.

Economic and military themes affected the news agenda in other ways. When these themes are combined, such topics represent over 43 percent of the coverage. After the Gulf War, many of the countries in the Middle East started to purchase or upgrade their weapons stock to the latest high technology weapons used in the Gulf War. For example, 75

percent of the articles about the United Arab Emirates deal with the purchase of new weapons from the United States and England. The acts of selling arms to other countries, especially to Arab nations, sparked industrial development and job growth for U.S. and British citizens.

The actual news events that were prominent about the Middle East from 1990 until 1995, were the Gulf War, the peace treaty between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel, The New York City bombing, and the Oklahoma City bombing. Table VI shows that political themes received the highest percentage, followed by terrorism.

Advocates for more balanced, accurate coverage from Third World countries believe that any story that originating from the Middle East automatically carries a crisis label with it. This study has proved to some degree that such criticism is not necessarily correct. The relationship between crisis and non-crisis themes was weak. Nevertheless, table I suggests that information coming from that part of the world need not be a crisis, as 65 percent of articles were non-crisis. Even amidst events of crises such as war, terrorism, and assassinations, the two newspapers reported more non-crisis events.

This study does not seem to support the agenda setting theory. As Cohen indicated, the press is regarded by many to be a powerful agenda-setting tool in the Western world.²

Davison states that "average Americans obtain most knowledge of international affairs from the mass media, since they are quite distant from personal experience."³ Two of the most important events of that time were the Gulf War and the peace treaty. The Gulf War lasted only a short time, and table IV shows only five percent of the total articles mentioned the war theme. On the other hand, political themes that included the Arab-Israeli peace treaty had 32 percent of the total articles, making it the theme with the most articles. This is due to the fact that the peace treaty is an ongoing process, fueled by the government of the United States, to establish peace in that region and reduce the threat of war and terrorism.

The conclusion of this research is that such topics as oil, terrorism, war, military coups and assassinations, disasters, and terrorism would be covered regardless of how many times they occur, be it in a Western, Far Eastern or the Middle East region. Events that are important to the West will be covered by their media, regardless if its crisis or non-crisis orientation.

Recommendations

The researcher concludes that there are crises themes, for example, war, assassinations, coups, terrorism, and civil unrest, that would be covered irrespective of where they occur. It is recommended that future studies should focus attention on identifying and exploring such topics in other regions of the world.

One major disadvantage of nominal data quantification is its inability to express the nature of the content. That is, the method obscures much of the richness of the data. This shortcoming reduces the effectiveness and force of conclusions from this study.

For example, we note that the country receiving the most coverage is Iraq with 22 percent of all articles examined. Table XI shows that Iraq had more non-crisis than crisis themes, and that the most covered theme on Iraq is economic and political, not war. However, the method does not identify what kind of economic or politics issues are being covered. That is, did the economy or politics involve the United States or England? Were these themes about buying food, selling oil, or elections? Neither can we say what aspects of Iraq news were covered. Was it disarmament, the sale of arms, or surrender? Such are the problems with quantified studies.

It is because of the flexibility and crudeness of quantitatively derived data that it seems Third World advocates and countries make their generalizations that there are more crisis than non-crisis coverage of is people and regions in the Western newspapers. Because of this misinterpretation, further research is recommended to:

1. Redefine the variables used in this study in such a way that conclusions that will be drawn from it will not be as vulnerable to attack or questions.

2. A field experiment should be undertaken by future researchers to observe the process that gatekeepers go through to select International news for publishing. For example, Q methodology might be conducted among news editors, asking them to read samples of news stories and indicate their intentions about possible publication. Another suggestion is to send questionnaires comprised of themes or topics to the editors, and reporters in New York and London, asking them to rank their newsworthiness. Further research on this is suggested because the researchers would be hearing from the source, instead of content analyzing after the news has been published. While the current study addresses the question of "what" is covered, it can only speculate on "why" items are included.

Endnote

¹ James F. Larson, "Television Windows on the World: International Affairs Coverage on the U.S. Networks." Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation. 1984, p. 31.

² Ibid.

³ W. Philip Davison, "Mass Communication and Conflict Resolution: The Role of the Information Media in the Advancement of International Understanding." New York: Praeger. 1974, p. 9.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

ARTICLES FROM *THE NEW YORK TIMES*
AND *THE TIMES* OF LONDON Articles

THE NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLES

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005.	August	5, 1990,	3,	13:2
006.	August	9, 1990	A,	17:1
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009.	August	15, 1990,	A,	21:1
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011.	August	24, 1990,	A,	1:5
012.	August	30, 1990,	D,	1:4
013.	September	2, 1990,	1,	5:1
014.	September	11, 1990,	A,	1:6
015.	September	15, 1990,	A,	14:4
016.	September	30, 1990,	4A,	14:5
017.	October	23, 1990,	A	11:1
018.	November	8, 1990,	D,	10:4
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039. July	23, 1991,	A,	20:1
040. July	30, 1991,	A,	1:6
041. August	3, 1991,	A,	1:3
042. August	10, 1991,	A,	18:1
043. September	6, 1991,	A,	22:1
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045. October	3, 1991	A,	10:1
046. October	13, 1991	1,	1:1
047. October	20, 1991	1,	10:4

048. October	25, 1991	A,	8:5
049. October	28, 1991	A,	12:1
050. October	30, 1991	A,	10:1
051. October	31, 1991,	A,	17:1
052. November	2, 1991,	A,	5:1
053. November	5, 1991,	A,	1:1
054. November	23, 1991,	A,	1:6
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057. December	22, 1991,	1,	14:5
058. January	6, 1992,	A,	8:4
059. January	28, 1992,	A,	8:4
060. February	25, 1992,	A,	21:1
061. March	22, 1992,	1,	1:1
062. May	3, 1992,	4,	4:1
063. June	5, 1992,	A,	29:6
064. July	1, 1992,	A,	6:2
065. July	26, 1992,	4,	1:4
066. August	23, 1992,	4,	7:1
067. September	2, 1992,	A,	6:3
068. October	2, 1992,	A,	3:1
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072. April	12, 1993,	A,	17:6

073. April	27, 1993,	A,	21:1
074. May	14, 1993,	A,	1:5
075. June	8, 1993,	A,	13:1
076. July	11, 1993,	3,	5:1
077. August	2, 1993,	A,	4:3
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086. July	16, 1994,	A,	1:6
087. August	10, 1994,	A,	4:5
088. October	19, 1994,	A,	12:1
089. October	31, 1994,	D,	5:1
090. December	31, 1994,	A,	1:1
091. January	15, 1995,	1,	15:1
092. February	16, 1995,	A,	6:4
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094. June	12, 1995,	A,	2:3
095. August	24, 1995,	D,	2:1
096. September	22, 1995,	A,	11:1
097. October	25, 1995,	A,	21:5

098. November	1, 1995,	A,	7:1
099. December	10, 1995,	1,	18:1
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106.	August	17, 1990,	3a	
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112.	December	6, 1990,	11a	
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120.	February	27, 1991,	4a	
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123. March	11, 1991,	10a
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148.	December	5, 1991,	8a
149.	December	10, 1991,	9b
150.	December	13, 1991,	11c
151.	January	15, 1992,	10e
152.	January	27, 1992,	2a
153.	February	8, 1992,	8a
154.	March	3, 1992,	10h
155.	March	12, 1992,	11c
156.	March	18, 1992,	11e
157.	Aril	4, 1992,	7a
158.	May	4, 1992,	8h
159.	May	12, 1992,	11c
160.	July	2, 1992,	13a
161.	July	14, 1992,	12g
162.	July	25, 1992,	11a
163.	September	12, 1992,	11a
164.	September	28, 1992,	11a
165.	October	5, 1992,	9e
166.	October	31, 1992,	11a
167.	November	5, 1992,	11a
168.	December	23, 1992,	3d
169.	January	9, 1993,	8e
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177. June	1, 1993,	17e
178. July	4, 1993,	1/18g
179. August	22, 1993,	1/12a
180. September	13, 1993,	18c
181. September	29, 1993,	16a
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187. April	29, 1994,	18c
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195. January	23, 1995,	9a
196. March	31, 1995,	12a
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