

THE IMAGE OF NICOLAE CEAUSESCU, FORMER
PRESIDENT OF ROMANIA, AS PRESENTED
BY TIME, NEWSWEEK, AND U.S. NEWS
& WORLD REPORT DURING THE 1989
ROMANIAN REVOLUTION

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PREFACE

This is a case study using content analysis. The primary objectives were to find out how former Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu's image was presented by three influential news magazines, Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report, during and immediately after the Romanian revolution in December 1989. The focus of the study is on the type of bias, the background of bias, and how bias affects news objectivity.

To complete this study, I received help from many others.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

General

Romanian ex-president Nicolae Ceausescu had been one of the longest-serving leaders in Eastern Europe. But the man who had exercised absolute power for 24 years was toppled in 10 days by the Romanian people during protests in December 1989. He was executed together with his wife by a military firing squad on December 25, 1989.

Ceausescu was known as the maverick of the Warsaw Pact. The Western world had praised him for his refusal (1) to follow the Soviet Union's lead on foreign policy, (2) to allow Soviet troops on his soil, (3) to participate in the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, (4) to support the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in 1979, and (5) to join the East-bloc boycott of the 1984 Summer Olympics in the United States.

In addition, Ceausescu established diplomatic relations with West Germany in 1967 and became the first Soviet bloc country to welcome a visit by a postwar American President, Richard Nixon. He also helped President Richard Nixon initiate the diplomatic process with China.

Moreover, Ceausescu maintained neutrality in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and refused to break off diplomatic relations with U.S.-backed Israel. He also increased trade with the West dramatically (Bacon, P. 169). In 1978, When Britain intended to sell airplanes to Romania, Ceausescu was offered a state visit, complete with an honorary knighthood (Barnard, P. 230). From 1975 - 1986, high ranking French officials from every party had had almost annual meetings with Ceausescu's government (Barnard, p. 230).

However, it was just such a man who maintained a balanced relationship between the East and West and who was denounced by Western countries immediately after his downfall.

President George Bush's press secretary, Marlin Fitzwater, announced on December 22, 1989, that "a terrible burden" had been lifted from the Romanian people and pledged U.S. assistance if Romania moved "along the path of democratic reform" ("Facts on File," P. 958). Three days after the announcement, the United States established diplomatic relations with the National Salvation Front government of Romania.

Meanwhile, Western Europe expressed strong support for the new government. French and Dutch officials conveyed to Soviet counterparts their governments' tacit approval should the Soviet Union decide to intervene militarily on the side of the anti-Ceausescu forces in Romania ("Facts on File," P. 958). Norway's King Olav V stripped Ceausescu of royal

honors awarded a decade earlier, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said Romanians had "taken liberty for themselves," and West German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher declared that Romanians "have won a great victory over a dictatorship contemptuous of mankind" (The Washington Post, 1989, P. 14).

The Soviet Union greeted the fall of Nicolae Ceausescu as "the will of the people" and supported the "just cause" of the pro-democracy movement in Romania (Remnick, p. 14). And, the Soviet media had heavy and dramatic coverage of the Romanian revolution, reflecting the Kremlin's satisfaction that Ceausescu, who had criticized Soviet reforms as a repudiation of socialism, had been removed (Remnick, p. 14).

Biography of Nicolae Ceausescu

Nicolae Ceausescu was born into a peasant family at Oltenia, Romania, on January 26, 1918. At age of 15, he joined the Communist Party's youth arm. Because of his revolutionary activities, Ceausescu was jailed about eight years prior to World War II (Current Biography, p. 62). After the war, Ceausescu rose rapidly in the political affairs of Romania. He became a full member of the Central Committee in 1952, and five years later, he was the second most powerful figure in the Party, just after the party leader, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej.

In 1965, Ceausescu took over as the party's first secretary due to the death of Gheorghiu-Dej. Three years

later, he became Romania's head of state -- President. Ceausescu stayed in power for 24 years until his execution on December 25, 1989, during the Romanian revolution.

Background on Romania

In 1989, swift and dramatic changes occurred in Eastern Europe that challenged all the Communist parties on the continent. Romania, having for a period of time resisted all changes in the region, especially Soviet style reforms, suddenly cried out for democracy and changed its government within one month.

From November 20 to 24, 1989, the 14th National Congress of the Romanian Communist Party was held in Bucharest. Nicolae Ceausescu, the tenured president, was reelected as the General Secretary of the Communist Party after 24 years of unopposed rule. In his acceptance speech, Ceausescu claimed that "the party was the vital center of Romania, the patriotic revolutionary consciousness of the entire people" (Kremaf, p. 21).

But three weeks later, Ceausescu faced a critical situation. Thousands of anti-government demonstrators in Timisoara clashed with the police, and hundreds of people were reported killed. And, soon after that, Ceausescu declared a state of emergency, appealing for unity to protect the "socialist system and working people's interests" (People's Daily, p. 6). On December 21, violence erupted in Bucharest during a pro-Ceausescu rally, and Ceausescu

immediately ordered a crackdown to demolish "the terrorists" (China Daily, p. 1). But on the next day, Romanian defense forces supported by the angry masses succeeded in toppling Ceausescu's socialist government and Ceausescu was arrested.

On December 25th, Ceausescu and his wife were executed as public enemies for their crimes. Then, the newly-formed Committee of National Salvation Front denounced Communism and called for national free elections for the sake of the nation and its people.

This Romanian revolution took place within the context of political and economic reforms underway in Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and even the Soviet Union, all of which attracted much attention from world's media. News magazines Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report were no exceptions.

Studies on Media

Time (with a circulation of 4.4 million in 1989), Newsweek (circulation of 3.3 million in 1989) and U.S. News & World Report (circulation of 2.3 million in 1989) are the three leading news magazines in the United States based on circulation. They not only reach a large audience at home, but also provide a strong reference for the media beyond the United States.

While the magazines are highly respected and have wide circulation, they are not without their problems. In a 1965 study, journalism professor John Merrill found that Time

used six techniques of bias to stereotype Presidents Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy.

Fourteen years after the publication of Merrill's study, three other researchers replicated it to examine Time's treatment of Presidents Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon (both before and after Watergate), Gerald Ford, and Jimmy Carter. The researchers found that Time continued to use most of the bias techniques reported by Merrill (Fedler, Meeske and Hall, p. 355).

In study of the comparison between Time and Newsweek coverage of the Kennedy presidential campaigns, researchers found that Time and Newsweek favored John F. Kennedy, but criticized Robert and Edward Kennedy (Fedler, Smith, Meeske, p. 489).

Media coverage cannot be unrelated to ideological constraints. Due to scientific analysis of the political, social and economic forces, communication theory makes possible accurate predictions of the effects of the mass media (Severin & Tankard, p. 209). Meanwhile, communication theory can also be used to examine the objectivity of news content.

In this study, the author studied Herbert Altschull's three models of the press: the market model, the Marxist model, and the advancing model; Harold Lasswell and Charles Wright's functions of the media: surveillance of the environment, the correlation of the parts of society in responding to the environment, and the transmission of the social

heritage from one generation to the next; Herbert J. Gans' enduring values in news, which affect what events become news and even help define the news; and Gaye Tuchman's theory of content of news: the social construction of reality. One conclusion can be drawn from examining these issues: news content serves the power interests and is controlled by ideological constraints.

Language of news content plays an important role in revealing the ideology. Objectivity of news content is apparent through language as well. The author studied the characteristics of language and devices of language summarized by Wendell Johnson and S. I. Hayakawa.

The misuse of language or deliberate distortion of meaning and adding a certain kind of color to the language can strongly affect the news objectivity which is the ideal of the journalism profession.

To study how the three magazines presented the image of former Romanian President Ceausescu, the author selectively chose the coverage of Ceausescu by Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News and World Report in the past three decades, and analyzed the coverage during the Romanian revolution which took place at the end of 1989.

Statement of Problem

Over the long run, Time, Newsweek and U.S. News & World Report have grown to look and read a lot alike. Edwin Diamond commented:

In the past, the three newsweeklies had to share a similar news franchise; more and more now, they are sharing the same design, the same ideas, and--eerily--some of the same editors, reporters, and writers (1988, p. 42).

Based on this observation, the author generally hypothesized that Time, Newsweek and U.S. New & World Report look and read alike, and that they had similar unfavorable attitudes toward Ceausescu because Romania's anti-government demonstrations fit well with the anti-Communist ideology of the United States.

This study was intended to answer these questions: Were there any differences among the three magazines in the characteristics of the news coverage of the Romanian revolution? Did the news stories in the magazines indicate bias? What stereotyped image of Ceausescu was presented by Time, Newsweek and U.S. News & World Report? Did the stories involve subjective, judgmental or opinionated reporting? If so, what techniques were used to present the information?

Significance of the Study

The 1989 Romanian revolution, though short, provides another opportunity to reexamine American's prestigious news magazines, Time, Newsweek and U.S. News & World Report, while testing the applicability of certain communication theories.

Such a case study using content analysis of news coverage concerning former Romanian leader Ceausescu has never been done before. As Time, Newsweek and U.S. News & World

Report magazines are so influential that they reach more than 60 million Americans every week and that many international media also use the three magazines as their news reference, it is necessary to examine the three magazines' objectivity and reliability at a time when all three of the magazines are attempting to present new looks in order to extend their influence.

In international communication, the dominant media have a strong responsibility to present a realistic picture as audiences rely heavily on these media to learn of important world events.

By analyzing how the three magazines portrayed Ceausescu, who had once been favored and then denounced by the Western media, this study can help readers and scholars learn how to seek the "true picture" and to have a relatively objective perception of an historical person or event. To media people and scholars, this research will help clarify the functions and responsibility of the media, and the application of communication theories within political, social and ideological and general semantics contexts for a better understanding of the depiction of reality presented by these news magazines.

Methodology of the research is a case study using content analysis. The focus is on news magazine coverage of the overthrow of the Romanian government which took place in December 1989.

Limitations

Due to the short duration of the Romanian revolution, Time, Newsweek and U.S. News & World Report did not have extensive coverage. The coverage was limited to all issues published in January 1990. Thus, it was difficult for the author to evaluate the three magazines completely by judging and examining this limited number of issues. Since none of the three magazines had paid much attention to Romania before the Romania revolution, a comparison over time was not feasible.

It should not be assumed that coverage by these three magazines is typical of all magazines, or that coverage by these magazines of this event is typical of their coverage of other events.

Organization of the Study

Chapter II reviews relevant research studies and discusses communication theories and functions of the mass media.

Chapter III explains the methodology of this research effort.

Chapter IV presents the research findings and discusses them in detail.

Chapter V summarizes the research effort, offers conclusions and recommends ideas for further study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Coverage of Ceausescu From the 1960s Through the 1980s By Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report

Based on the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, 17 articles from Time, 12 from Newsweek, and eight from U.S. News, were selected to study how the three magazines portrayed Romania's former leader, Nicolae Ceausescu, over the past three decades.

The Decade of the 1960s

Nicolae Ceausescu became the general secretary of the Romanian Communist Party in 1965. Three years later, he took over as Romania's president. News reports of his assumption of office appeared in Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News. And the image presented was that Ceausescu was independent -- politically, economically and ideologically.

All three magazines confirmed that Ceausescu showed some independence of Moscow, an openness to Western countries and that he promoted economic growth. But, all criticized Ceausescu's strict ideology.

Time Magazine. Time described Ceausescu as a son of a shoemaker, whose formal education was "scanty." But he moved out of his poor background to a decent and renowned position. According to Time, Ceausescu did not inherit his predecessor's "taste for luxury," dressed modestly, and had no "penchant for publicity" (March 18, 1966, p. 47).

Time reported that Ceausescu sent signals to the West that Romania was developing and it wanted the West's help in building a better Romania.

Domestically, Ceausescu was reported to have liberated the arts in Romanian life. He had gone even further than predecessor Dej in freeing Romanian artists from "strict socialist realism," and even permitted his people to experience Western movies and newspapers (July 30, 1965, p. 24).

Time also regarded Ceausescu as a nationalistic communist because he emphasized "the nation as a form of human community" (May 20, 1966, p. 47).

At the end of Ceausescu's first full year as party general secretary, Time declared that "Romania today is indubitably a state, defiantly a nation" (March 18, 1966, p. 34). Time also said that economically Romania ran well ahead of the other communist states, and its trade with the West was rising significantly.

However, Time added that "relaxation" of strict ideology in Romania was "absurdly juxtaposed" with remnants of tough police rule as the securitate assiduously tailed suspected Westerners (March 18, 1966, p. 48).

Time magazine's 1960s reporting presented an impression that Romania's new leader was an uneducated farmer, modest, realistic and nationalistic, but tough and independent.

Newsweek Magazine. Newsweek reported that in the international area, Ceausescu "flirted" diplomatically with Russia's "arch-enemy," China (Sept. 16, 1968, p. 46); he "outraged" most of his communist neighbors by establishing diplomatic ties with Western Germany (Dec. 18, 1967, p. 61); he "bitterly" attacked the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia and kept a close relationship with the communist world's "arch-revisionist," Marshal Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia (Aug. 4, 1969, p. 41). And, domestically, Ceausescu "tweaked Moscow's nose" with such measures as the abolition of Russian as a compulsory second language in Romanian schools (Sept. 16, 1968, p. 46). Furthermore, he had "steadily" weakened Romania's ties to the Warsaw Pact and had "adamantly" refused to allow Soviet troops to hold maneuvers on Romanian territory (Sept. 16, 1968, p. 46).

Newsweek referred to the Romanian leader as a "pudgy" Nicolae Ceausescu, an "ardent internationalist," an "independent-minded chief." Newsweek reported that he "toed a strictly orthodox communist line," declaring "Marxism-Leninism was nobody's property" (Sept. 16, 1968, p. 50).

Newsweek further described Ceausescu in an article "How Does Romania Do It?" as the "short and stocky" man who retained much of his "peasant cunning and courage" (Aug. 4, 1969, p. 41). Newsweek also said the "tough and pragmatic"

Ceausescu systematically shoved aside party opponents and managed to consolidate his power. In his relationship with Moscow, Ceausescu was proving to be a "formidable tactician." The man was also described as a devotee of strong, centralized planning and control.

In the same article, Newsweek said that Ceausescu permitted a "careful loosening" of the reins to benefit the Western press among others. He also kept a "healthy relationship" with the Romanian people, according to Newsweek, and his "shrewd, shining eyes" constantly appraised a "friendly crowd."

During the decade of the 1960s, Newsweek praised Ceausescu's independent foreign policy and his apparent courage and wisdom.

U.S. News & World Report Magazine. U.S. News characterized Ceausescu as a "smiling dictator" and as the communist boss with a pallid and usually grim-face, who sat at the "pinnacle of power," and who enjoyed a sort of "grudging popularity" among inactive Romanian communists (Aug. 4, 1969, p. 40).

U.S. News continued to report that Ceausescu had denounced the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia "loudly and boldly," and his economic policies were benefiting Romania. U.S. News wrote that "once a nation of peasants, Romania is rapidly becoming a nation of industrialized workers capable of operating the most modern machinery," and "Romania is richer than the other communist-run countries of

East Europe" (Aug. 4, 1969, p. 41).

But, U.S. News also reported that Ceausescu's "tight party control" at the top left no room for "interference" by worker groups, unions or other bodies. There was no opposition press in Romania, either (Aug. 4, 1969, p. 41).

Generally, during the decade of the 1960s, U.S. News described Ceausescu as an independent and courageous leader who exercised absolute power to move the country forward.

The Decade of the 1970s

The three magazines continued to discuss Ceausescu's role in international affairs, especially his defiance of Moscow. Both Time and Newsweek interviewed Ceausescu and published his views on world affairs. On the other hand, the three magazines targeted Ceausescu's personality cult.

Time Magazine. Time continued to elaborate Ceausescu's role in international affairs, such as his public opposition to Moscow, his close relations with China, and his mediation between Washington and Beijing. More emphasis was given to how Ceausescu irritated and defied the Soviet Union. In an interview with a Time correspondent, Ceausescu emphasized his firm, independent stand in favor of East-West detente, cooperation and peace.

Time reported that Romania was the first country in the Warsaw Pact to recognize West Germany, the first to join the International Monetary Fund, and the first to receive a visit by an American President, Richard Nixon (April 2,

1973, p. 32).

Time also reported that despite Ceausescu's "daring foreign policy," his domestic policies were more "rigidly conservative," and in conformity with Moscow (Aug. 16, 1971, p. 26). According to Time, Ceausescu was interested in building up his personality cult (April 2, 1973, p. 32). On his 55th birthday, Romanian top officials made it a point to comment favorably on his contributions to the country, and on his 60th birthday, Time had a special report saying that Romania's "diminutive dictator" who exercised absolute power was congratulated by many world leaders (Feb. 6, 1978, p. 38). Time mentioned not only Ceausescu's impressive number of titles and scope of power in Romania, but also his family members' high positions at different government levels.

Even so, Time reported:

Ceausescu's family-fostering ways have stirred no great undertow of resentment. After all, nepotism was an old Balkan tradition and may be a small price to pay for a new one that Ceausescu himself has invented: keeping independent of the Soviets. In both areas Ceausescu has proved himself adept (April 30, 1979, p. 32).

In Time's reporting over the 1970s, the tone became a bit more negative toward Ceausescu compared with reporting in the 1960s. Ceausescu was criticized for his personality cult and nepotism despite his popular foreign policy of independence. But even then, the criticism was not severe as it was always softened with some excuse for Ceausescu's behavior.

Newsweek Magazine. Newsweek targeted Ceausescu's domestic policies. Newsweek in its "Turn of the Screw" (Aug. 9, 1971) wrote that Ceausescu sought to polish up his Marxist-Leninist credentials by "tightening the ideological screws" at home. He decreed an "extensive crackdown" on liberal trends in Romanian cultural life, called for the intensification of political training in schools and factories and implemented tighter controls on the press. Unlike the 1960s, Western films disappeared from theaters, American television series were dropped from Romanian television, and British rock groups were canceled. Moreover, Ceausescu set in motion a "sweeping purge" of suspected liberals in the cultural and ideological branches of the party.

Newsweek related Ceausescu's efforts in international affairs to his ambition for greater power and favorable image. Newsweek said that Romania's Communist Party Chief Nicolae Ceausescu had marched pretty much to his own "dithyrambs." "Flaunting" his independence from Moscow, he had established diplomatic relations with West Germany, "cozied up" to China and played host to Richard Nixon and Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir. "This made him a hero to his people and the object of a growing personality cult" (Nov. 20, 1972, p. 52).

Newsweek added that Ceausescu appointed his wife as a full member of the Party Central Committee and "reshuffled" the party leadership and the government for his own benefit.

His forced industrialization prompted increasing resistance from Romanian people.

In the 1970s, Newsweek negatively reported Ceausescu's nepotism and crackdown on culture, but praised his efforts as an intermediary in international conflicts.

U.S. News & World Report Magazine. Under the title of "Why a Soviet Ally Is Turning to U.S.," U.S. News' answer was "Maverick Rumania, in need of capital and moral support, can't get them from Russia. That's one big reason for the knock on Washington's door"(Jan. 17, 1972, p. 80).

U.S. News put much emphasis on U.S.-Romanian relations, and at the same time confirmed Romania's diplomatic achievements: it had opened diplomatic relations with West Germany, developed friendly ties with China and helped President Nixon establish relations with China, and somehow managed to refuse Moscow's leadership without getting into trouble (Jan. 17, 1972, p. 81). In an interview with a U.S. News correspondent, Ceausescu once again expressed his "neutral" views on world affairs.

U.S. News also highlighted Romania's specific accomplishments under Ceausescu's leadership: increased electric-energy output, cement production, tractor output, manufacture of motor vehicles and television sets (Jan. 17, 1972, p. 81).

In the 1970s, U.S. News regarded Ceausescu's domestic role as "superorthodoxy" that even Stalin would find hard to criticize. The magazine wrote that despite the

popularity of his independent foreign policy, Ceausescu himself remained an "enigma" in his own country. His pictures were everywhere and reports about his comings and goings were detailed. His "ideological crackdown" proved how tight his control was, and the Romanian people's standard of living still remained low with occasional shortages of food.

According to U.S. News, Ceausescu progressively changed Romania, though his personality cult and tough control over people were increased. In exchange for economic assistance and moral support, Ceausescu helped U.S. foreign policy in various regions throughout the 1970s.

The Decade of the 1980s

After Mikhail Gorbachev rose to power in the Soviet Union in 1985, he proposed "glasnost" or openness, and economic decentralization for the Soviet Union. He called on his communist allies to meet the challenge of swift economic and technological change through closer and more intense cooperation. Ceausescu's longstanding independence in foreign policy and military affairs appeared to be in opposition once again to this latest Soviet proposal. The three magazines had more coverage on Ceausescu's economic policies and violations of human rights in the 1980s compared with previous decades.

Time Magazine. In 1980, when Time covered the Middle East problem, the magazine once again confirmed Ceausescu's

key role in helping arrange Sadat's historic mission to Jerusalem in 1977. Later, Ceausescu was believed to have promoted a Begin-Sadat summit to help Egypt's relation with the rest of the Arab world (Aug. 25, 1980, p. 24).

When Ceausescu visited Bonn, West Germany, in 1984, Time reminded its readers of Ceausescu's independence, especially his defiance of Moscow by allowing his country to participate in the Los Angeles Olympics which were boycotted by the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact.

In late 1980s, Time changed its tack to criticize Ceausescu's domestic policies more heavily. The magazine wrote that Ceausescu adhered to a Stalinist-era central planning system which "actually plunged the country into economic darkness" (July 14, 1986, p. 33). In an article titled "Mother of Fatherland" (July 14, 1986), Time made public Elena Ceausescu's role. It was reported that Romania's first Lady increasingly appeared to be "the power behind the throne." Ceausescu's nepotism was targeted again.

When Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev visited Romania in 1987, Time reported:

Ceausescu's Rumania is the most rigorously centralized and thoroughly policed of the Soviet satellites. The aging and bafflingly eccentric Ceausescu, 69, has spurned Gorbachev's campaign of glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring), apparently ordering the state-controlled media to avoid all mention of such initiatives. Thus, while glasnost is approaching the status of a household word in the West, Rumanians have had little about Gorbachev's reforms (June 8, 1987, p. 36).

Time wrote that Ceausescu "waxed eloquent" on the

merits of the Romanian-Soviet friendship but pointedly failed to endorse reform. The magazine commented that Romania, once the breadbasket of the region, was today's most "glaring" economic failure of the East bloc (June 8, 1987, p. 36).

In another article "Where Glasnost is Still a Dirty Word," Time said that in Romania, Ceausescu's delusions of grandeur "bled" the country and made life a backward march. Time reported:

Under Nicolae Ceausescu, 70, Rumanians have long been subjected to one of the world's most repressive and eccentric regimes, a situation that is worsening as Ceausescu imposes ever greater privations on his people while indulging his red-eyed ambitions (Sept. 5, 1988, p. 31).

Time also said that Ceausescu fed his ego with the only officially sanctioned personality cult in the East bloc. Time reported a riot in the city of Brasov, which seemed to show that the Ceausescu's "crazy" leadership was losing its grip.

Time emphasized Ceausescu's role in Middle East peace talks and his participation in the Los Angeles Olympics, in defiance of Moscow. However, in the late 1980s, Time criticized Ceausescu's repressive regime, his powerful ego, his nepotism and his failed economic policy.

Newsweek Magazine. Newsweek also reported on the riot in Brasov, in which people shouted "Down with the dictator" (Dec. 28, 1987, p. 27). Like Time magazine, Newsweek condemned Ceausescu's violation of human rights. The magazine

said that under Ceausescu's "iron rule," dissenters faced "swift and ruthless" punishment (Dec. 23, 1985, p. 44). Ceausescu "clamped down" on all foreign publications and jammed radio broadcasts. "Book stores stock little else than the myriad works of Ceausescu and his wife" said Newsweek (Aug. 21, 1989, p. 37).

Newsweek reported that Ceausescu "spurned" any thought of glasnost (Dec. 28, 1987, p. 27). He made his country the "poorest" and "most repressive" member of the Soviet bloc.

Newsweek regarded Ceausescu as the "megalomaniac," "Mad Architect" of socialism (Aug. 21, 1989, p. 31). The magazine added that as Poland and Hungary moved toward democracy, Ceausescu turned his poor country inward. According to the reports, the Romanian people enjoyed little freedom. Anybody who complained or opposed Ceausescu would be sent to prison. Under Ceausescu's poor economic policies, people suffered from shortages of food and beggars appeared in the capital, Bucharest. Finally, Newsweek commented:

Many Romanians hope that poor health may soon bring a natural end to Ceausescu's tyranny (Aug. 21, 1989, p. 37).

In the 1980s, Newsweek negatively depicted Romania's poor economic condition, Ceausescu's "madness" and the people's hatred of Ceausescu. Coverage in the 1980s was more negative than that of previous decades.

U.S. News & World Report Magazine. U.S. News reported that Ceausescu showed no interest in the idea of economic decentralization, openness in the media, and "purging" of

old party hacks. He "shrugged off" Gorbachev's call for reform. Instead, he still practiced nepotism and planned to create some "agri-industrial complexes" (July 11, 1988, p. 9). U.S. News reported:

The idiosyncratic 70-year-old dictator aims to force Romania's 2 million ethnic Hungarians, and other minorities, to give up their cultural identities. Ceausescu has shuttered ethnically based institutions and compelled parents to give babies Romanian names. Since 1974, demolition crews have leveled 15,000 buildings in Bucharest, many of them historic structures, clearing the way for bulking new symbols of Stalinist grandeur (p. 9).

U.S. News reported further that Ceausescu was "stubbornly" pursuing his blueprint for a "Stalinist future" and violating human rights (Oct. 24, 1988, p. 48). More than 30,000 people fled Romania in 1986. The economic situation became worse, and food stores often had empty shelves.

When Ceausescu was elected to another five-year term as Communist Party Chief in 1989, U.S. News reported:

At 71, the diminutive dictator, who has a fondness for titles ranging from 'Genius,' 'God,' and 'Oaktree,' to 'Prince Charming,' and 'Titan' was in robust health, his grip on this beleaguered Balkan nation of 23 million people vise-tight after 24 years in power (Dec. 4, 1989, p. 35).

U.S. News reported further that with a network of more than 50 relatives, Ceausescu kept "would-be stragglers" in line through the feared securitate, or security police.

U.S. News regarded this action as Stalinism.

In the 1980s, U.S. News increased the degree of its negative reports about Ceausescu's resistance to Soviet-style reform, his personal ambition, self-pride and

Stalinist-type dictatorship.

Summary, 1965-1989

Overall, from the middle of the 1960s to the late 1980s, all three magazines showed a common trend in reporting on Ceausescu: positive during the 1960s, increasingly negative during the 1970s, and becoming extremely critical during the 1980s. Ceausescu was praised often for his foreign policy throughout the decades, but was judged increasingly negatively for his domestic political and economic policies, his personality cult, nepotism and dictatorship.

The bias in the three magazines seemed to parallel the changes in the changing U.S. attitudes toward the Soviet Union. In another words, political and ideological attitudes seemed to have had a role in news reporting. The most obvious bias techniques used by the magazines were colorful language, emotionally-loaded words, devices of rhetoric such as humor and satire, and mixing facts with opinions and judgment. For instance, terms like "a smiling dictator," "an ardent internationalist," "a communist boss" and "a great Stalinist" involve strong positive or negative attitudes; and terms like "communism" and "democracy" describe a political system as well as make an evaluation. Other obvious techniques used included subjectivity, inference, personal judgment and slanting of news reporting.

Hayakawa defined inference as "a statement about the unknown made on the basis of the known" (p. 41). In the magazines examined, any statements printed about Ceausescu's thoughts and feelings are examples of inference. For instance, Newsweek reported that Ceausescu "had himself named to replace aging Chivu Stoica as President" (Dec. 18, 1967, p. 61). Time wrote that "Ceausescu said bitterly" (May, 20, 1966, p. 47). U.S. News said that "Ceausescu enjoys a sort of grudging popularity among Rumanians who are not active Communists" (Aug. 4, 1969, p. 40).

According to Hayakawa, any statement about the future is an inference, since the future is unknown. Newsweek often predicted the future. For instance, before Ceausescu became president in 1960s, Newsweek made the prediction that "what did seem to be clear was that no matter how the cards might fall, Nicolae Ceausescu would almost surely be on top of the pack" (Dec. 18, 1967, p. 61). Later in the 1980s, when the people of Eastern Europe started to shout for democracy, Newsweek exposed Ceausescu's opposition to the change and predicted that "many Romanians hope that poor health may soon bring a natural end to Ceausescu's tyranny" (Aug. 21, 1989, p. 37). These predictions are very subjective and inferred from partial facts.

Hayakawa defined judgment as "all expressions of the writer's approval or disapproval for occurrences, persons, or objects" (p. 42). For example, the three magazines used words such as "independent-minded," "impressive," and

"daring," (approval), and "megalomaniac," "stubborn," and "madman" (disapproval), to describe Ceausescu.

Hayakawa defined slanting as "selecting details that are favorable or unfavorable to the subject being described" (p. 48). The three magazines all confirmed Ceausescu's independent role in world affairs. Favorable details were often selected to emphasize Ceausescu's defiance of Moscow. At the same time, all the magazines denounced Ceausescu's tight ideological control. Unfavorable details were selected to target Ceausescu's domestic policies.

When talking about U.S.-Romanian relations in the 1970s, U.S. News not only chronicled the development of relations between the two countries, but also identified specific accomplishments of Romania under Ceausescu's leadership that were favorable to U.S. interests.

The above techniques used by the three magazines weaken the objectivity of news reporting. Though there is no absolute objectivity, journalists have a responsibility to reduce inference and judgment, and avoid slanting as much as possible, and thus increase the reliability of their reporting.

Studies of Objectivity

Previous Studies of Time and Newsweek

In a 1965 study, journalism professor John Merrill found that Time magazine used six categories of bias to stereotype Presidents Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy. The six categories of bias were:

- a. Attribution bias. Example: Truman grinned.
- b. Adjective bias. Example: Eisenhower, a smiling, warm-hearted, sincere leader.
- c. Adverbial bias. Example: Truman said curtly.
- d. Outright opinion (equivalent to judgments or evaluation). Example: Seldom has a more unpopular man fired a more popular one.
- e. Contextual bias: bias in whole sentences, whole paragraphs, or the entire story.
- f. Photographic bias: What overall impression does the photograph give? How is the President presented in the picture--dignified, undignified; angry, happy; calm, nervous; etc.? What does the caption say/imply?

Merrill chose ten consecutive issues of Time for study from each of the three Presidential administrations: Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy. He counted the occurrences of bias in each of the six categories. The findings showed that Time had a strong negative bias toward Truman, a strong positive bias toward Eisenhower, and a relatively balanced reporting of Kennedy. Time's favorable attitude toward

Eisenhower and unfavorable attitude toward Truman illustrated slanting -- "over a period of time the details selected almost overwhelmingly added up to either a favorable or an unfavorable impression of these presidents (Severin & Tankard, p. 64).

Merrill pointed out that Time "presented the reader with highly loaded essays of a subjective type" (p. 570).

Fourteen years after the publication of Merrill's study, researchers Fedler, Meeske and Hall replicated it to examine Time's treatment of Presidents Johnson, Nixon (both before and after Watergate), Ford, and Carter. They found that Time continued to use most of the bias techniques reported by Merrill. The results showed that Time was "ambivalent toward Johnson, strongly favored Nixon before Watergate, reluctantly opposed him after Watergate, moderately favored Ford and was critical of Carter" (p. 359). The researchers pointed out that "Time continues to weave facts into semi-fictionalized language patterns that are designed to lead the reader's thinking" (p. 358).

In a study of the comparison between Time and Newsweek coverage of the Kennedy presidential campaigns, researchers Fedler, Smith and Meeske (1983) found that Time and Newsweek favored John F. Kennedy, and criticized Robert and Edward Kennedy. According to this study, both magazines used colorful phrasing. And, they were "surprisingly" similar with respect to the percentage of favorable, neutral and unfavorable statements about the Kennedys.

No current study of bias in U.S. News & World Report was located.

Other than formal research studies, the magazines have been evaluated by journalism professionals and the magazine themselves.

According to professional journalist Edwin Diamond, in news magazine competition, Time, Newsweek and U.S. News have recently given renewed attention to their "journalistic mission," and "as each of the three has improved in one or another respect, they all have grown to look and read a lot alike" (Diamond, 1988, p. 42). They share similar Western ideas and values as well as some reporting styles and techniques. This is especially obvious in the coverage of international news, particularly the portrayal of Ceausescu over the past three decades.

Time at its 60th anniversary in 1983 pointed out that it very consciously maintains its faith in American and Western values which are described as belief in democracy, however imperfect; in a strong and beneficial American role in the world, however difficult (p. 5). Time admitted:

We are still in the business of making judgments and we still do not claim objectivity, which from the start we considered impossible and undesirable (p. 5).

The way the three magazines presented the image of the former Romanian leader Ceausescu over the three past decades by Time, Newsweek and U.S. News, and during the recent Romanian Revolution, revealed the three magazines' common Western values and ideology.

The Conflict Between Ideological Constraints And Objectivity

Objectivity has been defined by scientists as well as journalists and other professionals on numerous occasions. Roger Poole pointed out: "Objectivity is, for all practical purposes, the totality of what is taken to be the case, believed to be the case, affirmed to be the case" (p. 44). One of the media's functions is to reveal the true picture of the world regardless of whether it is believed to be acceptable or not acceptable, good or bad. In a word, objectivity is regarded as the true picture of the world, an accurate representation of reality.

However, it is believed that political, social and economic systems directly affect the objectivity of communication. "News flow can not be unrelated to the power interests of the political or economic owner of the news media" (UNESCO, p. 17). And news content to some degree reflects the views of publishers, reporters and editors in that they each make choices about what to include, exclude, emphasize or ignore on the basis of political ideologies (Dates & Gandy, p. 595). The way of presenting news reflects particular ideological perspectives.

J. Herbert Altschull, in his book Agents of Power (1984), emphasized that the mass media are the agents of those who hold the economic, political, and social power in any system. Altschull described three models of the press: the market (or capitalist) model, the Marxist (or socialist)

model, and the advancing (or developing countries) model. In the market model, Altschull explained that the purposes of journalism are "to seek truth, to be socially responsible, to inform (or educate) in a non-political way, to serve the people impartially; to support capitalist doctrine, and to serve as watchdog of government" (p 284).

The United States with its capitalist system fits the market model of mass media. With the apparent purposes of pursuing truth and taking responsibility, all the media imbue their audiences with capitalist ideology. Therefore, in American news reporting, use of "communists" or "Stalinists" communicate negative meaning, even though there is no associated comment.

Altschull also reached the following conclusions:

- 1) In all press systems, the news media are agents of the people who exercise political and economic power.
- 2) The content of the news media always reflects the interests of those who finance the press.
- 3) All press systems are based on a belief in free expression, although free expression is defined in different ways.
- 4) All press systems endorse the doctrine of social responsibility, proclaim that they serve the needs and interests of the people, and state their willingness to provide access to the people.
- 5) In each of the three press models, the press of the other models is perceived to be deviant.
- 6) Schools of journalism transmit ideologies and values systems of the society in which they exist and inevitably assist the people in power in maintaining their control of the news media.
- 7) Press practices always differ from theory (p. 298).

In sum, Altschull concluded that all news media are

agents of power. Media transmit the latest information as well as the intrinsic values of a society. Thus, news content serves the functions and needs of a specific social system. News content which might jeopardize the socio-cultural structure and people's faith in it might be omitted or buried. Objectivity, in this sense, is relative and limited, and tailored to a specific system and culture.

Communication scholar Harold Lasswell (1948) noted three functions of the mass media: surveillance of the environment, the correlation of the parts of society in responding to the environment, and the transmission of the social heritage from one generation to the next. When talking about correlation, Lasswell, quoted by Severin and Tankard, wrote that correlation is accomplished by the editorial and propaganda content of the media.

The correlation function serves to enforce social norms and maintain consensus by exposing deviance, confers status by highlighting selected individuals... The correlation function can become dysfunctional when the media perpetuate stereotypes and enhance conformity, impede social change and innovation, minimize criticism, enforce majority views at the expense of minority opinions that are not aired, and preserve and extend power that may need to be checked (Severin & Tankard, p. 218).

The image of Ceausescu presented by Time, Newsweek and U.S. News over the past three decades typifies the dysfunctions of media correlation. Ceausescu had been stereotyped as a dictator since he took power in the 1960s, and his dictatorship was always linked with his "tight" domestic policy which was not in conformity with Western values. When reporting his international role, Ceausescu

was presented as the maverick of the Warsaw Pact. Because of the different values between the communists and capitalists, an editor can consciously or unconsciously adjust news content to fit the ideology that he evaluates as suitable or acceptable to the society. Thus, objectivity is ignored or shaped.

Sociologist Herbert J. Gans confirmed that "the news does not limit itself to reality judgments; it also contains values, or preference statements" (P. 40). He wrote that underlying the news in the United States is a picture of the nation, society and the world as the media think they ought to be.

Gans distinguished between two types of values, topical and enduring. In the enduring values, Gans mentioned ethnocentrism which is defined as valuing one's own nation above all others (most explicit in foreign news), and altruistic democracy which is defined as the belief that politics should be based on the public interest and service. Gans said "American news values its own nation above all others, even though it sometimes disparages blatant patriotism" (P. 40). The coverage of Ceausescu from 1965 to 1989 in the three news magazines, Time, Newsweek and U.S. News, revealed strong values of ethnocentrism and altruistic democracy. All three magazines had a similar tone in describing Ceausescu's domestic role as a Stalinist -- a symbol of cruel communism, denounced by Western countries. What the magazines suggested in their reporting was that democracy

represented by the Western countries is superior to dictatorship represented by the communist countries.

According to Gans, news presents values as well as ideology. Values involve ideology which is also a part of a value system. When ideology affects the presentation of news content, the objectivity of news is diminished.

Sociologist Gaye Tuchman wrote in her book, Making News (1978), that "the act of making news is the act of constructing reality itself rather than a picture of reality" (p. 12). That is, news is the social construction of reality instead of the pure presentation of reality.

Actually, there is no pure presentation of reality. When professionals select news, report news and finally edit and present news, various other elements beyond the facts have already been built up and mixed in the presentation of news. In this way, a new reality is constructed. Objectivity is marred by conscious or sometimes unconscious intentions. In writer Mark Dowie's words "The selection and editing process is designed to produce, along with news and entertainment, an aura of objectivity" (p. 34). And Gerbner commented: "all news is views" (p. 495). Therefore, objectivity can be defined as the political and social status quo in any given society (Poole, p. 45).

In a social context, people accept a certain ideology and inherit its values. In turn, ideology influences people's thinking and controls people's behavior. The presentation of thought is through language. Thus, language

influences objectivity.

General Semantics and Objectivity

"General semantics deals with relationship between language and reality and with the ways in which language influences our thinking" (Severin & Tankiard, p. 67).

Studying objectivity cannot avoid an examination of language.

One of the founders of general semantics, Wendell Johnson, in his book People in Quandaries (1964), wrote that language is static, limited and abstract.

In the real world, reality is changing, faster than words do. Language used to describe a changing reality is fairly fixed. If people fail to realize things change, they will adhere to the old impression of an event or a person with its out-of-date language. Objectivity, which is regarded as the true picture of the world, cannot be achieved by those unwilling or unable to recognize that change has taken place.

Sometimes, people are not only slow to understand changing reality, but also are limited by their vocabulary. They have more difficulties in describing things they are unfamiliar with. Therefore, they would like to invent expressions which can not really represent the reality. Thus objectivity is distorted.

The use of language involves abstraction at different levels. Abstraction is defined as "a process of selecting

some details and leaving out other details" (Severin & Tankard, p. 55). Abstraction is obvious in news content which involves strong propaganda themes. Unfavorable details could be added or repeated to build up a negative image of a person. Favorable details could be omitted in order to ignore the positive aspects of a person. In addition, vague and ambiguous terms are used when a situation cannot be identified immediately, and unrelated things can be joined for emphasis. Moreover, stereotyping similar personalities is very common in news content. For instance, when describing communist leaders, the Western media often stereotype those who practice "iron control" as Stalinists to include dictators such as East Germany's Erich Honecker, Bulgaria's Todor Zhivkov, and Romania's Ceausescu.

Another founder of general semantics, S.I. Hayakawa described the devices of affective communication in his book Language in Thought and Action (1964). The devices include metaphor, simile, allusion, irony, pathos and humor.

Hayakawa said:

Metaphors are not 'ornaments of discourse;' they are direct expressions of evaluations and are bound to occur whenever we have strong feelings to express" (p. 122).

The simile is something of a compromise stage between the direct, unreflecting expression of feeling and the report (p. 123).

Slang often contains metaphor and simile: "Ceausescu, Gaullism, Bucharest style," "as pungently as the garlic in a mititei," "Moscow wanted an earlier date," "Rumania's Ceausescu, Ominous parallels," "Ceausescu with Mao in

Peking: Soviet patience has worn dangerously thin," "Mr. Ceausescu defies Moscow's lead, but runs a rigid Red state." All these terms appeared in photographic captions from the 1960s to 1980s in Time, Newsweek and U.S. News. They revealed reporters' attitudes toward Ceausescu or the situation.

Allusion is a kind of implied simile (Hayakawa, p. 125). In news coverage, editorials often involve allusion by relating historical events or persons to present ones. The former Romanian leader Ceausescu had been compared to De Gaulle and Stalin in international and domestic affairs.

Irony, pathos and humor are used in news content to express the writers' obvious or implied attitudes. They are also reflected in photographs which are a form of silent language. A funny, angry and ugly looking Ceausescu was purposely depicted by Time, Newsweek and U.S. News to show his "personality cult" and "ominous parallels." Therefore, "The uncanny ability of photography to represent reality -- to depict, apparently without human intervention, an entire world of referents" becomes impossible (Schiller, p. 92).

In mass communication, the basic symbolic act is the report of what has been seen, heard, or felt (Hayakawa, p. 38). According to Hayakawa, reports should be capable of verification, and exclude, as far as possible, inferences and judgments. Being verifiable, the reports can be checked out. Being exclusive, the reports must be accurate. The language of reports should match or represent reality as

accurately as possible, as everyday life requires that "we state things in such a way that everybody will be able to understand and agree with our formulation" (Hayakawa, p. 40).

Summary

In the news flow, both ideology and language control human behavior and influence objective reporting. The news magazines, Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News, all showed their bias in some national and international news coverage over the past decades. The portrayal of the former Romanian leader Ceausescu was an example of bias. It appears that objectivity in the sense of presenting a true picture of the world sounds very ideal but is also difficult to achieve.

However, pursuing the ideal of objectivity is essential in journalism. Bennett wrote in the prospectus for his HERALD that journalists should endeavor to record facts on every public and proper subject, stripped of verbiage and coloring. One of the distinctions between fiction and journalism is that fiction can exaggerate facts, but the press is not supposed to glamorize or distort facts.

Journalist Thomas Griffith pointed out in Newsweek that "the real job of the news magazine is to help the reader to make sense out of his times" (p. 52). This means that one of the news magazines' functions is to analyze and summarize the reporting that newspapers do by providing something beyond brief instantaneous reports of events. This requires

a sense of timing, broad knowledge, insight, and ability to analyze. But by no means should journalists distort reality by adding or omitting facts, making incorrect inferences, or presenting biased impressions of an event or a person.

Journalists have the moral obligation to act responsibly in order to prevent the abuses of objective reporting. To do so, it is necessary to report the truth about the fact, to make the distinction between fact and opinion, to identify news sources as much as possible, and to provide the wholeness of the truth and the fairness of the information (Leigh, p. 22).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

General

This is a case study using content analysis. The focus is on news magazine coverage of the overthrow of the Romanian government which took place in December 1989. The content of interest is the news coverage of the event, especially the image of the former Romanian President, Nicolae Ceausescu, presented by Time, Newsweek and U.S. News & World Report.

These three magazines were chosen because of their prestige and their leading roles in national politics. Content analysis is an efficient method of analyzing media content. It also "infers underlying intent, motivation, orientation, and effects, either implicit or manifest" (Hsia, p. 318). Krippendorff defined content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context" (p. 21).

Content analysis based on a case study can provide a great many observations, and develops ideas and insights concerning the event. By analyzing media content, both professionals and readers are able to perceive what is called "objectivity" of news and how the objectivity is

often distorted with deliberate thoughts, semantic errors and colorful or ambiguous language.

Magazine Profiles

Time Magazine

Time was founded in 1923. It is the oldest and largest in terms of content of the three magazines in this study. With a circulation of 4.4 million (1989), Time "defines the newsmagazine's form and has become the most assertive of the newsweeklies" (Diamond, p. 42). Time's founders, Henry Luce and Briton Hadden, said that Time was aimed to serve the modern necessity of keeping people well informed. Time's goal is to "better serve the needs of busy, curious, intelligent readers" (Time, 1988, p. 4). Time's routine columns include Critic's Voices, World, Nation, Milestones, Science, Religion, Cinema, Books, Medicine, Theater, Music, Sports, People and Essay. With various changes since its founding, Time has moved toward "a softer, more 'featurized' mix of material -- Muller Lite, in the inevitable gibe" (Diamond, 1988, p. 42).

Newsweek Magazine

Newsweek was founded in 1933, ten years later than Time. With a circulation of 3.3 million (1989), Newsweek has become the second largest news magazines of its kind in the United States. For many years, Newsweek has been trying to change its image of being an imitation of Time. "We

aimed for a grittier Newsweek, with a hard-edged, newsy look," said Newsweek art director Roger Black (Diamond, 1985, p. 20). Newsweek editor-in-chief Richard Smith wanted to create "impact journalism" and get people "thinking about and talking about what's in the magazine," (Diamond, 1987, p. 20). Newsweek's routine columns include National Affairs, International, Business, Society, The Arts, Lifestyle and Departments which include Periscope, Letters, Perspectives, Newsmakers. Bert Chapman wrote that "Newsweek began to develop from a somewhat dowdy tag-along to a sharp, aggressive publication under Elliott's direction" (Chapman, p. 90).

David Shaw said that Time and Newsweek are fierce rivals. In his article entitled "Fierce Rivals: Newsweek Versus Time," Shaw pointed out:

Time and Newsweek compete fiercely every week in every newsmaking area in the world -- world affairs, politics, business, sports, religion, education, science, medicine, art and entertainment... But competition for cover stories and newsstand sales is an intense weekly battle (p. 12).

U.S. News & World Report Magazine

U.S. News & World Report was founded in 1933, the same year as Newsweek. With a circulation of 2.3 million (1989), U.S. News has become the third largest news magazine in the United States. Its editorial director, Harold Evans, wrote "U.S. News will be cool. It will have an ordered, conservative look" (Diamond, 1985, P. 20). U.S. News' sections include Currents (mainly about controversial issues or

government issues, commentaries and the latest trends,) U.S. News, World Report, Business, Horizons, News You Can Use, and Editorial, which is close to Newsweek organization and style. U.S. News picks up on many of the same featurized themes as the other two newsweeklies, but it emphasizes service features and personal-finance pages--"News You Can Use" (Diamond, 1988, p. 43). Diamond also noted:

At U.S. News, editor Rosenblatt wants to encourage better writing, more thoughtful analysis, and more dramatic photography. At Time, the senior writers may be allowed to roam more widely and not be gathered to any single department. At Newsweek, meanwhile, Richard Smith says he wants to let the voices of his writers "shine through. I find unpredictability a healthy and satisfying thing" (p. 43).

Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

This study was intended to answer these questions for the three magazines' news coverage of the Romanian revolution in December 1989:

1. Were there any differences in the characteristics of the news coverage of the Romanian Revolution among the three magazines?
2. Did the news stories in the magazines indicate political bias?
3. What stereotyped images of Ceausescu were presented by Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report?
4. Did the stories involve subjective, judgmental or opinionated reporting? If so, what techniques were used to present the information?

It was generally hypothesized that Time, Newsweek, and

U.S. News & World Report look and read alike, and that they had similar unfavorable attitudes toward Ceausescu because Romania's anti-government demonstrations fit well with the anti-communist ideology of the United States.

Therefore, four specific null hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no difference in the extent or nature of news coverage of the Romanian anti-government protest among Time, Newsweek and U.S. News.
2. There is no difference in citing sources (identified versus unidentified) of news among the three magazines.
3. All three magazines have equivalent frequencies of instances of bias.
4. There is no relationship between type of bias and magazine.

Definition of Terms

1) "Extent of News Coverage" was defined as any information about Romania appearing in Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News, either in stand-alone articles or summaries and photographs.

2) "Sources" was defined as persons and media that provided the information contained in the news stories. Sources included identified sources and unidentified sources.

3) "Bias" was defined as descriptive expressions which may stimulate or affect people's perceptions away from neutrality or create favorable or unfavorable attitudes.

Bias includes positive (favorable meaning) and the negative (unfavorable meaning). In this study, bias was examined with respect to Ceausescu, not to other persons or the whole event.

4) "Categories of Bias" referred to the six categories of bias developed by Merrill: attribution bias, adjective bias, adverbial bias, outright opinion, contextual bias and photographic bias.

Categories were defined according to Fedler's study (1979). Isolated words and phrases were classified as examples of adverbial, adjectival or attribution bias. Entire sentences which were deemed biased were classified as "outright opinion" of the author, and whole paragraphs that contained positive or negative impression were classified as "contextual bias." Photographs regardless of their attached captions were judged as positive or negative in the category of photograph bias. If the photograph was positive, but the caption was negative, the photograph was still judged as positive, and the caption was judged as negative in the category of outright opinion bias. The reason for separating a photograph from its caption was because a photograph usually gives people the more direct positive or negative impression of a portrayed image.

5) "Magazine" was the three magazines Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News studied.

Sampling

As the Romanian revolution was brief, Time, Newsweek and U.S. News had only limited continuous coverage and that was focused in the issues published in January 1990. Therefore, all 15 issues of the three magazines published during this period were examined, without any sampling. A total of 18 items were examined. The items included summaries, photographs, stand-alone articles, interviews and general articles on Eastern Europe. Readers' letters to the magazine editors were excluded. All these items were related to Ceausescu's activities until his death. Four other articles (two in Newsweek, two in Time) published in February were excluded from the sampling because they were not continuous with the issues published in January, and they were not reports about the Romanian revolution but the writers' views about the death of Ceausescu and Romanian problems after his death.

Unit of Analysis

Each individual story including its headline, photograph and caption was the basic unit of analysis.

Categories of Analysis

This study follows the example of two former studies done by Merrill (1965), Fedler, Meeske and Hall (1979).

Merril set up six categories of media bias: 1) attribution bias, 2) adjective bias, 3) adverbial bias,

4) contextual bias, 5) out-right opinion, and 6) photographic bias. Instances of bias were noted either as positive (favorable) or as negative (unfavorable). To be specific, the six categories of bias are explained as follows:

Attribution Bias

Attribution bias is bias which originates with the magazine's means of attributing information to a source. The bias is contained in the verb. For instance, the attribution verb "said" is neutral, but "shouted" is negative as it involves emotion. "Smiled" is counted as a "favorable" term, for it is positively affective (Merril, p. 564). In addition, attribution bias also includes verbs that refer to actions depicted as favorable or unfavorable.

Adjective Bias

Adjective bias is a type of bias which tries to form an impression of the person described; "this is accomplished by using adjectives, favorable or unfavorable, in connection with the person" (Merril, p. 564). For instance, "He is confident of his power" (favorable) and "An ugly duckling auto, the Trabi" (unfavorable). These expressions are subjective rather than objective. Neutral terms, like "the red flower," merely describing a characteristic of something.

Adverbial Bias

Adverbial bias is determined by qualifiers or magnifiers -- adverbs, which build up a favorable or unfavorable impressions in the reader's mind. They always reinforce the verb or tell "how" or "why" a person said or did something. For example, "He speaks firmly" (favorable), and "His eyes flicked in terror from side to side" (unfavorable).

Outright Opinion

"The outright opinion is the most blatant and obvious type of bias or subjectivity in news writing" (Merrill, p. 565). The expression of opinion by the publication might be called "presenting a judgment" (Hayakawa, p. 42). Hayakawa defined "judgments" as "all expressions of the writer's approval or disapproval of the occurrences, persons, or objects he is describing" (p. 42). For instance, "The violence assumed its own macabre rhythms" would be an unfavorable judgment.

Contextual Bias

Contextual bias is bias in whole sentences or paragraphs. The writer may have intended to present the person reported on in a favorable or an unfavorable light by the overall meaning, regardless of specific words and phrases. For example, "As tyrants go, Ceausescu was surely crueler, more methodical and more blood-soaked than Noriega, who

often came off as a tinpot dictator."

Photographic Bias

Photographic bias is determined by how people were presented in photographs --- dignified, undignified, angry, happy, calm, nervous, etc.

This study counted all positive and negative instances of bias, ignoring all neutral terms.

The Quantification System

Items for analysis were counted and listed by magazine. Items of bias were listed under the different categories of bias whether the items were positive or negative with respect to Ceausescu. The data collected were nominal data or frequency count.

Coding

Two coders were used: the author and Dr. Mike Xu, who graduated from Oklahoma State University. They worked independently, each reading every article that Time, Newsweek and U.S. News published about the Romanian revolution and recorded instances of apparent bias according to the six categories of bias, and whether the items were positive or negative. When there were doubts about ambiguous statements, or disagreements, they discussed the articles in question and arrived at a common agreement.

In order to check the procedures and estimate

intercoder reliability, a pre-test was conducted that analyzed news stories published in Time, Newsweek and U.S. News about former Panamanian leader Manuel Noriega. An inter-coder reliability test was conducted.

Statistical Analysis

As data collected were nominal, chi-square analysis was used to examine content differences and relationships in Time, Newsweek and U.S. News & World Report. The 95 percent level of confidence was used to determine which differences were statistically significant.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Intercoder Reliability

For the purpose of checking coders' reliability in counting and categorizing bias, an intercoder reliability test was conducted between the two coders. Using the formula where $R = 2M / (N1 + N2)$ and M is the number of coding decisions on which the two coders agree, and N1 and N2 represent the total decisions made by coder one and coder two respectively, the intercoder reliability coefficient (R) is 0.99. On a scale of 0 to 1.0, where 1.0 is perfect reliability or agreement, 0.99 indicates a high reliability between coder decisions.

Findings

Extent of Coverage

The extent of coverage includes the number of articles and photographs concerning the Romanian revolution in the three magazines. Overall, Time published eight articles and 24 photographs, Newsweek had seven articles and 23 photographs, and U.S. News published three articles with seven photographs in the issues published in January 1990. See

Table I. Each magazine published five issues that month.

TABLE I
 EXTENT OF COVERAGE OF THE ROMANIAN REVOLUTION
 IN TIME, NEWSWEEK, AND U.S. NEWS,
 JANUARY 1990

MAGAZINES				
ITEMS	TIME	NEWSWEEK	U.S. NEWS	TOTAL
No. of Articles	8	7	3	18
No. of Photos	24	23	7	54
Total	32	30	10	72

Complex Chi Square Statistic = 0.17
 Table Chi Square ($p < .05$, $df = 2$) = 6.0

The eight stories and 24 photographs in Time cover 21 pages. Length of the stories varied from three half-to-full page columns each to 19 columns each. The cover story started with the first issue of January 1, 1990, and extensive coverage was included in the second issue on January 8. Many of the photographs were two columns wide by four or six inches deep. There was one photograph covering four columns that was seven inches deep. Two photographs occupied a whole page each, and one was on the cover page of the second

issue.

Newsweek's seven stories and 23 photographs occupied 16 pages. The stories varied from three columns each to 16 columns each. The cover story started with the first issue of January 1, 1990. Extensive coverage was concentrated in the second issue. Many photographs were about two columns wide by four inches deep. The largest photograph occupied five columns and was nine inches deep. One photograph appeared on the cover page of the second issue.

U.S. News started reporting the Romanian revolution with the month's second issue of January 8, 1990, which was the only issue that covered Romania that month. The coverage consisted of three articles and seven photographs, encompassing eight pages of that issue. The stories varied from four columns to 11 columns. There were some one-and-a-half column-wide by two-inches deep photographs, and some photographs about three columns wide by five inches deep. The largest photograph occupied four columns and was 9.5 inches deep.

In terms of number of articles and pictures, Time and Newsweek are very close to each other, each with a quantity three times that of U.S. News. Both Time and Newsweek began reporting the Romanian revolution one issue earlier than U.S. News, and used more issues to cover the revolution than did U.S. News.

As far as the number of columns and photographs is concerned, Time and Newsweek took the lead with 47 (Time)

and 37 (Newsweek) half to full page columns, and 24 (Time) and 23 (Newsweek) photographs, compared with U.S. News' 17 columns and seven photographs. Both had a photograph on Romania on an issue's cover page, while U.S. News did not.

The complex chi-square analysis of the extent of coverage among Time, Newsweek and U.S. News, however, shows that the difference in terms of the number of articles and photograph is not significant at the .05 percent level of confidence. This means that the difference might have been due to chance. However, the frequency counts are low, and may render the chi-square test useless.

Sources of Information in Articles

Sources of information in articles were divided into identified sources and unidentified sources. Time quoted a total of 27 identified sources and 14 unidentified sources. Newsweek quoted 40 identified sources and 21 unidentified sources. And U.S. News had only 10 identified sources and three unidentified sources. See Table II.

TABLE II

CATEGORIES OF SOURCES IDENTIFICATION BY MAGAZINE

MAGAZINES				
SOURCE IDENTIFICATION	TIME	NEWSWEEK	U.S. NEWS	TOTAL
Identified	27	40	10	77
Unidentified	14	21	3	38
Total	41	61	13	115

Complex Chi Square Statistic = .667
 Table Chi Square ($p < .05$, $df = 2$) = 6

The complex chi-square analysis of identified and unidentified sources used by Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News indicates that there is no significant difference at the .05 percent level of confidence among the three magazines. The difference might have been due to chance. However, the frequency counts are low, and may render the chi-square test useless.

The table shows that Time and Newsweek had the same proportion of identified sources. While U.S. News' proportion was greater, it had fewer instances overall.

Bias

There were six categories of bias, and each was divided into positive and negative bias. Overall, Time had 86 occurrences of bias, Newsweek had 69, and U.S. News had 24. See Table III.

TABLE III
TOTAL OCCURRENCES OF BIAS BY MAGAZINE

MAGAZINES				
	TIME	NEWSWEEK	U.S. NEWS	TOTAL
OCCURRENCES OF BIAS	86	69	24	179

Simple Chi Square Statistic = 34.4
Table Chi Square (p < .001, df = 2) = 13.8

The simple chi-square analysis of the total occurrences of bias among Time, Newsweek and U.S. News shows there is a significant difference at the .001 percent level of confidence, indicating a genuine difference among total instances of bias. Time had the greatest number of instances of bias, and U.S. News had the fewest.

Concerning occurrences of positive bias, Time had

14, Newsweek had nine, and U.S. News had none. See Table IV.

TABLE IV
OCCURRENCES OF POSITIVE BIAS BY MAGAZINE

	MAGAZINE			TOTAL
	TIME	NEWSWEEK	U.S. NEWS	
OCCURRENCES OF POSITIVE BIAS	14	9	0	23

Simple Chi Square Statistic = 13.12
Table Chi Square ($p < .001$, $df = 2$) = 13.8

The simple chi-square analysis of the occurrences of positive bias among the three magazines indicates that there is a significant difference at the .001 percent level of confidence. Again, Time had the greatest number of instances of positive bias while U.S. News had the fewest.

Other 72 occurrences of negative bias were found in Time, 60 in Newsweek, and 24 in U.S. News. See Table V.

TABLE V
OCCURRENCES OF NEGATIVE BIAS BY MAGAZINE

MAGAZINE				
	TIME	NEWSWEEK	U.S. NEWS	TOTAL
OCCURRENCES OF NEGATIVE BIAS	72	60	24	156

Simple Chi Square Statistic = 23.99
Table Chi Square (p < .001, df = 2) = 13.8

The simple chi-square analysis of the occurrences of negative bias among the three magazines shows that there is a significant difference at the .001 percent level of confidence. Once again, Time had the greatest number of instances of negative bias while U.S. News had the fewest.

Since, however, the number of articles varied among the three magazines, further analysis was done to examine differences based on instances of bias per article. The findings were somewhat different. Time did not maintain its number one position in terms of bias in all cases, though it had more articles and photographs than did Newsweek and U.S. News. The instances of bias per article are presented in Tables VI.

TABLE VI
 INSTANCES OF BIAS PER ARTICLE
 BY MAGAZINE

MAGAZINE				
INSTANCES OF BIAS				
PER ARTICLE	TIME	NEWSWEEK	U.S. NEWS	TOTAL
POSITIVE	.44	.3	0	.74
NEGATIVE	2.25	2	2.4	6.65
OVERALL	2.69	2.3	2.4	7.39

For overall occurrences of bias, Time had the greatest number among the three magazines, and U.S. News had the fewest. But the examination of instances of bias per article indicated that U.S. News had a higher rate (2.40) than Newsweek (2.30), while Time still maintained the highest level (2.69). See Table VI.

Concerning positive bias, it was found that Time had the greatest incidence, and U.S. News had the fewest. Considering instances of negative bias, Time ranked first, Newsweek second, and U.S. News third. However, the instances of negative bias per article indicated that U.S.

News ranked first with more instances of bias per article (2.40) than Time (2.25) or Newsweek (2.00). See Table VI.

Relationship Between Type of Bias
and Magazine

Table VII depicts the relationship between magazines and categories of bias.

TABLE VII
OCCURRENCES OF SIX CATEGORIES OF BIAS
BY MAGAZINES

MAGAZINES				
CATEGORIES OF BIAS	TIME	NEWSWEEK	U.S. NEWS	TOTAL
ATTRIBUTION	28	27	8	63
ADJECTIVE	24	15	7	46
ADVERBIAL	2	3	2	7
OUTRIGHT OPINION	10	9	3	22
CONTEXTUAL	17	12	4	33
PHOTO	5	3	0	8
TOTAL	86	69	24	179

Complex Chi Square Statistic = 4.598
Table Chi Square (p < .05, df = 10) = 18.3

The complex chi-square analysis of the relationship between type of bias and magazine shows no significant difference at the .05 percent level of confidence. The difference might have been due to chance. However, the frequency counts are low, and may render the chi-square test useless.

Analysis of Content

Aside from the quantitative findings and analysis, there are many other observations which are relevant and which complement the empirical findings.

Nature of Coverage

The findings show that there is no statistical difference in the extent of coverage of the Romanian revolution among the three magazines. By chance, Time had one more story and photograph than did Newsweek. And, U.S. News had one third the content of Time or Newsweek. The failure to find significant differences in the extent of coverage among the three magazines is possibly due to the low frequency counts.

However, there were similarities and differences among the reporting styles. All three magazines reported on the East European democratic movements which resulted in the collapse of communism, and which affected or encouraged Romania's revolution. All three magazines told the story of the fight that ranged from Timisoara to the capital of

Bucharest between the anti-government force (protesters and soldiers) and Ceausescu's loyal securitate. But Time and Newsweek had more overall coverage than U.S. News. None of the magazines was optimistic about Romania's short-term future because of the country's many political and economic problems.

Generally, Time and Newsweek emphasized people more in their reports. There was more detailed information about the Romanian people's attitudes toward the protest and their reasons for hating Ceausescu. And, the two magazines had more to say about Ceausescu himself, and both had a special report on Ceausescu's antiabortion measures. U.S. News reported the situation with fewer interviews and descriptions of people and their attitudes. In addition, both Time and Newsweek covered world reactions to the changes in Romania, which was missing in U.S. News coverage.

Both Time and Newsweek published the dialogue between the prosecutor and Ceausescu and his wife Elena Ceausescu at the secret trial which sentenced them to death.

Time emphasized the reactions of Ceausescu toward questions dealing with starving people, Ceausescu's contributions to the country, and his personal Swiss bank accounts. The impression given by the magazine was that Ceausescu was incorrigibly obstinate and the final sentence was sudden, firm and partially just. Time gave the basic facts about the trial without any comment. It let readers come to their own conclusions.

Newsweek also emphasized the questions and answers about Ceausescu's Swiss bank accounts and the starving Romanian people. More than that, Newsweek mentioned Ceausescu's orders to shoot protesters and emphasized Ceausescu's alleged mental illness. At the end of the dialogue, Newsweek commented "it was clear that the court had no intention of letting the Ceausescus off lightly," making an editorial conclusion for its readers.

Newsweek also reported on its interview with Ceausescu conducted in August 1989, in which Ceausescu made positive comments about Stalin.

Both Time and Newsweek expressed regrets about the secret trial, but targeted the cruel action of Ceausescu's securitate. U.S. News had an exclusive interview with a former Ceausescu aide who provided insight into Ceausescu's fall and Romania's future.

With respect to photographs, U.S. News did not publish any personal portraits, including Ceausescu. Nor did it have any photographs of numerous dead or wounded persons. All its photographs were about the fighting, or of some calm, serious and sad-looking people. Newsweek had Ceausescu's bloody body pictured on the cover page, and Time published it inside. Both magazines had photographs of Ceausescu and his wife in court as well as photographs of people rejoicing over their new political freedom. Photographs of the fighting and of the dead were published in Newsweek and Time.

Bias

Measuring bias is another way to check the accuracy and objectivity of news stories. The findings show that the three magazines had significant differences in overall instances of bias without considering individual categories of bias. Though differences among the categories of bias are not related to particular magazines, the findings still indicate differences in extent and type of bias, including positive or negative bias, toward Ceausescu. Bias about Ceausescu was categorized as attribution bias, adjective bias, adverbial bias, outright opinion, contextual bias and photographic bias.

Attribution Bias

The attribution verb is the key to a sentence. It sets the tone and dominates the meaning, favorable or unfavorable, toward a person or an event. Results showed that Time and Newsweek contained almost the same amount of bias in this category. The majority of the attribution verbs used by Time, Newsweek and U.S. News were negative.

Examples of negative attribution verbs used by Time to describe Ceausescu included: "falls," "fled," "vanished," "ruined," "vow," "astonished," "shocked," "froze," "force," "darted," "impoverished," "raged," "wrapped," "wasted," and "darken the future," etc.

Examples of negative attribution verbs used by Newsweek to describe Ceausescu included: "drowned out,"

"fled," "purged," "dispatched," "attempted," "pretend," "blamed," "staring," "condemned," "disappeared," "stashed," "provoked," "destroy," "forbade," and "forced," etc.

U.S. News reported that Ceausescu "lavished," "thwarted," "clung," "collapsed," "lost," "trembled," "fled," "ignored" etc.

Examples judged to be positive attribution include "Ceausescu cheered," "praised," "enforced" and "he dared" (in Time); and "claimed", "denied," and "replied" (in Newsweek). No instance of positive attribution was found in articles about Ceausescu in U.S. News.

The colorful and varied words in all the statements may have revealed the editors' or writers' negative attitudes toward Ceausescu. The impression given by the three magazines is that the former Romanian President fell standing virtually alone against the majority, after a fierce fight.

Adjective Bias

Adjectives used in news reporting make the descriptions of people, places and events more colorful. If the description is applied to a person, prejudice for or against that person may be apparent. Newsweek and U.S. News used all negative terms to describe Ceausescu. Time had only a few positive terms like "he's confident of his power," etc. However, there were more negative descriptions than positive. Based on all the descriptive adjectives, the image of the former Romanian President Ceausescu appeared to be as

follows:

Time. Ceausescu was a hard-liner, an old communist elite, an ugly-duckling auto, a tyrant, a paranoid dictator, a megalomaniacal leader, an extravagant cultist, a steel Stalinist, a corrupt dictator, an executed dictator, a fallen-dictator and an ashen-faced dictator. The description of Ceausescu's personality included his extraordinary cruelty, and his go-it-alone stubbornness. He was described also as being more cruel, more methodical and more blood-soaked than Manuel Noriega, the former Panamanian leader. His reign was ironfisted, his law was odious, his purges were paranoid, but his final hours were ignominious.

Newsweek. Ceausescu was a hard-liner. He was cruel, inhuman, oppressive and repressive, bizarre, and self-styled. Reports of television coverage of the secret trial showed the Ceausescus to be the picture of pained disbelief, indignant at the ridiculousness of their predicament. Ceausescu was defiant to the end.

U.S. News. Ceausescu was a Stalinist, a despotic ruler and a killer. He was bloodthirsty, bizarre, and irrational. He had eerie fantasies.

All three magazines built an impression that the former Romanian President was hateful, people despised him, and his regime needed to be overthrown regardless of his earlier positive overtures toward the West. Among the three magazines, Time more often described him as a "dictator" than

did the other two magazines.

Adverbial Bias

"Adverbs can be used to create an impression in the reader's mind, often in connection with attribution" (Fedler, Meeske & Hall, p. 357). Overall, there were few instances of adverb bias applied to Ceausescu in the three magazines. A few negative adverbs were used for emphasis. For example, Ceausescu "embarked on a stupefyingly large monument to himself" (in Newsweek); Ceausescu treated his people "with extraordinary cruelty" (in Time); and "the dictator systematically thwarted the will of the Romanian people" (in U.S. News).

Outright Opinion Bias

Outright opinion bias expresses subjective judgment of the writer or editor. The study found that all three magazines had published subjective opinions to promote Ceausescu's image. Outright opinion bias was seen in the following examples in the three magazines.

Time. An ugly-duckling auto, the Trabi, gets a moment of glory (Jan 1, 1990, p. 3).

The despot at a Communist Party congress: his shadow darkens the future (Jan 1, 1990, p. 34).

In the end, all dictators govern by fear (Jan. 1, 1990, p. 34).

He tolerated neither dissent among citizens nor a difference of opinion inside the party (Jan. 1, 1990, p. 37).

His go-it-alone stubbornness in foreign policy was only one more sign of his determination to depend on no power but his own. As it turned out, that was not enough (Jan. 1, 1990, p. 37).

Yet the ironic fact is that the abortion restrictions inadvertently - and literally - sowed the seeds that helped topple Ceausescu's regime 23 years later (Jan. 29, 1990, p. 36).

Newsweek. In a bold uprising, angry Romanians push out the last of the Warsaw Pact's hard-line rulers (Jan. 1, 1990, p. 28).

Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu, who liked to be referred to as "The Danube of Thought" and "The Genius of the Carpathians," could only manage a bewildered, vacant stare (Jan. 1, 1990, p. 28).

Nicolae Ceausescu loved nothing better than a monument to himself (Jan. 22, 1990, p. 35).

U.S. News. DRACULA EXECUTED was how one London tabloid reported the death of Nicolae Ceausescu last week. Never mind that "Dracula" was once the recipient of an honorary knighthood, bestowed upon him by Queen Elizabeth II (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 12).

What an irony that its independence proved to be nothing more than a symptom of its leader's megalomania, a disease finally cured by a firing squad's bullet, while in hardest-of-the-hard-line East Germany the Berlin Wall fell without a shot (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 12).

The new regulations overthrew some of Ceausescu's most hated policies, including a ban on contraception and his drive to urbanize the population (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 38).

For most Romanians, Ceausescu is synonymous with Communism. They want no part of it (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 38).

The technique used in the outright opinion bias is to link unrelated historical figures, give judgmental descriptions and present semantic distortion.

Positive outright opinions included: "He [Ceausescu] had been so confident of his power..." (in Time), which may

show a positive attitude toward the Ceausescu's personality. "It was clear that the court had no intention of letting the Ceausescus off lightly" (in Newsweek), which indicated some sympathy toward the Ceausescus because of the secret trial. "Paradoxically, some economists say Ceausescu's policies could now work to Romania's advantage" to free itself of debt (in Newsweek), which presented a different opinion.

Contextual Bias

Contextual bias has to do with overall meaning in whole sentences and paragraphs. Statements such as those below are examples of items in this category. Time magazine reported:

A dictator falls when fear changes sides, when individuals coalesce into crowds and defy him. Emboldened by the discovery that they are not alone, they take to the streets and squares to protest, and they learn -- through sometimes at great cost -- no tyrant can kill or arrest an entire nation. At that point, despots lose the special combination of visible authority and legitimacy that the Chinese call "the mandate of heaven (Jan. 1, 1990, p. 34).

This was a comment on a dictator. The author presented his own opinions which implied that Ceausescu was such a dictator who was destined to fall.

If the estimates of thousands killed turn out to be correct, Ceausescu's name will be deliberately linked to one of the largest government-inflicted massacres since World War II (Jan. 1, 1990, p. 34).

This assumption sounds like a fact that Ceausescu was the most terrible killer since the Second World War.

As the crescendo of toppling communist dominoes shook Eastern Europe, Ceausescu, 71, vowed that reform would come to Romania "when pears grow on poplar trees." He

ignored warnings from Gorbachev that he should begin easing up before it was too late to avoid violence. After 24 years of ruling by fear, Ceausescu rejected the idea of change (Jan. 1, 1990, p. 36).

This is typical of opinion mixed with fact. How did the author know that Ceausescu had ruled the country with fear for 24 years? Where did Ceausescu's quotation come from and in what context did he say so?

Another Ceausescu national policy was negatively presented:

The antiabortion measures imposed by Nicolae Ceausescu in the mid-1960s are typically viewed as an example of his repressive polities toward women. Yet, the ironic fact is the abortion restrictions sowed the seeds that helped topple Ceausescu's regime 23 years later (Jan. 29, 1990, p. 36).

Moreover, Ceausescu's "go-it-alone stubbornness in foreign policy was only one more sign of his determination to depend on no power but his own." The bias was in characterizing Ceausescu as being stubborn in foreign policy, a subjective judgment, without consideration as to subject, time and circumstances.

Time also compared Ceausescu with Panama's General Manuel Noriega who was toppled by U.S. invasion. Time reported:

As tyrants go, Ceausescu was surely crueler, more methodical and more blood-soaked than Noriega, who often came off as a tinpot dictator. Yet the similarities were striking. Like many of their kind, both described themselves as reformers, Ceausescu as a leader independent of Moscow, Noriega as a Panamanian nationalist. In addition, both became drunk with vanity. Ceausescu styled himself the "Genius of the Carpathians," put his face on posters all over Romanian and had 30 volumes of his speeches published. One of Noriega's last political acts was to have himself named Maximum Leader. Both pursued quirky impulses. Both

have been accused of stealing hundreds of millions of dollars and hiding their fortunes abroad. Both created secret police and both suppressed opponents without mercy. Both seemed to acquire the final illusion of the corrupted dictator, the megalomaniacal fantasy that he owns his country as a private possession, and that his people admire his strength (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 3).

Ceausescu and Noriega's cases were totally unrelated in their type of leadership, though they happened at almost the same time.

However, there was some positive bias. Time reported some "international criticism of the secret trial and hasty execution of Ceausescu," and discussed how the United States made use of Ceausescu to serve its special purposes, such as when Richard Nixon welcomed Ceausescu's help in negotiating the first opening to China.

In the contextual bias category, Newsweek contained almost half the instances of positive bias and half the negative. Newsweek had detailed descriptions mixed with opinions on the secret trial, which appeared to show pity for Ceausescu's final moments. For example:

Ceausescu's trial and execution made the issue moot. Circumstantial evidence suggests that they were tried outside the capital. The two-hour proceeding was recorded by a video camera, and the faces of the judges and prosecutor were not shown on television, apparently for their own protection. On the tape, the Ceausescus were the picture of pained disbelief, indigent at the ridiculousness of their predicament. "You are in front of the People's Tribunal, the new legal body of the country," a voice told them at the start. "I do not recognize any tribunal but the Grand National Assembly," Ceausescu replied. "A state coup cannot be recognized." It appears clear that the court had no intention of letting the Ceausescus off lightly. Their court-appointed attorney, whom they never accepted, did not speak up, according to the transcript, until near the end...(Jan. 8, 1990, p. 22).

Newsweek also mentioned that the United States "regrets" that the trial "did not take place in an open and public fashion."

Overall, Newsweek's tone was negative. The negative tone extended from the Romanian people's negative remarks to descriptions of Ceausescu's style of living. For instance:

In what has become a traditional rite of passage for counties moving from dictatorship toward democracy, Romanians broke into Ceausescu's pink stucco mansion in northern Bucharest. The opulence was more than a little tacky, but the creature comforts amazed and infuriated people who had gone without so much for so long (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 23).

U.S. News, however, expressed its negative attitude toward Ceausescu by linking him with historical or fiction figures such as "Dracula" who was once the recipient of an honorary knighthood bestowed by Queen Elizabeth II and statements such as Englishman did not tolerate "anarchists" on the continent.

The contextual category of bias also includes headlines and subheads, which include opinions. Time and Newsweek had very negative headlines about Ceausescu.

Time's first headline "Slaughter in The Streets" was followed by the subhead, "A massacre triggers the downfall of the tyrannical Ceausescu, but civil war erupts across the land." Another headline, "When Tyrants Fall," once again referred to Ceausescu as a tyrant. To review the dialogue between the Ceausescus and the prosecutor, Time titled the report "Defiant To The End." The article under the headline of "Busted by the Baby Boom" condemned Ceausescu's

antiabortion measures.

With a quote "Down With Ceausescu!" Newsweek headlined its first article, followed by a subhead, "In a bloody uprising, angry Romanians push out the last of the Warsaw Pact's hard-line rulers." Another article provided detailed information about the Romanian revolution and was headlined "The Last Days of a Dictator." The headline "Kill the Dog, Keep a Chain?" characterized Ceausescu as a dog.

Headlines in U.S. News did not involve direct negative bias toward Ceausescu, but a subhead "...while surviving tyrants tremble" under the headline of "Freedom begins where geopolitics ends" implied a negative view.

Contextual bias also involves the identification of news sources. Sources can also indicate whether reporting is objective in the overall context. It was found that both Time and Newsweek often used unnamed sources such as "a Western minister attache," "a young army officer," "a doctor," "a woman," (in Time); and "a Romanian general," "a man," "a soldier," "an army conscript," "a hotel manager," "a U.S. official," "an army captain," "an official news agency," "a Western diplomat," "a group," "a young man," and "Polish trade official" (in Newsweek).

Sources such as "unconfirmed reports" and "unidentified general" also appeared in Time. Moreover, other unidentified sources such as "first reports," "they were reported," "eyewitnesses," and "Western diplomats" (in Time); and "some reports," "reportedly," "TV footage," and "they were seen,"

(in Newsweek) were also used to illustrate the fight, the death and some people's attitudes or reactions. Ceausescu's attempt to flee was reported by unidentified sources, too.

Time also used unconfirmed sources to indicate Syrian and Libyan mercenaries' backing of pro-Ceausescu forces. Newsweek's report implied that a soldier had refused to protect Elena Ceausescu at the last moment.

Use of these unidentified sources may prompt doubts about the credibility of the news stories and the responsibility of the authors.

Identified sources included East European news agencies such as Yugoslavia's Tanug, Moscow's Tass and East Germany's ADN. These became important sources of news for Time on the reporting of the fighting. Relying on those communist countries' reports about another communist country's revolution helped increase the credibility of the reporting, at least to the extent of showing that the fighting was not exaggerated by Western sources.

However, Newsweek pointed out that "Soviet news organizations, which, unlike their Western counterparts had correspondents in the country, provided detailed accounts of the violence, often offering the highest casualty estimates." Newsweek used more broadcasting sources such as Yugoslav and Soviet television, Romanian television and Bucharest radio. Other sources were the Romanian press agency Agerpress and Reuters.

In contrast, U.S. News did not, for the most part,

identify the sources of its news.

For quotations from identified and unidentified sources, many represent anti-communist and anti-Ceausescu attitudes (in Time). For example, comments from common people included:

One young man in the crowd told Western correspondents, "We don't want more communists. We want freedom" (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 31).

A 68-year-old lathe operator, Valentin Gabrielescu, agreed, "I do not believe in good or bad communists, just communists. They are all crooks" (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 31).

Comments from officials:

Newly appointed Prime Minister Petre Roman admitted that the party might not have a future. "I don't know if it will survive" (Jan. 8, p. 31).

Vice President Mailu went further, "Romania is no longer a communist country" (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 31).

Deputy Foreign Minister Corneliu Bogdan said, "we hope gradually to weed out all the top officials who supported Ceausescu" (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 31).

Voice from demonstrators: "Ceausescu, Assassin!" "Give us our dead!" (Jan. 8, p. 32 and Jan. 1, p. 39, 1990).

Newsweek put more emphasis on individual's deep feeling of hatred for Ceausescu. For instance:

"The antichrist is dead," murmured a man who watched the broadcast about Ceausescu's execution (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 16).

"He died too easily," complained a soldier (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 16).

"I would have kept him in a cage in a public square," said a Bucharest hotel manager, "so that people could spit on him and pelt him with stones" (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 16).

"I would have killed Ceausescu for that law alone," says Maria Dulce (Jan. 22, 1990, p. 35).

Romanian dissident writer Norman Manea warned: "The dictator destroyed the entire political, economic and moral structure and it will be very difficult to reconstruct" (Jan. 1, 1990, P. 29).

U.S. News focused on democracy and human rights. For instance:

"The minds of the people have been distorted, Romanian has never really been a democracy," says Prof. Nikolai Harsanyi (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 37).

Dan Emilian Rosca, a Timisoara poet and a member of the city's new administration, notes: "We must not only feel democracy, we must learn it" (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 39).

Under Ceausescu, Hungarians, Turks, Serbs and Germans, who make up about 20 percent of the population, "became third-class citizens in a country without human rights," in the words of Hungarian author Pal Bodor (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 40).

"We must have constitutional rights," says Imre Robotos, a Hungarian-language writer, "not simply human rights" (Jan. 8, 1990, p. 40).

Photographic Bias

Bias in photographs was measured by the overall impression of the photograph and its accompanying captions. Time presented one positive photograph in which Ceausescu greeted youngsters with a smiling face at a factory. Another photograph was somewhat positive in that Ceausescu looked confident while the caption read that "An ugly-duckling auto, the Trabi, gets a moment of glory." There were three totally negative photographs. One showed Ceausescu looking frustrated with his hand on his head at the Party congress and the caption read "His shadow darkens the future." The other photograph showed an angry Ceausescu

and his wife at the trial. There was no caption. The third photograph showed a dead Ceausescu, lying in his own blood, and the caption read "the executed dictator: television reported the tape endlessly."

Newsweek had one positive photograph of Ceausescu when he was at his last rally. There were two negative photographs. One appeared on the cover page showing Ceausescu dead. The other showed Ceausescu and his wife looking serious and angry at the trial, but the caption simply said "the Ceausescus stood trial while soldiers and civilians stood fast against their security forces."

U.S. News did not publish any personal photographs of Ceausescu.

Summary

Through a review of all articles published in January 1990, this study found no significant differences in the extent or nature of news coverage of the Romanian anti-government protest among Time, Newsweek and U.S. News. Considering the content of the coverage, all the three magazines denounced Ceausescu and favored the anti-government protest, but expressed concern about Romania's future. Comparatively, Time and Newsweek had more detailed information than did U.S. News.

The news stories in the three magazines exhibited clear negative bias with subjective, judgmental opinions mixed with facts. As a whole, Ceausescu's image was as an iron-

fisted, blood-soaked tyrant, worse than the fallen Panamanian leader Manuel Noriega who was also described as a tyrant (in Time); Ceausescu was an inhuman and the cruelest dictator ever who endorsed Stalinist hard-line ruling (in Newsweek); and Ceausescu was a despotic ruler and killer (in U.S. News).

The techniques the three magazines used in reporting were: 1) Time showed its bias against Ceausescu by comparing him with another fallen leader, 2) U.S. News disreputed Ceausescu by linking him with other historical figures, 3) all the three magazines used interviews of individuals to represent the opinions of larger groups for the stories, 4) all three magazines mixed opinions with facts, using judgmental descriptions, emotionally-loaded words, semantic errors and colorful vocabularies, and 5) unidentified sources were used for news reports which detracted from the credibility of the reporting.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

In a 1988 study of Time, Newsweek and U.S. News & World Report, Edwin Diamond reported that the three news magazines' renewed attention to their "journalist mission" and their attempts to "sharpen the product" had led to unintended consequences. According to Diamond, the three magazines have grown to look and read a lot alike. They share not only a similar news franchise, but also the same design and the same ideas (p. 42).

Based on this observation, the author generally hypothesized that Time, Newsweek and U.S. News had similar unfavorable attitudes toward the former Romanian leader, Nicolae Ceausescu, when reporting on the 1989 Romanian revolution in their January 1990 issues. The basis for this hypothesis was the theory that Romania's anti-government demonstrations fit well with the anti-Communist ideology of the United States at that time.

In order to examine the consistency of attitudes toward Ceausescu among the three magazines, the author also examined the magazines' news coverage of Ceausescu for three decades before the 1989 revolution.

Mass communication theories and principles of general semantics were reviewed to examine their suitability for explaining the performance of the media in this case. Herbert Altschull's three models of the press, Harold Lasswell and Charles Wright's functions of the media, Herbert J. Gans' enduring values in news, Gaye Tuchman's theory of the content of news, Wendell Johnson's characteristics of language and S. I. Hayakawa's devices of language were examined.

In addition, three other studies about bias in news magazines were reviewed.

The general hypothesis for this study had four subordinate null hypotheses:

- 1) There is no difference in the extent or nature of news coverage of the Romanian anti-government protest among TIME, Newsweek and U.S. News.
- 2) There is no difference in citing sources (identified versus unidentified) of news among the three magazines.
- 3) All the three magazines have equivalent frequencies of instances of bias.
- 4) There is no relationship between type of bias and magazine.

The study was intended to answer these questions:

- 1) Were there any differences among the three magazines in the characteristics of their news coverage of the Romanian revolution?
- 2) Did the news stories in the magazines indicate bias?
- 3) What stereotyped image of Ceausescu was presented by

Time, Newsweek and U.S. News?

4) Did the stories involve subjective, judgmental or opinionated reporting? If so, what techniques were used to present the information?

The results found no significant differences among the three magazines with respect to the extent or nature of news coverage, identification of news sources, and the relationship between type of bias and magazine. Therefore the first, second and fourth null hypotheses were supported.

However, the study did find significant differences with respect to total instances of bias among the three magazines. Time had more total occurrences of bias, both positive and negative, than Newsweek and U.S. News. Since the quantity (number of articles and photographs) of news coverage in the three magazines differed (Time had the greatest coverage, Newsweek was second, U.S. News had the least), the instances of bias per article were considered. It was found that U.S. News had more total instances of bias per article than Newsweek while Time had the highest rate of the three.

Concerning instances of positive bias per article, Time ranked first, Newsweek second, and U.S. News third. However, with respect to instances of negative bias per article, U.S. News was ranked first with more instances of negative bias per article than either Time or Newsweek. Therefore, the third null hypothesis was rejected.

Overall, the general hypothesis was supported: the

three magazines had similar unfavorable attitudes toward Ceausescu when reporting the 1989 Romanian revolution.

The results showed that the news stories in the three magazines exhibited political bias toward Ceausescu. The image of the former Romanian leader was negatively established as a despotic ruler and killer (in U.S. News), an inhuman dictator and the cruelest dictator ever who endorsed Stalinist hard-line ruling (in Newsweek), an ironfisted, blood-soaked tyrant, worse than the fallen Panamanian leader Manuel Noriega who also was described as a tyrant (in Time).

Moreover, in news reporting about the Romanian revolution and Ceausescu's related activities, news stories contained subjective, judgmental and opinionated statements.

The techniques used by the magazines included:

- 1) Time showed its bias against Ceausescu by comparing him with another fallen leader.
- 2) U.S. News disreputed Ceausescu by linking him with other historical figures.
- 3) All three magazines used interviews in their stories of individuals to represent the opinions of larger groups.
- 4) All three magazines mixed opinions with facts, using subjective descriptions, emotionally-loaded words, devices of language, colorful vocabularies and semantic errors.
- 5) Unidentified sources were used for news reports, which detracted from the credibility of the reporting.

Discussion

The results of this study confirmed Diamond's conclusion that the three magazines had grown to read and look alike, especially in sharing the same ideas, particularly in reporting about Ceausescu. Though the number of instances of bias varied among the three magazines, unfavorable attitudes toward Ceausescu were consistent. This would be as predicted by communication theory, that is, media coverage is related to and consistent with ideological constraints. Media reporting is strongly influenced by the political, social and cultural, and economic system within which the media function.

American people have a tradition of anti-centralization, anti-religious control, anti-ideological and anti-political repression. They value freedom of expression, freedom of worship, and freedom of choice in life-style -- all of which are believed to be absent in a communist system.

Since Nicolae Ceausescu took power as the general secretary of the Romanian Communist Party in 1965 and later became Romania's President in 1968, his image in Time, Newsweek and U.S. News changed. All three magazines exhibited a common trend in reporting on Ceausescu: more positive in the 1960s, increasingly negative in late 1970s, and extremely critical in the 1980s. This was related to Ceausescu's increasingly repressive dictatorship. In this respect, Time, Newsweek and U.S. News were rather objective

as they were aware of changes of reality and adjusted their tone of reporting according to the change.

However, the changing relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union may well have affected the three magazines' reporting. When the two countries confronted one another in the 1960s and 1970s, the three magazines praised Ceausescu's defiance of Moscow and provided much information about Ceausescu's independent role in world affairs. When the confrontation between the two countries was eased by Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms in the 1980s, the three magazines no longer emphasized the positive effects of Ceausescu's independence from Moscow. Instead, his personality cult, nepotism and failing domestic political and economical policies were targeted extensively. With more and more news coverage of Gorbachev's reforms, Ceausescu's resistance to his ally's call for reform was described as stubbornness instead of independence.

The year 1989 was significant. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, communism which had ruled Eastern Europe for four decades was shaken severely. Countries like Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary abandoned communism, and other countries modified political systems to adapt to the changes in their countries

The Romanian revolution took place at the height of dramatic change of Eastern Europe. Ceausescu who had exercised absolute power for 24 years was toppled and executed. It was this man who had once played an important

role in balancing the East and West relationship, who was now denounced by the three most influential news magazines in the United States.

While some countries such as China were silent on Ceausescu's merits or wrongdoings, Western media such as Time, Newsweek and U.S. News would not forgive Ceausescu's "crimes." Ironically, Ceausescu once told Newsweek in an interview that it seemed unfair to link everything bad in the Soviet Union to the Stalin era. But after his death, Ceausescu received a similar condemnation. Newsweek in its February 1990 reporting accused Ceausescu of causing AIDS in his country because of his "corrupt polices" in Medicare. And Time too, accused Ceausescu of trying to kill the nation's spirit by rationing food and tightening personal freedom.

The presentation of Ceausescu's image by Time, Newsweek and U.S. News appears to indicate that the United States' anti-communism ideology subtly shaped the news coverage, and produced an unfavorable image of Ceausescu, which would have affected public perception.

In international communications, ideology is often reflected by a nation's foreign policies or position on important issues. However, policy makers are the people in power. They send signals and set the tones for important situations. Thus, media transmit the signals and convey the tones set by policy makers. In this respect, media are the agents of power as Altschull pointed out.

Lasswell's dysfunctions of media correlation were also confirmed when the three magazines stereotyped Ceausescu as a dictator. The three magazines not only emphasized Western values, but also enforced them by interviewing people who agreed with the values while ignoring different opinions. In Gans' words, "the news does not limit itself to reality judgments; it also contains values, or preference statements" (Gans, p. 40). This type of reality construction once again supports the conclusion that news involves subjectivity.

Although there is no absolute objectivity, pursuing objectivity is not merely an ideal but an essential goal for journalist professionals. People rely so extensively on media to get information, it is the media's responsibility to seek the truth and present the truth in a non-political way so as to serve as reliable information resources.

Recommendations For Further Research

Though this is a case study, and the content of media for the study is limited to the period of the 1989 Romanian revolution, a more comprehensive media analysis is worth doing. The examination of media content can be extended from Time, Newsweek and U.S. News to some other magazines such as Forbes, The Nation, or to some other media such as newspapers and broadcasting.

Moreover, if a comparative analysis could be conducted between a Western country and a Eastern country, between a

nation America likes and a nation America dislikes, or before and after Tiananmen Square, the evaluation of bias versus ideology would be more convincing.

Conclusion

The former Romanian leader Ceausescu's image portrayed by Time, Newsweek and U.S. News confirmed Altschull's market (or capitalist) model in which media support capitalist doctrine, but failed to support Altschull's idea that media in the capitalist countries inform in a non-political way and serve the people impartially in the model as well.

The bias the three magazines included in their news reporting demonstrates that ideological constraints and misuse of language may strongly affect news' objectivity.

Awareness of the necessity for objectivity in news reporting is important as the balance of global communication requires the objective presentation of reality and avoidance of disinformation and distortion.

The news media have the moral obligation to act responsibly in order to prevent the abuses of objective reporting such as adding or omitting facts, making incorrect inference and judgment, or presenting biased impressions of an event or a person.

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