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THEMES PRESENTED AND SOURCE DIVERSITY IN ELITE NEWSPAPER
COVERAGE OF OPERATION RESTORE HOPE

By

BYRON L. JAMES

A Thesis submitted to the
Department of Communication
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Science

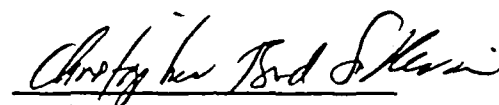
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I dedicate this document to my beautiful baby daughter Bria, for throughout this project making our home so hard to leave and so nice to come back to. I love you and will be eternally grateful to God for you.

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THEMES PRESENTED AND SOURCE DIVERSITY IN ELITE NEWSPAPER
COVERAGE OF OPERATION RESTORE HOPE

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This content analytic study identifies the themes most frequently presented and sources most often attributed in elite newspaper coverage of Operation Restore Hope, the relief effort in Somalia. The first two chapters introduce the reader to the study and reviews related research, focusing on the media's agenda setting function, the dynamic relationship that has existed between the military and the media during military conflicts in recent history, and the media's reliance upon official government sources as news sources. The remaining chapters detail the methods and procedures used to analyze newspaper articles in the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. discuss these findings and bring this text to a logical conclusion.

The study reveals that the humanitarian theme dominated coverage of the operation and military sources were attributed more often than nonmilitary sources.

Avenues for future research on media coverage of military are described after the findings have been summarized. Future research in this area could provide military public affairs officials with information on how to increase their influence over the themes, events and messages that are relayed to the public through the media.

Chapter 1

Purpose and Introduction

This study will analyze newspaper coverage of Operation Restore Hope. By strict analysis of the sources attributed in related newspaper articles, as well as by analysis of the overall themes presented about the day-to-day mission in Somalia, this study will determine if the media is helping the military convey key messages to the American public and solidifying the positive public opinion that is fundamental to the military's success in Somalia. The information gathered here may be used in a later study to determine if particular variables might give Department of Defense Public Affairs practitioners greater influence over which themes, events and messages are relayed to the public.

The literature reviewed in this study indicates an ancillary relationship between the media, the national agenda, public opinion and the military's war-fighting capabilities.

The media rely heavily upon military sources to provide them with timely and accurate information about military personnel, equipment and missions during peacetime or time of war. The media blends the information gathered from these military sources with information gathered elsewhere to inform the public. This in turn sets the national agenda and influences public opinion. Though some of the media's agenda setting power is brought due to conscious decisions made by the owners, editors, managers, directors, etc., in control of the media, the perceived omniscience and sheer

omnipresence of the media in Americans' lives are often considered the main sources of the media's power.

History has shown that when the military has garnered intensive and appropriate media cooperation as in World War II, and/or been highly effective at keeping its agenda in the hearts and minds of Americans as during the Persian Gulf War, public support has remained high on the homefront, enabling our troops to see those wars through to a triumphant conclusion.

With this literature in mind, this author posits that the themes which persist in media coverage of Operation Restore Hope will have a profound impact upon public opinion of the operation, in turn impacting the military's ability to see the operation through to victory.

Today, media representatives probably would not allow themselves to be placed under the controls they amenablely accepted during World War II. For example, General Douglas MacArthur required all copy go through several levels of censorship review before release, and the Navy reportedly delayed the release of "bad news" articles until they found a "good news" story sufficient enough to balance the effect. Such controls would be virtually impossible to enforce today anyway, considering that by the time hostilities have escalated to the point where our military's intervention becomes necessary, reporters with their satellites up-links and mobile telephones could, in some circumstances, already be in place helping to form the welcoming committee.

The media coverage of the Marines landing in Mogadishu, Somalia clearly illustrates the need for some restraints to be employed. The throng of print and electronic journalists who had gathered prior to the troops' landing seemed to believe that the landing was for their benefit. They thrust cameras

and microphones in the Marines' faces as if the landing was a Hollywood production. The Marines' night vision and other equipment was ruined, and their bodies were illuminated by the photographers' and cameramen's glaring lights. If the troops had encountered a hostile faction awaiting in ambush, as some military leaders had anticipated, everyone's lives at the landing site would have been endangered.

While a free press is a right guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, the media's rights should never outweigh a soldier's right to carry out the mission without being placed in unnecessary danger. A *Times Mirror* and a Time/CNN poll during Operation Desert Storm revealed that 79 percent of the American public agreed that media restraints are necessary. The Times/CNN poll went a step farther to suggest that greater restraints are necessary in times of war; however, no specific restraints were suggested.

A review of Vietnam War reporting illustrates that regular, sometimes erroneous, reports on the costs of the war in dollars and lives had a significant impact upon public opinion of the war, but the media does not deserve sole blame for communication failures during the Vietnam War. Military officials must share in the blame for providing the media with erroneous information, such as inflated accounts of enemy casualties. However, the failure of the Johnson and Nixon administrations to clearly communicate to the American people exactly why their sons and daughters were at war must be seen as the main factor in the public's decision that further participation in Vietnam was reprehensible.

Because of the media's reliance upon government sources for information, the U.S. military public affairs community is in a unique position to help create a mutually beneficial relationship between government and the media. The government is able to communicate its

overall goals and objectives to the public through the media and the media is able to use military sources to give the people sufficient timely and accurate information to make informed decisions about the direction our country should take. Concentrated and diligent efforts at cooperation by the military and the media could ensure that the public is more aware of the realities of military conflict and is aware of the goals and objects sought by the military.

Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney detailed the objective of Operation Restore Hope when he read the mission statement to reporters on December 4, 1992, in Washington, D.C. With his statement, "When directed by the National Command Authority, USCINCCENT, (Commander in Chief of United States Central Command), will conduct joint/combined military operations in Somalia, to secure major air and sea ports, key installations and food distribution points, to provide open and free passage of relief supplies, to provide security convoys and relief operations and assist United Nations/non-government organizations in providing humanitarian relief under U.S. auspices," the stage was set for the United States' participation in a clearly humanitarian mission.

By analysis of articles in three major U.S. newspapers, this study seeks to determine the sources most often attributed in newspapers articles about Operation Restore Hope and to determine if the U.S. media continually emphasized the humanitarian aspect of this operation. Each attribution of published information and each phrase that refers to the mission's objectives will be coded and these references will be tabulated to determine if government sources are attributed most often and which theme prevails. This author expects to find that military sources will remain the most often attributed source in newspaper articles and that the humanitarian theme of the operation will prevail in newspaper coverage.

Chapter 2

Review of Previous Research

President Abraham Lincoln once said, "Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail. Without it, nothing can succeed." This statement is a foundational belief of the United States military's public affairs community. Everything the military does—from the recruitment of a soldier, sailor, airman or Marine; to providing him or her with top-notch, realistic training; to winning wars in foreign lands—requires the participation and approval of the U.S. citizenry. At no other time is this more applicable than when circumstances abroad threaten our nation's reputation, interests, or indeed our national security, causing our forces to mobilize against such threats. The media today are significant players in the shaping of public sentiment or opinion and that significance is increasing every year.

This review of related literature will highlight the media's agenda setting function, the dynamic relationship that has existed between the media and the military during times of armed conflict abroad, and the media's reliance upon government officials as news sources.

The Media's Agenda-Setting Function

The media today are far more than mere sources of answers to questions that are on the minds of Americans. Indeed they are often the impetus that puts such questions into peoples' minds. While media may not necessarily dictate what people should think about a particular issue, they are highly successful in telling people what issues to think about (Cohen, 1963).

The videotaped beating of motorist Rodney King by members of the Los Angeles Police Department was a prime example of the media's agenda

setting function. Different people may have seen or thought different things while watching the videotape of the beating or reading countless stories about the incident; however, it was very difficult not to think about the incident at all.

Then director of the Ford Foundation's International Affairs Program, Shepard Stone said over ten years ago that a race riot makes the news. But the conditions and forces that led up to the riot, such as discrimination, harassment and governmental neglect, were significant news before the riots broke out but were not covered. He says the press fails to put those issues on the public agenda in a timely manner by not reporting them (Ryan & Owen, 1976).

Some critics of the press go as far as to say that the metropolitan daily newspapers are semi-responsible culprits in the demise of the cities because of their inadvertently or intentionally poor job of covering social problems which run rampant there (Ryan & Owen, 1976).

The danger of the media's agenda-setting capabilities are increasing as the public's dependency on the media increases.

Lippmann (1961) noted that man's environment has grown so complicated that he can no longer acquire all the knowledge and experience necessary to relate to that environment on his own; therefore, people rely on others, particularly the media, to see and experience for them. The government is a significant patron of the media, using them to provide information about itself to its citizens. This information helps people to shape their thoughts and opinions about what government is and what it does. Much of the information that government provides its citizens is via the mass media.

History of Media Coverage of Previous Military Conflicts

The U.S. Army created its first public relations office in 1916 and enjoyed a very cordial relationship with members of the media. The good relations continued to evolve after World War I with the public relations office primarily involved in promoting the use of aircraft by the armed forces in an attempt to influence Congress to appropriate more funds to that end. The Army lent its aircraft to such efforts as, crop dusting, search and rescue missions, and combating forest fires, all of which were fervently covered by the press. During the winter of 1923 when it was reported that people were stranded on a remote island in Lake Michigan, two Army planes were sent to the rescue with relief supplies. To help publicize the effort, the Army allowed each aircraft to carry along a Detroit newspaper reporter (Boyle, 1991).

Such a relationship was a precursor to the cooperation that was necessary and received from the press during World War II.

Media Coverage of World War II

The military and the media enjoyed perhaps their best relationship during WWII. History professor Richard Steele wrote that this mutually beneficial relationship was not as much a result of "journalistic patriotism" as it was "the Roosevelt administration's skillful management of both the war and the press," thus ensuring its overwhelming positive image (1985). In retrospect the war may appear to have been very popular, but

President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his associates proceeded on the premise that support had to be cultivated. His opinion advisors repeatedly reminded him of the shallowness of morale and fragility of public unity and FDR dared not and did not assume a grimly determined public irreversibly bound to the cause (Steele, 1985).

When Roosevelt and his advisors could no longer control the realities of the conflict, he changed from managing the war to managing the press.

Almost all information about the war was released by the government. Information was withheld as the administration saw fit, and military officials also had the task of accrediting and authorizing any reporters who entered the war zone. They could also ban reporters who filed antagonistic stories or created suspicion (Steele, 1985).

Of course occasional stories were written that the government would have preferred not been written, but Roosevelt knew that any more outright censorship would be met with a great deal of criticism from the public and the press. So he and his advisors had to rely on journalists' self-censorship of stories that might seem harmful.

To make certain the media knew which stories the government didn't want released and to galvanize their support, Roosevelt appointed a highly respected colleague of the reporters to the reigns of his newly created Office of Censorship. Byron Price, an executive editor of the Associated Press, led this office in establishing specific guidelines including one that required all published stories be attributed to an authorized government source. These government officials monitored the media for any violations and were available around-the-clock to answers any reporter's questions that might arise. When violations were found, the reporters were reprimanded and if repeat offenders were discovered, their editor or owners were contacted and told that their representative's "unpatriotic" behavior would be publicized as such (Steele, 1985).

Although more is written about the controls placed upon the media during World War II, there were many levels of cooperation between the military and the media during this period. For instance, journalists were allowed to accompany combat units throughout the region, and some

journalists were even allowed among the first wave of troops that reached the shores of Normandy.

In summing up the situation, Steele (1985) said, "although censorship rested largely on press self-restraint, it was grounded in government control of war information and supplemented by a system employing the sanction of professional and public disapproval." With such a system in place, the information that was released kept public support of the war high and enabled the U.S. and allies to pursue the effort to victory.

During Vietnam, however, the relationship between the military and the media changed drastically. The public's opinion of military involvement changed just as drastically.

Media Coverage of the Vietnam War

In the early stages of American involvement in Vietnam, there was significant popular support for President Johnson and his Vietnam policies. In 1965, sixty-one percent of people polled believed in America sending troops to Vietnam (Angelle, 1990). But press coverage of the war and the subsequent protests in the streets of our nation helped to convince most Americans that our military efforts in Vietnam were wrong. By March, 1968, only 41 percent of those polled supported America's involvement in Vietnam and the percentage of people who were opposed the war itself more than doubled to almost 50 percent (Angelle, 1990).

Vietnam was not, by any means, the first unpopular war in U.S. history. The unpleasant memories of the Korean War undoubtedly haunted the administration during the Vietnam War.

In Korea, after an ambiguous beginning when reporters were not censored but could be court-martialed for "unwarranted criticisms" or security breaches, censorship of reports containing casualty numbers,

derogatory comments about United Nations troops, and the like was imposed. But by then the damage to public opinion had been done. Many opinion polls of that era showed the American public believed that getting involved in Korea was a mistake. (Hallin, 1986).

Many authors have theorized as to why public opinion of Vietnam was so negative. More than a few of these theories point to the effects of media coverage.

The Vietnam War has been described as "television's living room war" (Patterson, 1984). For the first time in history, Americans were receiving daily doses of violence and bloodshed, delivered directly into their own homes, from a tiny Southeast Asian country that months before they had never even known existed. Robert Elegant (1981) said of the Vietnam War that it was "the first time in modern history that the outcome of a war was determined not on the battlefield, but on the printed page."

Critics of the media and historians alike seem in agreement that media played an integral role not only in the winning or losing of the war, but also in all the governmental decisions that guided the nation during those years. It is reported that for the first time in history that a President did not seek re-election because he had lost the support of a nation because of a television anchorman, Walter Cronkite (Maclear, 1981).

There are two very distinct perceptions of the media's role in the war. Members of the media and the government agree that the media coverage had a significant impact on the outcome of the Vietnam War, but the agreement ends there when each group considers what that impact was.

The first perception of media's role, largely subscribed to by the media, is that of a great hero, mercifully putting an end to a lost cause. According to television critic Cleveland Armory (1984), when Cronkite finally spoke out

publicly against American participation in Vietnam, "he not only brought down a presidency, but also, to all intents and purposes, ended a war."

The second perception, an opinion largely held by military members of the era, is that the media, because of its own misrepresentations, distortions and weaknesses, drained this country's determination to pursue a "noble cause" to victory (Wyatt, 1986). Eighty-nine percent of the respondents to a survey of general officers who served in Vietnam held a negative rating of the press' performance, including 38 percent who said outright that the press was "disruptive of United States efforts in Vietnam" (Kinnard, 1977).

In recent years, upon further study and reflection, this latter perception has become even more commonly held, even by some media representatives themselves. A former Newsweek Far East correspondent observed, "The South Vietnamese were first and last, decisively defeated in Washington, New York, London and Paris." He added that those media defeats made defeat on the battlefield inevitable because "the pen and camera proved decisively mightier than the bayonet and ultra-modern weapons" (Elegant, 1981).

One example of a stark disagreement between media and military officials was the reporting of the Tet offensive. It is true that initial attacks by the North Vietnamese surprised the allies because of their size and speed. But when the battles were done, American troops had decimated the North's men and materials, in effect winning the confrontation—a fact that was predominantly ignored by reporters. They reported the Tet offensive as a victory for the North Vietnamese. These erroneous accounts caused an American general to say that perhaps the enemy had won the battle in the section of town where the reporters were living so the average reporters over

there had been reduced to Chicken Littles, running through the streets exclaiming that the sky was falling (Howell, 1987).

The expectations that the media and government officials had of each other were never fully met during the war. For example, during the first few years of the war, the military welcomed media attention to the situation in Vietnam. Reporters were given helicopter rides to cover the war and took advantage of military briefings. Government leaders believed that media attention could foster greater public support of the war. But these and other efforts failed because, as noted by a former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, unlike WWII, there was never a significant organized effort by the government to ensure the American public knew exactly where the government stood on the most significant event of a generation (Boyle, 1991).

Media Coverage of Grenada

Some ten years after the U.S. military's withdrawal from Vietnam, a small Caribbean island became the focal point of military/media relations. In October 1983, President Ronald Reagan sent U.S. troops to Grenada to provide some stability to the government and to rescue 400 American medical students studying there. "We got there just in time to protect innocent lives, end chaos and restore law and order," proclaimed Reagan (Servaes, 1991). [Sounds very similar to what President George Bush would say some ten years later about the situation in Somalia.]

Combat on the ground lasted only a few hours, however, it would be two days later before the media were allowed access to the area. As might be expected, there was a great and immediate media outcry.

Both camps, the media and the military, were still stinging from criticisms leveled during Vietnam. The media felt that the government had violated their Constitutional Rights and the government cited operational

security and the need to respond very quickly as justification for not carrying media along. The media responded by saying that any problems with security and timeliness could have been overcome by using media pools. This dialogue went back and forth, but the invasion had garnered wide popular support in the United States and the military went with this momentum, working quickly to accommodate the requests of the media.

Less than two weeks after landing in Grenada, the Pentagon announced the establishment of a special panel to determine the feasibility of press coverage of future military deployments. The panel, consisting of media representatives and senior public affairs officers, recognized the media's legitimate need to cover military deployments when feasible. Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger ordered the immediate implementation of the "quick response" media pool.

The government's quick and cooperative action in forming the media pool was a successful venture for all involved. Media representatives were very pleased with the preliminary tests of the pool concept. They commented that the Department of Defense seemed to finally be taking the press pool seriously, and one female reporter added that the media could learn from the military's less discriminatory view of women covering combat (Boyle, 1991).

During this era the media and military once again found an amicable compromise which relied heavily on the media's self-restraint and self-censorship for the good of all involved.

Media Coverage of Panama

The first test of the media pool in a combat situation began on December 20, 1989, when American forces invaded Panama. A 16-member media pool arrived in Panama five hours after the invasion began and they were confined to an American air base for another five hours before being

airlifted to cover troops in action. While the situation was a vast improvement over media access to Grenada, it still did not live up to the media's expectation. Some media members complained that they were always one step behind the action and that some of the places to which the media were allowed access appeared to have been included for propaganda rather than its news value (Boyle, 1991).

To the government's credit, many reporters applauded the lack of censorship and the equipment and facilities that were at their disposal. The overall consensus of the media response could best be summed up by the Washington Bureau Chief for the Associated Press, Jonathan Wolman, when he said that the situation was like a sports reporter missing the big game but having great access to the locker room after the game (Boyle, 1991).

The pool concept had proven to be a "Catch 22" for the government, causing some news agencies to commend them for their efforts as others accused them of manipulating media coverage for their own aims; however, there was little time to study the problem in hopes of making changes. Mounting tensions in the Middle East erupted into military conflict. This time, the whole world would be watching, live and in living color.

Media Coverage of the Persian Gulf War

Few people will ever forget the Cable News Network's live coverage of the attacks on Baghdad or the rest of Iraq during the Persian Gulf War. These live satellite feeds seemed to bring our nation together as Americans sat glued to their television screens night after night; however, these same feeds were the source of great concern as well. Not only were Americans tuned in to their troops every move, so were the enemy. One too-telling comment by media or a few seconds of too-revealing footage could jeopardize thousands of American and allied lives. This situation, coupled with the exponential

increase in the number of media representatives wanting to cover the conflict, created problems never before encountered by either camp.

To try to accommodate the many media organizations requesting to cover the gulf war, media pools were formed again within weeks of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. All media representatives who were included in the pools going to the front line had to pass a basic physical fitness test and were issued a list of guidelines which they were expected to follow. The guidelines included: they were to be under constant escort by a trained military public affairs official, they were not to release specific information on troop numbers or weapons involved, specific rescue missions in progress, specific locations of military units or their plans for movement, etc. They were also alerted that their copy had to pass through security review before being released (Gersh, 1991). Even with these specific and often reiterated guidelines, some reporters failed to live up to the military's expectations. Veteran newsman Sam Donaldson inadvertently gave the location of a major military base one night on "Nightline."

Media executives and field reporters registered a multitude of complaints about these military restraints of the press. The American Society of Newspaper Editors and the Radio-Television News Directors formally objected to the security review process. They cited the absence of such measures during Vietnam and accused the government of trying to "limit coverage, distort the news or hide embarrassing information that the American people had the right to know" (Boyle, 1991).

Most of the media's fears were shown unfounded when, despite all their concerns that the government might suppress any criticism of military efforts in the gulf region, there was very little evidence of that occurring at all (Boyle, 1991). There were instances, of course, where reviewing officials

would make changes in a reporter's copy. If disagreement arose from these changes, higher officials at the Pentagon would hear the appeals and usually decided in favor of the media (Stein, 1991).

Most importantly to the military community, while accusations continued to fly back and forth between the military and the media, the military was enjoying many successes on the battlefield and seemed to be winning the war of public opinion back home. Public opinion remained favorable conceivably because of the military's exhaustive efforts to keep its goals and objectives in front of the American people. A *Times Mirror* poll conducted during the early phase of the war revealed that 76 percent of those polled were aware that the media was being restricted and 79 percent believed that such restrictions were necessary. Seventy-eight percent responded that they felt comfortable that the government was not concealing bad news and 57 percent responded that the Pentagon should exercise even more control over war reporting. A Time/CNN poll in January 1991 found that almost 90 percent of the people supported some censorship of the press during the war (Boyle, 1991).

With public opinion so high, there is little surprise that elected officials rallied around the Pentagon's position as well. Senator Joseph Lieberman contended that the rights of the press "do not transcend the rights of our soldiers to survive." Wisconsin senator Herb Kohl added that the Pentagon was doing an "honest and effective job of making sure that the American people have the information they need to make an informed judgment about the conduct and status of the war" (Gersh, 1991).

When other Congressional leaders voiced objections to or voted against President Bush's decision to engage in battle in the region, they were often labeled as unpatriotic. Yellow ribbons and American flags were

common sights on cars, on trees and in windows of homes and businesses from coast to coast demonstrating support for the troops serving in the Gulf.

Public opinion of that nature does not happen accidentally. It requires careful, honest and repeated attempts by the government to keep its agenda before the American people. Pentagon public affairs officials must apply some of the lessons learned from the Persian Gulf War in dealing with the media during any subsequent conflicts in order to maintain mission integrity and keeping the public informed and sympathetic to their cause.

Media's Use of Government Officials as News Sources

The military public affairs community must capitalize on every opportunity they have to effectively communicate their message to the public. One opportunity that still exists today is the media's heavy reliance on government officials as sources of timely and accurate information about themselves, despite the many technological advances in news reporting.

According to Turk & Franklin (1987),

"Official" sources—representatives of government who seek to shape the media's content agenda so that the reality the media present to the citizenry might reflect government's actions of the people, by the people and for the people—are particularly influential...because there is an inevitable dependence... of the reporter on the (government) information source.

According to Kathleen Hansen, Journalism and Mass Communication professor at the University of Minnesota, "whether the medium be print or broadcast, scholars have found that daily reporting relies mainly on routine channels of information and official government sources" (1991).

The published findings of Sigal's 20-year content analysis of the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* revealed that almost 60 percent of the news in all stories came from routine sources such as press conferences and news

releases. Further he found that more than 75 percent of the sources attributed were government officials (Brown et al, 1990).

A number of factors explain why there is such little diversity in news sources. Gans (1979) concludes that the primary reason for limited source diversity is the fact that an infinite number of possible stories face editors and reporters each day; therefore, the stories that are to be covered must be done as efficiently as possible.

The criteria for source selection identified by Gans are availability and suitability. The explanation of the criteria seem to have been written explicitly with the Pentagon in mind.

“They (the selected sources) are most likely to meet the *availability* criterion through their powers to attract journalists’ attention and to restrain subordinates from contacting journalists, and through their geographic and social proximity to the journalist” (Brown et al, 1990). These sources are also better able to meet the *suitability* criterion due to their centrality of power. They are able to provide a great deal of information without overworking their people or the journalists (Brown, et al, 1990).

The media reportedly prefer such bureaucratic sources because of the credibility, regularity and utility of the information. The sources simultaneously benefit from the relationship because these “information subsidies” are consumed by reporters , and the reporters use these subsidies to directly affect the agendas of lawmakers, the general public and other very influential audiences (Brown et al, 1990).

Rationale

The United States media and Armed Forces both exist to serve the American public. The media serve by keeping the public well informed on the issues and able to make rational, sound decisions. The military serves by

protecting and defending—against all enemies, foreign and domestic—the public's right to make their own decisions. In times of military conflict, the two groups can sometimes become polarized at a time when solidarity is what the country deserves and needs most.

Most Americans believe that the essence of democracy is the right to debate issues. The military believes their job is to protect such a democracy and often attempts to remind the public that the military's role is carrying out policies made by the officials who have been elected by the American public. The solidarity the military seeks during time of conflict is basic support for their commitment to carry out these policies to the best of their abilities.

Operation Restore Hope provides the military yet another challenge to serve this nation. It also provides the military public affairs community another opportunity to work with the national media to communicate a clear understanding to all Americans of our nation's goals and objectives in Somalia.

This study will assess the media's use of government sources in reporting the news and their assistance in conveying key themes about the mission of Operation Restore Hope to the American public by answering the following research questions:

Research Questions

1. Are military sources more frequently attributed in newspaper coverage of the operation than other sources?
2. Will the humanitarian theme of Operation Restore Hope dominate in newspaper coverage?

Upon answering these research questions, the author expects to find that military officials remain a predominant source of information for

reporters. Although media were allowed "free and independent coverage" of the operation according to military public affairs officials , military press briefings, releases, and interviews are expected to be the main source of published information.

Further this author expects to find that the humanitarian objective of Operation Restore Hope is the most frequently referred to objective of the military efforts in Somalia. After Secretary Cheney carefully articulated his emphasis on the humanitarian aspect of the operation, subordinate military personnel will use every available opportunity to reemphasize the military's commitment to humanitarian assistance to the American public through the media.

Chapter 3

Methods and Procedures

Content analysis is a "research technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics within a text" (Frey et al, 1991). Holsti (1969) adds that "content analysis is a multi-purpose research method developed specifically for investigating any problem in which the content of communication serves as the basis of inference."

With these definitions in mind, this study will analyze all news articles printed in three leading newspapers from different geographical areas. The *Los Angeles Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*, were selected because of their varied geographical locations, similar regional prominence and large circulations. The papers will be selected from the period of 4 December 1992, the day the President announced American troops' participation in the operation, through 2 January 1993—a 30-day period.

Examining each paragraph in the articles, coders will identify the sources attributed in the news articles and determine the thematic content of each phrase that refers to the military's mission in Somalia.

The categories used to classify units in the content analysis must be mutually exclusive, equivalent and exhaustive (Berelson, 1952). Therefore when coding for sources attributed in the articles, coders will use the categories "official military sources" and "non-military sources" as follows:

- 0 No attributable source
- 1 Official military sources
 - a. airman
 - b. sergeant
 - c. lieutenant
 - d. captain
 - e. major
 - f. colonel
 - g. general
 - h. private
 - i. specialist
 - j. corporal
 - k. seaman
 - l. petty officer
 - m. ensign
 - n. commander
 - o. admiral
 - p. Defense Secretary
 - q. President
 - r. Pentagon officials
 - s. soldier
 - t. sailor
 - u. officer
 - v. other
- 2 Non-military sources
 - a. United Nations officials
 - b. Somali residents
 - c. relief workers
 - d. Congressmen (Senators, Representatives)
 - e. dependents (husbands, wives, sons, daughters)
 - f. family members (mother, father, siblings, aunts, uncles, etc.)
 - g. American citizens
 - h. other media sources (CNN, polls, newspapers, radio, etc.)
 - i. foreign citizens/politicians
 - j. other

The categories used to identify thematic content of each paragraph referring to the operation are "humanitarian," "combat," "human interest," and "political/diplomatic." The categories will consist of the following:

- 0 No reference to mission
- 1 Humanitarian
 - a. humanitarian mission/relief effort
 - b. distribution of goods (food, water, clothing, medical supplies)
 - c. opening delivery routes (securing airports, clearing paths)
 - d. saving lives/bringing hope
 - e. escorting supplies
 - f. other
- 2 Combat
 - a. firing shots
 - b. being fired upon
 - c. casualties
 - d. providing security for dignitaries
 - e. dangerous missions
 - f. disarming Somalis
 - g. other
- 3 Human interest
 - a. personal sacrifice (homesickness, holidays away from family, etc)
 - b. media coverage of operation
 - c. developing rapport with Somalis
 - d. starving/suffering Somalis
 - e. other
- 4 Political/diplomatic
 - a. meeting with warlords
 - b. Somali civil unrest
 - c. U.N. countries interrelating
 - d. other
- 5 Other

These content categories were developed for use by the coders following a pilot study.

Procedures for Pilot Study

Initial content categories for the pilot study were developed based on the author's perusal of related newspaper and magazine articles and inputs

from committee members, all professors in the Florida State University College of Communication.

The pilot study to test reliability was conducted by two independent coders on four randomly selected articles that will be a part of the later study. After a brief training session with the author, each coder was provided a coder manual consisting of the following information:

I. Please check to ensure the manual contains the following:

- A. Coding instructions (with coding examples)
- B. Content Categories Sheets
- C. Pencils
- D. Coding sheets
- E. Text of newspaper articles
 - 1. Each article is assigned a number following an abbreviation of the newspaper name (i.e. LAT1, NYT2, WP3)
 - 2. Each paragraph is numbered

II. Coding Atmosphere

- A. Find a quiet study atmosphere in which to code
- B. Plan three hours a day for coding
- C. Please take a 7-10 minute break between hours of coding

III. Coding Instructions

- A. Read each paragraph carefully
- B. Assign each numbered paragraph the various codes as they apply
 - 1. First code for sources attributed, looking for quotation marks, "according to," "said," "added" or any other indication of attribution. If no indication of source is given, the paragraph should be coded 0, No Attributal Source.
 - 2. Then code the attributed information according to the slant it takes, positive, negative or neutral, with reference to the mission. A positive statement, coded +, will support the mission, the people or their

actions. A negative statement, coded -, will condemn the mission, people, or actions. And a neutral statement, coded N, will not take either side or have elements of both.

3. Now code for the theme that prevails in the paragraph. There may be more than one theme represented in a paragraph, however, the theme that prevails about the mission of the operation should be coded. For example, the paragraph, "The soldier will spend this Christmas away from his wife and children," should be coded 3a for having a human interest theme. The paragraph, "The soldier will spend this Christmas away from his wife and children, ensuring that food and medical supplies reach starving Somalis," should be 1c for having a humanitarian theme. The paragraph, "The soldier will spend this Christmas away from his wife and children, on a dangerous mission in the Somali desert," should be coded 2e for having a combat theme. If the paragraph has no theme that corresponds to the categories provided, place a 0 in the appropriate box on the coding sheet and write the theme that does prevail in the left margin of the text of that paragraph to be discussed later.
4. As in step 2 above, code the theme of the paragraph according to the slant it takes, positive, negative or neutral, with reference to the mission.

- C. Write in pencil the appropriate codes in the corresponding boxes on the coding sheet
- D. Proceed in this manner until every paragraph of each article has been coded

Reliability Results

A formula developed by Holsti (1969) to determine the reliability of two coders was used in this study. In the formula:

$$R = \frac{2(C1.C2)}{(C1+C2)}$$

Holsti explains that C1,C2 refers to the number of category assignments agreed upon by both coders. C1 + C2 refers to the total number of coding decision made by Coder 1 and Coder 2, respectively. In this study the coders agreed on 268 coding decisions. Each coder made 352 coding decisions for a total of 704. Therefore, if

$$R = \frac{2(268)}{(352 + 352)}$$

the reliability of this study is .76 according to the Holsti formula.

There is no level generally agreed upon to qualify a coder's percentage as reliable (Budd et al, 1967). However, this author sought a reliability level of .73 for this study based upon other accepted content analysis studies with levels as low as .73 (Ryan & Owen, 1976).

As a result of this study's producing a higher reliability than required, the content categories remained unchanged. However, analysis of coding decisions made and poststudy interviews with coders indicated that more thorough training should bring about more agreements between coders when coding for the slant of the attributions and the themes presented.

Procedures for Actual Test

The articles to be analyzed as a part of this study were gathered through the use of the Nexis data base. After compiling a complete list of articles that appeared in the Los Angeles *Times*, New York *Times* and Washington *Post* during the period in question, the author excluded all articles that appeared on the Opinion/Editorial pages and printed the remaining articles for analysis by the coders.

Two trained coders, graduate students in the Florida State University College of Communication, each received the same training, newspaper articles, supplies and coding manual used in the pilot study. They coded the articles, as originating from a military source or not. The slant of the attributed information, positive, negative or neutral, was coded as well. Coders also analyze each paragraph indicating the thematic reference to the mission and the positive, negative or neutral slant taken. Each coder was paid \$2.50 per hour for approximately twenty hours.

The results of this study were examined and analyzed on a Macintosh IIcx computer. After the coding was accomplished, the coders returned the coding sheets to the author. The coding decisions were entered into Microsoft Excel, and cut and pasted into a statistical program, Exstatix, for testing. Once the data had been transported into Exstatix, basic statistical analysis such as frequencies and crosstabs were performed. Chi square tests were performed to test the significance of several relationships.

Chapter four takes an in depth look at the sample data used in the content analysis and the findings of this study.

Chapter 4

Findings and Discussion

The author described the purpose of this study of themes and source diversity in elite newspaper coverage of Operation Restore Hope in Chapter 2.

The researcher sought to answer the following research questions:

- 1) Are military sources more frequently attributed in newspaper coverage of the operation than other sources?
- 2) Will the humanitarian theme of Operation Restore Hope dominate in newspaper coverage?

This chapter first addresses the reliability of the overall study. Second, the sample data used for the study is described. Third, the frequencies of variables in relevant categories are accounted for and discussed. Fourth, some relevant crosstabs will be detailed and discussed. Chapter five will revisit the research questions and summarize the findings.

With the overall study, as in the pilot study, a minimum reliability level of .73 was sought. The coders agreed on 7,624 of the 10,284 total coding decisions each made. Therefore, the Holsti formula revealed an observed reliability of .74.

Table 4.1 presents the newspapers used in this study and the number of articles used from each publication. There were vast differences in the amount of coverage given to the operation in the different newspapers. However, the three newspapers combined published 75 articles and 1,714 paragraphs about the relief effort in Somalia. The *Los Angeles Times'* coverage was disproportionately larger than the other observed publication due in part to the Marine base nearby, Camp Pendleton, from which the vast majority of the Marines deployed to Somalia were sent. The proximity of the

TABLE 4.1: Sample Data Population

Newspapers Used	Number of Articles	Average Number of Paragraphs
Los Angeles Times	53	25
Washington Post	17	22
New York Times	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>
Total	75	Total 1,714

base to the newspaper meant there would be added interest in this operation among the people in that vicinity.

The frequency table for source attributed (Table 4.2) indicates that 54.8% of the paragraphs, or cases analyzed, could not be attributed to a particular

TABLE 4.2: Frequency of Sources Attributed

Category	Count	Percent of Total
No Attributed Source	1877	54.80
Military Source	861	25.10
Nonmilitary Source	<u>690</u>	<u>20.10</u>
Total	3428	100

source; however, a greater percentage of the cases were attributed to military sources than nonmilitary sources. Twenty-five point one percent of the cases were coded as originating with a military source as opposed to 20.1% coded as originating with nonmilitary sources. This information is important because sources attributed is one of the variables being analyzed in this study.

TABLE 4.3: Frequency of Source Subcategories

Military Sources	Count	Percent of Total Sources		Count	Percent of Total
Colonel	142	4.1	Relief Workers	134	3.9
Others	141	4.1	U.N. Officials	107	3.1
General	96	2.8	Others	96	2.8
Lieutenant	91	2.7	American Citizens	92	2.7
Sergeant	79	2.3	Somali Residents	87	2.5
Corporal	72	2.1	Spouse/Children	73	2.1
Pentagon Officials	61	1.8	Other Media Sources	31	0.9
Captain	33	1.0	Other Family Members	29	0.8
Major	31	0.9	Foreign Citizens	26	0.8
Defense Secretary	28	0.8	Congressmen	<u>15</u>	<u>0.5</u>
President	25	0.7			
Officer	18	0.5	Totals	690	20.1
Specialist	14	0.4			
Commander	9	0.3			
Sailor	8	0.2			
Petty Officer	4	0.1			
Airman	3	0.1			
Seaman	3	0.1			
Admiral	2	0.1			
Soldier	<u>1</u>	<u>0.0</u>			
Totals	861	25.1			

The frequency table for the source subcategories (Table 4.3), in keeping with the source attributed table, indicates that in 54.8% of the cases no attributable source could be found. Of all the sources identified in the study, 4.1% of the information is attributed to colonels. This is due primarily to reporters attending the regular press conferences held in Somalia and quoting the senior Public Affairs Officer there, Col. Fred Peck. Another 4.1% of all cases were coded as "other". Unfortunately, no specific information was gathered as to the ranks or affiliations of other sources. Two point eight percent of the cases originated with general officers and coders indicated that most of the general officer attributions originated with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell.

The nonmilitary sources gathering the highest percentages of attributions were relief workers with 3.9%, United Nations officials with 3.1% and "other" with 2.8%.

The source subcategories figures indicate a similarity between the military and nonmilitary sources selected by journalists. In both categories, journalists seem to have selected people that are at the upper end of the hierarchy or whose titles lend instant credibility. The military sources are senior ranking individuals and the nonmilitary sources are relief workers or other officials.

The percentages of "other" found in both military and nonmilitary categories is interesting to note as well. According to the coders, there was a significant number of sources who preferred to remain anonymous.

The slant of the sources attributed (Table 4.4) is an indication of the source's perception of the mission, the people carrying out the mission or their actions. Sixty-six point nine percent of the cases were coded as being neutral, (not supporting or condemning the mission, people or actions), or

containing both positive and negative elements. A positive slant was given to 17.3% of the cases, while negative codings were given to 15.8%. Obviously the overall slant of sources attributed is positive, but the difference is slight. Perhaps a concerted effort by the media to present balanced coverage of

TABLE 4.4: Frequency of Source Slant

Slant	Count	Percent of Total
Neutral	2294	66.9
Positive	594	17.3
Negative	<u>540</u>	<u>15.8</u>
Totals	3428	100

Operation Restore Hope is partly responsible for this slight difference.

Nearly one quarter of the cases, 24.9%, indicate that the humanitarian theme dominates in coverage of the operation, as detailed in Table 4.5. This information is important because it deals directly with the second research question proposed in this study. A human interest theme was perceived in 22.8% of the cases and 17.1% of all cases presented no reference to the mission. The other categories of themes presented unfolded with the combat theme receiving 16.3% of the codings, the political/diplomatic theme receiving 10.9% and 8% presented other themes such as simple logistics of the mission, moving troops and equipment from one place to the next, and the size of and distances between Somali cities.

The data reported in this table directly answers the second research question. The humanitarian theme is dominating newspaper coverage of Operation Restore Hope. The human interest theme was the second most frequently presented theme, due in part to the time span of the articles used in this study covering the Christmas holidays.

The theme subcategories table (Table 4.6) parallels that of the themes presented, in that 17.1% of all cases have no reference to the mission. All the

TABLE 4.5: Frequency of Themes Presented

Theme Presented	Count	Percent of Total
Humanitarian	854	24.9
Human Interest	780	22.8
No Reference to Mission	585	17.1
Combat	560	16.3
Political/Diplomatic	375	10.9
Other	<u>274</u>	<u>8.0</u>
Totals	3428	100

percentages are listed in the table; however, it is important here to highlight the subcategories which received the highest percentages.

Within the humanitarian category, 7.2% of the codings referred to the relief effort in general terms, while 5.7% referred specifically to the distribution of food, water, clothing and medical supplies. Within the combat category, 5% of the codings referred to the disarming of Somali gunmen.

Within the human interest category, 9.2% of the codings referred to the personal sacrifices made by the troops and their families and 3.4% referred to media coverage of the operation. 5.1% of the codings referred to "other" political/diplomatic subcategories, such as visits by President George Bush.

The percentages of positive, negative and neutral slants coded under the themes slant variable are similar to those reported under the source slant variable. As Table 4.7 illustrates, almost half of the codings, at 47.3%, indicate that the cases have a neutral slant. 27.9% of the paragraphs were coded as having a positive slant, and 24.8% of the paragraphs have a negative slant.

After the relevant frequencies were analyzed, the author decided to test for relationships between the variables. Chi square tests were employed to

TABLE 4.6: Frequency of Theme Subcategories

Theme Presented	Theme Subcategory	Count	Percent of Total
No Reference to Mission	None	585	17.1
	Other	274	8.0
Humanitarian	Relief Effort	247	7.2
	Distribution of Goods	197	5.7
	Opening Delivery Routes	162	4.5
Combat	Disarming Gunmen	172	5.0
Human Interest	Personal Sacrifices	317	9.2
	Media Coverage of Operation	117	3.4
Political/Diplomatic	"Other"	175	5.1

examine the significance of the difference between variables with the significance level for all crosstabs set at less than .001

When examining the relationship between source attributed and source slant, a Chi square was calculated to be 169.589 (degrees of freedom = 4; significance < .001). Therefore, based on the Chi square table value of 9.488, a significant association is indicated between the source attributed and the slant of that attribution.

A crosstab of these two variables indicates that the vast majority of the sources had neutral slants. Table 4.8 illustrates that 75.3% of all cases that could not be attributed to a source, 59.1% of the cases attributed to military

TABLE 4.7: Frequency of Theme Slant

Slant	Count	Percent of Total
Neutral	1620	47.3
Positive	958	27.9
Negative	<u>850</u>	<u>24.8</u>
Totals	3428	100

sources and 54% of cases attributed to nonmilitary sources held a neutral viewpoint. The sources attributed may have fallen victim to the same problem discussed earlier. Coders may have difficulty separating the positive gains made in Somalia from the negativity of the country's problems.

Of the cases revealing no attributable source, the percentages for the positive and negative slants were very similar, having receiving 12.4% and 12.3%, respectively. However, more revealing perhaps are the percentages for

positive and negative slants provided by the military and nonmilitary sources. Of the military sources attributed, 25.8% of the cases had positive slants and 15.1% had negative slants. By contrast, of the nonmilitary sources attributed, 20.1% of cases had positive slants, while a greater percentage, 25.9%, had negative slants. These differences are interesting and might best be explained by reiterating the findings in the source subcategories category as shown in Table 4.3.

TABLE 4.8: Source Slant by Source Attributed

Source Slant	Source Attributed		
	No Attributal Source	Military Source	Nonmilitary Source
Positive			
Count	233	222	139
Percentage	12.4	25.8	20.1
Negative			
Count	231	130	179
Percentage	12.3	15.1	25.9
Neutral			
Count	1413	509	372
Percentage	75.3	59.1	54.0
Total			
Count	1877	861	690
Percentage	100	100	100
Degrees of freedom = 4	Chi square = 169.589		Significance < .001

The military sources attributed most often were senior ranking officials such as General Powell and Colonel Peck. The sources without military affiliation attributed most often were relief workers and other U.N. officials. One might expect the military officials to emphasize the successes of the operation in Somalia with positive statements, and the relief workers, who work with the sickest and weakest in the country, to emphasize the devastation of famine and disease that still exists with negative statements.

A crosstab of themes presented by theme slant (Table 4.9) reveals a calculated Chi square of 720.616 (degrees of freedom = 10; significance < .001).

As noted in Table 4.5, the themes presented most often in coverage of Operation Restore Hope were the humanitarian and human interest themes.

As Table 4.9 illustrates, these two themes differ significantly in the percentages of positive and negative slants taken. Fifty-one point five percent of the cases with a humanitarian theme have a positive slant and only 13.7% have a negative slant. Conversely, 27.6% of the cases with a human interest theme have a positive slant and a larger percent, 37.2, have a negative slant. A review of the themes subcategory may foster a better understanding of what seems to be going on in this table.

The subcategory dominating the humanitarian category referred to the general relief effort, while the subcategory dominating the human interest category referred to personal sacrifices made by the troops and their families.

With these factors in mind, one might be able to understand why paragraphs containing the humanitarian theme would be mostly viewed as positive, while the paragraphs containing the human interest theme are mostly negative. Comments about the help being provided to the starving men, women and children of Somalia affirm the readers' beliefs that helping others is an important virtue, while comments about these military families'

separation, particularly during the Christmas holidays, reminds the readers that their sons, daughters and friends are enduring hardships because of U.S. participation in Operation Restore Hope.

When the author examined the relationship between the source attributed and themes presented (Table 4.10), the Chi square was calculated to be 76.834 (degrees of freedom = 10; significance < .001).

TABLE 4.9: Theme Slant by Themes Presented

Theme Slant	No Reference to Mission	Themes Presented				
		Humanitarian	Combat	Human Interest	Political/ Diplomat	Other
Positive						
Count	58	440	136	215	91	18
Percentage	9.9	51.5	24.2	27.6	24.3	6.6
Negative						
Count	73	117	189	290	146	35
Percentage	12.5	13.7	33.8	37.2	38.9	12.8
Neutral						
Count	454	297	235	275	138	221
Percentage	77.6	34.8	42.0	35.2	36.8	80.6
Total						
Count	585	854	560	780	375	274
Percentage	100	100	100	100	100	100
Degrees of freedom =10		Chi square =720.616			Significance < .001	

Table 4.10 illustrates that of all cases coded as originating with both

TABLE 4.10: Sources Attributed by Themes Presented

Themes Presented	Sources Attributed		
	No Attributed Source	Military Sources	Nonmilitary Sources
No Reference to Mission			
Count	363	99	123
Percentage	19.3	11.5	17.8
Humanitarian			
Count	437	263	154
Percentage	23.3	30.5	22.3
Combat			
Count	268	164	128
Percentage	14.3	19	18.6
Human Interest			
Count	449	190	141
Percentage	23.9	22.1	20.4
Political/Diplomatic			
Count	213	61	101
Percentage	11.3	7.1	14.6
Other			
Count	147	84	43
Percentage	7.8	9.8	6.2
Total			
Count	1877	861	690
Percentage	100	100	100
Degrees of freedom = 10		Chi square = 76.834	Significance < .001

military and nonmilitary sources, the humanitarian theme was presented more often than any other theme. The human interest theme received the

second highest percentages with military and nonmilitary sources as well. Of all cases attributed to military sources, 30.5% presented a humanitarian theme, while the human interest theme received 22.1% of the codings. Of the cases originating with nonmilitary sources, the humanitarian and human interest themes were presented 22.3% and 20.4% of the time, respectively.

With respect to the research questions, this table indicates that the humanitarian theme did dominate newspaper coverage. It did so by being the most often referred to objective of Operation Restore Hope by both military and nonmilitary sources.

The details of the frequencies of certain variables in published elite newspaper articles, particularly the sources attributed and themes presented variables, have done a great deal to answer the research questions brought forward in this study. This chapter has detailed that military sources are attributed more often than nonmilitary sources and that the humanitarian theme dominated all other themes presented in newspaper coverage of the operation. Crosstabs of different variables have indicated that high ranking military officials and relief workers are the most often attributed people within the military and nonmilitary subcategories, respectively. Further, this data has provided insight as to which categories and subcategories provide the most positive, negative and neutral information to reporters.

Chapter 5

Summary and Conclusion

This final chapter revisits the research questions developed for this study with appropriate responses and summarizes the findings.

First the author asked: Are military officials more frequently attributed in elite newspaper coverage of Operation Restore Hope than other sources? The findings indicate that military sources were attributed more than nonmilitary sources; however, based on Sigal's finding in 1973, the difference was lower than the 50% difference anticipated. One possible explanation as to why the percentage of military sources attributed found in this study are much lower than that found by Sigal's 1973 study is the fact that many technological advances have been made in news reporting and information transmission since the 1970s, allowing reporters much greater mobility and timeliness. Another factor allowing greater source diversity with regard to coverage of Operation Restore Hope is the Pentagon's policy of "Free and Independent" coverage in Somalia. During Restore Hope no restrictions have been placed upon reporters in the theater of operations. After having experienced the limitations placed upon them during Desert Storm, the reporters may have used this opportunity to learn what people other than military officials had to say, as well as to hone their fact finding skills.

Second, the author asked: Will the humanitarian theme of Operation Restore Hope dominate in elite newspaper coverage? The findings here indicate that where distinct themes were presented, the majority of them did indeed emphasize the humanitarian objectives of the operation. It is

important to note that nearly one-third of all information attributed to military sources presented a humanitarian theme. With all the other possible questions and responses that could arise, that figure is noteworthy. This fact demonstrates that, as a whole, the military community was successful in keeping the nation's focus on the mission's objective; however, a greater determination to emphasize the mission at hand and fewer references to personal sacrifices could foster an even greater understanding among the American people as to the job to be done.

Apparently military/media relations have improved greatly since the days of General MacArthur and WWII, and since the days of Presidents Johnson and Nixon during the Vietnam era. Hopefully, both camps have learned a lot about themselves and each other as America faced and worked through the many challenges that have arisen within its borders and abroad. The literature reviewed for this study indicates that both the military and the media have extremely important jobs to do in and for this country, and an honest stance of cooperation between the two will enable them both to perform their duties to the high levels expected of them by the people they serve.

Conclusion

This study examined the sources most frequently attributed in elite newspaper articles about Operation Restore Hope and the themes that dominate in those newspapers' coverage of the operation.

Chapter 1 gave the purpose of and introduction to this study. Chapter 2 reviewed the available literature related to the media's agenda setting function, the dynamic relationship that has existed between the media and the military during times of armed conflict abroad, and the media's reliance

upon government officials as news sources. This chapter also provided the rationale and research questions for this study.

Chapter 3 detailed the methods and procedures used during the pilot study and the actual study. Chapter 4 detailed and discussed this study's findings. And the findings were summarized in the first section of this chapter as they related to the research questions.

The mass media penetrates into every aspect of American's lives. This penetration carries along with it the potential to determine the issues that people think about and what they think about the issues.

The media rely heavily upon official news sources to provide them with timely and accurate information. During past military conflicts or wars, when the media and military officials have cooperated with each other to facilitate an appropriate flow of accurate information, the American public has felt that both entities were fulfilling their duties and public support has remained high enough to see the conflicts or wars through to victory.

The results of this study indicate that in early coverage of Operation Restore Hope military sources are more often attributed in newspaper coverage of the operation than nonmilitary sources. This study also finds that the humanitarian theme, as posited, dominates other themes presented. This author believes that although the humanitarian theme did dominate the coverage of the operation, military members did not take every available opportunity to emphasize, as Secretary Cheney did in his initial mission statement, the humanitarian objective of the operation. If they had, the domination of the coverage by the humanitarian theme would have been greater than found here.

Apparently, the media has begun to offer a more balanced perspective in their media coverage of the military and military conflicts abroad. Where

Vietnam coverage seemed to show a particular bias toward bringing death destruction and other "costs" of U.S. involvement into American living rooms on a daily basis, coverage of the Persian Gulf War and particularly the coverage of Operation Restore Hope analyzed in this study demonstrate a concerted effort by the media to include "gains" and other angles in their reports.

Operation Restore Hope currently enjoys positive public opinion at home and the military in turn is being allowed to continue the pursuit of its military objectives in Somalia. But if it is to retain the support of the American public, the military must continue, and perhaps increase, its efforts to communicate its humanitarian objectives to the public through the media.

Further, the lessons learned from cooperating with the media and communicating with the public during this operation should be combined with those learned from previous conflicts. This information can prove invaluable to military officials, especially the Department of Defense public affairs community seeking to solidify the positive public opinion that is fundamental to any military success.

Limitations of the Study

This study encountered a number of limitations as it moved toward fruition. The most significant limitations include the short timespan in the sample data population, and the author's limited experience with statistical analysis.

The time span from which the articles were drawn for this study was from December 4, 1992 through January 2, 1993. While this time span was a manageable one, Operation Restore Hope still has not ended. The findings of a study of all published newspapers articles might be very different if the

operation drags on for a much longer period than anticipated by the public, the military and the media.

The coding decisions made by the two coders in this study and the computer assisted analysis of the data, has the potential to yield far more information than is dealt with in the pages of this study. Though the analysis done for this study is more than sufficient for answering the research questions brought forth here, further, more indepth analysis of this data could provide additional important findings.

Recommendations for Future Research

The next step in this study would be to examine the particular variables that contribute to a source or attribution being used in an article. Are there particular illiterations that make there way to print more often than others? Do the reporters have a penchant toward a particular story angle? Does the military rank of the spokesperson influence what emphasis the information provided receives or the number of direct quotes used?

Research in these areas could provide military public affairs officials with very useful information on how to better influence the themes, events, and messages that are relayed to the public through the media.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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THEMES PRESENTED AND SOURCE DIVERSITY IN ELITE NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF OPERATION RESTORE HOPE

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Term Degree Awarded: Spring, 1993

This content analytic study identifies the themes most frequently presented and sources most often attributed in elite newspaper coverage of Operation Restore Hope, the relief effort in Somalia. The first two chapters introduce the reader to the study and reviews related research, focusing on the media's agenda setting function, the dynamic relationship that has existed between the military and the media during military conflicts in recent history, and the media's reliance upon official government sources as news sources. The remaining chapters detail the methods and procedures used to analyze newspaper articles in the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, discuss these findings and bring this text to a logical conclusion.

The study reveals that the humanitarian theme dominated coverage of the operation and military sources were attributed more often than nonmilitary sources.

Avenues for future research on media coverage of military are described after the findings have been summarized. Future research in this area could provide military public affairs officials with information on how to increase their influence over the themes, events and messages that are relayed to the public through the media.