

independent producer. The work from any one of these periods alone would have established him as a major figure in film history. Unfortunately, the most comprehensive current biography of this fascinating character (Spoto 1983) is marred by an unpleasant (and unfulfilled) agenda.

2. “Alfred Hitchcock Dies,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 1980, p. 1. The second headline, in type half the size, is “Carter Picks Muskie to Be Secretary of State.”

3. The most casual computer search will yield scores of recent papers and books on Hitchcock’s films.

4. Hitchcock’s 1936 classic *Sabotage*, adapted from Joseph Conrad’s *The Secret Agent*, should not be confused with two other Hitchcock films, *The Secret Agent*, or 1942’s *Saboteur*.

5. Hitchcock’s technique also made it difficult for producers to credit his work by using extra footage and master shots routinely called for in the studio system (Leff 1987, 215).

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Teaching Women in the News: Exposing the “Invisible Majority”

Penny M. Miller, *University of Kentucky*

Suppose your local newspaper, or the *New York Times*, or the college daily, became an exclusively female domain—that every expert source, byline, photograph, quotation, and evaluation were female. Most readers might wonder why women deserve 100% of the coverage when they represent 52% of the population. By contrast, an all-male front page might not register as anything unusual, for it is a regular occurrence in many publications (Aprile 1993, H8).

A Dramatic Lesson

The following hands on exercise has been conducted several times at the University of Kentucky in courses on American government, introduction to political science, political behavior, campaigns and the media, women and politics, and state and local politics. It takes at least 40–45 minutes to complete, and it is particularly successful in

discussion sections of large lecture courses.

In each of these courses, the exercise has had the same impact on students, who are consistently stunned by the results. The conclusion in every class has been clear: when it comes to front-page reporting, Kentucky’s major newspapers, the *New York Times*, and the college daily significantly underrepresent coverage of women and are often unflattering in the coverage they do provide.

In October 1994, I conducted this exercise in a class on women and politics. Armed with the sectional front pages of the *Lexington Herald-Leader*, the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, the *New York Times*, and the *University of Kentucky Kernel*, I distributed 90 newspapers randomly to 45 students. I also distributed two different-colored marking pens to each class member.

First, students were instructed to highlight in one color every textual reference to persons (noting proper

names, not pronouns), byline, or photo of a woman and, using the other highlighter, to do the same for men. Then they were asked to tabulate male and female totals for the different categories. Each student presented his or her findings orally, and the results were enumerated on the blackboard.

Overall, female bylines on the newspaper pages averaged 25% of the totals. Women amounted, on average, to 20% of those shown in photographs. But the most extreme result had to do with textual references to females. On average, females were the subject of only 10% of front-page references.

Some students had front pages that contained no female bylines, photographs, or references to women. Even stories on topics of unusual concern to women, such as abortion, often contained more references to men, and few or no references to women.

Secondly, to gain further insight into the problem of the “invisible

majority," students were instructed to look for positive, negative, neutral, and mixed images of the roles in which women were portrayed. *Negative* images were identified as those that depicted women as victims, perpetrators, or discredited sources. *Positive* images focused on women in positions of power and authority or as attainers of noted achievement. *Neutral* images were basic, nonevaluative references (i.e., wife, mother) or those where no significance was attached to the reference. *Mixed* images were defined as a combination of positive and negative roles (i.e., a state senator charged with bribery). Overall, the portrayals of women in stories were approximately 45% positive, 25% neutral, and 30% negative or mixed.

Stories about females were often about their victimization (rape, murder, domestic violence). Descriptions of women, no matter what the female had done—a courageous act, a major exploit, an intellectual accomplishment—almost always included a physical description and a familial relationship. Even female candidates for national political office were described in terms of their physical attire, personal feminine attributes, and family relationships. Men seldom were described in this fashion. In fact, it was rare that a male's marital or parental status was mentioned.

The students also noticed that certain front-page stories focused on the gender of women in nontraditional roles (e.g., a female state trooper and a female construction worker). This emphasis on gender implies oddities, and the focus on gender diminishes other qualities. In scanning the inside pages of their particular newspaper sections for gender references, the students observed that women were underrepresented everywhere except in the advertisements, where often female models appeared only for their beauty or sensuousness.

Third, students were asked to express their feelings about what they had observed. Most were agitated, and heated discussion ensued about positive actions to redress these coverage patterns.

Some *Kernel* reporters in the class later convened a special session of newspaper staffers and conducted a similar exercise with them. Several students expressed their outrage to some Lexington and Louisville newspaper reporters and editors and wrote letters to the editor for publication. A follow-up class discussion was scheduled after the students read assigned materials by M. Junior Bridge (1993) and FAIR (1992). Two local media experts were invited to the next class session to discuss exposing the "invisible majority"; students were required to prepare relevant questions.

. . . when it comes to front-page reporting, Kentucky's major newspapers, the New York Times, and the college daily significantly underrepresent coverage of women and are often unflattering in the coverage they do provide.

In the context of this women and politics course, future discussions and follow-up materials (see appendix) also related media coverage to electoral success and failure, to the relative effectiveness of female officeholders, to female voting behavior, and to gender variations in interest and participation in political issues and processes.

The same exercise in five American government discussion sections in February 1995 was followed by extending the lessons concerning invisible women to the invisible (or negatively visible) African American, Hispanic, and Asian American populations, the effects of media treatment of minorities on voter perceptions of poverty/immigration/discrimination policy, and the difficulties minority interest groups face in achieving concrete legislative results.

Scholarly Information to be Provided After the Exercise

After the hands on lesson, students can be directed to in-depth research studies on reserve at the library. These materials can become the subject of stimulating future group discussions.

Several national studies have investigated this issue. Bridge (1996), in a survey sponsored by Women, Men and Media¹ (cochaired by Betty Friedan and Nancy Woodhull), examined 20 daily newspapers (10 major market, 10 small to medium markets) for a one-month period.² The print-media analysis examined bylines, photos, and references by and about women on the front page, the first page of the local news section, and the opinion/editorial pages.

In the content analysis of the 20 dailies, including the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*, the Women, Men and Media study showed that men rather than women were referred to or solicited for comment 85% of the time in front-page stories. Men wrote 65% of the front-page stories and 74% of the opinion pieces. Women appeared in 33% of the front-page photographs. References to and comments from women leaders and experts consistently appeared toward the end of stories and commentaries, or did not appear at all. Even when the issues commented on had more direct impact on women, such as breast implants, sexual harassment, abortion, and domestic violence, men's voices dominated front pages. Although "six percent of the front pages examined carried no female references, there were no front pages devoid of male references" (Bridge 1996, 3).

The same patterns cropped up in an examination of five nightly news shows³ by Bridge (1995). The television analysis focused on the number of women reporting the news, anchoring news programs, and being interviewed within a news story. In the study of TV network news (ABC, NBC, CBS, and PBS), men reported 80% of the nightly news stories. At least one day on three of the five nightly news shows

(NBC, CNN, and PBS), not one female reported a story. Although females reported 61% of the CNN stories, only 23% of those interviewed by CNN were women. On average, three out of four interviews for the five different newscasts were with men (Bridge 1995, 8).

Since 1989, the Women, Men and Media project's annual surveys have consistently concluded that women are "significantly under-represented" in the news (Bridge 1993, 1). This work and some studies conducted by FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting) have raised sobering concerns about the responsibility of the media in shaping people's views of the world and their picture of women's place in it (FAIR 1992).

Information Available Nearby

Local and state interest groups have also collected data that can be made available to students. In Kentucky, the national research, plus expressed interest by the Kentucky media industry in increasing readership/viewership by women, prompted the Kentucky Commission on Women (KCW) to conduct similar research on statewide dailies.⁴

For a two-week period each quarter beginning in the summer of 1992, KCW analyzed the *Courier-Journal* and the *Lexington Herald-Leader*, and in the last quarter also examined the *Kentucky Post* (Kruzich and Campbell 1993). This analysis focused on gender references, bylines, and photos on the sectional front pages of the papers, and on positive, negative, neutral, and mixed images of the roles in which women were described.

KCW's research results fall generally within the range identified by national studies. In summer and fall 1992, 15% and 13%, respectively, of sectional front-page stories were by or about women; in the winter, it rose to 22%. The portrayal of women in these stories was approximately 50% positive, 25% neutral, and 25% negative or mixed.

Two broad conclusions follow from this analysis. First, coverage of women's issues seldom offered

women the opportunity to speak for themselves and voice their concerns. Even in stories about issues relating directly to women (e.g., silicone gel breast implants and Norplant birth control usage), most writers quoted male experts. In stories about abortion, writers regularly quoted abortion-rights advocates and anti-abortion spokespersons. The women directly affected by specific restrictions, however, were rarely used as sources. Second, when women made it to the front pages, they often did so because of their familial relationship to a front-page male—in over one third of the Kentucky stories, a

To put the gender gap into perspective, Woodhull said that if newspapers could get women to read in the same proportion as men do, they would gain four million readers.

woman was referenced only as a wife or mother.

In reviewing media coverage of the 1992 elections, the KCW study found that male candidates were usually referred to by name, with little descriptive wording attached. By contrast, references to female candidates often included identification of gender, and in some cases eliminated their names altogether.

Drawing Conclusions

The in-class exercise, in combination with academic research and the localized advocacy-oriented work, can lead to fruitful and broader discussions led by the instructor or media experts.

What difference do these coverage patterns make? Nancy Woodhull, a founding editor of *USA Today*, maintains that it makes a tremendous difference. "There is an act called symbolic annihilation,"

Woodhull argues. "It means that if the press does not report your existence, for all perception purposes you do not exist." It's called feeling "invisible."⁵ Groups that are consistently excluded from the press eventually stop looking. According to Woodhull, in 1970, 78% of U.S. women read a newspaper on a given day. By 1990, that figure had dropped to 51%. Male readers also jumped ship, but their plunge was not so dramatic—from 77% to 64%. To put the gender gap into perspective, Woodhull said that if newspapers could get women to read in the same proportion as men do, they would gain four million readers (1993, 43–45).

In her book on women newspaper columnists, Maria Braden writes that, while women journalists do not always agree on issues, "one fact stands out: Women's voices often contrast significantly with those of men" (1993, 16). If newspapers fail to give expression to that contrasting voice, then women will either not find it, or will have to find it elsewhere.

Some researchers have suggested that the gender gap in the news has contributed profoundly to the significant underrepresentation of women in elected and appointed offices at all levels of government (Braden 1996; Cook, Thomas, and Wilcox 1994; Kahn 1994a). The electability of women candidates for local, statewide, and national offices may be significantly influenced by differential press treatment. Female candidates may be covered differently because of standard operating procedures of the press, as well as stereotyping by reporters and editors. In recent U.S. Senate and statewide races, female candidates have consistently received less coverage than men and coverage that is more focused on their chances of winning, less devoted to issues, and more likely to emphasize their possession of typical feminine traits and their strengths in typical female policy areas (Kahn 1994a, 1994b, 1992, 1991).

Both the extent and nature of media coverage greatly affect public perceptions, and research documents that reporting on women is

quantitatively deficient and, often, qualitatively problematic. Only when more representative, realistic portrayals of women, men, and minorities are adopted can responsible social change occur.

Thus, the in-class exercise on exposing the "invisible majority" can be a real eye-opener for students and media professionals alike and can lead, through widely available additional sources, to a fundamental academic and cultural challenge.

Notes

1. The Women, Men and Media project was established in 1989 to examine diversity in news coverage; it is funded primarily by the Freedom Forum, an international organization dedicated to free press, free speech, and free spirit for all people.

2. The major newspapers reviewed by Bridge in February 1996 include the *Atlanta Constitution*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Miami Herald*, *New York Times*, *Seattle Times*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *USA Today*, and *Washington Post*. The smaller-market papers examined were the *Albuquerque Journal* (NM), *Beacon-News* (Aurora, IL), *Courier* (Findlay, OH), *Daily Camera* (Boulder, CO), *Enid News and Eagle* (OK), *Joplin Globe* (MO), *News-Times* (Danbury, CT), *Pine Bluff Commercial* (AR), *Sun-Journal* (Lewiston, ME), and *Tuscaloosa News* (AL).

3. The nightly television news shows monitored by Bridge in January 1995 include ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN (World Today), and PBS (MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour).

4. Thanks to Marsha Weinstein, former Kentucky Commission on Women Executive Director, and Lindsay Campbell, executive assistant, for their leadership in conducting and promoting this research.

5. Woodhull was the featured speaker at the gathering of Kentucky journalists in Frankfort, Kentucky, on June 12, 1993. The media roundtable was sponsored by the Kentucky Commission on Women and the Bluegrass Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.

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Appendix

Several public and private groups are working on research, writing, and publishing reports on how women are portrayed in the news:

- American Women in Radio and Television, Inc.
1101 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
- Association for Women Journalists
P.O. Box 2199
Fort Worth, Texas 76113
- Center for Media Literacy
4727 Wilshire Boulevard, #403
Los Angeles, CA 90010
- Communications Research Associates
10606 Mantz Road
Silver Spring, MD 20903
Media Report to Women
- FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting)
130 West 25th Street
New York, NY 10001
- EXTRA!
"Missing Voices: Women and the U.S. News Media" Special Issue, 1992 (publication of FAIR)
- Freedom Forum Media Studies Center
580 Madison Avenue
42nd Floor
New York, NY 10022
- Media Studies Journal*
- Gender Bias in the Media Project
Kentucky Commission on Women
614A Shelby Street
Frankfort, KY 40601
- International Women's Media Foundation
1001 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Suite 1201
Washington, D.C. 20036
- Journalism and Women Symposium
School of Journalism
University of Missouri
P.O. Box 838
Columbia, MO 65205
- Media Watch
P.O. Box 618
Santa Cruz, CA 95061
- Media Watch
517 Wellington Street West, #204
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M5V 1G1
- National Association of Media Women
157 West 126th Street
New York, NY 10027
- National Council for Research on Women
47-49 East 65th Street
New York, NY 10021
- A Directory of Women's Media*
- National Federation of Press Women
Box 99
Blue Springs, MO 64013
- off our backs
2337-B 18th Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20009
- Organization for Study of Communication, Language, and Gender
Department of Communication Studies
University of San Diego
San Diego, CA 92110
- Political Woman
276 Chatterton Parkway
White Plains, NY 10606
- Unabridged Communications
Junior Bridge, Director
1737 Preston Road
Alexandria, VA 22302
- WINGS, Women's International News Gathering Service
P.O. Box 5307
Kansas City, MO 64131
- Women and Language Communications Department
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA 22030

Women Are Good News
1550 California Street, Suite 6318
San Francisco, CA 94109

Women in Cable and
Telecommunications
230 West Monroe Street
Chicago, IL 60606

Women in Communications
10605 Judicial Drive, Suite A4
Fairfax, VA 22030

Women in Film
6464 Sunset, Suite 900
Hollywood, CA 90028

Women's Institute for Freedom
of the Press
3306 Ross Place, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Women Make Movies
225 Lafayette Street, Room 207
New York, NY 10012

Women, Men and Media
Mount Vernon College
2100 Foxhall Road N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007

Women's Media Project
NOW Legal Defense and
Education Fund
99 Hudson Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10013

Women of Color Resource Center
2288 Fulton St., Suite 103
Berkeley, CA 94704
*Women of Color Organizations
and Projects: A National Directory*

Women's Wire
435 Grand Ave., Suite D
San Francisco, CA 94080

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Creating a Critical Thinking Learning Environment: Teaching Statistics to Social Science Undergraduates¹

Allan B. McBride, *University of Southern Mississippi*

Analytic thinking skills are highly prized in academia, and yet there is speculation and some evidence that such skills are in decline among contemporary students. The putative decline has been attributed to, among other things, too much television viewing and the wider availability of post-secondary education. Whatever the cause, faculty members at secondary and undergraduate institutions of learning are quick to point to an inability of students to perform well on tasks that require such skills. A recent article in *PS* (Hoeffler 1994) argues that political scientists have been slow to embrace teaching methods that address these deficiencies and that they should begin to give greater attention to the issue of critical and analytic thinking.

One set of educators (Whimbey and Lochhead 1986) has gone beyond complaints to offer some very specific suggestions to faculty members to help them challenge their students to improve their thinking ability as well as their per-

formance on standardized tests. Whimbey and Lochhead's work on problem solving and comprehension, which comprise integral components of analytic thinking, includes several concrete methods that they report are used by good problem solvers—maintaining a positive attitude toward problem solving, being concerned with accuracy, breaking complex problems down into parts, avoiding guessing, and being active in the problem solving process (26–27).

The first two methods are largely psychological, requiring the problem solver to be convinced that the problem can be solved and to recognize the importance of understanding the facts and relationships in the problem fully and accurately. A key to the second recommendation, according to Whimbey and Lochhead, is fastidious reading and rereading of relevant materials.

Reading is such an important activity that they devote an entire chapter to it and note six myths that are often associated with read-

ing. High on the list of reading myths is the myth that reading aloud, or even moving your lips as you read, is a habit that good readers reject. In fact, Whimbey and Lochhead assert that reading aloud and subvocalizing are important to comprehending challenging material. The remaining myths that the authors attack are a reflection of their aim to encourage reading practices that result in greater comprehension rather than greater speed in reading (137–40). For example, among these they note that the superior problem solver reads carefully and slowly while focusing on challenging words and words that are central to the meaning of the text.

As a faculty member in political science who has borne the primary responsibility for teaching research methods, statistics, and computer-based data analysis for both undergraduate and graduate students in our program, I have been interested in developing some approaches to teaching that would